

Ministry of Transportation

Province Nominates GTTA Chair And Vice Chair

GTA Fare Card Offers More Convenience And Reliable Transit

QUEEN'S PARK, Oct. 12 /CNW/ - Minister of Transportation Donna Cansfield today announced the nomination of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority (GTТА).

"I am pleased to nominate Robert MacIsaac as Chair and Peter Smith as Vice Chair of GTТА. We're bringing seamless and better connected transit to the third fastest-growing urban region in North America," said Cansfield.

"Commuters in GTA and Hamilton expect better transit and I am confident that

GTТА will deliver."

"My priority is creating streamlined and efficient transportation in the region," said MacIsaac. "I'm looking forward to working together with the province, the Vice Chair and GTТА board members from Durham, Halton, Peel and

York Regions, and the Cities of Hamilton and Toronto."

"I look forward to working with Mr. MacIsaac and all GTТА board members towards a quick, reliable and safe transportation system, essential to the prosperity of this region," said Smith.

Robert MacIsaac is the current Mayor of the City of Burlington and has been involved for over 15 years in public transit. Peter Smith is the current Chair of GO Transit. This experience makes them excellent choices to launch GTТА. These appointments are subject to review by the Standing Committee on

Government Agencies.

The Fare Card will become the responsibility of GTТА, which will allow commuters to travel from Oshawa to Hamilton using a single card. Once fully implemented, the GTA Fare Card System will:

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- Place over two million fare cards in the hands of GTA residents
- Benefit over 800 million transit riders annually
- Provide \$100 million in travel time savings to transit customers
- Save transit agencies \$20 million per year in operating costs
- Reduce fraud and improve security.

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GTТА is responsible for developing a long-range integrated transportation plan for local transit, GO Transit and major roads for GTA and Hamilton. Also announced today is the selection of Accenture to head up the team of industry leaders that will build and operate the GTA Fare Card System for the next 10 years. It will be introduced initially on four Mississauga bus routes and two GO Transit stations on the Milton line and Union Station for both GO Transit and TTC in mid-2007. It will be fully implemented across the GTA and Hamilton by 2010.

Through significant infrastructure investments, the McGuinty government is delivering better hospitals, schools, transit systems, borders, roads and bridges - all necessary for future growth and prosperity.

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Backgrounder

GTA FARE CARD BRINGS MORE CONVENIENCE TO TRANSIT TRAVEL

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The McGuinty government's announcement that Accenture has been selected to build and operate the GTA Fare Card System is an important step toward more

convenient and efficient public transit between Hamilton and Oshawa.

Accenture

is heading up a team of industry leaders that will develop the necessary hardware and software and operate the fare system for 10 years. The

Greater

Toronto Transportation Authority (GTТА) will assume responsibility of the system once the fare card is implemented.

How will the GTA Fare Card work

The fare card will work much like a debit or telephone card. Transit riders will scan the card upon entering and leaving the transit system and the GTA Fare Card System will calculate how far they have traveled, which transit

systems they've used and the total fare. That sum will be deducted from the card account or e-purse (the electronic equivalent of cash). The account can be topped up at wickets at train and bus stations, selected retail outlets, via pre-authorized payments, by telephone or Internet from the comfort of home.

Personal privacy will be fully protected. The GTA Fare System will adhere to all provincial and municipal privacy guidelines.

Next steps

Work is underway to develop a name and brand for the fare card. In the coming months Accenture will begin designing the system and launch the card in mid-2007:

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- At the Meadowvale and Cooksville GO Transit stations on the Milton GO Transit line
- On four Mississauga bus routes that link to Meadowvale and Cooksville GO Transit Stations
- At Union Station for GO Transit and Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) riders.

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After the launch, the fare card will be implemented on the GO Lakeshore West train corridor at Burlington and Oakville. Full implementation will occur by 2010 on all GO Transit rail and transit systems in Brampton, Burlington, Durham Region, Hamilton, Mississauga, Oakville and York Region. TTC will participate initially at five subway stations: Finch, Downsview, Union, Don Mills and Islington - the key regional transfer hubs currently serving over 10 million cross-boundary riders each year. TTC is reviewing its requirements for full participation in the fare card system and will table a business case early in 2007.

Benefits

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The GTA Fare System will:

- Eliminate the need to line up for tokens, tickets or passes from

various transit agencies. Each municipal transit agency will continue to set their own fares.

- Make it easier and faster for commuters to transfer between various municipal transit services and the GO Transit system
- Allow customers to replace lost or stolen cards, unlike tickets, tokens, passes or cash
- Include security features to help prevent and detect fraud
- Open the potential for future use for payment of additional services such as parking.

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Other Fare Systems

Hong Kong's Octopus system has proven to be an outstanding success with the original transit agency partners now counting over 300 clients including parking facilities, fast food outlets and vending machines using the cards for non transit applications. In operation since 1997, there are 13 million cards in circulation with over 9.5 million transactions per day.

London's Oyster card went into full operation in late 2004 and represents one of the largest transport fare card schemes in Europe, with over 3.6 million cards in use facilitating over two million journeys a day.

While a number of cities in North America - including Washington, Chicago, San Francisco, San Diego, Los Angeles, and Montreal - have contracted

for electronic fare card systems, none have been fully deployed to date. However, they have all met with enough initial success in their pilots that all have signed major contracts for system wide implementation.

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