

Metrolinx set to give historic train station a face lift

As Metrolinx continues work towards significantly expanded GO Train service in the years ahead, Aurora's historic GO station is set to get a significant makeover as early as the spring.

Metrolinx, the Provincial body that operates GO Transit, is in the process of awarding a contract for the rehabilitation of the station building. Work will include exterior paint repairs to wood cladding, the repair of trim and decorative elements and the refurbishment of any wood repair that is necessary.

‘It’s important to maintain all of our stations to ensure they are safe and reliable for our customers,’ says Phil Pengelly, Metrolinx’s senior manager for facilities, operation and maintenance. ‘But when it comes to heritage buildings, ongoing maintenance plays an important role in preserving a piece of history so future generations can continue to enjoy them.’

Aurora welcomed its first steam train in 1853 on the Ontario, Simcoe, and Huron Railway.

The present station on Wellington Street East, near between Berczy Street and Industrial Parkway South, was built by the Grand Trunk Railway. Before Metrolinx took over operations in 1982, the station was designated a Provincial Heritage Building in 1971.

It was named a Federal Heritage Railway Station in 1990.

Today, the Aurora Station is a hub for GO Transit, serving both rail and bus commuters and is a stop on several bus routes operated by York Region Transit.

As a stop on the Barrie Corridor, the Aurora Station will see all-day two-way GO Train service in the years ahead, along with double-tracking to make the expansion possible.

As part of the rail expansion, Metrolinx plans to construct a vehicle and pedestrian underpass to minimize long-term traffic disruption on Wellington Street once 15-minute all-way rail service is put in place.

‘We have received bids through a public tendering process and the contract is expected to be awarded in the coming weeks,’ says Metrolinx spokesperson Fannie Sunshine. ‘Any maintenance or repairs to these properties are done in accordance with The Heritage Act and other applicable legislation, as per the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties (S&G). The intent of this work is to ensure building integrity is maintained, particularly through the exterior painted coatings in this contract.’

By Brock Weir Editor Local Journalism Initiative Reporter