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Wednesday 22 October 2014

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Wednesday 22 octobre 2014

**Standing Committee on
Estimates**

Ministry of Transportation

**Comité permanent des
budgets des dépenses**

Ministère des Transports

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
ESTIMATESCOMITÉ PERMANENT DES
BUDGETS DES DÉPENSES

Wednesday 22 October 2014

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The committee met at 1606 in room 151.

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Good afternoon, members. We're here to resume consideration of the estimates of the Ministry of Transportation. There are a total of six hours and 48 minutes remaining. Before we resume consideration of the estimates of the Ministry of Transportation, if there any inquiries from the previous meetings that the ministry or the minister have responses to, perhaps the information can be distributed by the Clerk at the beginning in order to assist the members with any further questions. Are there any items, Minister?

Ms. Carol Layton: Yes. Could I read them in, actually?

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Sure.

Ms. Carol Layton: Okay. Well, let's do it that way.

This was actually over to you, Mr. Hillier. You asked a couple of things. One was about fleet and the second one was about expropriation.

First of all, in your estimates briefing book, page 46 of 86 is where you would have seen the reference to the fleet. There's a one-pager, but what I want to say is that we have a multi-year plan to consolidate the vehicles—the cars, the trucks, the vans—into the Ministry of Transportation. We've been doing that since 2011-12. In 2013-14—it was a big year—many ministries' fleets actually came in, and that's why you see it fully realized in this current year, the first full year of it, because there was a lot of transition happening last year. So it's many ministries: children and youth services, community and social services, education, natural resources, agriculture and rural affairs, health and long-term care and community safety. It's almost consolidated. This year what is happening is some of the heavy commercial vehicles from community safety. There's a one-pager that we could actually provide as well.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Yes, but my question was if you could provide a list of the acquisitions. That was my question yesterday.

Ms. Carol Layton: Oh, I thought—so we have about a total fleet of about 5,500.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Yes.

Ms. Carol Layton: These are existing vehicles that we moved into it. Acquisition, as in what do we buy each year or something?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Yes. Well, what you have planned for this year, because you have \$18 million allocated—

Ms. Carol Layton: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Mr. Hillier, we're actually now eating into your time.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Oh—

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): So do you want to continue?

Mr. Randy Hillier: I thought we hadn't even started today. I thought this was—

Ms. Carol Layton: I've taken your question back and we'll work on that. I have to admit, we have to get the Hansard to really make sure we respect it.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay. Well, maybe I'll finish off, then, or you—

Ms. Carol Layton: The other one was about property acquisition?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Yes.

Ms. Carol Layton: I just want to make sure that you know that on page 70 of 86 is where you see in the printed estimates where property acquisition falls in. It falls into a much larger category, and the category is under capital assets, if you see that, and the first line, called transportation infrastructure assets. It's about a \$2.5-billion line. You won't see it spelled out there, but it's not a separate vote and item. The actual value of that—this year we expect to spend about \$200 million.

You asked more specifically about expropriation. I guess the point I'd make first is that, of course, we always look at our property purchases on a willing buyer/willing seller basis. We pursue that with many, many visits to try to resolve it all in an amicable way.

In terms of last year, though—which was, I guess, it's fairly safe to say, a typical year—we recorded property purchases of about \$42 million, of which only \$2 million was associated with expropriation. So about 5% of the amount last year. This year's a bigger year for proper acquisitions, but the 5% figure could be relevant this year. We'll know as the year progresses. We're only halfway through the fiscal year.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay. Maybe I can phrase this up then.

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Mr. Hillier, we're going to actually move to your time slot, okay? And then you can continue to ask questions.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Oh, okay.

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): When we adjourned yesterday, you had six minutes left. You can now start that rotation. If you want to ask the questions, feel free.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you, Chair.

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Okay.

Mr. Randy Hillier: So going back on the expropriations for a moment, then, there is, I understand, and I agree fully, that a willing buyer/willing seller is the way we want to see things end up. However, there's a number of properties that are needed for highway expansion, road expansion, whatever, and would be subject to expropriation for the needs of the ministry. When you enter into willing seller/willing buyer, then we don't need to use the Expropriations Act to do so.

Really, what my question is, have you got budgeted for the purchase of potential expropriations—

Ms. Carol Layton: We don't go into the fiscal year assuming that we're going to be expropriating. We go into the year assuming that we're going to be able to reach good—on a market-value basis—deals with the landowners and be able to buy their land, again on that willing buyer/willing seller basis. We have a team of folks, depending on the region, who visit businesses and landowners many, many times to try to pursue that.

So, again, in that \$2.5-billion figure, which is the transportation infrastructure assets, the estimate that we have for property acquisition would be about \$200 million. That's the amount that we are assuming we will spend this year on property acquisition.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Right.

Ms. Carol Layton: The amount for expropriation would be something which would be a very small per cent of that, if all goes well—and we work really hard to make sure that all does go well. That would be a figure that we would not—we don't budget on that basis. We budget on the basis of willing buyer/willing seller and amiable purchases.

Mr. Randy Hillier: So let's just take a look at that line item again, \$2.5 billion, and \$200 million being used for land acquisition for projects.

Ms. Carol Layton: Yes.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Give me a little snapshot picture of what the other \$2.3 billion—what other assets are you acquiring—

Ms. Carol Layton: Yes. What that actually is—as you can appreciate here, our capital assets are for many things. It's for the planning, engineering, design, construction of our highway system, and so that is, in a sense, all of the expenditures, all of the investments, I guess it's fair to say, that we're making in the highway system. That's why it's classified as a capital asset as opposed to a capital expense. It's how we're increasing the value of the asset holdings for the province, in a sense.

That would include work as we continue on Highway 407, all of the work that I've talked about: the actual construction, construction administration, engineering, design work for all of the highway rehabilitation projects that we would have around the province, and any additional expansions of highways as well as the HOV net-

work. Of course, it does include what I indicated was the property acquisition.

The Ministry of Northern Development and Mines—that money flows through their budget. We do that work for them, but in there would be northern highways—\$571 million is what we're spending in the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, but it's actually work through the Ministry of Transportation as well.

So service centres, ferries, remote aviation equipment as we buy and invest in all of those assets as well—that also is under that \$2.5 billion.

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Mr. Hillier, you have one minute.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Just to go back quickly on northern development and mines: There's money transferred out of that. What—

Ms. Carol Layton: The actual northern highway expansion rehab program this year will be \$571 million. That actually flows—

Mr. Randy Hillier: But that's not for the Ring of Fire.

Ms. Carol Layton: No, no, it's not for the Ring of Fire.

Mr. Randy Hillier: That's for upgrading or improving existing—

Ms. Carol Layton: Yes, and it flows through MTO to MNDM, so I guess the point there being that the regional staff that we have around the province, for example, in Sudbury, North Bay, Thunder Bay, they're MTO staff, but they're doing work, in a sense, as a service to the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Thank you.

We'll move to the third party: Ms. DiNovo, 20 minutes.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Thank you, Chair. I first of all want to apologize that I failed in my job of getting you dedicated funding in today's question period. I did my best with the Minister of Finance and the Premier—to no avail. They did not promise. I didn't hear dedicated funding that would go into the Trillium fund from gas taxes and asset sales and others. Right?

But you didn't get to weigh in on that, so I'll ask you now, Minister, if you want to just weigh in on that perhaps once more. Do you have any hope that the funds necessary are going to go into the Trillium fund from the various revenue sources?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Thanks very much for that question. I guess the first thing I'd say is that I'm disappointed I didn't have the opportunity to answer your question in the House today, but of course, we on the government side certainly believe in sharing the opportunity to talk about the great news that we have around our transit and transportation plan.

I haven't had a chance just yet to see Hansard from today, but I thought that I heard pretty clearly the Minister of Finance talk in a very positive, optimistic, definitive way about the fact that monies will be flowing into the trust that will be able to provide us with the foundation or the basis to make the investments that we have committed to the people of Ontario, which were found in

the budget that he introduced and that our government, the Legislature, passed a little bit earlier this year. So I felt that I heard a definitive answer from the Minister of Finance, but as I said a second ago, I have yet to see Hansard today.

But I think the responses we gave to the questions yesterday, in particular the notion around how successful the initial green bonds issue has been, the excitement around how much revenue can be generated from that program potentially, I think is something that we should continue to highlight, because it does bode well for the government's plan, and it will be one of many tools that will provide us with the opportunity to make the billions of dollars' worth of investments that we will over the next 10 years.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: We certainly all live in hope of that, that's for sure.

Again, I don't know where that was left, but I was hoping, even though you said this was a Minister of Finance matter, that I would get—and I don't have to get that in this committee but maybe afterwards, as soon as possible—just a breakdown of what you do expect from gas tax, what you do expect from asset sales etc., some ballpark figure. That would be really, really helpful in terms of looking at the prediction of the rollout of projects.

Moving on, also on money, this is on page 244 of the budget. We learn that transportation—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Sorry, which page?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Page 244. We learn that transportation is grouped with the ministries that face cuts averaging 6% per year each year for the next three years. Now, that's for a whole group that includes transportation among them. What I would like to know is if you could tell me the exact amount of budget cuts that the Minister of Finance has said that you will face over the next three years. It might even be increases; I don't know. What have they told you?

Ms. Carol Layton: So if I could do that—and actually, I might invite Linda McAusland to come up as well. I'm flipping to that handy-dandy page 244 of the budget as well.

First of all, the Ministry of Transportation: Because we have, of course, a lot of huge investments in the capital through highways and other capital assets as well, a fair amount of our budget is actually amortization and is actually a statutory payment. So, likewise, we have other contractual obligations. For example, the area maintenance contractors that we have, the 20 different area maintenance contracts around the province is a contractual obligation. When we enter into—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: So you're hoping there will be no cuts? Is that what you're saying?

Ms. Carol Layton: Well, I'm explaining all this. This is actually, hopefully, my acceptable explanation to you. All I'm saying is that between—okay, amortization, statutory payment, lots of contractual obligations. Gas tax is a great example. The two cents per litre flows right through us right into municipalities, in their coffers, and

that's about a \$320-million or so expenditure, contractual; likewise, area maintenance contracts, a contractual obligation. Transfer payments to things like the Waterloo LRT, Ottawa—definitely that as well. Of course, the arrangement for Scarborough, once we get to that stage, would be, again, a fixed obligation, so it's contractual.

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The actual discretionary part of expenditures for the ministry—we are flat or declining, and that's what I'm going to get Linda to jump in on—is actually a fairly small part of our budget, and that relates certainly to the cost of staff and salaries and wages and services.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: So how much would that be?

Ms. Carol Layton: I'll get Linda to jump in and help out on that.

Ms. Linda McAusland: The reduction to our core program is at about 4%, but it is a very small part. As the deputy mentioned, over the next three years we don't expect our budget to decrease; it will actually increase to cover our growing amortization on transit, our growing amortization on highways, and our growing investment on the appropriation front. We're not seeing an overall net reduction, we're actually seeing growth in our ministry. But our core programs, our ministry administration, our policy—all the core is going down by 4%.

Ms. Carol Layton: So where we have that discretion is what we want to say. We're working hard on ourselves—you know, no stone left unturned. We're certainly looking for those opportunities to, in a sense, reduce the size of our discretionary spending. That's what MTO is doing.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: My wonderful researcher just passed me a note that says, "If the cuts aren't coming from your ministry, then they're going to be coming from some other ministry." So if it's 6% across the board—again, going back to page 244. I imagine they're listening; they may be listening with some trepidation. At the end of the day, can you set year-by-year expenditure programs? Do you have that?

Ms. Carol Layton: Obviously, the fiscal plan is shown on a three-year basis, but we certainly do our budgeting; we look, obviously, beyond year one and we look at our total programs in that regard as well. So we try to forecast, as best we can, where we're going in different program areas.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: A change of pace a little bit: I want to talk about the all-year daily GO rail in Niagara region. During the recent election campaign, we had the Premier describing increased GO rail service to Niagara as a "very, very high priority." At the time, Jim Bradley, St. Catharines MPP, said, "I see it coming ... in 2015"—that's a direct quote. If that's true, why does the word "Niagara" not appear anywhere in Metrolinx's latest five-year strategy?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I'm happy to take this question. I had the opportunity over the course of the summer—I know in my comments yesterday I talked on more than one occasion about the experience I had as, at that point, a very, very new Minister of Transportation at

AMO. All the delegations were great, but one of the best delegations that I had was the large group that came in alongside the Niagara regional chair—I think it's Gary Burroughs; forgive me if I'm getting the first name wrong.

Interjection: That's right.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: It is? Okay, so it's Gary Burroughs. He came in with the mayors representing every lower-tier municipality in his region and a variety of the staff. They came in and they talked to us a lot about the considerable work that they've done, working closely with Metrolinx, and the discussions they've had with the Ministry of Transportation to let us know why they feel very excited—first of all, why they're very happy with the GO bus service that exists, that currently provides—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: So why is it nowhere in Metrolinx's five-year strategy, Minister?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: If I can just finish off the discussion, because I think it's an important thing to note, I know as well that we've introduced summer holiday service to the community, and I know that there will continue to be ongoing discussions around how best—and I said this many times yesterday when you asked questions about a variety of other individual projects. I know that the business case analysis, the research, the technical analysis that the Ministry of Transportation and Metrolinx is doing—on a line-by-line basis, but then as it relates to that entire cohesive, seamless network for transit investments—is work that is ongoing. We will see a point in time—I think I said this yesterday more than once—over the next number of months, certainly, I hope, in the short term, because I understand there are a lot of communities out there that have a very strong interest in hearing exactly how we're going to roll out—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: They've even put money into it, with the regional transit system counting on your coming through on this promise.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Sure, and I think the team in Niagara has done some outstanding work. I think, for example, the staff at the city of Hamilton—that's another example—have also done considerable work—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: We'll get to them too.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: —around their Rapid Ready project.

What I said to both representatives from Niagara and what I've said in a separate meeting—we may get to it today—when I had the chance to meet with Mayor Bratina and a selection of councillors and staff from Hamilton was that we are working on that seamless network. When we roll out our plan over the next few months, people in communities like Niagara and in communities like Hamilton and right across the greater Toronto and Hamilton area will have a very clear sense about what we plan to do, how we plan to phase it—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: And when you plan to do it?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: My hope is that we will have a very strong sense, yes, publicly, like I said yesterday, of when we plan to do it.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Because those were some pretty specific—I mean, “I see it coming ... in 2015” is a pretty specific promise.

Bottom line: You are going to do this. It's going to happen for sure.

Interruption.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Sorry, I couldn't hear you over the coughing.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Bottom line: It's going to happen for sure.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: What's going to happen for sure?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Our daily GO rail to Niagara.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I said this yesterday more than once: I'm not appearing at committee to make announcements that are going to prejudge the outcome of the technical work and the business case analysis that MTO and Metrolinx are going to do. It wouldn't matter whether we're talking about Niagara or any of the other wide variety of lines or projects that you and members from the official opposition asked me about yesterday. I'm not here to announce specific timelines or to make confirmations, because that would be me getting ahead of the work that MTO and Metrolinx are currently doing. It really does, from my perspective, have to be evidence-based and based on business.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: So you can't even say that this is a for-sure project that will happen, even if you don't know the date that it will happen?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: You're correct.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Okay—which is extremely disappointing, I have to say, for the people of Niagara region.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Well, but I just—I think it's important to read into the record, because yesterday I found—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Certainly it is, and this will go out to the people in Niagara region.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Chair, if I could just say, I found yesterday that, despite my best effort to keep the tone in that conversational, friendly way, unfortunately, as I know occurs from time to time at standing committees, notwithstanding how many times I took the opportunity to provide a straightforward answer, members of both opposition caucuses tried to read into the record something that wasn't exactly what I said.

What Ms. DiNovo asked was: “Can you confirm it will happen?” When I answered that the work was still under way, that MTO and Metrolinx are doing that evidence-based research, the technical analysis—and by the way, the region of Niagara knows this is taking place. They heard this; they've heard it in the past; they've heard it from Metrolinx. When I say, “It cannot be confirmed,” you're automatically making the assumption that it won't occur, and that's certainly not something that I said into the record.

I would sincerely appreciate it—because I'm doing my level best to give you straightforward answers—that you wouldn't attempt to, inadvertently perhaps, distort

what I'm saying for the audience that may be watching from another community.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: We're not all lawyers in this room or in the community—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I thought what I said was pretty straightforward.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo:—so talking about rhetoric and talking about wordplay here, all I simply asked was, “Are you committed to have this happen? Is this a commitment that you're willing to make to have this happen at some point, some time?” It would seem to me that to say yes or no to that is not a huge commitment.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: We all know—you know this because I know how closely you watch the transit discussion. Yesterday we talked a lot about how you feel about what's happened or not happened in downtown Toronto; today we're talking about Niagara. I think my answer today is remarkably consistent with what I said yesterday, whether I was talking about what's going to take place in Kitchener or around high-speed rail, from the discussion we had yesterday, or around the Union Pearson Express and the electrification.

I've tried to explain; I'll say it again. I suspect I'll probably have to say it a few more times over the balance of my appearance here at estimates: This work is ongoing. MTO and Metrolinx are doing the work. Whether it's in my mandate letter or in the discussions I've had with communities, everybody wants these decisions to be evidence-based. They want us to arrive in a place where the results are not only positive for their communities but integrated, that we have that seamless transit and transportation network. That's what we're working on. So I'm not trying to be cute here.

Mr. Grant Crack: You're cute.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I'm looking at Grant Crack; no one has ever accused me of being cute here. I'm not. I'm legitimately trying to give you a straightforward answer. The work is ongoing, and I suspect that over the next three, four, maybe five months we'll have answers to a lot of these questions in terms of how we're rolling them out.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: They're just very, very, very different answers than we heard from some of your top ministers during the campaign. Anyway, we'll go on. Actually, your last Minister of Transportation—very different answers again. It doesn't inspire a lot of confidence, I'm sorry.

Let's talk about the Kitchener-Brampton GO. Last year, Metrolinx staffers told Brampton officials that all-day, two-way GO rail service was at least 15 years away.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Sorry, when was that?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: This was last year—Metrolinx staffers.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Do you know when last year?

1630

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I'm not sure; I don't have the exact month. But last year, Metrolinx staffers told Brampton officials that all-day, two-way GO was at least 15 years away for them. Brampton officials said that this

is because CN owns the tracks between Georgetown and Bramalea. We get that this is a vital corridor for CN. It's evidently not willing to share the tracks any more than it does now.

This, again, comes back to a credibility gap, because during the election campaign, the then Minister of Transportation, Glen Murray, said that he could deliver all-day, two-way GO rail all the way out to Kitchener within five years.

The question, to me and to those who want to know if they're going to get this service or not, is: Are Metrolinx staffers correct or is the Minister of Transportation correct?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I think it's important for everyone, for the balance of the time that I'm going to spend in estimates, to realize that it's really, really difficult for me—because this isn't the first question that's been posed to me since I started appearing at committee where it's been suggested that there were meetings, there were discussions, somebody from this place said that or a former politician or a former minister said this. I'm really not in a position to make a comment about meetings.

I know you said last year. I don't know where the meeting was. I don't know which Metrolinx official said it. I don't know to whom they said it. I don't know the date, the time, the location for the meeting. So it's hard for me to comment on what Metrolinx may or may not have said, some nameless, faceless official or staff person from Metrolinx.

Having said all of that, what we emphasized in our budget, what I have talked about repeatedly since June 24, what I talked about extensively yesterday—particularly because to one of the other members of this committee, I know the Kitchener-Waterloo line is near and dear to his heart, as it is to my parliamentary assistant and to our colleagues from that region. Kitchener-Waterloo and that line is part of the existing GO network. That is what we will be implementing over the next decade, 10 years, as part of our plan: two-way, all-day regional express rail at up to 15-minute intervals, electrified. That is what we are working towards. It hasn't changed since yesterday.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Okay. So it will happen, but we're not sure whether it will happen within five years or whether it will happen within 15 years?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: No. The goal is—I'll say it one more time—to fully roll out and implement the entire two-way, all-day regional express rail plan that we've committed to over the next 10 years.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Over the next 10 years?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Ten years.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Ms. DiNovo, you have about two and a half minutes.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Okay. At least that's better than we heard for the poor Niagara people.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I should also mention—and again, members of the committee would probably be aware of this—we have already committed to, and we are

in a position to deliver or to have two additional morning trains and two additional afternoon trains running to Kitchener-Waterloo starting in 2016. That's something that I meant to reference a second ago. It's a commitment that I know is—there's a lot of excitement about that particular commitment, which we will deliver by 2016.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Okay. That's good. We'll move on to the Hamilton LRT.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Sure.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Again, a Liberal press release from the 2007 election campaign warned Hamiltonians to vote Liberal—this is right out of your campaign literature—because the Conservatives would put rapid transit projects through Move Ontario 2020, including two light rail lines across Hamilton, at risk. So, three elections later, Hamiltonians are still guessing whether the government intends to keep its repeated promises to fund Hamilton's light rail project.

Again, is that going to happen? Are you going to fund it?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: So at the opening of your question, you said that this was a 2007 election commitment?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Yes.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: In 2007, for what it's worth, I wasn't serving as a member of provincial Parliament. I certainly wasn't Minister of Transportation. I think in that particular year, I may have even had bangs at that point. So I'm not really in a position at all to make a comment with respect to what may have been and was committed to seven years ago.

What I know is that I had the opportunity, fairly soon after becoming Minister of Transportation, at the invitation of Mayor Bob Bratina in conjunction with Ted McMeekin, our minister who represents that region or that community, to go to Hamilton and sit with the mayor and some of his senior staff, a selection of city councillors on one of the committees and two of the mayoralty candidates, including one of my predecessors, a former Minister of Transportation.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Okay, but the bottom line is, this is your government—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: So it was my first opportunity to hear from them—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: This is your party. This is their commitment. This is Move Ontario 2020 commitments—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: It is.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo:—that your party and your government made to Hamiltonians.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: To fund rapid transit in Hamilton. So what I wanted to make sure I understood—because they produced a phenomenal report. We're almost out of time, but we can come back to this because it is important to me too. Hamilton produced a phenomenal report, Rapid Ready, I think it was in 2012, I want to say. It might have been 2013—2012 or 2013. One of the things that wasn't completely contemplated by them at that time was this notion of two-way, all-day regional express rail, because it hadn't become the priority. In

2012, if I'm right about the year, it didn't have the same level of priority, or it wasn't quite as featured, I guess I would say, in our regional transportation and transit plan at that point in time.

So one of the questions I had for them as a new Minister of Transportation was, "Talk to me a little bit about how you view the findings that came from"—

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Sorry—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: The Chair is interrupting me, but if I could—

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Sorry, Minister. You're out of time.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Still waiting for the answer to the question: Will you fund it?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Great.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: But I will be back.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I will be here.

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): We'll move to the government members. Mr. Crack: 20 minutes.

Mr. Grant Crack: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Would you like to finish the answer to that previous question, Minister?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I would prefer for Ms. DiNovo to be here to hear the rest of my answer.

Mr. Grant Crack: Okay. Very good. Well, thank you very much, Minister, and you do look great without bangs. I just wanted to make that comment.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: It helps with my wind sprints in the morning, so it's all good.

Mr. Grant Crack: Excellent.

I'd like to congratulate you on your appointment as Minister of Transportation. I can tell you that our caucus—and, I'm sure, all of the people of Ontario—have full confidence in you as you continue to fulfill your role, duties and responsibilities—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I'm not putting a subway in your riding, Grant.

Mr. Grant Crack: I was just going to actually mention that I can't expect a two-way, all-day GO train to Hawkesbury any time soon during this plan, I would imagine, right?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I think that question is out of order.

Mr. Grant Crack: Well, I want to first of all—also, you'd mentioned the AMO conference. We also have the ROMA conference, which is very important to our municipal leaders, and I want to thank you for taking those delegations in August. It's very important.

As a former municipal mayor, it's important for us to be able to meet the Minister of Transportation and, of course, the Minister of Infrastructure as well. We were mandated by the province to put forward some asset management plans where we prioritize our assets and our priorities in our own local municipalities, and that's our opportunity to present those to you as we look for funding and partnership—from both levels of government, but in particular the provincial government.

Sometimes, as a former mayor, we kind of judge ourselves and the success of being a mayor as the amount of

money that you can receive in partnership from the provincial government. I can tell you that, during the last five years of my term, for a small municipality of 10,500, close to \$10 million is substantial. It means a lot to rural Ontario that we're able to maintain reasonable tax rates, because we have to remain competitive, as well, to attract business and industry.

I can give you an example of East Hawkesbury, a municipality of about 3,300 people. It's the easternmost municipality in Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, and in the province of Ontario. The mayor, Robert Kirby, was quite enthusiastic about the close to \$750,000 that they received through the province, in partnership, to upgrade one of their major roads in the municipality.

So, I'm very, very pleased as a rural member to be able to go out—first of all, during the campaign, but to continue over this term in promoting the \$29 billion that was tabled in the budget. The \$1.4 billion per year that will be coming to areas other than the GTHA is great news.

We all recognize that there's an infrastructure deficit, not only in the GTHA, but there are infrastructure deficits across the province of Ontario, especially in rural Ontario, in communities like mine. I get to travel from four and a half to anywhere up to six hours, going one way, from the riding to Queen's Park, and there's a lot of construction going on, whether it's bridge construction or resurfacing and reconstruction of the 401. I commend you on that, as well. It certainly makes the roads safer. That's a priority for me, as well.

I know that there are some initiatives, as well, to improve snow removal. You might want to touch on that as I get to my actual question, but I first of all want to put on record how important these funds are to rural Ontario as well. We've spent a lot of time talking about transit, subways and GO trains.

So I'm going to ask you, Minister, recognizing the infrastructure deficit across the province, what your opinion is on how this is going to address some of our needs. Out of that funding, I understand that there's going to be some coming out of the Ministry of Transportation, but also out of Minister Duguid's portfolio of infrastructure, as we meet with him on a regular basis. Maybe you can just talk to us about how this \$1.4 billion per year will affect rural Ontario.

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Hon. Steven Del Duca: Sure. Thanks very much for that question and for the very nice things that you have said with respect to offering me congratulations on taking over this responsibility. I would say back to you that it has been a great honour for me to work alongside you and other members of our caucus since I first arrived here at Queen's Park in 2012, and I know that you have taken, on behalf of your community, a very keen interest in a number of issues that are relevant to the Ministry of Transportation.

I think, of course, of your work in your private member's bill dealing with changing some of the circumstances around off-road vehicles and how important that

is to people in your community. I certainly remember speaking with you about that as you introduced that bill, and I know that I've heard you speak in the Legislature on many occasions, talking about the roads, the bridges and some of the other very crucial infrastructure that exists and needs to be properly maintained in your community of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell but also looking at the rest of eastern and southwestern and all of rural Ontario, making sure that, of course, people like myself who represent suburban GTA ridings are consistently reminded of the fact that this is, as Premier Wynne has said on a number of occasions, one Ontario.

I did say this yesterday afternoon. I'm not sure if you were here in the committee room when I mentioned it, but when you do look at the fact that we have developed a plan, a very ambitious plan over the next 10 years, to generate and invest \$29 billion in transit and transportation infrastructure, and some other crucial infrastructure, that that split, that division between the greater Toronto and Hamilton area and the rest of the province, is very nearly 50-50. It is based on population statistics. But that demonstrates very clearly that there is no one, let's call it, half of the province—I think you understand what I mean when I say “half”—that's benefiting to the detriment of the other half. That's very important when you think about Premier Wynne's and our government's philosophy as it relates to building the province up and moving the province forward.

You would know, of course, because from my memory, you were in attendance at the AMO conference over the course of the summer, that it was during that conference that the Premier and minister—I think it was actually Minister Leal who attended the announcement with the Premier—announced a brand new Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund, taking that \$100 million over the next decade to be invested in helping to support crucial infrastructure revitalization in a number of small and rural communities across the province. The reception or the recognition that the Premier, I think quite deservedly, received from communities that—I can remember being in a multi-ministry delegation, and I'm not sure if it was the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus or it was one of the others, when the news started to disseminate across the conference that this announcement had been made, and there was a great deal of satisfaction and a great deal of happiness on the part of those representatives at the AMO conference from communities like the communities that you represent in Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, because it was a very clear, visible sign from our Premier, from our government, that we had heard loud and clear in all of our consultations with the communities that we needed to look at restructuring and redesigning how we deploy that \$100 million, and I think that will go a long way to helping to support municipalities across your communities, across your riding and a number of the others that are represented obviously here in the Legislature.

I also did talk a fair bit yesterday, I think, about the fact that in 2014-15, the Ministry of Transportation will

be investing \$2.5 billion in roads, bridges and highways across the province. You mentioned that as you have the opportunity to drive along Highway 401 that you see work that's ongoing. Not that many days ago, I was in the community of Northumberland-Quinte West with our good friend Mr. Rinaldi where we made an announcement about some of the changes and the enhancements we've made to the winter maintenance program, and I also had that opportunity driving along the 401 to see very clear, tangible evidence of the work that is taking place around rehabilitating, upgrading and rebuilding a number of highway crossings.

You also referenced winter maintenance, so let me just circle back for a quick second and talk about that. I think we all experienced last year, regardless of where you live in the province, from a weather conditions standpoint, it was obviously a pretty horrible winter. It started early. We had ice storms, we had lots of snow, we had polar vortexes, we had all of that stuff. It started early and seemed to last quite some time, and that obviously had an impact, whether you're in northern Ontario or you're in southern Ontario, with respect to the roads. There was, I would say, some dissatisfaction, generally speaking, in a variety of communities about the winter maintenance program.

I know that the staff at the Ministry of Transportation has worked very, very hard since last winter with our area maintenance contractors across the province to get to a place where the partnership is strong, where there's a very clear understanding of what the contractual obligations are, and also to have been able to deploy some additional resources.

Last year, I think deployed by February, if I'm not mistaken, there were 50 or 55—

Ms. Carol Layton: Fifty-five.

Hon. Steven Del Duca:—55 pieces of equipment that were deployed in northern Ontario. What I announced last week in Northumberland-Quinte West was that for southern Ontario for the upcoming year there would be 55—I always get the numbers confused. This year was 50.

Ms. Carol Layton: Fifty-five last year, 50 this year.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: So for the upcoming winter season, there will be 50 additional pieces of equipment deployed on southern Ontario highways, primarily to help clear ramps and shoulders in communities like Northumberland-Quinte West.

Our colleague, my other parliamentary assistant, Mike Colle, was in Woodstock making a similar announcement, because obviously this will have a positive impact. And I got a chance to learn all about the tow plows and the combo units and the rest of the machinery that our area maintenance contractors will be deploying this year because of the additional resources that we're bringing to this particular situation.

So my expectation is that, first of all, I'm going to keep my fingers crossed—not as the Minister of Transportation, but as someone who doesn't really enjoy shovelling snow as much as I used to—that this

upcoming winter season doesn't quite have the same weather that we had last year. But regardless, I am very confident that the Ministry of Transportation will be very well positioned to work with our contractors to make sure that we provide drivers across the north and the south of our province with a much better situation than they perhaps experienced last year.

Mr. Grant Crack: Thank you. Just a follow-up, then, and I appreciate your comments on rural Ontario. But part of my riding also—I've heard some area-specific questions before. East of Ottawa, there's a serious issue with delays and congestions similar to what happens in the GTHA from Clarence-Rockland on Highway 174/17 into the city of Ottawa. The city of Ottawa and the united counties of Prescott-Russell are undertaking an environmental assessment and they're looking to determine the preferred corridor and come up with some costs in the future. I just wanted to make sure that you're updated on that particular file. It's very, very important to traffic flow in eastern Ontario, especially a lot of the traffic coming from Quebec, as it's a main corridor coming from the province of Quebec all the way up through Hawkesbury, some other smaller municipalities and then up to Orleans. I would hope, maybe, you could just set aside some money once that EA is done, and I look forward to working with you on that project as well.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Now, if I can just say—I know you're not actually asking a question there—but if I could just say, because I'm sure there are a number of individuals from your community who are watching as we're sitting here in committee and we're talking about this: Everyone who lives in your riding should be very well aware of the fact that you are a true champion for your community, and I know that you never have had nor will you have any hesitation in making sure that the Minister of Transportation, that the minister responsible for infrastructure, that every single individual who serves within the government caucus and cabinet is very well aware of the needs of the people of Glengarry-Prescott-Russell. I know that you'll continue to champion your community here at the Legislature for many, many years to come.

Mr. Grant Crack: Well thank you very much, Minister. I'll pass it off to one of my colleagues. Again, thank you very much for the thorough answer on the outside-the-GTHA portion of the \$29 billion.

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Ms. Kiwala?

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Thank you. It's interesting to hear you speak about winter maintenance. Actually, I'm going to take a sidetrack for a minute—I know it's never happened in this room before—I was listening to you speak yesterday and I have to say that for being a new minister, I'm very impressed with the breadth and depth of your knowledge on the various different kinds of transportation projects that you have and that you seem to have mastered. When you spoke about those projects, you were not only able to discuss them—I'm new, but it seemed to be very thoroughly—you also did so with what seemed to be a great deal of pride. That may not always

be the case and that impressed me, so I thank you for taking that amount of energy and enthusiasm in your new role. It's most commendable.

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Hon. Steven Del Duca: If this keeps up, Chair, can we add 10 more hours to my time at estimates?

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Ms. Kiwala has about four and a half minutes.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Okay, I'm going to wind up quickly with one little thing. In Kingston and the Islands, we have what I would call a unique set of transportation issues because of the islands and the LaSalle Causeway. As you probably know, we had some issues with ice clearing with our ferries, and that was in process. After I won the election, the Ministry of Transportation was already working on that problem, so that was great. It was well under way. The mayor of the islands and I did not need to do our dive after all, because we were both threatening that we were going to do that. That was good, so thank you for that.

There is also the LaSalle Causeway bridge that has been talked about in our community for a very long time. I know you can't give any promises or specific answers to projects—I'm not asking for that—but in general, if you can just speak a little bit to some of those types of projects and what you have, and the government has, coming forward in the next little while.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Absolutely. Thanks very much for that question. I am a little bit embarrassed by your opening, but I appreciate it. It was a wonderful segue to butter up the minister before you asked about some of the projects in your local community. But I'm only teasing, I'm only teasing.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: It was meant earnestly.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: First of all, I think that the community—the riding, let's call it, of Kingston and the Islands—has benefited greatly since 1995, obviously. Your predecessor, our very good friend, someone I've known for a very long time, former MPP John Gerretsen, was a very strong advocate for the community. I know that's a tradition that will continue because of the representation that you're providing to the people of Kingston and the Islands. Of course, within that community, between yourself and former MPP John Gerretsen, while he served here, and Mayor Mark Gerretsen, at least for a few more days, there has never been any hesitation—like I said about the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell; maybe it's an eastern Ontario thing. But there has never been any doubt or hesitation about making sure that we clearly understand, here at Queen's Park, what the priorities are.

Again, I did have a chance to meet with Mayor Gerretsen and, I believe, the chief administrative officer—or the city manager or whatever the right title is—for Kingston when I was at the AMO conference. Specifically, they talked to me about some of the stuff you just referenced a second ago. We had a great conversation. They are aware of the fact that we have a number of decisions that need to be made around how we support crucial infrastruc-

ture—bridges, roads, highways—in addition to the public transit that we talked about a second ago. They are obviously willing to partner with us. In that meeting that I had with them, they made it clear that there is, as you mentioned, a variety of requests, and there still is some local work that needs to be done, from what I recall, working with MTO to talk a little bit about some of the prioritization—

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): You have one minute, Minister.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Thank you very much, Chair—about what might be forthcoming. I know that since 2003, the community of Kingston, the riding of Kingston and the Islands, has seen the benefits of having a provincial government in place that believes passionately in making sure that our public infrastructure is constantly renewed and revitalized. In the coming months and years, because of your advocacy and because of the fact that we will continue to do the work at MTO in that evidence-based way that I talked about extensively while being here at committee, I have no doubt that we'll be able to partner with Kingston on a lot of exciting projects.

I look forward to that, and I certainly look forward to hearing from you and whoever might become the mayor after Monday, October 27, in that community—and others from the community—about exactly how we can go forward, not only building Ontario up but making sure that we also build Kingston up.

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Thank you, Minister.

Official opposition: Mr. Hillier, 20 minutes.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you, Chair. I'm glad to see that the minister is still standing after that withering onslaught of softballs and fluff. To listen to a 20-minute infomercial about yourself must be a tough thing.

It's unfortunate that the Liberal members on this committee don't understand that they do have a responsibility in this committee to examine the estimates of each ministry that come before it and that they have a responsibility to their constituents and to the broader public to actually ensure that the public is getting value for the money that is being spent by your ministry.

Let me start off, Minister: First off, yesterday I requested the pre-feasibility study. You were noncommittal on providing that to the committee. After a good night's rest and all that patting on the back, have you made a decision whether or not you will provide the pre-feasibility study to us?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I really enjoyed the discussion that we had back and forth, both myself, yourself and also your colleague from Kitchener–Conestoga about the importance of this particular project for our government. My answer hasn't changed since yesterday.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: That's still under consideration, but I appreciate you asking again.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Minister, I've gone through the public accounts and there's a number of expenditures that

are unexplainable in how they're listed in the public accounts. I think this is important for all members of the committee that they go through the public accounts and see how expenditures are reported so that we can examine them. I'm going to ask about a couple of those expenditures.

The first one is an individual named Rudy Mion who received \$1 million. He's president of Central Precast Inc. In addition to that is a fellow named John Mion who received \$760,000 in other payments. He's vice-president of Central Precast Inc.

Minister, I'm sure you don't have that information at the tip of your fingers, but maybe you could give us some indication of what those expenditures might have been for?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I appreciate that question. I'm going to ask the deputy and perhaps some of the team here to be able to provide you with that information.

Ms. Linda McAusland: So that information is in volume 3 of our public accounts. I don't have the specifics on what that would have been, but we can look into it and see what we find out about those in particular.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay.

Ms. Linda McAusland: Are there others involved, Mr. Hillier, that you want us to look into?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Yes, there are, and maybe if it would be appropriate, Minister, if I could table this list with the committee Clerk—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Yes, please.

Mr. Randy Hillier: —and if you could fill in some of those gaps, what these expenditures purchased or services rendered, but they all show up in other payments under the Ministry of Transportation public accounts.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I'd appreciate that

Mr. Randy Hillier: Minister, you mentioned that \$571 million flowed through to the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, but it was not for transportation to the Ring of Fire. We know, looking at your results-based planning book, that the Ring of Fire in all government documentation—the multi-modal transportation to the Ring of Fire is a big factor, a big project, but I don't see anything in the estimates allocating expenditures for the design or construction of the transportation links to the Ring of Fire. Is it in the estimates and, if so, where would I find it?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I'm going to ask the deputy to clarify—

Ms. Carol Layton: Sure. I might have Gerry Chaput jump us as well, but first of all on the \$571 million, because I did reference that, you can actually see that on page 79 of 86 of your estimates briefing book. What I mentioned there was that the regional offices for our provincial highways management team, as we call it—we have offices in North Bay, Thunder Bay, Sudbury and all that. Our staff do all of the planning and the engineering work and the procurement and all that for all of the highway design and all that, and the money is actually in that very large—

Mr. Randy Hillier: You already explained that earlier. So—

Ms. Carol Layton: Yes, but it's recovery—I guess the point that I wanted to point out for you is that there's a \$571-million recovery then, and we recover—so we do the work, the money flows through, we cover it back from the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines. There is not an allocation in the 2014-15 estimates in this ministry for work for the Ring of Fire. Actually, the lead ministry for that is our colleague ministry the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.

1700

Mr. Randy Hillier: That's fine. So there is nothing in the estimates committee for a transportation link to the Ring of Fire. I guess we'll take a look at northern development and see if they have some appropriations for transportation links to the Ring of Fire.

I want to ask some questions about—recently, your ministry has made significant changes to testing for seniors. This is for seniors over the age of 80. This requires a number of notifications mailed out and new cognitive testing for seniors. Minister, two questions on this: The first is, what is the cost of that program? Secondly, how many seniors have lost their licences due to the cognitive testing?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: When you say the cost of the program, can you just clarify for me?

Mr. Randy Hillier: The cost to administer, to notify, to pay for whoever is doing the cognitive testing, and then the—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: And the number who have lost their licences?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Yes.

Ms. Carol Layton: What I'd like to do, actually—I could call up Heidi Francis as well. First of all, we recognize, because of that growing demographic, our seniors population—we actually felt that we had to work with health specialists and scientists on a different form of testing. So absolutely, in April 2014 we did introduce a new test. We were the first ones in the world to do it. That's what we're doing at the Ministry of Transportation. It's a test that is actually looking at their—you use the term "cognitive," but it is a special test.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I've seen the test.

Ms. Carol Layton: You've seen the test. We're actually very transparent about that test; it's up on the website. The point there is that we still do the driver record review. We still look at the vision test. We still do a smaller, in-class session. We were motivated by, first of all, less time for them—a three-hour session versus reducing the time—but also motivated by a more effective test, truly getting at their driver behaviour. I don't have exactly—

Mr. Randy Hillier: That leads me to a third question then: From what you just stated, what evidence—because we are the only jurisdiction that does this. Actually, in a number of the studies I've read, many European countries previously had that and have gotten rid of it because of its lack of effectiveness. If you have any evidence or

any studies that you used to base your decision on, I would be most appreciative to have that shared with us.

Ms. Carol Layton: First of all, I think you might be referring to the SIMARD test, which was fairly contentious. We are absolutely not doing the SIMARD test, not by any measure of comparison.

I think I will ask Heidi Francis, though, who is the assistant deputy minister for road user safety—it was actually her branch, when she was in the director's job, that actually oversaw the research. Perhaps if she could expand on that a little bit.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Sure. If she could answer those questions for me, it would be much appreciated.

Ms. Heidi Francis: Sorry, what—

Mr. Randy Hillier: Those questions—the cost of it and how many people are having their licences revoked or suspended due to it.

Ms. Heidi Francis: Absolutely. There is no cost to the senior. There never has been. The cost of the program to the senior—there is not a cost.

Ms. Carol Layton: The seniors aren't charged.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Except when they get into a medical review situation; then there's a significant cost to the senior.

Ms. Heidi Francis: If the seniors have to go for a medical review or any kind of information we require back, we need that. There's no way to get around that. That was also in the old system, though. Nothing has changed with that.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay, so the program costs from the Ministry of Transportation and how many people have had their licences suspended due to it.

Ms. Heidi Francis: Nobody gets their licence suspended from a group education session. They never have and they don't now. There is no change there. What the change is—and I'm really happy you asked because this is a program that we're very, very proud of. You asked about evidence. It took us a number of years—

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay, the first two questions: the program cost—how much is it costing the ministry to do this program?

Ms. Heidi Francis: I don't have those numbers here with me, but there is no increase to what the program cost before. I don't have those numbers.

Ms. Carol Layton: We can get it for you.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay. And you're telling me that due to this testing, nobody has had their licence suspended or revoked or required having it temporarily removed until they do further medical reviews?

Ms. Heidi Francis: What happens in the group education session—

Mr. Randy Hillier: Maybe you could just go a little closer to the microphone.

Ms. Heidi Francis: Sorry. What happens in the group education session, which you may be confusing with other things that we do in the ministry, is a senior comes into the session. In the old world, what they used to do was a knowledge test. It didn't make a lot of sense to

have a senior do a knowledge test on what a stop sign looked like or what a traffic light was.

What we knew we needed to do, with the growth in seniors, was to test the cognitive ability, which we can't test in a knowledge test; there is no way to do that. So what we did—and I'm really happy you asked this, because it's a really great program, and we also have the support of—

Mr. Randy Hillier: Not so great for a lot of people who have been subjected to it, I'll tell you.

Ms. Heidi Francis: Well, I can say anecdotally that I have a 93-year-old father and an 84-year-old mother, and they were very pleased with this.

We have also sat through the seniors—and we've seen them when they exit. They actually prefer this to the knowledge test, and I'll tell you why. When you go on to our website, you can actually see the test before you show up. It takes the fear factor out.

The other thing that is important on this test is that it is supported by the medical community, in spades. We had out 446 peer-reviewed articles, and we can give this to you because we have that publicly available. We went through each of these, and we came down to 42 tools. This is something that a lot of hard work went into, and we feel very, very proud of it.

We came up with two tools that worked in our environment. One is the clock drawing, which you have seen and you could see if you went, and the other one is a letter cancellation. What they test—

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay. I don't want to get into—

Ms. Heidi Francis: No, but I'm going to tell you what they test and why they're really, really important.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: And you asked for the research.

Mr. Randy Hillier: To provide the research, yes.

Ms. Heidi Francis: This is actually really very important to the question. It tests the visual-spatial ability of the driver. That's one thing. That's the clock drawing. In addition to that, what it also tests is the psychomotor, but here is the piece that—

Mr. Randy Hillier: Maybe I'll clarify my question. If you fail the cognitive test, you are then put in to do a medical review.

Ms. Heidi Francis: You may not be, and here's another piece—

Mr. Randy Hillier: Well, let's talk about the ones who are. Okay? Because that's what my question is about, the ones who are. Then there is a significant cost for them, through DriveABLE, to go through that medical review testing, through a private contractor, and I'm asking, how many people. I beg to differ. I have seen and heard from many constituents that with that cognitive test, if they don't get it done in the allotted time or if there is a failure, then your licence is suspended until you get back to a DriveABLE facility and pay the \$500 to \$800 that they require for you to go through that test again.

I would just phrase that question again. People going through, seniors over 80, however you want to frame it up—seniors over 80, how many of them have failed to

meet the MTO requirements? Maybe that's the best question.

Ms. Heidi Francis: Well, actually it's an even more complicated question. There is a decision tree that you go through with the two tests and with the driving record, as well. There are about 18 different combinations that can come out of that. I can tell you that that decision tree is used at the medical school at U of T, and it is used at Yale right now. It is a solid decision tree.

When you come out of this, it will give you a number of combinations. You may pass, you may go to a road test or you may go for a medical. There is a cost with the medical, but that was under the old system also. But what happens here, which is better, is that we actually send the right people to the right test, and so we're not sending a senior under a wrong test—because we didn't have the confidence level that we have now. It was an absolute step in the right direction. We have support from the stakeholders.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I would challenge you on that. I had one constituent who was in a doctor's office, and the husband said, "Oh, you're being forgetful," in an off-handed fashion, and that person then had to go through that cognitive testing etc., just on an offhand comment. So I would say your decision tree has a few more knots in it than maybe what you're willing to recognize.

Ms. Heidi Francis: No. I think you've mixed something up there. When you're in a doctor's office and the doctor feels that they have to report you, which is another program—if a doctor reports you, we don't have any option but to go down that path so we're all safe on the road.

1710

That isn't the cognitive screening test. It's something a doctor made, Minister. That could be SIMARD actually, but it isn't one from the Ministry of Transportation.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: And then, by the way, just to be clear: That's not age specific, what you're talking about. Right?

Mr. Randy Hillier: No, it certainly isn't age specific.

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Mr. Hillier, you have about four minutes.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay. Let me go on to one other subject, and that is, in the estimates, I know that there had been some decisions made on the drive-on, drive-off ferry for the Amherst Island ferry. Are there any appropriations in the estimates for continued design, development and construction of the drive-on, drive-off ferry for Amherst Island?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Thanks for that question. We're just going to get you clarification on that one right now. Just give us one second.

Ms. Carol Layton: We don't have the specific figure for it. It would be in a larger number, I think—is that what you're saying, Gerry? We think.

Mr. Gerry Chaput: We think. I'm not sure whether it's allocated for the next year's investments or not. Sorry.

Ms. Carol Layton: We can get back to you on that.

Mr. Randy Hillier: If you could.

Ms. Carol Layton: Yes, we're happy to do so.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay. I guess, just one last question on this DriveABLE. DriveABLE does all these medical review tests. What oversight, Minister, do you and your ministry have on auditing and ensuring that DriveABLE, or any other contractor that you may engage in the future, is meeting the intent and the legislative requirements for that medical review testing that DriveABLE does on our behalf?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I do apologize. I missed the very beginning of your question. I'm not sure if you can give me that very quickly again, or we can try our best to answer.

Mr. Randy Hillier: DriveABLE is a private contractor. They do, I believe, all the medical review testing in-car. They charge people between \$500 and \$800 each for that driver's test. I'm wondering what specific mechanisms MTO has to audit DriveABLE and to ensure that they are meeting the obligations of the legislation?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Thank you for explaining that to us again.

Heidi?

Ms. Heidi Francis: I'm not sure which ones they use when they go for a medical assessment—the occupational therapists in a full medical assessment. I have to get back to you on that one if it is DriveABLE. I'm not sure that that's the one that we're using right now.

Mr. Randy Hillier: You are.

Ms. Heidi Francis: It is. Okay, so I have to get back to you on that.

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Two minutes, Mr. Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay, so I'll just finish off: I don't believe I got a clear answer to the fleet acquisition. Can we get a list of what the MTO is acquiring under the fleet acquisition this year?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Yes.

Ms. Carol Layton: Yes.

Mr. Randy Hillier: We can.

Ms. Linda McAusland: Can I clarify?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay.

Ms. Linda McAusland: I would like to clarify.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: We may have it for you right now.

Ms. Carol Layton: With one bit of clarification.

Ms. Linda McAusland: What I can give you is a list of the vehicles that are currently on our selector list. We are currently working with ministries to determine where their fleet is as far as whether they're at that seven-year or 200,000-kilometre mark. Based on that, we make our procurements at the end of March.

I don't have the specific list of what the makeup is of that—what will actually be procured this year—but I can give you the vehicle selector list with what we choose.

Mr. Randy Hillier: And you must have a quantity. How many vehicles do you—

Ms. Linda McAusland: We're just going through that process with ministries right now. We're going through

their inventory. Again, there are over 5,500 vehicles in our list. We're working with them to determine which ones are at a ready state, are fully amortized, and are ready for replacement. So we don't have those—

Mr. Randy Hillier: You replace at 200,000 kilometres?

Ms. Linda McAusland: There's a criteria: 200,000 or seven years is our criteria right now.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay. Well, I think my time is probably just about out.

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): I think it just about is. Yes.

Ms. Linda McAusland: Would you like the vehicle selector list?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Yes. Sure, absolutely.

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Thank you. Ms. DiNovo, 20 minutes.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I'm just going to, first of all, recap what we were talking about before. I asked you about facing cuts. I heard the response that there wasn't going to be an overall cut in your ministry, which again might be a surprise to other ministries.

I asked you about the Niagara rail priority, which I didn't get an answer to. But essentially, I asked you, "Would it be built at all, ever?" We have a question mark still about that, so we don't know if Niagara will ever be built.

The Kitchener-Brampton rail question: We had Glen Murray promise five years. We had 15 years from Metrolinx staffers. And so you've fallen, Minister, in the middle there at about 10 years, that maybe in 10 years, we'll get that happening, except for two trains in 2016, to be fair.

Now we're on to—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Two trains in the morning and two trains in the afternoon, just to be fair.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Okay, four trains in 2016.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Yes, which the people of Kitchener-Waterloo are thrilled about, by the way, if you have a chance to speak to them at some point.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Okay. That's for sure in 2016?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: It is, yes.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: It is absolutely for sure.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Yes.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: You know what? That's the very first "for sure" answer I've had since sitting in this chair. That's great.

Going on to Hamilton, I left before I got the answer to the question. Are you committed to funding 100% of the Hamilton King-Main light rail project?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I'm happy we've had the chance to circle back and talk about this. I was in the middle of explaining to you that I had the chance, as your colleague knows because she was there that day as well, waiting for me outside—

Miss Monique Taylor: I wasn't allowed in.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I had the chance to sit down with Mayor Bratina and members of council, a couple of the mayoralty candidates who I don't believe serve on

that particular committee of council, for me—at that point, a very new Minister of Transportation—to have the chance to hear very directly—from not only the mayor, the council members and the mayoralty candidates but also senior city staff—about some of the work that that municipality, Hamilton, has undertaken. I referenced the Rapid Ready report.

I thought it was a great meeting. It was a great conversation. There is a lot of passion. I don't mind saying this; I've said it many times to my colleague Minister McMeekin. I still to this day receive, almost on a daily basis, emails from people in Hamilton who are very passionate about this issue, which I think is thrilling to see—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: That's lovely, but the answer to the question: Is 100% of the funding—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: In the course of the conversation and in the course of my opportunity to speak with the media afterwards, I reiterated that we will be there to support rapid transit in the city of Hamilton. What I said to—

Miss Monique Taylor: What does rapid transit mean?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I'm not sure who's asking the questions at this point, Chair. Sorry.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: No, it's okay.

Miss Monique Taylor: Sorry.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: It's okay. I don't mind taking questions from other members of—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: The 100% funding question.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: What I said to city staff that day and what I said to members of council, and this is really important: When Rapid Ready was done, the province hadn't, at that point in time, contemplated that two-way, all-day regional express rail for GO would take the priority that it is. My question to staff—and they gave me a great answer that day, which I was able to take back to both the staff at Metrolinx and also the staff at MTO. Rapid Ready was actually 2013. I said 2012 or 2013 earlier; I couldn't remember. It was approved February 27, 2013. What I said was, "Have you given consideration to how the investments that we are making as a province in your community to help support the delivery of two-way, all-day regional express rail would link up, potentially, to what you want to see with respect to your rapid transit?"

They provided some information to me that day. I was able to take that information back. I know that the conversations have continued to occur between officials at Hamilton and also MTO and Metrolinx. Like I said with respect to the answer that I gave you earlier on Niagara and many of the answers I gave yesterday, MTO and Metrolinx are working with a number of municipalities. They are working together to make sure that in the short term, we will be able to announce exactly how we plan to deploy what we will be doing next around two-way, all-day GO, the regional express rail, and how we'll be supporting projects like the one that will be supported in the community of Hamilton to make sure that it all links up.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Okay, so 100% funding—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: What I did say publicly that day was that the province of Ontario will be there with 100% funding for rapid transit in Hamilton, and we are working on the details still.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: And what does that rapid transit look like? The two light rail lines—not part of that discussion?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Everything is part of the discussion at this point in time, as it was when I was there.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Okay. So moving on to Scarborough rapid transit.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Sure.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: We all watched when the light rail transit turned to subway during the campaign there as well. My first question is, what is the status of negotiations to change the terms of the master agreement from the LRT to the subway? What is the status of those negotiations?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I know that Metrolinx continues to have discussions with the TTC and, again, with the municipality here in Toronto, like they do with others. Those negotiations and discussions are ongoing.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: They're still ongoing. They haven't resolved it.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Yes.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Okay. So we still don't know: LRT or subway.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: No. We ran on a plan in the last election campaign which the people of Scarborough and the people of Toronto and, frankly, the people of Ontario endorsed in a very clear way. That plan included building a subway to Scarborough, and that's what we're going to do.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Okay. The Scarborough subway EA that's due to be completed in 2016, is that still on target? Are the negotiations going to be done by then? Is that going to happen?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I don't have an exact date in front of me right now. Off the top of my head, I don't remember the exact date of conclusion for that EA.

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Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Okay, so that's still ongoing.

Let's move on to the Eglinton Crosstown. When will that contract be signed?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Which contract are we talking about?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: For the Eglinton Crosstown.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: When you say the contract that will be signed, are you talking—I mean, there's work that's being undertaken right now, but you're talking about the—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: For financing.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: The RFP that's—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Yes.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Just give me one second. I'm trying to get you a date or a time frame.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I'll move on. Basically, what you did is you issued \$500 million worth of green bonds—

we've talked about this before—to be used to finance the Eglinton Crosstown. I'm interested in how those green bonds will work with alternative financing and procurement—how much of the Eglinton Crosstown, for example, will be procured using traditional public methods and how much will be procured with alternative financing and procurement. What is the ratio there?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Just give us one second.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Sure. No problem.

Ms. Carol Layton: Sorry, Eglinton Crosstown: What you're asking for is, first of all, when the actual AFP will be signed. I think you asked for that, right?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Yes.

Ms. Carol Layton: As well, did you ask for a sense of the—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Well, I'm asking how much is going to be funded, first of all, by the AFP and how much by the green bonds. What does it look like right now?

Ms. Carol Layton: First of all, that first issue of that green bond which was reported I think on October 9, which I referenced yesterday, was a \$500-million bond, and the commitment was that that was a bond to be used for the Eglinton Crosstown. So that's that.

I think the Eglinton Crosstown AFP, that value—is that one you can speak to, John?

Mr. John Lieou: Yes. I think—

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Excuse me, could you identify yourself, please?

Mr. John Lieou: Yes. I'm John Lieou. I'm with the MTO policy and planning division.

With respect to your question on AFP versus green bond, even AFP procurement will require—sorry, my voice—some sort of payments to the consortium. Those payments will be financed through the green bonds. So that's how it works.

In terms of your question of when the contract will be signed, I assume that what you're asking really is, on the AFP procurement process, when will it conclude and so on?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Yes.

Mr. John Lieou: Basically, the information that I have is that two short lists of consortia are currently in the process of responding to an RFP—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: To the RFP, since you're there: Why is it incomplete?

Mr. John Lieou: What do you mean?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: The RFP seems incomplete. For example, you don't have submission requirements, you don't have evaluation criteria for the RFP. So where are the evaluation criteria and the submission requirements?

Mr. John Lieou: We're going to have to check with Infrastructure Ontario, which is leading the process for Metrolinx. However, in terms of timing, I think they expect to receive submissions by December of this year, December 2014. I do not know the status of the criteria. They may be available or they may not be yet—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: We're very concerned that the public be able to see those criteria. I'm going to give you an example, and you're probably aware of this example.

In Vancouver, there's a lawsuit now because they were promised, through the AFP process, tunnel boring, and they ended up with a cut-and-cover, which was very disruptive. So local merchants are—it's an ongoing lawsuit. I think for your safety, for our safety, for information for the people who are going to be affected in that corridor, they would want to know what the criteria are for the bidders on this.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: You mentioned tunnelling a quick second ago and I just want to make sure—I think you know this anyway. The tunnelling work is under way; it's well advanced.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Yes, I know, but I'm just giving you an example of what happens when the process is not transparent. You open yourself up for—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I just wanted to make sure, that's all.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: —you open yourself for lawsuits. That's concerning.

Mr. John Lieou: Ms. DiNovo, on your question of criteria, we undertake to come back and clarify that after we've confirmed with IO, Infrastructure Ontario. But in terms of timing, your earlier question, Infrastructure Ontario, IO, expects to receive the final submissions from the consortia by December 2014. If the process proceeds according to plan, then there will likely be a selected winner by early 2015.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: And which consortia are they?

Mr. John Lieou: There are two consortia. I do not have—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: That's hardly a competitive bidding structure.

Mr. John Lieou: Sorry?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Only two?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: To be fair, you have to remember at \$5.3 billion, this is the largest public transit infrastructure project in more than half a century in the province of Ontario.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Absolutely. This is the problem, we would say, with the process, that there are only two that can even bid on it in the first place. The TTC report, as you're aware, had some real problems with it. They said—and I'm quoting from the report—that “the APTA peer review noted that although AFP promises increased competition with very large multi-billion contracts, there is a very real possibility that such large contracts may actually inhibit competition”—which we see that they are—“and may result in no competition. The contracts may be so large that very few, if any, contractors have the resources and can raise the financing to participate even in the RFP process” at all.

You are confirming that the TTC's concern—that this peer review is actually correct—

Mr. John Lieou: I'm not sure—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: In no way, shape or form are we confirming the assertion that you provided to the committee. Again, we are talking about the fact that we are moving forward on delivering to the people of Toronto and the people of the greater Toronto and Hamil-

ton area a more than \$5-billion public transit infrastructure project which represents the single largest public transit infrastructure project in this province in more than half a century.

We will provide you with the information, which I'm sure is probably publicly available—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: It wasn't just the TTC, Minister.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: —around the two consortia that are going to be bidding on this or doing the work. You will see that we are talking about some of the world's finest, including—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: We may also see a \$500-billion—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: —Ontario-based infrastructure companies that I would argue, because we have a very strong track record of delivering infrastructure across a wide variety of sectors in the province of Ontario—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: If I might interrupt for a second because I have limited time. The TTC have concerns. The American Public Transportation Association have serious concerns about this process, and the Construction and Design Alliance of Ontario have serious concerns. In fact, they said that the government, under this process, will probably overpay by half a billion dollars. That's from their express concerns. That's from their writing. What do you say to that, because that's scary?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I say that over the last 10 years the government of Ontario has delivered billions and billions and billions of dollars through alternate financing procurement in the health care sector, dealing with courthouses—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: We've seen gas plants. We've seen Ornge. We've seen all sorts of problems with—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Chair, if I could have an opportunity to answer this question, that would be wonderful.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Sure. Go ahead.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Great. We've seen in this province literally more than two dozen, I believe, hospitals built. We've seen courthouses and a wide variety of communities—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Brampton hospital, over cost.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: As someone who lives next door to Brampton, I can tell you that every single occasion on which my wife or I or my children have been there for any kind of health care, we have received nothing but top-notch health care. We have also had the opportunity—it is a neighbouring community to mine—to be in a physical space that I would argue is in great shape.

I'm also the MPP for the community of Vaughan. We're in the process of, hopefully soon, releasing the RFP for the future Vaughan hospital, which will also be an AFP. We see currently construction taking place with the new Humber River Regional Hospital—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Sir, back to the question here.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: But the question was whether or not we can trust the AFP model, generally speaking, for delivering infrastructure.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: No, I asked you what your response is—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: And my response back to you is—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: —or Metrolinx's, because Metrolinx and—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: My response back to you is that the people of Toronto and the people of Ontario expect us to deliver. They've seen very clear evidence over the last decade of us doing nothing but delivering positive results—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I would argue we've seen very clear evidence of the AFP or the private-public partnership model failing incredibly—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Then you should talk to people who live in communities that have benefited greatly from the AFP model to deliver their hospitals, deliver their courthouses and deliver, in the future, crucial public transit infrastructure.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: If you're so convinced that your method is correct, why did you not even bother to respond to these concerns? These are not minor concerns. When the TTC, the American transit association and the Construction and Design Alliance of Ontario all raise these concerns and when Metrolinx doesn't even bother to respond and you don't bother to respond to their specific concerns, I would say we have a problem.

How much time do I have left, Chair?

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): About five minutes.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Okay.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: The notion of responding to those particular concerns that were expressed around how we procure some of these projects is probably a question best posed to the provincial agency that deals with procurement for these projects, which would be Infrastructure Ontario.

I can also tell you, coming from the infrastructural world as an individual before I became an MPP, that Infrastructure Ontario—not that I'm the minister responsible for that agency, but I will say because I think it needs to be said, given what you've suggested here at committee today—has a world-renowned record for working on projects like this and for delivering them. I have no doubt that MTO and Metrolinx and Infrastructure Ontario will continue to work closely together over the next decade to deliver the results that the people of Ontario expect us to deliver in transit and transportation infrastructure.

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Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Again, as with everything else, we live in hope but we don't have any guarantees whatsoever.

When we're going into a P3, there are value-for-money audits that are supposed to happen. How many value-for-money studies have been done on the Eglinton Crosstown?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: My suggestion is that that's a question that was better posed to Infrastructure Ontario or to the minister responsible.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: They said to ask you.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I wasn't in this room when you're suggesting that was said and I haven't had the chance to review Hansard. And not for the first time, Chair, perhaps for the hundredth time since I appeared at committee, I am being confronted with questions regarding statements that were made by individuals, with no evidence that any of this was said. So it would be helpful for me, as a relatively new minister—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I'm happy, if you give me what I've asked for, to give you what you've asked for.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: —for folks to provide me, when they ask me questions, with specific dates and times.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I'm happy to do that, if you give me what I asked for—you first. The buck stops somewhere. Bottom line: The buck stops somewhere, and the buck is the Ontario taxpayers' dollar. We just want to make sure of how it's spent, and that we actually see some of these projects.

I'm just going to wrap up because I only have a couple of minutes left, and it's the last time I'll have the pleasure of being here. Just overall, here's the—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I'm here next week.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I'm not back next week though. We're going to be asking different questions on different issues next week by a different critic.

Overall, the theme that I've heard—and I just want to state this for the record—is that we can't trust what former transportation ministers have said. The statements that have come out of their mouths both during campaigns and actually in meetings—and again, these are all public record meetings—we're wiping the slate clean from that. We have a new transportation minister—which we do every year—so we have a new slate. And so in this new slate we have no guarantees of most of the projects that were promised during the last election. The promises that are being kept, like the Union-Pearson rail link, will disrupt and endanger our communities' health, and, I suggest, will run over budget—I'm almost willing to bet money on that—and will run mostly empty at prices no one can afford.

Meanwhile, we're still waiting for the buses in Toronto. We've got new streetcars, I'll give you that, but the tunnel boring on Eglinton, we're still talking about how that's going to be financed; that's under way. Again, we don't have dedicated transit funds, as we were promised, yet again, with the Trillium fund—the money is not necessarily flowing into that. As a good source in the Globe and Mail has pointed out to us—Adrian Morrow has pointed out there is very little dedicated transit funding, period.

I'm just going to lay that out there because I am shocked, really shocked, at how little we know for sure, how little we're guaranteed. And I'm still going to ask you, Minister, I want a rollout—I will give you what you've asked for—of projects, how they're going to be paid for, when they're going to be happening, and you've promised by the end of this year. I would say that the

people of Ontario would like it a little sooner than that, but certainly we'd like it at some point. Projects, when they're rolling out, how they're going to be paid for—that's pretty standard business procedure; we'd just like to see it from your ministry. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Is that a question to the minister at this point? You have about a minute and a half left.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I'm happy to respond.

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): Are you expecting a response?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: What I'm expecting is—and I'll use this last minute to ask for it again—that this has to come back from research and I want all the responses to these questions that I've asked here, and I'd like to see them in writing. I'm happy then to respond in kind. If you want to know when Glen Murray said what he said, who was in the room, I'm happy to supply that; campaign promises, I'm happy to supply them, they're on your documents.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: In the time left, if I could begin quickly by responding—

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): One minute.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I think one of the things that I heard most loudly and clearly from the member from Parkdale–High Park in that very, very long, protracted, I guess, perception of what's taken place at estimates committee so far was the word “trust.” I think what's most important for the people who are listening to this committee today, and for people who will read this in Hansard after the fact is to remember, if nothing else, we need to trust what the people of Ontario did on June 12 of this past year, and what they did through their representatives in this Legislature when we passed our budget.

We have a very clear responsibility that people have entrusted us, as members of this Legislature; they've entrusted me, by virtue of the appointment the Premier has given me to serve as Minister of Transportation, to deliver on \$29 billion: \$15 billion for the GTHA, \$14 billion for transit and transportation, and other crucial infrastructure outside the GTHA. I have a lot of faith in the people of Ontario and the decision they made that we're going to get on with the job at hand. Thank you very much, Chair.

The Chair (Ms. Cindy Forster): We'll turn it over to the government members: Ms. Kiwala, for 20 minutes.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I have to say that I find that the transportation file is very intriguing. I haven't lived in Toronto for a long time. I used to live here a number of years ago. I don't understand how there can be a perception that there aren't a lot of transportation projects going on out there.

When I arrived in Toronto after winning the election, I was plunked right at Union Station. There is lots of incredible construction going on there. There's construction all the way around Queen's Park. There's construction in Kingston. There's a lot of transportation work going on, and it's very evident from what I've seen.

I'm interested in the revitalization of Union Station, Canada's busiest transportation hub. It's an important project being undertaken by the city of Toronto. The expansions to the GO concourses, upgrades to the rail corridor, rebuilding of the TTC subway station and the connection to Pearson airport will keep Toronto moving.

I also recently saw an announcement made by your ministry, alongside Metrolinx and Ivanhoé Cambridge, to further the development of Union Station by connecting it to a new downtown GO bus terminal.

Minister, would you please tell us a bit more about this new GO bus terminal and what implication this bus terminal will have for commuters in and around the GTHA?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Thank you very much for that question.

I think it's really important—and you kind of referenced this when you started your question with the opening comments—notwithstanding what people may have heard from other members of this committee who seem to have a very narrow view of the positive results that have already been delivered for not only the city of Toronto but for the entire region—positive results that have been delivered, positive results that are currently being delivered, because there is a great deal of work that has already taken place.

I think it's important for everyone to understand that when you are talking about billions of dollars' worth of investments in this kind of infrastructure, it is, I would say, at the very least, unrealistic, and at the very worst, misleading, to suggest to people who are very busy in their lives that this kind of work can take place at the flick of a switch, as if there's a magic wand that exists somewhere to make this happen overnight.

There is an extraordinary amount of expertise, there is an extraordinary amount of work and studying and analysis, and then we get to the point at which we begin the work, and the work itself—because we are playing catch-up, there is no doubt about that. I talked in my opening remarks yesterday about how life in this region generally has changed over the last 10 or 11 years for me as a commuter. We heard from the member from Cambridge about her own experiences and how it has changed. We are playing catch-up. Take into account the planning, the technical analysis, the business case analysis, the research, the literal nuts-and-bolts actual planning you have to do—engineering, architectural, whatever it is—dealing with partner ministries, dealing with municipalities, dealing, we hope, in many cases, with upper-tier governments like the federal government, having them at the table as a stable and secure funding partner.

You take into account all of those moving parts and then you begin the work. You put shovels in the ground and you start the work and—it hasn't come up so far in my appearance at estimates, by the way. When it comes to this infrastructure work, you employ tens of thousands of skilled women and men who work in our construction trades to deliver these projects for us, and in many cases,

for years. For example, with the subway extension that's currently coming to York University and up into York region, it's estimated that close to 15,000 jobs will be created as a result of the investment. That's a fantastic example of an investment where all three levels of government are partnering to make it happen.

But, as I was saying a second ago, there is an extraordinary amount of work that's already under way. Of course, certain members of this committee repeatedly talk about streetcars—the streetcars that I was really privileged to be at the official launch for—as if that's the only tangible result of the work that has taken place here in the city of Toronto over the last decade, as we've invested as a government more than \$19 billion in this kind of infrastructure over that decade, \$9.1 billion for GO Transit. We've seen the positive results: the additional trains, the longer trains, the additional seats, the revitalized GO stations, the new GO stations, the parking spaces that exist across the entire network.

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I referenced the Toronto York-Spadina subway extension. We talked as well today about the Eglinton Cross-town LRT. Think about that for a second: 19 kilometres of LRT across a major artery through the city of Toronto, a \$5.3-billion project, 19 kilometres, about half of which will be underground through, as I call it, the middle part of the city. We're talking about the single largest investment in public transit in this province in 50 years, and that's taken place because our government has had a long-standing commitment to making the right decisions to build public infrastructure up, to build the province up and, frankly, though I haven't mentioned it in my time here at estimates so far, it's also because for a generation before 2003, when all three parties served in power—all three—prior to 2003, there was a generation or more of, essentially, neglect.

That's why there is a huge infrastructure deficit that exists in the province of Ontario and across Canada. It's one of the reasons Premier Wynne has taken such a leadership role as the chair of the Council of the Federation to say to all of her provincial counterparts from across the country, "We have to work together." We have to have that dialogue and discussion with our federal government so they understand that not just for Ontario, not just for public transit, not just for roads and bridges, but right across Canada, we need a national infrastructure strategy that will deliver the revitalization we need for the next hundred years.

There are a lot of projects taking place. Of course, already we see work—I referenced it earlier today. Then in 2016, for Kitchener-Waterloo we'll have two additional trains in the morning and two additional trains in the afternoon. I spent some time up in East Gwillimbury with my good friend the new member from Newmarket-Aurora not that long ago, where we announced that we are opening the brand new GO bus facility. You talked in your opening question about the fantastic project that will take place in downtown Toronto for the new GO bus terminal. Yesterday, in some of the comments that I

made, I talked about how proud I was to be there alongside the chair of Metrolinx and representatives from the private sector from Ivanhoé Cambridge because of their determination and their decision to work with us, that dynamic partnership between what government can accomplish when you harness some of the energy from the private sector to jointly deliver a positive public good for the people of a region.

As you know, we're going to be moving the GO bus terminal that currently sits at 141 Bay Street down to 45 Bay Street. Ivanhoé Cambridge will then build two 48-storey commercial towers, one at 45 Bay Street and one at 141 Bay Street. They will connect the two with a bridge over the rail corridor itself, which means that when you arrive, whether you're on a GO bus or you happen to be on any other kind of bus that's going to be using the new GO bus terminal—you arrive at that station and you can link to the Path system. You can get onto the subway, you can walk, you can cycle—you can do a number of things to get to whatever your destination is, particularly if you have the benefit of being employed in a wonderful community like Trinity-Spadina, represented by a great MPP serving here on this committee.

Regardless of what it is, those linkages, that ability to partner with the private sector to deliver that kind of investment and that kind of economic development is extraordinary, and it's one of the reasons why, wherever I go in the province of Ontario, people have a great deal of faith in the ability that we will have to deliver on these kinds of projects.

This list goes on. I could talk about the fact that not that long ago, we increased GO service along the Lakeshore lines. Every 30 minutes, seven days a week, there's now a GO train running on Lakeshore West and Lakeshore East. We've seen tremendous—I wouldn't say changes in behaviour, but modifications in behaviour in terms of the spike of people who are using the GO trains in off-peak hours.

The air-rail link, the Union Pearson Express, a project that is on time, will be delivered on budget and will provide people in this region with the opportunity to travel directly from our airport for the first time ever by public transit to downtown Toronto, something that will be delivered in time for the Pan Am/Parapan Games in 2015—very excited about the fact that we're making that actually happen. Certainly, whenever I talk to members in the government caucus, like the member from York South-Weston, the member from Davenport or, of course, the member from Trinity-Spadina, there's a ton of palpable excitement in their respective communities for the fact that we are delivering these positive results.

Is our work done? No, absolutely our work is not done. If the people of Ontario thought the work was done, perhaps they would have had a different decision to make on June 12. They didn't. They know that we have to roll up our sleeves, but they want a government—and fortunately they have a government—that is focused on rolling up the sleeves collectively, getting shovels in the ground, making the right decisions, doing the analysis in

the right way and delivering on the projects that will make a positive impact in the lives of the people that we represent and that will help spur significant economic development for years to come.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: That's fantastic. It's very encouraging, I have to say. That first trip back into Union Station after 17 years of being away—actually, it was probably more than that—I was quite impressed and overwhelmed. But as I was moving along from Via Rail onto the subway system with my suitcase and my briefcase, I started to think about some of the modifications that you're going to have to make in terms of accessibility. I'm wondering if you can speak a little bit to what you're doing with respect to accessibility and how some of these changes have been integrated into your plans.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Sure. I very much appreciate that question. I know that, in the conversations that my team and I at MTO have had with the folks at Metrolinx, there is a very clear awareness that we are in a position to deliver on the commitments that our government has made around accessibility.

Of course, you'll know from your time within our caucus that this is a subject that comes up on a regular basis. We have many champions within our caucus, from the Premier on down, who are very committed to making sure that we hit our accessibility targets. The team at Metrolinx and the team at MTO understand.

I've heard, frankly, directly from constituents of mine who have talked to me about some of the challenges they faced around accessibility at GO stations and elsewhere. It is work that is ongoing. I have absolute confidence that we'll be able to continue to deliver results for people around the accessibility piece in a way that helps them fully realize the potential and the opportunity to use the public transit systems that we'll be building out as a result of our infrastructure investments.

On the streetcar piece in particular, I should highlight—and I think I said this yesterday in one of my answers—that among many other features in the new streetcars that are being rolled out in the city of Toronto, we also see that they are situated lower. They are physically closer to the ground, which certainly helps a great deal with respect to making them more accessible.

We are going to continue working hard with all of our partners, all of our agencies, to make sure that we deliver on whatever commitments we have made around accessibility.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Excellent. Impressive.

The Vice-Chair (Miss Monique Taylor): MPP Ballard.

Mr. Chris Ballard: Thank you for your answers today, Mr. Minister. This is one very detailed portfolio, and I'm impressed at the depth of knowledge that you bring to the table, as well as your staff.

I wanted to first start off by, of course, congratulating you on being Minister of Transportation. I think I was the first out of my seat on the day that you were sworn in to remind you of the needs of Newmarket–Aurora, and I will continue to do that.

But I also wanted to say, on behalf of those of us who use the two new late GO trains northbound to Aurora and Newmarket, thank you very much. I get nothing but a warm welcome when I manage to catch that 6:15 train—which we won't be doing today—back home. A large number of people get to take advantage of it instead of having to take alternative transport home. That was a fantastic way, I think, to start this term.

As the report here puts in front of us, we know that transportation is the cornerstone of Ontario's prosperity. It was interesting: In my riding of Newmarket–Aurora, when I was canvassing, it was the number one issue. It really was the number one issue, because people saw how it tied together the things that affected them most in my riding. It tied together their social issues, their quality of life. It tied together the need to create jobs and prosperity in our communities of Newmarket and Aurora. They understood the importance that it has with our local manufacturers. In fact, years ago when I chaired the town of Aurora's economic development advisory committee, we had manufacturers—large ones, multi-billion dollar corporations that had plants in the riding—talking about the greatest challenge they faced being getting raw material to their plants and finished product to the automobile assembly plants north, south, east, west, and how they might have to move to be closer to those plants. It was very discouraging. It wasn't so many of the things that we think challenge business; it was simply transportation and the cost of transportation that was causing them so much grief.

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Much of what we value—our jobs, leisure time, health care, education—depends on the quality and accessibility of Ontario's transportation system. I think that's well established.

I mentioned the quality of life. I remember in my first campaign for councillor with the town of Aurora, people would say to me, "What can you do to make my life better? What can you do to make my family's life better?" The sense of stress that people in my riding face day in and day out—I know this is not just right across my riding but right across many parts of Ontario, the stress that people face because of the daily commute, because the two and three hours a day they have to put into commuting is overwhelming at times. I know that many communities suffer at a social level because we can't get volunteers to take care of the Guides and the Scouts or church or synagogue or whatever, because they're in Toronto, or they're on the Don Valley parking lot trying to get back to their homes and their families. Anything we can do, as you well know, to get people to their jobs and back to their homes in a timely manner will really improve their quality of life.

You mentioned a couple of events in the riding and near to the riding that I just wanted to touch on again personally. The extension of Highway 404 from Green Lane to Ravenshoe Road—by the way, some of the locals took me aside afterwards and told me that it's really "Ravenshoe Road," but we'll deal with that later on in terms of

signage—how important that is to their community, and ours too: We're to the south, and as you rightly mention, 22,000 cars are taken off the road on each southbound and northbound trip. Many of those cars were ending up coming through my riding on secondary streets and side streets, so there has been a noticeable decrease. People are quite thankful that those cars now can get on the road farther north, and stay on the road without coming through my riding. Thank you for that.

We also met at the new bus garage, and I was impressed with that. I was impressed by how high-tech it is, and how there were services there to take care of the bus drivers, like a physical education centre that drivers could work to stay in shape so they wouldn't get out of shape like some of us who sit around committee tables all day long—just some of us though.

I think what was exciting was the announcement of the purchase of the 500th bus for GO services. We heard that our line will soon, I hope, start utilizing the double-deckers, because I know our GO buses are packed already. It's an absolutely fantastic thing to see the number of people who line up to take the GO bus north and south, and the new service that takes them to Sheppard so they can catch the Sheppard TTC line and can get to the north end of Toronto. All sorts of things are slowly unfolding but are really appreciated by the people in our riding.

I also, in reading the fulsome report here, just wanted to make a comment about what really impressed me too. It was about how safe our roads have become. When I drove that Green Lane highway—and I think I had the member for York–Simcoe in my rear-view mirror. I know that the chair of York region went past me at a high clip, but I believe the member from York–Simcoe was behind me—

The Vice-Chair (Miss Monique Taylor): Excuse me, Mr. Ballard. You have two minutes.

Mr. Chris Ballard: Two minutes? I haven't even asked the question yet. Oh, no. Okay, let's get to a question.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I was hoping I'd get to ask you a question at this rate.

Mr. Chris Ballard: I just had so many things I wanted to get on the record.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Keep going.

Mr. Chris Ballard: Let me get to the question.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Take about two minutes.

Mr. Chris Ballard: To sum up, transit has been number one in our riding for years, and there have been a lot of positive things happening and we see a lot of positive things happening. A lot of people in my area take Highway 407 west. I've got to tell you, without getting into any detail because my friends opposite aren't here, we grind our teeth when we have to pay. I'm really interested in knowing about the Highway 407 east extension. Did I say 407 east? We take the 407 west.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Is it west?

Mr. Chris Ballard: The 407 east extension I'm really interested in, and in what little time is left, can you tell us a little bit more about how the government is going to ensure a seamless payment system for both highways, because one is private and one is public, and will both fees appear on the bill etc.?

The Vice-Chair (Miss Monique Taylor): You have less than one minute.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I have less than one minute.

I appreciate everything that you said, and it's fantastic to be a York region colleague of yours in particular.

Highway 407 east, phase 1 of which is currently under construction, is, as you mentioned, and very clearly will be as a result of the decision made by Premier Kathleen Wynne and our government—it will remain in public hands, unlike the 407 ETR. Of course, we all know what's taken place with that historically. It's a fantastic, phenomenal, massive infrastructure project that's taken—

The Vice-Chair (Miss Monique Taylor): That's time.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Am I done?

The Vice-Chair (Miss Monique Taylor): Yes, you are.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: —that's currently taking place. It is a project—

Interjections.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: —the people of Newmarket–Aurora and for all of Ontario. Thank you very much for that hard-hitting question.

The Vice-Chair (Miss Monique Taylor): Thank you, Minister.

It being pretty close to 6 p.m., I will adjourn the committee until 9 a.m. on Tuesday, October 28, 2014.

The committee adjourned at 1756.

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