

GO Train celebrates first year of service

'Steady Acton ridership meets expectations'

It has been one year since GO Train service resumed in Acton – after a 21-year break – and aside from wanting more trains, commuters appear happy with the Acton station. Last January 7, GO/Metrolinx began operating two round-trip trains to Acton during the morning and afternoon weekday rush hour. On the first day of service, ridership for the first morning train was about 32 passengers, while the passenger count for the second morning train was about 21 people.

An informal survey of GO Train riders at the Acton station Friday even-

ing found the service has made lives easier – but commuters want more of a good thing. For Candace Saffery-Neufeld, who faces a four-hour round trip commute from Evertton to Toronto three or four times a week, it is a matter of convenience.

"From Acton, there are only two trains that go into Toronto in the morning and two home in the evening and that's really limiting," Saffery-Neufeld said. "If I have an afternoon meeting, I have to take it on the train and there's not WiFi on the train, so I have to put a hot spot on my phone –

its great, but we just need more service," she said, adding before GO Train service resumed, she worked from home.

For Ricky Kelsick of Eden Mills, who takes the GO Train daily to his job in downtown Toronto, the service is quick and easy, but he wishes the Guelph station had a larger parking lot. "It (the Guelph station) is closer to my home, but there's not enough parking, I drive a little further to Acton where there's lots of parking," he said.

Acton's Sharon Confiat, a daily commuter to Toronto, began using the GO train in November, and is "very happy" with the service.

"I would like to see a later train coming straight

to Acton because of I have to stay in Toronto for any length of time, I have to know in advance and drive to the Georgetown station, so I'd prefer there was one more train."

Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette, an early, vocal champion for an Acton GO Train stop, was surprised by the anniversary. "I can't believe it's already a year," Bonnette said on Monday. "I think people are happy with it... and hopefully ridership will continue to grow."

"Remember there were concerns there would be so much traffic and parking on Church Street? I'm pleased that didn't manifest itself," Bonnette said, repeating an earlier comment that Halton Hills is lucky to be one of just a few GTA communities to have two GO train stops.

The suggestion of a GO Train from Toronto to Acton caused a war of words in 1987, when then-Halton MP Otto Jelinek suggested the Town spend \$50,000 to build a train station in Acton so Toronto shoppers could come to town and head home by 2:15 p.m.

Local politicians said the proposal would not serve Acton residents and opposed the plan, but the

idea prompted Town officials to think ahead and buy land near the Old Hide House and rail line from CNR for \$50,000 for a future station.

In 1990 after hard lobbying by Bonnette and Old Hide House owner Steve Dawkins, the David Peterson Liberals at Queen's Park agreed to fund Go Train service to Acton. The Liberals were replaced by Bob Rae's NDP, and citing low ridership, two years into the NDP rule, the GO Train service was cancelled.

Overall ridership in Acton has been "steady" with approximately 50 "boardings" on each of four daily trains, according to Metrolinx Media

Relations and Issues Team Lead Vanessa Thomas. "We are extremely pleased that we have maintained steady ridership over the past year," Thomas said in an email Tuesday, noting the industry standard is to look at the first several years of train service before determining actual ridership demands.

In 2009, the new Acton station was approved as part of the Georgetown-to-Kitchener Extension. Service was to begin by late 2011, but was delayed, partially due to negotiations with the Hide House, which has a non-exclusive lease with the Town to use part of the parking lot for its customers.



Inagural train - January 07, 2013

Parents of Grade 8 Students are invited to attend a PARENT INFORMATION EVENING

Parents of students who will attend Acton or Georgetown District High School in September 2014 are welcome to come and learn more about Grade 9 programs, services for students, and diploma requirements. Parents should attend the Parents' Information Night at their home school (the school designated for their community). For more information, please contact the school office.

Acton High School
Thursday, January 16, 7 p.m.
(519) 853-2920 <http://act.hdsb.ca>

Georgetown District High School
Tuesday, January 14, 6:30 p.m.
Families with Surnames A-L - General Information in the Theatre.
Families with Surnames M-Z - Specialized program Information sessions (Essential and Special Education (including gifted) in the Library, French Immersion room 118, Futures and Centre Programs room 112)

7:05 p.m. A-L - Specific Program Information sessions (as above).
M-Z - General Information in the Theatre
(905) 877-6966 <http://georgetonvndistricthighschool.com>



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Grade 1 Parent Information Sessions

Come and hear about the great opportunities for your children

The Halton District School Board takes pride in offering excellent Grade 1 programs to the students in their communities. Every school in the Halton District School Board with Grade 1 will be running Parent Information Sessions in January 2014. Parents are invited to attend one of the information sessions, listed below, to gain an understanding of the programs offered in our schools: English Literacy and Math, Core French, French Immersion, Special Education supports and programs, extra-curricular opportunities and other initiatives unique to each school.

Grade 1 Program Sessions for Single Track English Schools:

Tues Jan 14	Limehouse PS (11139 22nd Side Rd) - 6:30 pm Pineview PS (13074 5th Side Rd) - 6:30 pm Silver Creek PS (170 Eaton St) - 6:30 pm
Wed Jan 15	Gardiner PS (14365 Danby Rd) - 6 pm Harrison PS (59 Rexway Dr) - 6:30 pm
Thurs Jan 16	Glen Williams PS (512 Main St) - 6:30 pm Joseph Gibbons PS (41 Moore Park Cres) - 6 pm McKenzie-Smith Bennett PS (69 Acton Blvd) - 6 pm Park PS (6 Hyde Park Dr) - 6:30 pm

Grade 1 Program Sessions for Dual Track and Single Track French Immersion Schools:

Wed Jan 22	Robert Little PS (41 School Lane, Acton) - 7 pm
Thurs Jan 23	George Kennedy PS (75 Weber Dr) - 6:30 pm

