

Aliraza Asrani



September 18 2017

Re: Stouffville Line Service Changes

J. Robert S. Prichard  
Chair, Metrolinx  
97 Front Street West  
Toronto ON M5J 1E6

To Mr. Prichard:

It is extremely disappointing that Metrolinx advertised a service cut as a service enhancement. While the new midday and evening trains will provide needed rail service between Scarborough and Downtown Toronto and Markham it will cause a service reduction in other ways as detailed below:

- Midday and evening GO bus service between Markham / Stouffville and Downtown Toronto used to operate at an approximately 20 – 30 minute frequency. However, under the new schedule, the trains only run once an hour. This is a reduction of service as riders now have lesser flexibility and less options when taking transit between Downtown Toronto and Markham / Stouffville.
- The express bus service between Unionville and Markham stations and downtown complete the trip quicker than the train. There is also the issue of needing to transfer between the train and bus at Unionville station which was not necessary before. Transfers add an unnecessary inconvenience, especially the 15 minute wait for inbound passengers. Under the old system it took, as per official schedule, 35 minutes to travel in midday from Unionville to Union Stations by bus. From Markham and Stouffville Station respectively it took 40 and 59 minutes. In contrast, a train from Unionville takes 41 minutes to reach Union . Under the new bus-train transfer system a trip from Markham Station takes 74 minutes and one from Stouffville takes 93 minutes, If we add waiting times then the average total travel time currently from the three stations are 50, 55, and 74 minutes. The average waiting time is determined by having the frequency, assuming that people are ready to start their journey in a random time distribution. Under the new system the average wait time increases from 15 to 30 minutes so the travel times are 71, 104, and 123 minutes.

The all-day GO service to Scarborough has significant benefits and allows for better service to/from Scarborough and Downtown Toronto, Markham, and Stouffville. However, this service

comes at a significant cost to existing users. Therefore, I request that Metrolinx reinstates the operations of express GO busses between Unionville & Union stations. The busses can meet with the trains at Unionville allowing for travel between Scarborough and Markham / Stouffville. This way new service is provided and existing service, both in terms of frequency and travel time, aren't impacted.

I also take issue with the way the initiative was announced. It is inappropriate to make such significant transit announcements suddenly. There should have been a public meeting regarding the proposal allowing the public to provide feedback. Additionally, a cost-benefit analysis and rationale should be made public.

Furthermore, I found that my inquiries were not responded in an appropriate manner. I request that Metrolinx Board examines the way customer complaints are handled and increases its transparency by releasing the basis used to reach decisions..

Regards,

Aliraza Asrani

CC: GO Transit

Ontario Minister of Transportation

Ontario Official Opposition Critic for Transportation

Ontario NDP Critic for Transportation