



Building on strong foundations

How **Direx Solutions** is helping build a solid base on which future infrastructure projects are being delivered

Canada is faced with the challenge of a population growing at a rate faster than any other country worldwide. As a result, public transport passenger demand exceeds current market capacity. Metrolinx, an agency overseen by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, is responsible for the management and integration of public transport in the Golden Horseshoe region of southern Ontario. Metrolinx has over 200 road and public transport projects underway, including the GO Expansion Program.

GO Expansion is a multi-billion dollar, 10-year transformational program to expand the existing commuter rail service from 1500 to 6000 trains per week. This is one of the largest infrastructure projects in North America, and includes new track,

new electric trains, new and modified infrastructure, renovation of existing GO stations, and construction of 21 new stations.

Direx Solutions has over 10 years' experience of working on railway transit projects worldwide. Direx experts have integrated their expertise into Metrolinx's teams to assist in delivering the GO Expansion Program into the region. Relationships grew on a foundation of partnering and trust and this allowed solutions to be shaped for Metrolinx that were based on success, sustainability and showed real improvement to public transportation that kept up with the dynamic growth. As part of this process Direx transferred knowledge and embedded innovation into each

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project workstream, with results that proved working together collaboratively accomplished more. The projects delivered not only improved passenger rail service, but value for money for taxpayers, created job opportunities across the region and offered better options for travellers, with new trains that are up to 29% faster and up to 50% less expensive to operate.

Canada market focus for UK Suppliers and solving challenges

In 2016 Direx Solutions started to work with and support Metrolinx on projects such as the GO Expansion Program. The Metrolinx operations were across heavily congested regions and rail services did not mirror passenger demand. The GO Expansion Program was created to improve train services by adding all-day two-way services, with 15-minute services over core segments of the GO Rail network. The project teams were tasked with delivering infrastructure upgrades including adding tracks, expanding stations, upgrading the rail network with electrification, procuring new trains, and implementing new control systems to enable more frequent services.

Direx Experts were placed in roles including Project Sponsor and into the Procurement, Customer Service, IT and Train Planning teams. Each role's purpose was to enhance the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) region rail infrastructure to support the growing demand.

The Project Sponsors had to develop programs and benefits management realisation plans from the Strategic Planning stage to in-service operations. Each business case had to be approved and the team had to deliver these projects from start to completion. The Customer Service team provided expertise and guidance on customer concepts for third party delivery of customer experience across the Metrolinx rail network both on-train and at stations. The Procurement team was involved in developing Passenger Service Requirement regimes for Metrolinx train service and drafted contractual templates for the Build Finance model that brought a consistent and collaborative approach to the project. The Train Planners helped redesign the technical specifications with external Technical Advisors, developing the schedules and specifications criteria, and coordinating legal, technical, and commercial input from internal and external stakeholders, and the IT team advised and guided the Metrolinx in house team on how to ensure the infrastructure was supported by the right technology.

The success Direx brought to these workstreams was down to the individuals experience of working on similar train franchises in the rest of the world and from developing compliance specification in these areas for the Department for Transport in the UK.

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Building for the future

Direx Solutions specialist transport consultancy has built a solid partnership with Metrolinx in Canada based on the Direx company commitment and focus that every project they undertake creates a brighter future for their customers.

By integrating Direx experts into the dedicated Metrolinx teams they were able to deliver projects worth millions of dollars, on time and on budget. The experts' ability to use their project management experience and their aptitude to understand what Metrolinx needed created a feeling of trust and confidence that together they would achieve success. Each project workstream was delivered because of an in-depth understanding of the subject matter of each consultant and their experience of many years working in the transport industry. This allowed long and short-term processes to be implemented to improve the Metrolinx services along with ability to provide technical knowledge and support not only achieving resource efficiencies and cost savings, but also providing the innovation platform to create significant change.

What's next

Following on from the success of working with Metrolinx in Canada and with a strong base of experts to support any future project, Direx Solutions is looking to expand its client base by entering new markets and fields.

For example, Direx Consultancy Team includes pre-eminent leaders in zero emission transport. Their vast knowledge in the field is an unrivalled source of understanding and experience on the operations, limitations, and implications of introducing these types of vehicles into new and existing fleets. Direx has partnered with a team of outstanding delivery experts including world-class academics from partners at Durham University (a global leader in the UK of decarbonisation including hydrogen technology). This experience would allow a tailored solution to be created for any Operator's needs.

Direx's expertise is in building the solid foundation to help any organisation achieve stability, sustainability, and success in their marketplace. The building blocks of these foundations establish long term confidence, strong partnerships and encourage resourcefulness and innovation to maximise all the opportunities.

Role of the UK's Department of International Trade (DIT) and High Commission of Canada in the UK (HCC)

Sector initiatives organised by DIT and HCC, including visit programmes to the UK for delegations of Canadian public sector agencies, and seminars at Canada House in London, proved to be invaluable support to Direx. It provided introductions at a senior level into organisations including Infrastructure Ontario, City of Calgary, City of Edmonton, Translink, and allowed

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the opportunity to build relationships with key stakeholder and emerging business prospects to be identified. The DIT and HCC's knowledge of political affairs, understanding in the changes to the Metrolinx markets and rail contracts and introductions to specialist partners like Direct Access Group (a renowned UK expert in transport accessibility) were critical and instrumental in the success of Direx.

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