

## **Green Lights for Transit Vehicles in Ontario**

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The Ontario government has approved the use of technology that will let buses, streetcars and transit maintenance vehicles cut short a red traffic light or lengthen a green traffic light.

Under the Transportation Statute Law Amendment Act, 2005, public transit vehicles (municipal buses and GO Transit) and traffic signal maintenance vehicles are allowed to install and use pre-empting traffic control signal devices. This gives transit vehicles priority and makes transit more efficient. Prior to this legislation, only emergency vehicles were allowed this technology to decrease their response times.

This initiative responds to requests from municipal transit authorities. The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) and York Region have already implemented forms of this transit priority system on some of their routes and other cities, including Ottawa, are looking at using it. The way it works is sensors are placed in the pavement in front of a traffic light. A transmitting device is installed in the authorized transit vehicle and is used to send signals to the sensors to shorten or lengthen the traffic light.

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation says the move should help cut commuting time, ease traffic congestion and make public transit a faster and more attractive alternative to driving a car.