

On Track to Reducing Traffic Congestion in the Eastern GTA

By: Jim Flaherty, Minister of Finance and Minister Responsible for the GTA

Traffic congestion has become a major issue for individuals, families and businesses located east of Toronto. For those travelling west from communities such as Peterborough, Clarington, Oshawa and Whitby, gridlock has stretched out commute times, is deteriorating the air quality and eroding productivity.

Our government is taking steps to unlock gridlock and get people and goods moving in this part of the GTA.

In Budget 2008, we established a \$500 million Public Transit Trust. As part of that Trust, we have announced a joint federal / provincial study to determine how we will re-establish commuter rail service from Peterborough to Union Station in Toronto. The study will look at:

- who is best to run the service;
- where and how often trains should run;
- whether or not a P3 is a viable option for the project; and
- how much the project will cost.

We expect this study to be completed in less than a year.

The balance of the funds for the implementation of the Peterborough commuter rail link will be set aside as part of Ontario's allocation under the *Building Canada* fund. In other words, the money for this project is in place.

Let me be clear, this project is a top priority for the Government of Canada. This is one of the fastest growing areas in the country and the Peterborough rail link will help establish a more efficient transportation system across the GTA.

In fact, the Peterborough commuter rail link will complement the initiatives our government previously announced as part of FLOW, our \$1 billion long-term transportation plan for the GTA.

FLOW includes the extension of Toronto's Spadina Subway, rapid transit projects in Mississauga, Brampton, and York Region, investments in Durham Transit, the widening of highway 7 in Durham Region, the extension of highway 404 north beyond Newmarket, and the extension of highway 407 east to highway 35/115.

Our government has developed a forward looking infrastructure renewal plan that balances regional needs with national priorities. *Building Canada* provides historic infrastructure funding of \$33 billion over seven years. It provides long-term base funding for municipalities, including money to ensure the Peterborough commuter rail project stays on track and reaches its destination.

