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Price of GO ticket may get much more expensive

By **BRAD REAUME**
The Champion

Riding a GO train may be dramatically more expensive soon.

Recent announcements in funding shifts between the province and municipalities will put \$28.2 million of the tab for GO Transit on Halton property taxpayers' bills. That expense could be shifted to riders through increased ticket prices.

Halton officials feel the new GO Transit obligations will be offset by the province's commitment to pay for the bulk of education, which Halton taxpayers financed at \$199 million last year.

According to Halton Region's new chief administrative officer, Barry Malmsten, the estimate for GO Transit costs in Halton is based on ridership from Halton stations divided into the total provincial subsidy for the service.

The only way that bill could be covered is by local taxpayers picking it up, another level of government stepping in or a hike in ticket prices, he said.

Currently the province subsidizes about 40 per cent of the average GO ride, according to Joe Rinaldo,

Halton's commissioner of corporate services.

GO Transit funding is one of the central issues facing the new Greater Toronto Services Board (GTSB), which is supposed to report in February on its plan to provide services which are shared across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). However, Mr. Malmsten pointed out that the second largest users of the system, residents of Simcoe County (Barrie) are not in the GTA and are not covered by the GTSB.

According to Halton senior policy advisor Rob Rossini the province spends \$123 million on GO Transit and Halton accounts for about 22 per cent of the ridership on the system.

There are several GO rail stations in Halton but they also serve commuters from outside the region, said Mr. Malmsten.

Mr. Malmsten agreed that a municipal subsidy for capital costs, coupled with a ticket increase to cover operating expenses, might be the preferred option. However, a financial breakdown is not readily available.

"More than 190,000 people a day use GO and we cannot afford to build the highways to take up the slack if the service was discontinued," he said.

REFORM PARTY OF CANADA

NOTICE OF CANDIDATE NOMINATION MEETING

For the new Federal HALTON riding to be held at the HILLCREST United Church, Tues. 18th February, 1997
Trafalgar Rd and # 5 Side Road, South West Corner.
Meeting Time 7-15pm. Doors Open at 6.45pm.
Entrance to Hall at the rear Parking Lot.

The Candidates for this Reform Seat are Mr. Clayton Downes, Mr. Brian Esch and Mr. Richard Malboeuf. The Meeting will be addressed by Ms. Val Meredith, M.P.

All are welcome, ample parking. Smoking not permitted.



Volunteers

Crisis centre needs a hand

The Volunteer Centre receives many requests for volunteers in your community. You can explore new challenges and help provide needed volunteer services to local agencies. For more information, call 878-0955.

- **The Halton Rape Crisis Centre** needs volunteers to help provide peer support and counselling on a crisis telephone line from the comfort of their own home. As a volunteer you would be asked to fill four 24-hour shifts a month. If you are 18 years or older and interested in this volunteer opportunity, please call the Volunteer Centre.
- **Big Brothers of Halton** need volunteer mentors to spend time with a child in a school setting for one hour per week. Some activities you would be involved in would be sports, board games and baking. If you are interested in being a mentor to a child, please phone the Volunteer Centre.
- The Halton Hills branch of the **Canadian Red Cross Society** need volunteer drivers to transport patients to and from treatment facilities for medical appointments. If you are 21 years of age or older and have a good driving record, please call the Volunteer Centre for more information.
- Volunteers are needed by the **North Halton Association for the Developmentally Handicapped** to become special friends to young adults with special needs. Every other Friday evening volunteers go with young adults to have supper and see a movie. If you are at least 18 years old and want to help, please call the Volunteer Centre.

The Halton Social Planning Council and Volunteer Centre is a United Way Member Agency.

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