

Date

Name/Title

Address

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Re: Letter of Recommendation for Passenger Rail Service

The Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) of the City of Peterborough has written this letter giving its support to re-introduce Passenger Rail Service between Peterborough and Toronto Ontario, and also urges all levels of government to provide their financial support.

Passenger Rail Service will provide cost effective, efficient and safe travel for persons with disabilities to and from the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) given that both the proposed transit trains and station platforms would meet the latest accessibility standards. Public transport between Peterborough and Toronto already exists via buses, however not all buses servicing Peterborough are fully accessible. This mode of transport is a challenge for many people with disabilities. Private transport is also prohibitive due to high cost. People with disabilities living, working and attending school in Peterborough, therefore, need Passenger Rail Service. With this letter, the AAC urges all levels of government to give their financial support to this much needed service.

To highlight this need, the AAC would like to share the experiences of an individual with a physical disability that lives in the City of Peterborough. The individual enrolled in classes offered only in Toronto after confirming that GO Bus service between Peterborough and Toronto was accessible to passengers using mobility devices (see www.gotransit.com). On the first day of classes he went to the Peterborough GO Bus transit stop, but the bus that arrived lacked the accessibility required in order for him to board. Unfortunately, this happened several more times. On one specific occasion the individual got stuck trying to board the bus as it too did not meet this individuals specific needs for a mid-sized scooter. Frustrated with the lack of accommodation and service, the ultimate decision was to cancel classes and remain at home. Had a Passenger Rail Service meeting the accessibility standards been operating between Peterborough and Toronto this individual would have been able to attend class like any other able bodied citizen with a greater sense of independence and quality of life.

To summarize, we, the City of Peterborough Accessibility Advisory Committee, strongly urge all levels of Government to approve funding to restore Passenger Rail Service between Peterborough and Toronto. Thereby giving Persons with Disabilities living, working and attending school in Peterborough the access to public transportation that they both deserve and need.

Sincerely,

Councillor Keith Riel
Chair, Accessibility Advisory Committee
City of Peterborough