



## Transport Action News - April 2022



### HFR shouldn't mean outsourcing VIA Rail services

Hello ,

The response to our survey was overwhelming and decisive: **The vast majority of our members and supporters want High Frequency Rail to proceed, and think the government is taking far too long getting the project approved and built.** However, the message was also loud and clear on a couple of key points: First of all, the Windsor to Quebec City corridor is not the only priority the government should be working on, with ensuring the continuity of long-distance services and the restoration of the Calgary-Edmonton corridor both being high priorities, including for members who live along the Windsor to Quebec City corridor. Secondly, your responses **strongly reject the outsourcing of VIA Rail's corridor services** to a private sector partner, as proposed by the federal government on March 9th.

Over the course of a series of meetings with the Assistant Deputy Minister responsible for High Frequency Rail and with Minister of Transport Omar Alghabra, we have sought an explanation for their choice of procurement methodology, and asked for the Joint Project Office's full report to be made public. We have yet to receive either, but Minister Alghabra and his colleagues expressed enthusiasm for passenger rail and public transit as key elements in building a strong, inclusive and sustainable economy while fulfilling Canada's climate commitments, including outside the corridor. VIA Rail, transit agencies and passengers have not always enjoyed such a level of policy support from Canada's federal government, but unfortunately this was not reflected in this year's federal budget, which once again failed to provide funding to start the urgently needed replacement of the long-distance train fleet.

The rest of VIA Rail's vital network across Canada could be at risk if more than 90% or services and 75% of revenues from the corridor are in the hands of a private sector partner. Worse, the private sector partner would be expected to take a gamble on ridership and revenue projections up to 50 years into the future, while inheriting many of the challenges and risks VIA faces today. Any private sector consortium would also almost certainly have to include a European or Asian state-owned passenger railway company, doing the job that VIA Rail, our Canadian state-owned passenger railway company, was created to do.

We will be urging the government to proceed with HFR, but with full transparency, sooner, and on the basis of VIA Rail continuing to directly operate Canada's passenger railway.

**Don't miss [Transport Action Ontario's AGM and public meeting with Elizabeth May, this Saturday](#), where we will be discussing HFR and other passenger rail priorities. Details below...**

Sincerely,



Terry Johnson, President  
Transport Action Canada

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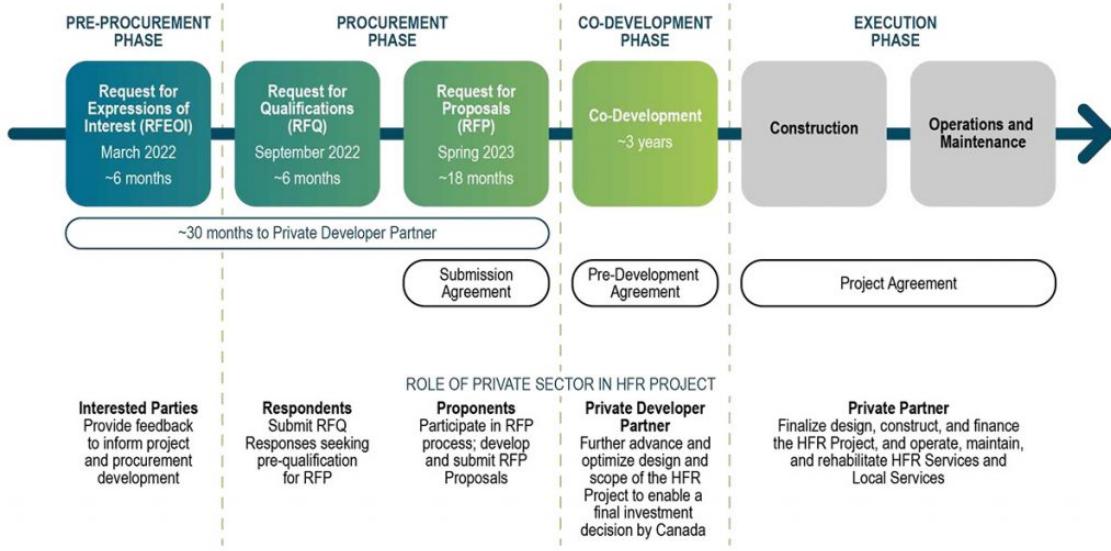


### **Public Presentation and Transport Action Ontario AGM**

Public Presentation by Elizabeth May M.P. and TAO President's Report Saturday April 23rd 2022, 1:00pm Eastern  
Invitation to the Public Transport Action invites you to join us for the public portion of our Ontario Annual General Meeting, featuring...

[Read more](#)

[ontario.transportaction.ca](http://ontario.transportaction.ca)



## HFR has grown into a megaproject, can it succeed as one?

Transport Action is concerned that the recent scope changes put the High Frequency Rail project in jeopardy due to the significant cost escalation, and disappointed that a final decision is unlikely to be made before the next election in 2025.

[Read more](#)

[www.transportaction.ca](http://www.transportaction.ca)



## FlixBus enters the fray in Ontario

FlixBus, owned by German company FlixMobility, enters the recently deregulated and increasingly crowded Ontario intercity bus market on April 7 th 2022, with routes from Toronto to Guelph, Kitchener, Niagara Falls, St. Catharines, and Ottawa....

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## Saskatoon Bus Cancellations Causing Concern

Saskatoon Transit's aging buses are becoming a big maintenance issue, reportedly causing numerous cancellations. The transit director was recently in front of council to explain why this is happening.[1] The city's fleet consists of older Nova...

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[prairie.transportaction.ca](http://prairie.transportaction.ca)



## Atlantic Transport News - April 2022

Federal budget comes up empty for VIA's Ocean – but tri-weekly service to resume in June; Maritime Bus gets cash infusion from provinces – but nothing yet for DRL; Rates unchanged this summer on Marine Atlantic ferries ...

[Read more](#)

[transportactionatlantic.ca](http://transportactionatlantic.ca)

# Transportation Newsround

BC Transit bus route from Lougheed SkyTrain to Chilliwack launching this month  
<https://dailyhive.com/vancouver/bc-transit-fraser-valley-express-66-fvx-lougheed-route>

High-frequency rail network would need detour to reach downtown Montreal  
<https://montrealgazette.com/news/local-news/high-frequency-rail-network-will-need-detour-to-reach-downtown-montreal>

Ottawa LRT Projects Advancing  
<https://www.railwayage.com/passenger/light-rail/ottawa-lrt-projects-advancing/>

Ontario government and Metrolinx arrange co-fares with most GTHA transit systems but not the TTC  
<https://blog.metrolinx.com/2022/03/01/metrolinx-unveils-deals-to-help-thousands-of-go-transit-and-up-express-riders-save-money/>

Halifax Transit plans interim bus lane for part of Bayers Road  
<https://www.halifaxexaminer.ca/city-hall/halifax-transit-plans-interim-bus-lane-for-part-of-bayers-road/>

TransLink raises fares while Toronto and other cities across Canada freeze theirs  
<https://theprovince.com/news/local-news/translink-raises-fares-while-toronto-and-other-cities-across-canada-freeze-theirs>

London GO train off to slow start as mayor lobbies premier for boost  
<https://o.canada.com/news/local-news/london-go-train-off-to-slow-start-as-mayor-lobbies-premier-for-boost>

Quebec budget 2022: \$1M to study customs clearance at Central Station  
<https://montrealgazette.com/news/local-news/quebec-budget-2022-1m-to-study-customs-clearance-at-central-station>

European transport company FlixBus expanding to Canada, launching in Ontario  
<https://toronto.citynews.ca/2022/03/28/flixbus-toronto-ontario-canada/>

Ford, Tory break ground on new Ontario Line, promise support to impacted businesses  
<https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/ford-tory-break-ground-on-new-ontario-line-promise-support-to-impacted-businesses-1.5836568>

New Transit Route from Nanaimo to Cowichan Starts Service April 4  
<https://www.mycowichanvalleynow.com/70456/news/new-transit-route-from-nanaimo-to-cowichan-starts-service-monday/>

Alberta commissions economic impact study on Calgary-Banff passenger train proposal  
<https://www.rmotoday.com/banff/province-commissions-economic-impact-study-on-calgary-banff-passenger-train-proposal-5164072>

Sudbury - Electric buses could be part of GOVA Transit as early as next year  
<https://www.sudbury.com/local-news/electric-buses-could-be-part-of-gova-transit-as-early-as-next-year-5185148>

Politicians, transit executives call for new approach to financing public transportation  
<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-politicians-transit-executives-call-for-new-approach-to-financing/>

Via Rail silent on full return of Sudbury - White River train line  
<https://northernontario.ctvnews.ca/via-rail-silent-on-full-return-of-sudbury-white-river-train-line-1.5840926>

Megabus to resume cross border service from Toronto  
<https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/megabus-to-resume-service-between-toronto-and-the-u-s-increase->

Owen Sound avoids transit frequency cut

<https://www.owensoundsuntimes.com/news/local-news/new-transit-provider-will-maintain-30-minute-service-with-new-buses>

Germany: First overhead electrification islands bring built for battery trains.

<https://www.railtech.com/rolling-stock/2022/03/17/first-overhead-line-islands-for-battery-trains-to-be-built-in-germany/>

Belarus: Railway employees sabotage system to hinder Russian military

<https://www.railtech.com/infrastructure/2022/03/21/railway-connections-between-belarus-and-ukraine-sabotaged-to-hinder-russian-troops/>

USA: USDOT's FY23 budget proposes funds for Amtrak repairs, Hudson Tunnel project

[https://www.progressiverailroading.com/federal\\_legislation\\_regulation/news/USDOTs-FY23-budget-proposes-funds-for-Amtrak-repairs-Hudson-Tunnel-project--66229](https://www.progressiverailroading.com/federal_legislation_regulation/news/USDOTs-FY23-budget-proposes-funds-for-Amtrak-repairs-Hudson-Tunnel-project--66229)

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Transport Action Canada is funded by grassroots members and donors like you. Your support enables us to continue our mission to ensure access to bus and rail services for to all Canadians.

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

Join or Renew  
Now

If you would prefer to join or make a donation by mail, please [download our printable membership form](#) and post it to us at the address below with a cheque.

Thank you again for your continued support!

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