

This newsletter is produced by Transport Action Canada for all members of the Transport Action family. If you are a member of Transport Action Atlantic, Ontario, Prairies or BC, you are automatically a member of Transport Action Canada. The regional organizations have chosen to issue a joint electronic newsletter covering all of Canada.



TRANSPORT ACTION
CANADA

Dear ,

With a federal election barely a month away, and the next government preparing a budget shortly thereafter, we are putting forward our best ideas for the future of rail and bus services across Canada... and we mean across **all** of Canada, please, not just for the biggest cities with the most vocal mayors.

Launching our *Ideas in Motion* Policy Briefings



Our *Ideas in Motion* policy briefings have already been delivered to The Hon. Marc Garneau, Minister of Transportation, all the federal opposition party critics, the Transportation Committee co-chairs, as well as relevant MPs and provincial politicians.

Prepared over the summer by our national and regional boards with the expertise of Transport Action members, these one-page briefings address some of the most urgent subjects the government must tackle:

- Ordering new sleepers, accessible sleepers, and dining cars to replace the "Renaissance" cars before they wear out and leave VIA Rail without enough equipment to deliver reliable long-distance service.
- Providing regulatory support for passenger rail to ensure track access and on-time service, backed by investment support for freight railroads.
- Restoring a nationwide network of bus and rail services, to fill the gap left by Greyhound and fulfill the responsibility to provide safe transportation options to all Canadians.
- Making Newfoundland ferry rates reasonable and affordable again, as mandated by the Terms of Union.
- Securing the future of the Cape Breton rail network.
- Delivering an integrated network plan for Southwestern Ontario with the federal and provincial governments working together rather than offering competing services.

You can read and download these briefings here:

<https://www.transportaction.ca/documents/policy-briefings/>

Please share these documents with your local candidates. They're putting themselves forward to be your representatives because they believe they can make Canada better. You can show them how ensuring adequate public transportation to bring people together is critical to turning their hopes for our country into reality.

We'll be launching online campaign tools for election 2019 soon.

All our staff are volunteers, but this still costs money.

Your support will help us make it happen.

Donate \$25

Gaspé leaders meet Quebec Premier, railway action promised

On August 18th, more than 150 citizens attended a rally to demand an acceleration of the repairs to the Gaspésie railway, in order to considerably shorten seven year timeline suggested by the Premier François Legault earlier this year. A delegation from Gaspé then travelled to Quebec City to meet with Premier Legault on Wednesday August 21st, securing a promise to speed up the pace and complete the work as quickly as possible.

VIA Rail service has been suspended since 2013, and even after this announcement it would be 2025 before the line is ready for passengers again. **Le Groupe TRAQ** and other advocates in Quebec will continue to push the government to do better.

<https://www.lavoixdelest.ca/actualites/le-fil-groupe-capitales-medias/chemin-de-fer-en-gaspesie-les-citoyens-veulent-un-retour-plus-rapide-2c344f2bb23e51295ca655554863a428>

Halifax Station Renovation Complete



The VIA station in Halifax has been undergoing some significant renovation work over the past year. Extensive work on the roof and skylights required scaffolding and a temporary drop ceiling to be installed. This took up much of the station space, making it crowded around train departures and arrivals, and made it impossible for the station to be used for events.

This work is finally complete. It feels very bright, open and cheery, especially after so many months of construction. Tim Hayman of **Transport Action Atlantic** captured the beauty of the new clear skylights in the photo above, taken on a sunny Friday August 2nd. It is ready for daily service, when we win it back. *Keep up the fight!*

Federal Funding Committed for two Toronto Transit Projects

On August 26, 2019, the federal government confirmed more than \$1 billion of funding for two Toronto rapid transit projects - capacity improvements at the Bloor-Yonge subway station and construction of six new "Smart Track" GO stations.

The Bloor-Yonge project is a solid and badly-needed initiative. However, there is considerable strategic uncertainty about the Smart Track stations.

For further details about the funding and projects, please refer to the post Transport Action Ontario's website: <http://ontario.transportaction.ca/federal-funding-committed-for-two-toronto-transit-projects/>

Transport Action Ontario will continue to track these projects and advocate for the best use of taxpayer dollars.

Greater Toronto Fare Integration Moving Slowly, Needs More Commitment

Setting up a region-wide integrated transit fare system across the 11 transit agencies of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area has been a goal of transit planners for over

a decade. It remains elusive. Transport Action Ontario has summarized this long-running saga:
<http://ontario.transportaction.ca/greater-toronto-fare-integration-moving-slowly-needs-more-commitment/>

The work to meet this objective has not gone well. The first five years were largely spent on getting the Presto fare card system up and running. Analysis of various regional fare models consumed the next three years, with Metrolinx finally concluding that simple modifications to the existing systems were the best option. The last three years have seen limited progress, and some setbacks, on making these simple modifications. **Transport Action Ontario** is disappointed with the slow progress and urges all agencies and levels of government to commit resources and political will to this important area.

VIA Rail launches apprenticeship program

VIA Rail has introduced its own training and apprenticeship program for locomotive engineers, in addition to hiring fully qualified engineers and conductors. It's a rigorous and intensive two-year program, based in Toronto, and the first cohort will be graduating just in time for the new Siemens Charger locomotives arriving in 2021. So, if you know someone who has what it takes to drive a train, send them this link:

<https://corpo.viarail.ca/en/locomotive-engineer-apprentice>

Transportation Newsround

LA Times: Via Rail, a return to the older - and let's be honest, better - way of travelling

<https://www.latimes.com/travel/story/2019-08-16/canada-via-rail-toronto-vancouver>

Ontario adds more GO frequencies

<https://www.blogto.com/city/2019/08/ontario-announces-major-go-transit-service-expansion/>

VIA Rail introduces Leisure Passes, makes all business passes transferable

<https://www.viarail.ca/en/fares-and-packages/rail-passes>

Canada invests \$45.8 million in Gaspésie erosion protection and restoring railway

<https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/canada-invests-in-protecting-the-gaspesie-against-erosion-and-restoring-railway-transportation-899458932.html>

Consortium picked for Hurontario LRT build

<https://www.on-sitemag.com/infrastructure/ontario-picks-mobilinx-consortium-to-build-1-4-billion-hurontario-lrt-through-mississauga-and-brampton/1003965000/>

Grain shipments returning to port of Churchill

<https://www.producer.com/2019/08/grain-cars-make-return-visit-to-port-of-churchill/>

Shoreline and rail line protection study moves forward in Nova Scotia

<https://www.trurodaily.com/news/regional/amhersts-mayor-pleased-with-tender-call-for-isthmus-study-340858/>

Ontario Northland to refurbish GO cars, protecting some North Bay jobs for now

<https://northernontario.ctvnews.ca/ontario-northland-receives-go-train-contract-1.4539789>

Pressure still on to get the Nothlander restored

<https://www.mynorthbaynow.com/46833/vanthof-worried-that-tories-are-saying-little-about-restoring-passenger-rail/>

Overnight train from Montreal to New York still under consideration

<https://www.journaldemontreal.com/2019/08/16/un-ex-depute-veut-lancer-une-liaison-ferroviaire-de-nuit-vers-new-york>

USA: Las Vegas rail project back on track

https://www.progressiverailroading.com/high_speed_rail/news/Virgin-Trains-seeks-financing-for-Las-Vegas-to-California-rail-service--58240

USA: Phoenix voters soundly thrash anti-LRT ballot measure

<https://www.smartcitiesdive.com/news/phoenix-voters-substantially-back-light-rail-expansion/561856/>

We love to hear what you think! We hope you enjoyed reading this newsletter. Reply to this email with any thoughts you may have, and your own local transport and advocacy updates.

Thanks for reading!



Terry Johnson
President, Transport Action Canada

P.S: Transport Action Canada is funded by grassroots members and donors like you. Support our mission to ensure access to bus and rail services for to all Canadians by making a contribution.

Any amount-- \$25, \$50, \$100, \$200... Even \$10 will be deeply appreciated, and makes a real impact in our ability to continue our work.

Donate Now!

Our membership is our strength. You can help by recruiting a friend to join our fight for better public transportation across Canada...

Join Transport Action

If you prefer to send us a cheque, cheques may be mailed to:
Transport Action Canada, P.O. Box 858, Station B, Ottawa ON K1P 5P9

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