

GO Transit upgrades buses

BY MID AUGUST, 20 aging GO Transit buses had been replaced with new more environmentally-friendly vehicles that provide excellent fuel economy and fewer emissions. The buses are equipped with wheelchair lifts. According to Ontario Transportation Minister Donna Cansfield, "These are the first 20 of 60 buses purchased earlier this year. Fleet renewal is key to retaining ridership . . ." The remaining buses will arrive over the next two years. Together, the province and GO Transit invested about \$35 million in the 60 new buses, which are manufactured by Motor Coach Industries of Winnipeg, Manitoba. GO Transit serves over 5 million people living in and around Toronto. ❧



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Manitoba partners to step up e-waste collection

FOR A SHORT PERIOD in summer 2007, Manitoba partnered with HP Canada and Best Buy to expand its e-waste (electronic waste) round-up program. From July 20 to August 2, people could drop off any make or model of unwanted desktop computer, laptop, monitor or printer at Winnipeg Best Buy locations and in return were offered



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a discount of \$25 off the purchase of a new HP or Compaq desktop computer, laptop, monitor or printer. Sims Recycling in Brampton, Ontario, receives Manitoba's e-waste. The province's first shipment of e-waste, part of an estimated 500 tonnes to be collected before the program ended in September, was delivered in early July. ❧

Canada buys better broadband service

THROUGH THE GOVERNMENT of Canada's National Satellite Initiative (NSI), the federal government is contributing 75 percent (approximately \$20.65 million) of the \$27.5 million cost, for the procurement of two satellite transponders and the required earth station and local access network upgrades. The remaining \$6.88 million is being provided from a variety of sources: the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund is contributing \$1.8 million, the Government of Quebec's *Villages branchés* program will contribute \$2.2 million and Telesat Canada is putting in \$2.88 million. As a result of the purchase, 43 northern communities in Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba will have greater access to broadband services such as e-health and online education opportunities. Today, broadband is considered a key piece of public infrastructure. The federal government's \$33-billion "Building Canada" plan was developed to support infrastructure development and renewal by providing a source of long-term, stable funding to initiatives such as NSI. ❧

Windsor, Ontario grows its 311 service

BUILDING ON ITS existing 311 service and technology, in the summer of 2007, the City of Windsor took credit for being "the first city in North America to test and launch Motorola's next generation customer service request (CSR) software – CSR version 4.0. CSR is Motorola's government customer relationship management software."

The new 311 is faster and offers more intelligent call handling thanks to "integrated telephony features, a new geographic information system (GIS)-centric application and improved performance management tools. . . These features will provide Windsor with enhanced information for better decision making and streamlined service delivery.



Windsor launched its 311 service in August of 2005, the first of its kind in Ontario; the service has quickly grown into a well-utilized service by residents throughout the community. Windsor residents can call 311 to get information on any of the numerous city services, programs or events. In 2006, Windsor 311 (311@city.windsor.on.ca) received over 140,000 calls and is projected to take 200,000 in 2007 based on current call volumes. The CSR software quickly documents citizen's requests and electronically sends them to the appropriate department for investigation. Residents are given a tracking number to assist them in following up on their request. CSR 4.0 . . . will further streamline their 311 operations. . . Additionally with the enhanced multi-jurisdictional capabilities available with map layers, the city will be able to offer call centre support to other neighbouring municipalities that may want to offer 311 service to their citizens." ❧