



Greyhound Departure: a Kick in the Gut for Western Canada

Earlier this summer Greyhound Bus announced it is abandoning all but one of its bus services west of Sudbury. Until this October, Greyhound is an interprovincial passenger and parcel service relied upon by many Canadians, although in diminishing numbers. Our politicians, both federal and provincial, must act now. In July our Prairie VP, Steffen Knippel, sent an appeal to the federal Minister of Transport, Marc Garneau, and all provincial and territorial ministers, calling for an Integrated Multi-Modal Transportation Strategy.

In his letter, posted on our website, Steffen stated that "Canadians only pay taxes because they trust their elected representatives to protect their interests. Most Canadians don't care which level of government has jurisdiction, they just want to know that public goods and services will continue to be available at a reasonable cost." Steffen further pointed out that those same "elected leaders must . . . ensure the continued provision of transportation services that meet the needs of all Canadians".

Canada has never had a National Public Transportation Strategy, but the Greyhound collapse in Western Canada requires immediate action from both levels of government. One of Transport Action's contacts in Ottawa says that a federal-provincial task force has been set up to investigate and recommend possible solutions. We believe strongly that:

1. Bids should be requested immediately from Greyhound and other bus operators for a one year subsidy to forestall the pending disruption to passengers that will occur at the end of October,
2. VIA Rail should be asked to collaborate with the task force on a staged return of passenger rail services on the CP line in an initial "Prairie phase" from Winnipeg to Calgary in conjunction with regional bus operators to supplement and feed said rail service,
3. The federal government should work with VIA Rail to return The Canadian service to the CP tracks from Toronto to Winnipeg and run it six days a week, or alternatively, to run a three day a week service to supplement The Canadian on CN from Winnipeg to Edmonton, and
4. A possible extension or separate service to Vancouver from either Calgary or Edmonton (if The Canadian is not run 6 or 7 times a week) should be investigated now as a second phase.

Transport Action urges both levels of government to not only find an immediate solution to the Greyhound problem, but to develop a longer term integrated rail-bus plan for Western Canada.

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What we've been reading:



Skelly says no danger to Hamilton LRT funding

A former city councillor and fierce LRT opponent, Skelly was elected in June to represent the riding of Flamborough-Glanbrook. She's the city's only Tory MPP. Hamilton's other four ridings are held by New Democrats. MPP says if LRT ends up dying it will be because new municipal council decides not to go ahead. [More here.](#)

Government of Canada announces funding to improve rail safety in Alberta

Today, the Honourable Amarjeet Sohi, Minister of Natural Resources and Member of Parliament for Edmonton Mill Woods, on behalf of the Honourable Marc Garneau, Minister of Transport, announced more than \$3.3 million to support eighteen projects that will improve rail safety in Alberta .

[More here](#)



Air Canada, WestJet raising baggage fee to \$30 for lowest-fare passengers



Many Canadians will be forced to spend a little more to travel after Air Canada and WestJet Airlines Ltd. said they are increasing fees for passengers to check their bags. The country's two largest airlines are raising the fee for the first checked bag to \$30 from \$25, and for the second bag to \$50 from \$30.

[More here](#) .

Highway-clogging construction near Chamberlain, Sask. to be halted for long weekend



Roadwork that has been slowing traffic to a standstill on Highway 11 near Chamberlain, Sask., will be halted for the upcoming long weekend, according to the province. [More here.](#)

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