

Keep Transit Public.

What is Keep Transit Public?

Keep Transit Public is a grassroots campaign to ensure public transit in Ontario remains publicly owned, publicly operated, and democratically accountable.

Who is behind Keep Transit Public?

Keep Transit Public is driven by the frontline workers of your public transit agencies, represented by the Amalgamated Transit Union, working together with transit riders, advocates, and elected officials.

What do we mean by keeping transit public?

The government of Ontario, through its arms-length transit agency Metrolinx, is currently spending more money on transit and infrastructure projects than anywhere else in the world. The issue? Each of these projects is a public-private partnership (P3) under a FDBOM procurement method. That means all components from financing, designing, and building to operating and maintaining the project are included in one contract. As a result, only groups of companies that can provide all five of these elements are eligible to run these projects, leaving out local public transit agencies that have the most experience and can be held accountable if they fail to deliver the services the public expects.

What is Keep Transit Public's goal?

Our goal is to rally public support for an expanding, world-class, publicly-owned and operated transit network in Ontario. For us, that means putting an end to the use of P3s and contracting out in public transit. We are demanding that the provincial government separate Operations and Maintenance from its procurement model and ensure those elements are provided by experienced local transit agencies. We also encourage Metrolinx to develop an team in-house to support that work.



Visit keeptransitpublic.ca or facebook.com/keeptransitpublic for more information.

But if Metrolinx owns the cars, doesn't that mean it's still public transit?

It is not unusual for public transit agencies to contract out the designing and building of large scale infrastructure projects, like an LRT or subway. What is uncommon, ineffective, and unprincipled is the full-scale contracting out of operations and maintenance of these projects. That means that the everyday scheduling, service levels, fares, employee relations, wages, benefits, safety procedures, and maintenance are controlled by a private company. In addition that private company is legally obligated to its shareholders, not to the public and passengers that rely on that service. So we lose both the control and the accountability that comes from a publically owned and operated agency.

But aren't P3's supposed to transfer risk from the government to the public sector?

P3 advocates will often tout the "transfer of risk" from the public to the private sector in the use of P3s. It's basically a buy now, pay later deal for the government, except we are buying something and then giving away control over how it's taken care of and operated. We know from examples in Canada and abroad that privatization doesn't work. These companies are incentivized to make a profit and they do that by cutting corners on safety, maintenance, and service or increasing fares or decreasing wages and benefits. When they fail to become profitable, the public is often left to absorb the failing service and clean up the mess. Transit isn't a profit center; it's a public service. And if something were to go horribly awry, as in the case of the London Underground, these private companies can just walk away. So are we really transferring any long-term risk? No.

What can I do to stop transit privatization?

Sign our petition at keeptransitpublic.ca or **call your local city councillor or MPP** and tell them to Keep Transit Public in your city and across Ontario!

For more information, please visit our website keeptransitpublic.ca, Like our Facebook page at facebook.com/keeptransitpublic, @ us on Twitter at twitter.com/keeptransitpub, and follow us on Instagram at instagram.com/keeptransitpublic.