

GOVERNMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE

GO expansion qualified bidders and CIB funding announced

Don Wall June 10, 2019



FORDNATION VIDEO/FACEBOOK — Infrastructure Ontario president and CEO Ehren Cory was on hand in Toronto May 30 as four teams were announced as qualified to bid on the GO RER On Corridor project. Cory commented, “We have strong teams bidding on the project combining proven international and local experience.”

The Ontario government has announced the four teams that will be invited to submit proposals to undertake the massive third phase of Metrolinx’s GO Regional Express Rail (RER) expansion project, with Infrastructure Minister Monte McNaughton calling the proposed P3 procurement plan a unique new approach that will deliver major technological innovations.

Proponents who unveiled the plan May 30 at Toronto’s Exhibition Place noted the project would be Canada’s largest ever P3. Infrastructure Ontario has previously said the third-phase procurement could be worth \$8- or \$9 billion not including a 35-year operations

period, which would be valued at billions more.

Among the project supporters on hand was Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB) president and CEO Pierre Lavallee. The CIB will contribute \$2 billion to the On-Corridor project.



FORDNATION VIDEO/FACEBOOK — Ontario Minister of Transportation Jeff Yarek revealed the names of the four teams qualified to bid on the GO RER On Corridor project during a Toronto presentation May 30.

“The On Corridor works P3 will differ from all previous Ontario P3s in that it will be an outcome-based procurement,” said McNaughton. “We are asking the private sector for the best, most innovative solutions to a simple challenge — moving people from point A to point B within a certain time frame. We are not telling them what technology or design to use. We have confidence in the private sector’s ability to find the most efficient solution.”

The announced scope of work will include operation of train services; timetable planning, train control and dispatch for all operators across the GO-owned network; design, build, finance, integration and maintenance of the railway corridor including civil infrastructure, tracks, electrification and signalling; maintenance of all rolling stock and procurement of new fleets; construction of new maintenance and train storage facilities; and reconstruction of Union Station tracks and platforms.

The project will implement 15-minute service across the GO-owned network using electrified trains. It had been previously indicated that construction of the On Corridor phase was expected to start in 2021 with 2028 the targeted completion date. Updated Infrastructure Ontario documents did not contain specific project timetables.

Metrolinx CEO and president Phil Verster explained the RFP was designed in a way to ensure maximum innovation in an era where powering systems for electrified trains are always evolving. Hydrogen fuel cells are one system advancing rapidly, he said, “and it is up to bidders to decide if they want to offer that solution to us.”

“When we talk about technology, electric traction, which can either be by an overhead concatenation system or hydrogen fuel cells, what we are talking about is what is the most feasible going forward between those two options, and that is where the technology choice is going to land,” Verster said. “It is not just a technology choice, it is the way they implement the technology.”

The CIB statement on the project noted the bank was created by the federal government to attract private sector investment into revenue-generating infrastructure projects that are in the public interest. The federal government had already announced support for the broader GO RER project. Lavallee clarified at the media conference that the new CIB funding for On Corridor was in addition to existing federal commitments to other phases of the work.

This is the second transit investment by CIB following the \$1.28-billion commitment to Montreal’s Réseau express métropolitain project announced last year.

The four teams announced as pre-qualified to bid on the project are EnTransit, MTR Kiewit Partners, ONcore Transit and ONxpress Transportation Partners. The RFQ went out in April 2018. Members are as follows:

EnTransit

- Applicant Lead: SNC-Lavalin Capital, Siemens Project Ventures, Keolis
- Construction Team: SNC-Lavalin, Siemens
- Design Team: SNC-Lavalin, Siemens, Balfour Beatty Rail
- Operations and Maintenance Team: Keolis SNCF, SNC-Lavalin, Siemens
- Financial Advisor: National Bank

MTR Kiewit Partners

- Applicant Lead: MTR, Kiewit
- Construction Team: MTR, Kiewit
- Design Team: MTR, Arup, Mott Macdonald
- Operations and Maintenance Team: MTR
- Financial Advisor: Scotiabank

ONcore Transit

- Applicant Lead: ACS
- Construction Team: Dragados Canada
- Design Team: AECOM, Sener
- Operations and Maintenance Team: ACSIC, RATP Dev, Bombardier
- Financial Advisor: Astris Finance and Rubicon

ONxpress Transportation Partners

- Applicant Lead: Aecon Concessions, John Holland, Meridiam Infrastructure, Alstom Transport Canada
- Construction Team: Aecon IM, John Holland, Alstom
- Design Team: WSP, Hatch, Alstom
- Operations & Maintenance Team: Deutsche Bahn, John Holland, Aecon O&M
- Financial Advisor: RBC Dominion Securities.

The first phase of the RER program is called Early/Enabling Works and phase two involves Off-Corridor projects, including station upgrades and new stations.

A document titled GO Expansion Full Business Case, that was approved by the Metrolinx board of directors in December, put the total cost of the three phases of the RER project at \$16.2 billion.

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