APPENDIX M
Heritage Impact Assessment – Aurora GO Station
TAYLOR HAZELL
ARCHITECTS

Aurora GO Station
Heritage Impact Assessment

FOR METROLINX
JULY 2017

Taylor Hazell Architects Ltd.
333 Adelaide Street West
5th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M5V 1R5

contact Ellen Kowalchuk
ekowalchuk@taylorhazell.com
tel 416 862 2694 x236
fax 416 862 8401

FINAL
Aurora GO Station
Heritage Impact Assessment

FOR METROLINX
JULY 2017 | THA NO. 1719

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Executive Summary

TEAM MEMBERS AND QUALIFICATIONS

Metrolinx requested a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) to assess and mitigate the impacts of undertakings on the cultural heritage value and heritage attributes of the Aurora GO Station at 121 Wellington Street East in Aurora, Ontario (Fig. 1). The consultant team for the HIA was comprised of:

Taylor Hazell Architects
Ellen Kowalchuk (Associate, Manager of Heritage Planning), MA, CAHP
Nigel Molaro (Heritage Specialist), BA, Dipl. Heritage Conservation

PROPOSED UNDERTAKINGS

The proposed undertakings at Aurora GO Station consist of two projects: the Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion project and the GO Rail Network Electrification project. Both are being undertaken as part of the overall introduction of 15-minute, two-way electrified service to core parts of the GO Transit network. Although they are being completed as separate environmental assessments, any interventions are being coordinated by the project teams.

The Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion project includes the infrastructure required to support this expanded commuter service: a second track from Lansdowne Avenue in the City of Toronto to Aurora GO Station, and upgrades to the stations themselves. The BRCE project will be implemented in different phases. Phase 1 includes:

- Detailed design and construction of a second track from Tecumseth Street in the City of Toronto to Aurora GO Station;
- Upgrades to the Rutherford, Maple, King City, and Aurora GO Stations; and
- Detailed design and construction of a new train layover facility within the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury for overnight train storage.

Phase 2 - Future Phases will include the second track between Aurora GO Station and Allandale Waterfront GO Station and associated station upgrades.

At Aurora GO Station, the second track will be accompanied by a pocket track. The additional station upgrades (being completed under a separate project from the Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion) include a new platform, a rehabilitated platform, elevator and stair access to two pedestrian tunnels, new platform shelters, a snowmelt system, a service bunker, and expanded lighting, closed-circuit television, fare and public address systems.

The purpose of the GO Rail Network Electrification project is to convert six GO-owned rail corridors from diesel to electric propulsion, including the whole of the Barrie Rail Corridor. The proposed activities consist of introducing an overhead contact system and its component support structures, foundations, wiring, and grounding and bonding.
The proposed activities of both projects are described in detail in Section 4.0.

HERITAGE STATUS OF PROPERTY

The Aurora GO Station has been identified as a Metrolinx Provincial Heritage Property of Provincial Significance as it satisfied the criteria in Ontario Regulation 10/06. This assessment was made through a Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (THA, March 2014) and confirmed by the Metrolinx Heritage Committee (August 14, 2014). A small parkette at the north end of the site includes a commemorative plaque erected by Ontario Heritage Trust.

At the municipal level, the property is listed by the Town of Aurora in its Register of Properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest (2004).

At the federal level, the property is designated a Heritage Railway Station under the federal Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act (1990). Since the station’s ownership was transferred from CN, a federally regulated railway company, to Metrolinx, the designation remains in place but is no longer enforceable.
1.0 Introduction

1.1 METHODOLOGY

The content of this HIA is informed by a number of sources. These include a meeting between THA, Metrolinx, Gannett Fleming (the prime engineering firm undertaking the GO Rail Network Electrification project conceptual design) and Morrison Hershfield (the firm leading the GO Rail Network Electrification project Environmental Assessment/Transit Project Assessment Process), a site visit to Aurora GO Station and community consultation with the Town of Aurora. Metrolinx provided THA with drawings and specifications for both projects, as well as excerpts from the Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion Project Draft Environmental Project Report (2017) and GO Rail Network Electrification Transit Project Assessment Process Draft Environmental Project Report (January 2017). THA also used publicly-available information from the Metrolinx website about the two projects. A full list of sources is provided in Section 9.0.

1.2 PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION OF PROPERTY

Aurora GO Station is situated on the Barrie Corridor, which runs between Toronto and Barrie. The Aurora GO Station property comprises a rectangular parcel, 1.4 hectares in size. The station building is located on the east side of and adjacent to the railway tracks (Fig. 2). It is set on a concrete foundation and surrounded by brick pavers. The paved platform runs along the east side of the railway tracks, with four steel and glass passenger shelters (Figs. 3-4). The property also includes a large surface parking lot on the west side of the tracks, and another one on the east side of the station, a bus turnaround area, a kiss-and-ride-area, a small utility building and a six-level commuter parking garage. A small parkette at the north end of the site includes a commemorative plaque erected by Ontario Heritage Trust and a locomotive bell erected by the Aurora Board of Trade.

1.3 SUMMARY OF PROPOSED UNDERTAKINGS

Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion

The undertakings of the Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion project at Aurora GO Station involve a range of proposed activities which are at various stages in the design process. The activities include the introduction of a second track and a pocket track to the west of the existing track and the associated grading and drainage work. A new island platform will be introduced between these new tracks and the existing platform will be rehabilitated. Both platforms will receive a new snowmelt system as well as new and replacement platform shelters. To provide access two pedestrian tunnels which are currently under construction, stair enclosures, elevators and partial canopies will be constructed at both entrances to both tunnels (the pedestrian tunnels, currently under construction, were not assessed part of this HIA). The undertakings will also involve the introduction of an above-grade electrical, communications and mechanical bunker, as well as expanded lighting, closed-circuit television, fare and public address systems.
GO Rail Network Electrification

The GO Rail Network Electrification project is currently at the conceptual design stage, general to the six GO-owned corridors. The specific design of proposed activities in the context of Aurora GO Station will be determined at a later stage. Electrification will require the installation of an overhead contact system (OCS) above the tracks. This comprises a support structure of either a cantilever or portal type, with poles between 8 and 10 metres in height and spaced approximately 55 metres to a maximum of 65 metres apart. The poles will be integrated with station elements where possible and will elsewhere require foundations of between 900mm (36") and 1200 mm (48") in diameter made through excavation at an approximate depth of 5 metres. The contact wire will accommodate multiple types of trains and its typical height will be approximately 6 metres above the top of the highest rail. The system will be grounded and bonded to minimize risk of electric shock, as well as to provide the means to carry electric currents into the earth under normal and fault conditions.

Barrie Corridor Train Sheds

Concurrent with the Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion and the GO Rail Network Electrification projects is a separate project involving the development of a prototype design for a full platform enclosure for stations on the Barrie Corridor, including Aurora GO Station. The project rationale is to replace the existing hydronic snow melting systems currently integrated into station platforms with a train shed that would cover the entire platform as a more cost-effective solution to managing snowfall. Since the new enclosure would house all track and platform elements of the station site, the introduction of a train shed would supersede several of the proposed activities assessed in this HIA. All proposed activities of the Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion and GO Rail Network Electrification project are nevertheless addressed in this HIA. The train shed project is not part of the scope of this HIA. A new HIA will need to be developed for the train shed project in conjunction with its design development phase, and this HIA will should be revised and updated to reflect any changes.

1.4 OTHER PLANNING PROCESSES / REQUIREMENTS

The Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion and GO Rail Network Electrification projects are subject to environmental assessments under the Transit Project Assessment Process (TPAP). The TPAP needs to consider whether the transit project will have a negative impact on a matter of provincial importance. Matters of provincial importance include a protected heritage property, built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes.¹ This HIA will support the TPAP by identifying and mitigating any impacts to the Aurora GO Station, which is a protected heritage property.

2.0 Discussion of Cultural Heritage Value & Status

2.1 STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE

The following Statement of Cultural Heritage Value was approved by the Metrolinx Interim Heritage Committee in 2014.

Description of Property

The Aurora GO Station property comprises a rectangular parcel, 1.4 hectares in size. The Aurora GO Station is a one-storey, wooden railway station located at 121 Wellington Street East in the Town of Aurora, in York Region. Built in 1900 by the Grand Trunk Railway, it was designed in the picturesque Stick Style, with a steeply pitched roof, gable peaks with decorative bargeboard, an open porte-cochere, and a projecting operator’s bay. The station is owned by Metrolinx/GO Transit and operates as a GO Station on the Barrie Line. It sits next to the railway tracks, in a mixed industrial and residential area. The station building is surrounded by commuter parking lots and is highly visible from Wellington Street East, a major arterial.

A small parkette with two commemorations is located at the north end of the site: a bronze plaque erected by Ontario Heritage Trust; and a bronze bell on a stone base, erected by the Aurora Board of Trade. The Aurora GO Station is a Provincial Heritage Property of Provincial Significance.

Cultural Heritage Value

The Aurora GO Station building, built in 1900, is an excellent, representative example of the small, standard plan stations designed by the Grand Trunk Railway in the Stick Style between 1895 and 1905 for rural stations in southern Ontario. Beautifully restored, it retains most of its key original features. It is one of only two such stations with original features that are known to still be in service as a railway station.

The Aurora GO Station property is directly associated with the construction and operation of the Ottawa, Simcoe and Huron Union Railroad Company, which operated the first steam railway in Canada West. Aurora marked the terminus of the first leg of the steam railway, opened in May 1853. The Aurora GO Station property is directly associated with the inauguration of the first steam train in Canada West, which carried out its first journey, from Toronto to Aurora, on 16 May 1853.

The Aurora GO Station displays a high degree of craftsmanship in its Stick Style features and finishes, including gable peaks with bargeboard decoration, projecting operator’s bay, open porte-cochère with wooden pillars, exterior framing and paneling, and interior paneling.

The Aurora GO Station is the key resource that defines the railway character of the area. It supports the 19th century character of the neighbourhood to the west and north of the station.

The Aurora GO Station is physically, functionally, visually and historically linked to the railway tracks and to the Railway Hotel, built in 1856 on the north side of Wellington Street East. A railway has operated on this site since 1853.
The Aurora GO Station operates as a landmark within the Town of Aurora. It is a highly visible reminder of the town’s 160-year-old railway heritage, and a key focus for the town’s current importance as a commuter suburb. It reflects the high value placed on heritage preservation by the town and citizens.

The Aurora GO Station is of provincial significance because it has a strong association with an event of importance to the province. The station property is the location of the inaugural trip of a railway engine on the Ontario, Simcoe and Lake Huron Union Railroad line in 1853. This was the first railway steam engine and the first steam railway to operate in what is now the province of Ontario. The event is commemorated by a plaque erected by the Ontario Heritage Trust at the station property.

**Heritage Attributes**

The heritage attribute essential to the cultural heritage value or interest of the provincial heritage property is the station building. Key elements of the station building include:

- Its rectangular footprint and one-storey massing.
- Its domestic scale and delicate, pleasing proportions.
- Its steeply-pitched hip roof, and deep, overhanging eaves, broken by gables on the north and west (trackside) elevations.
- Features and finishes attributable to its picturesque Stick-Style design, including:
  - Bargeboard, King-posts, finials, pendants and arched brackets in the north-end and west-side gables;
  - The pattern of board-and-batten siding, vertical and diagonal boarding, and externally expressed framing on its exterior wall surfaces;
  - The open porte-cochere at its north end with its slender pillars and arched brackets.
- The articulation of exterior and interior wall surfaces as three horizontal bands, defined by the use of different wood surfaces.
- The placement and proportions of original openings, including the operator's bay window and tripartite windows on the west, north and east elevations.
- The projecting operator's bay window on the west/track side and all of its associated materials, including original glazing, wood trim, signage and signaling hardware.
- The treatment of the interior wall and ceiling surfaces, including wood paneling and boarding, cornices and door and window surrounds.
- Surviving original interior waiting room benches.
- The orientation and visual relationship between the station building and the railway tracks.
- The visibility and legibility of its heritage attributes when viewed from passing trains and from Wellington Street East.

The key attributes of the provincial heritage property that express its provincial significance are:

- The location, content, visibility and accessibility of the plaque erected by OHT in 2009 commemorating the first steam train in Canada West.
- The spatial and visual relationship between the plaque and the railway station, including the proximity of the plaque to the station and key views from the plaque towards the station.
- The spatial and visual relationship between the plaque and the section of railway tracks immediately adjacent to the railway station, including: the proximity of the plaque to the railway tracks; and key views from the plaque towards the railway tracks.
### 3.0 Assessment of Site Conditions

#### 3.1 DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT CONDITION

A site visit was conducted on April 11, 2017, by Ellen Kowalchuk (Associate, Manager of Heritage Planning) and Nigel Molaro (Heritage Specialist) of THA. A visual review and photographic documentation were completed with the objective of comparing photographic documentation from the site visits undertaken as part of the Cultural Heritage Evaluation completed by THA in 2014.

Significant paint deterioration was observed on the east, south and west façades of the station building (Figs. 5-8). On the east façade, deterioration is particularly concentrated in paint loss under the roofline, and is otherwise general to the façade. On the south façade, similar deterioration was observed around the base of the entrance, while new deterioration is concentrated in paint loss along the base of the façade. On the west façade, deterioration is similarly concentrated in paint loss along the base. Paint loss was also observed under the eaves of the west façade and under the north portico.

Some modifications to outdoor furnishings were observed, including the replacement of waste disposal containers, the removal of planter boxes and the addition of an information screen for passengers. The station building was otherwise observed to be in good condition.

#### 3.2 LIMITATIONS OF SITE INVESTIGATIONS

This focus of this condition assessment was limited to areas where the proposed activities have potential impact on heritage attributes, particularly the areas west and north of the station building. It was a visual review conducted from grade, and included no destructive testing.

### 4.0 Description and Purpose of Proposed Activities

#### 4.1 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

**Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion**

The proposed activities associated with the Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion at Aurora GO Station are at various stages in the design process. The following list of activities was provided to THA, and the descriptions are based on the various sources of information provided to THA by Metrolinx.

*Grading and drainage work*

To achieve double-track service from Union Station to Aurora GO Station, the introduction of a second track and a pocket track at Aurora GO Station requires associated grading and drainage work.
Drawings indicate grading work on the rail bed on the station property, while drainage work such as culverts, storm sewers, swales and ditches appear to be outside of the station property.\(^2\)

**Construction of a second track west of existing station**

The targeted service expansion requires laying a second track from Lansdowne Avenue in the City of Toronto to Aurora GO Station. The new track is proposed to run parallel to the existing track, immediately to the west of the existing track at Aurora GO Station.\(^3\)

**Construction of a new pocket track to west of existing station**

A third track, known as a pocket track, is proposed to allow trains to park off the main tracks at Aurora GO Station. It will extend west from the second track north of Cousins Drive and terminate at Wellington Street East, separated from the second track by the island platform.\(^4\)

**Aurora GO Station Upgrades**

**Existing side platform east of existing track to be rehabilitated**

In order to incorporate new stair enclosures and elevators which access pedestrian tunnels, the existing platform at Aurora GO Station will be rehabilitated. The work includes replacement of existing curbs and re-paving along the entire length of the platform in either asphalt or concrete.\(^5\)

**Construction of a new west island platform**

In order to provide access to the second track, a new platform will be constructed to the west of the new track. It will be an island platform between this second track and the pocket track. The platform will match the length of the existing platform, from Wellington Street East to east of Metcalfe Street.\(^6\)

**Snowmelt system for new platform and existing platform**

A new snowmelt system is proposed for both the rehabilitated existing platform and the new island platform. The system includes piping embedded in the platform and a separate boiler / pumphouse structure adjacent to the platform.\(^7\) The pre-insulated pipes will be encased in concrete and steel.\(^8\)

**New and replacement platform shelters**

New platform shelters are proposed for the station platforms, replacing the existing shelters and introducing additional shelters. In total there will be six new shelters, three per platform. Two of the

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\(^3\) Metrolinx. BRCE ROLL PLAN (S2B) - Aurora GO Station. 2017.


\(^5\) Metrolinx (email, 29 May 2017).

\(^6\) Metrolinx. BRCE ROLL PLAN (S2B) - Aurora GO Station. 2017.

\(^7\) Metrolinx (email, 15 May 2017).

shelters will be positioned between the station building and the south pedestrian tunnel, and the remaining four positioned south of the south pedestrian tunnel. The new shelters will be positioned at corresponding locations on each of the platforms. Their design is undetermined at this time.\(^9\)

**Stair enclosures, elevators and partial platform canopies at two tunnels located at existing bus loop and to north of existing station building**

Two pedestrian tunnels are currently under construction at Aurora GO Station. The first is located north of the station building, approximately half the distance to Wellington Street East, and the second is located near the south end of the existing bus loop east of the railway track. To provide access to the tunnels, stair enclosures and elevators are proposed to be excavated and constructed at each end on both platforms. Each pair of structures will be connected by a partial canopy.

At the north tunnel, the elevators will be located north of the tunnel\(^10\), and the stair enclosures to the south. The elevators, partial canopies and stair enclosures will be connected in north-south alignment, with a combined size of approximately 3 metres wide by 25 metres long\(^11\). On the existing platform, the stair enclosure will come in close proximity to the north side of the station building, with the enclosure’s entrance located at a distance of approximately 2.5 metres to the station building.

At the south tunnel, which is at a considerable distance from the station building, the stair enclosures will be located north of the tunnel. The location of the elevators has not been determined.\(^12\)

The tallest of these combined structures will be the elevator shafts, approximately 5.75 metres above the platform. The elevator lobbies, stair enclosures and canopies will be approximately 3.5 metres above the platform. Pitched metal roofs are proposed above all the structures, which will create additional height. The current designs reflect and imitation of the roof lines of the station building. The elevator and staircase enclosures will be constructed of a concrete curb and glazed walls separated by structural framing.

**Above grade electrical, communications and mechanical bunker located to south of existing bus loop**

As part of the station upgrades, an above-grade electrical, communications and mechanical bunker is proposed to be built south of the south pedestrian tunnel, immediately east of the station platform.\(^13\)

**Expanded lighting, public address, closed-circuit television and fare systems**

Proposed station upgrades include expanded lighting, public address, closed-circuit television and fare systems. These systems will not be fastened to the station building, and an existing

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\(^12\) Metrolinx (email, 15 May 2017).

\(^13\) Metrolinx. *BRCE ROLL PLAN (S2B) - Aurora GO Station.* 2017.
communications and electrical room in the parking structure could potentially be utilized to service these expansions.  

**GO Rail Network Electrification**

The GO Rail Network Electrification project is system-wide and conceptual in nature. The specific design of the undertaking in the context of Aurora GO Station has not yet been determined, and the final design of the electrification project will be determined at a later stage and in accordance with *Metrolinx Design Excellence Guidelines*. THA understands the undertaking to encompass these four main activities as follows.

*Support structures for overhead contact system*

Electrification of the GO Rail Network requires the installation of an overhead contact system (OCS) to which all wires will be attached with wire support assemblies. The support structures for the OCS consist of either a cantilever or portal type structure. A typical cantilever is a single pole from which pipe and wire attachment assemblies are supported, while a typical portal is two columns with a crossbeam between them supporting the catenary assemblies. In the Barrie Corridor, two tracks will be electrified, therefore the majority of OCS support structures will be cantilevers, but some locations may require a portal structure. The typical distance between structure poles is approximately 55 metres to a maximum spacing of 65 metres. The typical height of the structures will range from between approximately 7.6 metres to 12 metres above the top of the highest rail, and typical pole height for this section of the Barrie Corridor will be between 8 and 10 metres. The historic station building, for comparison, is approximately 7 metres in height. Poles will be integrated with station elements where possible to minimize visual impact, and there will be a focus in their placement on avoiding station elements such as light poles, shelters and mini-platforms.

*Foundations for overhead contact system poles*

The OCS poles will be integrated with station elements such as shelters and canopies in order to minimize visual impact where possible. Elsewhere, stand-alone poles will require a foundation consisting of a caisson with a square pedestal and embedded anchor bolts. The pole foundation sizes are dependent on whether the support structure is a cantilever or portal type, however typical sizes are estimated to be as follows: 900mm (36”) diameter for a single track cantilever, 1050mm (42”) diameter for a two track cantilever, 1050mm (42”) diameter for a portal structure less than 24 metres.
wide, 1200mm (48”) for a portal structure greater than 24 metres wide. To install stand-alone pole foundations, excavation will be required at an approximate depth of 5 metres.

Wiring for overhead contact system

The OCS contact wire affixed to the support structures will be designed to accommodate the widest and tallest existing Metrolinx rolling stock, future rolling stock requirements, other passenger trains, and additional freight clearance requirements. The vertical clearance of the wire will therefore be developed to accommodate multiple types of trains that operate in the system (Double Stacked Freight, GO Electric Multiple Units, GO Bi-level trains, VIA Rail, etc.), the highest vertical clearance being the Double Stacked Freight and GO-Bi-level trains. The contact wire height will range from 6 metres to 7.6 metres. In this section of the Barrie Corridor, which has no provision for double-stack freight, the typical height of the contact wire is 6.3 metres above the top of the highest rail.

Grounding and bonding of the overhead contact system

Grounding and bonding serves two main purposes. First, it serves to minimize touch voltage, step voltage and ground return currents caused by electrification in order to protect passengers, personnel and other public on the platform or on the train from the risk of electrical shock. Touch potential is the voltage between an energized object and the feet of a person in contact with the object, while step potential is the voltage between the feet of a person standing near an energized grounded object. The grounding and bonding of all metallic station elements within 4 metres of the track will ensure a strong return path to the traction power substation located in Barrie, preventing exposed metallic items at the station from being at different potentials. A buried counterpoise wire will be installed, grounded at both sides and bonded to the nearest impedance bond. Platform rebar and all exposed metallic items are then bonded to this counterpoise. The second purpose of grounding and bonding is to provide the means to carry electric currents into the earth under normal and fault conditions without exceeding operating and equipment limits, or adversely affecting continuity of service.

4.2 RATIONALE AND ALIGNMENT WITH METROLINX OBJECTIVES

Both the Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion and GO Rail Network Electrification projects are part of a transformation from a rush hour commuter service to an all-day regional transportation service.

Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion

The Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion project is being undertaken as part of the overall introduction of 15-minute, two-way electrified service to core parts of the GO Transit network, in order to address

33 Metrolinx (email, 20 April 2017).
increasing population and traffic congestion in the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area. Within the next decade, weekly trips across the network will increase from about 1,500 to nearly 6,000\textsuperscript{44}. The Barrie Corridor includes ten stations in eleven municipalities primarily over a single track\textsuperscript{45} (Figs. 9-10). The project will be implemented in different phases. Phase 1 includes:

- Detailed design and construction of a second track from Tecumseth Street in the City of Toronto to Aurora GO Station;
- Upgrades to the Rutherford, Maple, King City, and Aurora GO Stations; and
- Detailed design and construction of a new train layover facility within the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury for overnight train storage.

Phase 2 - Future Phases will include the second track between Aurora GO Station and Allandale Waterfront GO Station and associated station upgrades.

GO Rail Network Electrification

Under the Metrolinx Regional Express Rail program, electrification is a key component of the transformation of the GO Transit network into a comprehensive regional rapid transit network. The GO Rail Network Electrification project is being undertaken as part of the overall introduction of 15-minute, two-way electrified service to core parts of the GO Rail Network, in order to address increasing population and traffic congestion in the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area. The purpose of the electrification project is to convert six GO Transit-owned rail corridors from diesel to electric propulsion, including the whole of the Barrie Rail Corridor. Once implemented, the system will operate with a mixed fleet of diesel and electric trains. The Barrie Corridor electrification limits begin at the limits of the Parkdale Junction (off Kitchener Corridor) and continuing north to Allandale Waterfront GO Station on the Newmarket subdivision.

4.3 ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC CONSERVATION PLAN

There is currently no Strategic Conservation Plan for the Aurora GO Station. As a prescribed public body, Metrolinx is subject to the Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties (S&G PHP). The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada should also be used as a reference for conservation best practices.

4.4 OTHER PLANNING PROCESSES / REQUIREMENTS

The Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion and GO Rail Network Electrification projects are subject to environmental assessments under the Transit Project Assessment Process (TPAP) in accordance with Ontario Regulation 231/08. The TPAP needs to consider whether the transit project will have a negative impact on a matter of provincial importance. Matters of provincial importance include a protected heritage property, built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes.\textsuperscript{46} This HIA will

\begin{itemize}
  \item[\textsuperscript{45}] Metrolinx. \textit{Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion Project Draft Environmental Project Report [excerpts]}. 2017.
\end{itemize}
support the TPAP by identifying and mitigating any impacts to the Aurora GO Station, which is a protected heritage property.

## 5.0 Impact Assessment

The cultural heritage values and/or attributes and adjacent values and/or attributes potentially impacted by the proposed activities are identified, as well the potential impact is described and evaluated. All cultural heritage values and attributes of the property were considered. The values and attributes impacted by the Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion and GO Rail Network Electrification projects do not affect the key attributes which express the property's provincial significance. The impacts of the proposed activities on values and attributes are rated based on the following range:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>NONE</th>
<th>The activity has no negative impact on the value or attribute.</th>
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<tr>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>The activity has minimal negative impact on the value or attribute and requires mitigation to reduce impact to none.</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEDIUM</td>
<td>The activity affects or disturbs the value or attribute and requires mitigation to reduce impact to low or none.</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>The activity replaces or removes the value or attribute and requires mitigation to reduce impact to medium or low.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### 5.1 Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROPOSED ACTIVITY</th>
<th>VALUES AND/OR ATTRIBUTES AFFECTED</th>
<th>ADJACENT VALUES AND/OR ATTRIBUTES AFFECTED</th>
<th>POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON VALUES AND/OR ATTRIBUTES</th>
<th>SEVERITY OF IMPACTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grading and drainage work</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>Grading and drainage work on the railway bed will involve minimal change to the site. It has no negative impact.</td>
<td>NONE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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47 Based on the list of the “Description of future works planned at Aurora GO Station for BRCE project and separate GO Station upgrades”, Metrolinx Request to Quote. 17 March 2017.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROPOSED ACTIVITY</th>
<th>VALUES AND/OR ATTRIBUTES AFFECTED</th>
<th>ADJACENT VALUES AND/OR ATTRIBUTES AFFECTED</th>
<th>POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON VALUES AND/OR ATTRIBUTES</th>
<th>SEVERITY OF IMPACTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction of a second track west of existing station</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>The introduction of a new track maintains the functional and visual relationship between the station and the railway. Historical photographs indicate multiple previous tracks. It has no negative impact.</td>
<td>NONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of a new pocket track to west of existing station</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>The introduction of a new track maintains the functional and visual relationship between the station and the railway. Historical photographs indicate multiple previous tracks. It has no negative impact.</td>
<td>NONE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Aurora GO Station Upgrades**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROPOSED ACTIVITY</th>
<th>VALUES AND/OR ATTRIBUTES AFFECTED</th>
<th>ADJACENT VALUES AND/OR ATTRIBUTES AFFECTED</th>
<th>POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON VALUES AND/OR ATTRIBUTES</th>
<th>SEVERITY OF IMPACTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existing side platform east of existing track to be rehabilitated</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>The activity has no negative impact. If it has not been addressed in advance, repaving the platform provides the opportunity to undertake the repair of the deteriorating wood base of the station building.</td>
<td>NONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of a new west island platform</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>The introduction of a new platform maintains the functional and visual relationship between the station and the railway. It has no negative impact.</td>
<td>NONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowmelt system for new platform and existing platform</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>The snowmelt system consists of below-grade piping and a boiler structure which will be located at a substantial distance from the station building. It has no negative impact.</td>
<td>NONE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROPOSED ACTIVITY**</th>
<th>VALUES AND/OR ATTRIBUTES AFFECTED</th>
<th>ADJACENT VALUES AND/OR ATTRIBUTES AFFECTED</th>
<th>POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON VALUES AND/OR ATTRIBUTES</th>
<th>SEVERITY OF IMPACTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| New and replacement platform shelters | • The station is the key resource that defines the railway character of the area  
• The visibility and legibility of its heritage attributes when viewed from passing trains and from Wellington Street East | NONE | The design and placement of the two new platform shelters nearest to the station building may impact legibility of the station building. | LOW |
| Stair enclosures, elevators and partial platform canopies at two tunnels located at existing bus loop and to north of existing station building | • The station is the key resource that defines the railway character of the area  
• The visibility and legibility of its heritage attributes when viewed from passing trains and from Wellington Street East | All physical values and attributes | The design and placement of the stair enclosures, elevators and partial platform canopies serving the north tunnel will impact sightlines to and legibility of the station building.  
The proximity of the northeast stair enclosure to the station building may cause its construction to impact the building’s physical integrity through excavation and heavy machinery operations. | MEDIUM |
| Above grade electrical, communications and mechanical bunker located to south of existing bus loop | NONE | NONE | This structure is located near the southern extremity of the property at a substantial distance from the station building. It has no negative impact. | NONE |
| Expanded lighting, public address, closed-circuit television and fare systems | NONE | • The station is the key resource that defines the railway character of the area | These installations will not be fastened to the station building, but their design and placement may impact the legibility of the station building. | LOW |
5.2 GO RAIL NETWORK ELECTRIFICATION PROJECT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROPOSED ACTIVITY</th>
<th>VALUES AND/OR ATTRIBUTES AFFECTED</th>
<th>ADJACENT VALUES AND/OR ATTRIBUTES AFFECTED</th>
<th>POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON VALUES AND/OR ATTRIBUTES</th>
<th>SEVERITY OF IMPACTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Support structures for overhead contact system | ● The station is the key resource that defines the railway character of the area  
● The visibility and legibility of its heritage attributes when viewed from passing trains and from Wellington Street East | NONE | Support structures could partially obscure views of the historic station building. | LOW |
| Foundations for overhead contact system poles | NONE | All physical values and attributes | Excavation potentially adjacent to the historic station building may impact the physical integrity of the building. | LOW |
| Wiring for overhead contact system | NONE | NONE | This activity will have no impacts. | NONE |
| Grounding and bonding of the overhead contact system | NONE | NONE | This activity will have no impacts. | NONE |

6.0 Considered Alternatives and Mitigation Measures

By following the mitigation measures and recommended alternatives, the severity of the impacts of the proposed activities on the attributes of the Aurora GO Station are reduced to ‘low’ or ‘none’. Activities with impacts of ‘low’ should have best practice conservation techniques incorporated into the specifications as a mitigation measure. As concept designs are further advanced, it should be determined whether mitigation measures and alternatives should be revised for any of the proposed activities within this HIA.
### 6.1 BARRIE RAIL CORRIDOR EXPANSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROPOSED ACTIVITY</th>
<th>SEVERITY OF IMPACTS</th>
<th>MITIGATION / ALTERNATIVES</th>
<th>MITIGATED IMPACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grading and drainage work</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of a second track west of existing station</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of a new pocket track to west of existing station</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aurora GO Station Upgrades</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing side platform east of existing track to be rehabilitated</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>If it hasn’t been addressed in advance, repaving the platform provides the opportunity to undertake the repair of the deteriorating wood base of the station building.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of a new west island platform</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowmelt system for new platform and existing platform</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New and replacement platform shelters</td>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>New platform shelters should be placed away from sightlines to the station building as much as possible while respecting the building’s functional link to the railway. Their design should adhere to the <em>Metrolinx Design Excellence Guidelines</em> and the guidelines specific to Aurora GO Station.</td>
<td>NONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROPOSED ACTIVITY</td>
<td>SEVERITY OF IMPACTS</td>
<td>MITIGATION / ALTERNATIVES</td>
<td>MITIGATED IMPACT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stair enclosures, elevators and partial platform canopies at two tunnels located at existing bus loop and to north of existing station building</td>
<td>MEDIUM</td>
<td>New stair enclosures, elevators and partial platform canopies at the north tunnel should be placed away from sightlines to the station building as much as possible while respecting the building’s functional link to the railway tracks. Their design should adhere to the <em>Metrolinx Design Excellence Guidelines</em> and the guidelines specific to Aurora GO Station. The location of the northeast stair enclosure must consider potential impacts to the footing of the station building portico and the foundation of the building, including its angle of repose, through geotechnical study. The caisson wall indicated as a solution to protect the railway bed could be extended to isolate and protect the station building.(^{55}) A comprehensive protection plan should be established for the station building to mitigate any impact from construction, such as incidental contact from machine operations which could damage the structure or the finishes. It should include a protective zone around the building.</td>
<td>LOW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above grade electrical, communications and mechanical bunker located to south of existing bus loop</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanded lighting, public address, closed-circuit television and fare systems</td>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>New and replacement lighting, public address, closed-circuit television and fare systems should be placed away from sightlines to the station building as much as possible while respecting the building’s functional link to the railway. Their design should adhere to the <em>Metrolinx Design Excellence Guidelines</em> and the guidelines specific to Aurora GO Station.</td>
<td>NONE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2 GO RAIL NETWORK ELECTRIFICATION PROJECT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROPOSED ACTIVITY</th>
<th>SEVERITY OF IMPACTS</th>
<th>MITIGATION / ALTERNATIVES</th>
<th>MITIGATED IMPACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support structures for overhead contact system</td>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>Support structures should be positioned to avoid interfering with views of the station building.</td>
<td>NONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundations for overhead contact system poles</td>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>A comprehensive protection plan should be established for the station building to mitigate any impact from excavation during construction. It should reflect an understanding of machine operations around the building and, if possible, include a protective zone around the building.</td>
<td>NONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiring for overhead contact system</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounding and bonding of the overhead contact system</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.0 Summary of Community Engagement

7.1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

THA submitted a consultation plan to Metrolinx on April 20, 2017. On April 24, Nigel Molaro (THA) contacted Mr. Jeff Healy, Planner for the Town of Aurora and Staff Liaison to the Aurora Heritage Advisory Committee. The Town of Aurora provided comments to THA on May 8. The correspondence is as follows in Section 7.2

In 2013, Metrolinx and THA undertook a Cultural Heritage Evaluation which was the basis for the Metrolinx Heritage Committee’s decision in 2014 to identify the Aurora GO Station as a Metrolinx Heritage Property of Provincial Significance. As part of the Community Engagement process for the Cultural Heritage Evaluation, Metrolinx and THA consulted with the Program Manager of Heritage Planning at the Town of Aurora, the Aurora Heritage Advisory Committee, and the Aurora Historical Society.

Public consultations have been undertaken by Metrolinx as part of the Transit Project Assessment Process (TPAP) for the Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion (BRCE) and the GO Rail Network Electrification projects. The first public meeting for the BRCE took place in November 2015 and noted potential impacts to cultural heritage resources would be considered through the TPAP process. The second round of public meetings took place in November 2016 with a specific meeting in Aurora on November 23, 2016. The meeting identified cultural heritage resources within the study area. The third public meeting took place in February 2017. It noted that impacts to built heritage resources were
being assessed as part of the TPAP. A review of the published summaries from the first and second meetings did not reveal any public concerns with regard to heritage at Aurora GO Station.

The first round of public meetings for the GO Rail Network Electrification project introduced the project to communities, presented recommended locations of infrastructure for feedback, and collect comments and inputs from the public. These took place in February and March 2016, with one meeting held in Aurora on February 17, 2016. A second round of public meeting were held in November 2016, to provide project information, review proposed mitigation strategies, and collect community feedback. The Aurora meeting took place November 23, 2016, and was a combined meeting incorporating two other TPAP projects: the Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion, and Lakeshore East – Don River to Scarborough Expansion. A third round of public meetings were held in June and July 2017. The meetings provided updates on the overall project and public feedback, mitigation strategies, in addition to cultural heritage and archaeological studies and recommendations. Aurora GO Station was identified as a provincially important heritage property that will potentially be impacted. The closest meeting to Aurora was held in Newmarket on July 5, 2017. Feedback on cultural heritage properties was requested at the meeting.

Consultation is ongoing as part of the TPAP, including public meetings, and the final Environmental Project Report and technical studies (including heritage) will be posted for the 30-day public review period.

7.2 CORRESPONDENCE WITH COMMUNITY

Enquiry from THA – April 24, 2017

Mr. Jeff Healy  
Planner, Town of Aurora  
Staff Liaison, Aurora Heritage Advisory Committee

Dear Mr. Healy,

As part of its obligations under the Metrolinx Heritage Protocol, and in order to assist with management of its properties, Metrolinx has retained Taylor Hazell Architects (THA) to prepare a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) regarding the Aurora GO Station at 121 Wellington Street East in Aurora, Ontario.

As part of the Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (CHER) undertaken in 2013, Metrolinx and THA consulted with the Program Manager of Heritage Planning at the Town of Aurora, the Aurora Heritage Advisory Committee, and the Aurora Historical Society. Confirming the findings of this CHER, in 2014 the Metrolinx Heritage Committee identified the Aurora GO Station as a Metrolinx Heritage Property of Provincial Significance in accordance with Ontario Regulations 09/06 and 10/06.

The present HIA is being undertaken to address the proposed activities of two separate projects: GO Rail Network Electrification and the Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion. Public consultations undertaken by

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56 THA (email, 24 April 2017)
Metrolinx as part of the Transit Project Assessment Process for each project have been ongoing since November 2015, with further public meetings in November 2016 and February 2017.

The HIA will assess the proposed activities in relation to the heritage attributes described in the Metrolinx Statement of Cultural Heritage Value. The proposed activities include:

**GO Rail Network Electrification**
- Construction of an electrified overhead contact system

**Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion**
- Construction of a second track
- Construction of a new pocket track
- Rehabilitation of the existing side platform
- Construction of a new island platform
- Construction of new and replacement platform shelters
- Grading and drainage work
- Construction of an electrical, communications and mechanical bunker
- Construction of two tunnels with stair enclosures, elevators and partial platform canopies
- Installation of a snowmelt system for new platform and existing platform
- Expansion of lighting, PA, CCTV and fare systems

The proposed activities, while proximate to the station building, will not involve any physical interventions to the station building itself. Metrolinx would welcome any input the Town of Aurora may have as part of this HIA process.

Yours sincerely,

Nigel Molaro
Heritage Specialist
Taylor Hazell Architects Ltd.

**Response from Town of Aurora – May 8, 2017**

The following comments are to be taken into consideration of the preparation of a future HIA for the Aurora GO train station:

- Will the proposed and refurbished shelters incorporate heritage design to be complementary to the Train Station?
- Staff recognize the current construction of three underpasses, are the proposed tunnels additional construction?
- Lighting and CCTV systems are recommended to be designed in a matter in keeping with the historic train station
- Metrolinx to consider wood chairs which are designed in keeping with the train station

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67 Town of Aurora (email, 8 May 2017)
• Metrolinx to provide conservation measures for the train station and the OHT heritage plaque & bell during construction

Regards,

Jeff Healey
Planner
Planning & Building Services
Town of Aurora

8.0 Recommendations

The undertakings at Aurora GO Station vary both in terms of scale and potential impact on the cultural heritage value and attributes of this protected heritage property. Most of the proposed activities do not have a direct impact on the station building itself, and none impact the attributes which express the property’s provincial significance.

Certain proposed activities, however, have the potential to impact cultural heritage values and attributes, and require mitigation on two general fronts – the physical integrity of the station building during construction and the visibility and legibility of the station building in the context of new structures.

As a whole, the undertakings allow the increased use of Aurora GO Station required for it to operate within the planned 15-minute, two-way electrified service of the GO Transit network. This overarching outcome supports the functional relationship of the station to the railway which is described in the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value adopted by the Metrolinx Heritage Committee. The range of proposed activities also present an opportunity to look at the property in its entirety, in a manner that protects and enhances the cultural heritage values and attributes of Aurora GO Station.

Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties

As a prescribed public body, Metrolinx is subject to the Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties (S&G PHP) in the case of this Metrolinx Provincial Heritage Property of Provincial Significance. The S&G PHP set standards for the protection, maintenance, use and disposal of these properties. They also set out the requirements for a Strategic Conservation Plan (SCP). An SCP for Aurora GO Station is recommended as a priority in order to assess any areas of concern, establish overall conservation guidelines, and set out specific short-, mid- and long-term conservation activities. This will ensure the proper conservation of cultural heritage attributes, such as the paint and wood deterioration observed during the assessment of site conditions.

Metrolinx Design Excellence Guidelines

Any proposed activities at Aurora GO Station should document, understand, and be compatible with the context, setting and built attributes that contribute to cultural heritage value as per the Metrolinx Design Excellence Guidelines, which contain a dossier specific to Aurora GO Station.
Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

The design of new structures as it relates to the values and attributes of Aurora GO Station is of particular importance. On the subject of contemporary interventions, the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (S&G) state: “Conserve the heritage value and character-defining elements when creating any new additions to an historic place or any related new construction. Make the new work physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the historic place”. The S&G are recommended as a source of best practices.

The current designs for station upgrades include roof designs, for instance, which propose to imitate the roof design of the historic station building. Furthermore, the Town of Aurora’s comments include a request for certain new work to be “in keeping with the historic station”. As designs are developed, heritage specialists should be involved at every stage, and the community further consulted.

9.0 Sources

Drawings


Metrolinx. BRCE ROLL PLAN (S2B) - Aurora GO Station. 2017.


Correspondence

Metrolinx (email, 20 April 2017)

Metrolinx (email, 15 May 2017)

Metrolinx (email, 29 May 2017)

THA (email, 24 April 2017)

Town of Aurora (email, 8 May 2017)

Other


60 Town of Aurora (email, 8 May 2017)


## 10.0 Project Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSONNEL</th>
<th>PROJECT ROLE</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>QUALIFICATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ellen Kowalchuk</td>
<td>Project Manager</td>
<td>Associate / Manager of Heritage Planning, Taylor Hazell Architects</td>
<td>MA, CAHP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigel Molaro</td>
<td>Conservation Specialist</td>
<td>Heritage Specialist, Taylor Hazell Architects</td>
<td>BA, Dipl. Heritage Conservation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.0 Figures

![Fig. 1 Aurora GO Station (Google, 2017)]
Fig. 2  Aerial image of local context, with red arrow indicating the Aurora GO Station building, and blue rectangle corresponding to the property boundary (Google / THA, 2017).
Fig. 3  Aurora GO Station platform, facing south (THA, 2017)

Fig. 4  Aurora GO Station platform, facing north (THA, 2017)
Fig. 5  Aurora GO Station, paint and wood deterioration on the west façade (THA, 2017)

Fig. 6  Aurora GO Station, paint and wood deterioration on the south façade (THA, 2017)
Fig. 7  Aurora GO Station, paint deterioration under the north portico (THA, 2017)

Fig. 8  Aurora GO Station, paint deterioration on the west façade (THA, 2017)
Fig. 9 GO Rail Network Electrification Study (Metrolinx).