

# Shhh! Group wants GO train horns silenced

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The town of Whitchurch-Stouffville passed a whistle cessation bylaw for two of its urban level train crossings back in 2011, but only now has the safety audit request been sent in.

"Only this year we got through all the requirements," said Rob Flindall, director of public works for the municipality.

Council, in 2011, approved whistle cessations at the Hoover Park Drive/Ninth Line and Reeves Way Boulevard/Ninth Line level crossings.

A no-whistling bylaw was previously passed for the crossing at Millard and Church streets and only a bell is rung on Main Street, according to Flindall.

*'These are loud, loud horns that would blast you, if you live beside them, out of your bed if you weren't ready for it.'*

A Markham-based group of residents – nohorn.ca — is trying to get all GO train whistles silenced along the Stouffville line, from Markham to Lincolnville, just north of Stouffville.

A petition with more than 2,200 signa-

tures was presented to Markham council last week.

There are currently no plans to lobby Stouffville council, according to Shanta Sundarason, chairperson and co-founder of nohorn.ca.

Metrolinx may move to two-way, all day, electrified service, with trains running every 15 minutes between Union Station and Unionville and every 20 minutes between Unionville and Lincolnville.

"There is an incredible amount of traffic that comes down from Stouffville and other communities to the north. I applaud you for bringing RER (express rail) right up to Unionville, that 15-minute service, but if we could extend it to Stouffville, at least during peak hours, that would, I think, relieve a lot of pressure on the traffic and road system. Currently, it's (already) gridlock, it's absolute gridlock," said Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti at York Regional Council last month.

"It sounds kind of cute, anti-whistling. It's anything but (cute). These are loud, loud horns that would blast you, if you live beside them, out of your bed if you weren't ready for it," Scarpitti said.

"Train operators are either bullies or substance abusers or both. Let's draw a line in the sand here and stifle the horns," said Markham resident Robert Vallee during a Markham council meeting recently.

Mayor Justin Altmann, through a spokes-



STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

GO trains begin their run to Toronto from the Lincolnville Station just north of Stouffville.

peron, told The Sun-Tribune he is working with staff and could not provide a comment by our deadline in regards to nohorn.ca's demand to silence all whistles along the Stouffville line, including those within the municipality.

Even though the municipality has passed a no train whistle bylaw at certain crossings, it does not mean the train conductor will never sound the whistle, which is really four toots of the horn. The driver will still whistle if there

are safety hazards such as people, vehicles or animals around the tracks, according to Flindall.

Measures, known as mazes, have been put into place on the sidewalks at the Hoover Park Drive and Reeves Way Boulevard crossings to help make them safer.

"At least you must potentially look up. ... It's for the distracted person," Flindall said. *With files from Amanda Persico and Lisa Queen*

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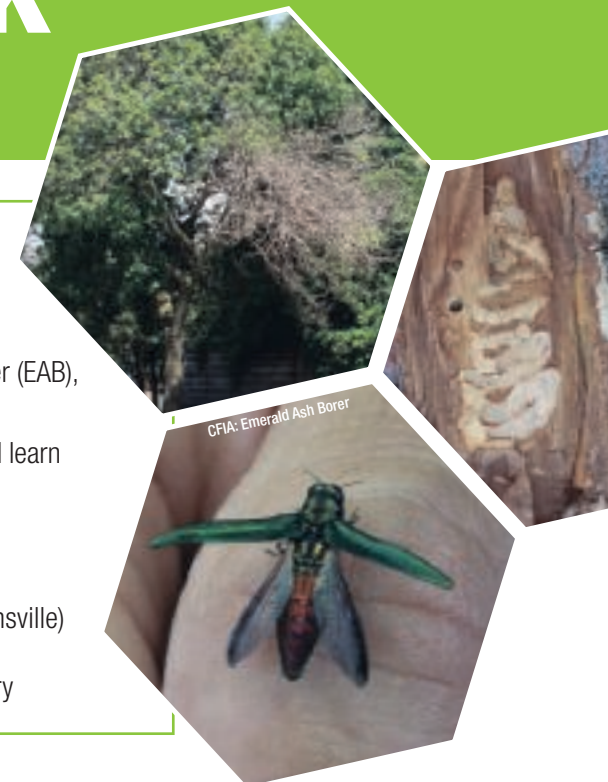
**7 p.m. to 9 p.m.**

Morning Glory Public School  
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