

There is a GO plan, says former Mayor

OUR READERS WRITE:

In the weeks since remarks were made during the lengthy June 25, 2024 Town of Caledon Council Meeting asking about the 'plan' as it relates to the Bolton GO train and more recently with the Media Release from the Town of Caledon announcing the prioritization of a Bolton GO train station, it appears there is a need for a refresher on the extensive historical background of this particular file.

The July 16, 2024 Media Release released by the Town of Caledon says Council have announced plans to 'prioritize advocacy for a GO train station on Highway 50 in Bolton.'

Establishing or even prioritizing a GO train station on Highway 50 is a moot point.

Why?

Because in the overall planning for this type of infrastructure it is not about the stops or the stations.

It is about the line.

As the former Mayor of the Town of Caledon I can tell you your Caledon team at that time - including our Chief Administration Officer (CAO) and other staff - were working collaboratively with our counterparts at the City of Vaughan to advance this particular line. It has been a multi-year project involving extensive studies at multiple levels to help provide better transit options for the residents of both communities as we prepare for population growth.

The province designated the lands near Humber Station Road and King Street (commonly referred to as Macville) for a future GO rail side in March 2021.

The provincial commitment the proposed Caledon-Vaughan GO rail line was moving forward was received in January 2022 and was included as part of the provincial government's Greater Golden Horseshoe Transportation Plan released in March of that same year.

The Caledon-Vaughan GO rail line is a brand-new build running from Weston to Macville with stops along the way designed to accommodate the growing populations of the two communities. The two communities need to work together to capture the population numbers and justify the expense of the new line.

As part of the plan, the GO station is to be located along the existing CPR rail line at King Street and Humber Station Road and connect with the existing GO Line that includes the Emery, Woodbridge, Elder Mills and Kleinburg stations, providing connections to the UP Express at Weston and across to Toronto Pearson Airport, as far as Union Station.

The announcements were an important community partnership because there are many questions and variables to consider in the development of any new rail line, including quite simply the question of where to park the trains at the end of the tracks.

Vaughan wants and needs this transit line every bit as much as Caledon does.

But there is no place to park the trains in Vaughan.

And where do we have the space to park trains in downtown Bolton?

The line will be running through Bolton so I couldn't agree more - it makes 100 per cent sense to have a station in downtown Bolton.

But you need enough space to build that required end-of-line infrastructure built first ? in advance of both the line or any homes being built around it.

It just makes sense.

The recent Media Release goes on to say ?staff will immediately adjust the approach for the upcoming Association of Municipalities of Ontario advocacy conference.?

While there is certainly no harm in advocating for a second station, I would caution the delegates against any advocacy efforts that do not include the Humber Station Road and King Street (Macville) location for the simple reason that prioritizing the Bolton station does not address the end-of-the-tracks and without that pivotal and particular infrastructure, the line simply cannot be built.

If?as seems to have been suggested by the remarks in that June 25, 2024 Council Meeting?during this term of Council the delegate teams are being questioned about where the plan is, maybe what is really being asked for is an update from the Town of Caledon on the progress of the ?plan? that was developed after many years of study and collaboration by multiple agencies and government partners and included in the provincial government's Master Transportation Plan released almost two-and-a-half two years ago now.

As our Town of Caledon delegate teams begin their homework to prepare for the upcoming advocacy meetings at the provincial Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) the following links provide important background information and should help refresh the memories for our Town of Caledon delegate teams:

March 8, 2021:

justsayincaledon.com/caledon-to-receive-designation-