

GO ramps up commuter service this September

By Brock Weir

Local commuters will have more options on their morning commute next month as GO Transit expands its train service along the Barrie ? Toronto corridor.

Starting Sept. 2, there will be two morning train trip extensions from Maple to Allendale, and the length of the regular trains will be doubled from six cars to 12 to make the commute significantly more comfortable.

The changes were announced by Ontario Transportation Minister Steven Del Duca at the King City GO Station last week.

?With this particular change, we will have 15 minute service for the entire Barrie line during the busiest travel period,? he said.

?We're also adding one new morning and one new afternoon train on the Barrie line making all stops from Bradford to Union. We're also adding trips to some of our busiest and most in-demand bus routes across the Region, serving commuters in Burlington, St. Catharines, Guelph, Hamilton, Mississauga and Richmond Hill.

?I want to help you envision the personal benefits of seamless connections between GO Transit's bus and train routes, because a faster, more reliable and accessible transit service means that a promise that is made is a promise that is kept. It means you will never miss your child's soccer game or your daughter's dance recital, it means that you will have the flexibility, time and freedom to never miss an appointment; it means fundamentally you will be spending less time commuting and more time with the people you that you care about.?

This expansion is just one more step towards Ontario's commitment to GO Regional Express Rail (RER) which, when brought to fruition, mean 15-minute all-day two-way train service.

King Station will receive a boost in on-site parking through upgrades scheduled for 2019, the Minister added.

?Every intention that we have to as a government is to continue and make investments in transit and transportation and we're going to make sure we get it right and we get it done,? he said. ?As the Minister of Transportation since 2014, I have had the privilege of witnessing this transformation as we work hard to create a modern, integrated and sustainable transportation network that will transform the way we experience life, work and play right around the Greater Toronto and Hamilton area. We are planning service improvements here in King Township and across the entire GO Network. This means more GO buses and more trains and, in fact, because the majority of these new train trips will be powered over time by electric engines, these trains will be quieter and cleaner than ever before.

?A transit plan like the one we are delivering is not necessarily created overnight. It takes important incremental steps along the way to build that larger and more integrated picture. It is announcements like today's that show us that we are on the right track, that we are collectively building a future that is faster, that is more accessible and greener than ever before.?

Del Duca reiterated the Province is committed to delivering on RER within 10 years back in 2014 and ?we are on track to deliver by 2024 or 2025 as promised.?

?We will have continued upgrades and incremental steps, improvements or enhancements towards the ultimate goal over the next little while,? he said. ?Stay tuned for more details coming. It is all going to be good news, that I can guarantee.?

GO RER includes electrifying core segments and expanding the rail network, and bringing more two-way, all-day service to commuters and families, increasing the number of weekly trips from about 1,500 to nearly 6,000 by 2025. It will provide faster and more frequent service across the GO rail network and is the largest commuter rail project in Canada.