



Transport Action News - June 2023



VIA Train #72 cruising at 150 km/h

Hello ,

With the fourth new Venture set now in Montreal and fleet deliveries expect to ramp up, scenes like the one above will soon change. Operations now extend regularly between Ottawa and Quebec City, with *Renaissance* set the first to be replaced, but new trains could be appearing on services to Toronto by the end of the year. Seat selection on the new trains is linked to the new reservation system, whose launch has again been postponed. In our recent meetings with VIA Rail, we have warned that airline-style baggage fees would be a bad idea. We hope that when the new reservation system eventually launches there are no such "junk fees" taking the shine off the new fleet and adding to the cost of travel.

Transport Action British Columbia meet with Transport Canada officials regarding the Vancouver Island Rail Corridor on May 18th. We welcomed the reconciliation-first approach to the issue. The conversation also opened the door to future discussion of the New Westminster Bridge replacement and improving public transport for the BC interior.

At the beginning of May, we also [met with Sarnia Mayor Mike Bradley](#) to discuss the lack of progress on rail and transit improvements in the region. Transport Action Ontario has since invited to participate in the Technical Advisory Committee for the province's SW Ontario transportation plan, with the first meeting taking place on June 1st. We will continue to urge federal-provincial collaboration to improve train service in the near term, on existing corridors, and creating a regional hub at London's VIA station for rail and intercommunity bus services.

The House of Commons Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities has completed its study on intercity bus, for which we provided testimony and a written brief, and presented its report on May 30 (full story below) which includes several recommendations we advanced, including creating a fare clearing house to restore interline connections.

We're also preparing a submission for a new parliamentary committee study: *Projects of High Frequency Rail Between Quebec City and Toronto, Between Calgary and Banff, and Between Calgary and Edmonton*. We're excited that the committee is looking at more than just the existing corridor!

Sincerely,



Terry Johnson, President
Transport Action Canada

All our work is made possible by members and supporters like you, both through volunteering and donations. If you are able to set up a monthly donation, that helps us to plan and organize more advocacy. Thank you!

Make a
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Parliamentary committee calls for improved bus services

The Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities presented a report entitled *Improving Bus Connectivity in Canada* to the House of Commons on May 30, 2023. This report arises from widespread concern from politicians of all...

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Mario Pélouquin appointed to lead VIA Rail

On May 16, 2023, the federal government announced that it was appointing Mario Pélouquin to fill the position of President and CEO of VIA Rail Canada, for a five-year term beginning on June 12. The position has been vacant since the resignation of ...

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Bus services to Detroit reinstated by FlixBus and Trailways

Passengers in Ontario once again have options to travel by bus to Michigan and the US Midwest, with both FlixBus and Trailways offering routes between Toronto and Detroit. The Trailways service, launched on April 5, 2023, operates twice daily and ...

Transportation Newsround

Transit systems now accepting debit card taps alongside Presto

<https://www.metrolinx.com/en/news/more-ways-to-pay-presto-introduces-debit-taps-on-transit->

Mayors of Terrebonne, Mascouche, Repentigny and Montreal East, Laval lobbying for rapid transit

<https://globalnews.ca/news/9665508/mayors-demands-public-transit-system-east-of-montreal/>

Northumberland County concerned that train 651 may not return

https://www.northumberlandnews.com/news/council/no-indication-via-train-651-will-be-reinstated-northumberland-county-cao-tells-cobourg-council/article_cb582f0e-5e69-5b80-a86e-fe36f9573256.html

Mississauga councillors push for LRT loop as Metrolinx says line will be ready by end of 2024

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/mississauga-new-lrt-line-to-finish-in-2024-but-council-wants-a-loop-1.6830905>

Unaffordable “Regional Air Access” is of little help to the Gaspésie

<https://magaspesie.ca/moins-de-37-des-billets-davion-accessibles-a-500-dollars-ont-ete-vendus/>

Montreal transit authority launches plan to make Metro safer, cleaner

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/stm-metro-safety-ambassadors-special-constables-maintenance-1.6830817>

Business case for proposed Hwy 7/Concord GO station

<https://www.metrolinx.com/en/news/business-case-for-proposed-hwy-7-concord-go-station-released>

City of Pickering votes for rail, against airport

<https://durhampost.ca/council-no-to-airport-on-pickering-lands-votes-for-rail>

ATU calls on Peterborough to vote against transit cuts, retain Sunday service

<https://www.thepeterboroughexaminer.com/news/council/2023/05/08/transit-union-calls-on-city-council-to-reject-peterborough-transit-cuts.html>

Regina adds buses to airport, weekdays only

<https://globalnews.ca/news/9683555/new-regina-transit-route-downtown-to-airport/>

Ottawa-Quebec co-investment secures electric buses for ten transit agencies

<https://montrealgazette.com/news/local-news/quebec-feds-to-spend-nearly-1-9-billion-for-1229-electric-buses>

RAIL, Transport Action meet with Mayor of Sarnia

<https://sarnianewstoday.ca/news/2023/05/12/local-passenger-rail-advocates-continue-push-enhanced-service1>

Crosslinx sues, refuses to explain further delays in opening Eglinton Crosstown

<https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/another-unacceptable-delay-construction-consortium-behind-eglinton-crosstown-plans-to-sue-ttc-metrolinx-says-1.6400279>

Quebec government funding allows STM to plan service expansion for fall

<https://montrealgazette.com/news/local-news/stm-to-boost-bus-service-this-fall-as-it-climbs-out-of-death-spiral>

REM opening date pushed back as operational testing continues

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/rem-opening-delayed-1.6847129>

Niagara GO service expands to three daily trains

<https://www.101morefm.ca/news/local-news/province-expanding-niagara-go-train-service/>

Grey County's GTR offering fare-free travel on summer weekends

<https://www.collingwoodtoday.ca/the-blue-mountains-and-grey-highlands/grey-transit-route-now-fare-free-on-summer-weekends-7024756>

Opinion: The trains are really late

<https://www.lapresse.ca/debats/editoriaux/2023-05-23/les-trains-sont-vraiment-en-retard.php>

Gravenhurst transit could help non-emergency medical travel

https://www.muskokaregion.com/news/that-s-not-too-bad-possible-gravenhurst-transit-system-could-help-residents-access-hospital-quicker/article_e65b9a77-88d6-5738-b7b6-d26081543fe6.html

Corridor bike service awaits new VIA fleet deployment

<https://montrealgazette.com/news/local-news/vias-new-trains-to-offer-bike-racks-in-quebec-city-windsor-corridor>

Orangeville posts big jump in transit ridership after going fare-free

<https://citizen.on.ca/council-learns-removing-bus-fares-is-a-boon-to-ridership/>

Unifor pushes municipalities to buy Canadian and keep passenger rail on track at FCM

<https://www.unifor.org/news/all-news/unifor-pushes-municipalities-buy-canadian-and-keep-passenger-rail-track-fcm>

Internal migration with Canada fueling transit ridership in regional cities.

<https://globalnews.ca/video/9726565/population-increase-leading-to-skyrocketing-public-transit-use-in-moncton>

Columbia: Women-Led Electric Bus Fleet Is Reshaping Bogotá's Public Transit

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2023-05-08/la-rolita-electric-bus-company-prioritizes-gender-equity>

UK: Another privatized rail franchise failure, public sector takes over TPE

<https://www.railtech.com/all/2023/05/11/tpe-uk-passenger-operator-behind-service-alterations-scandal-sacked/>

USA: Honolulu rail transit service to launch on June 30

https://www.progressiverailroading.com/passenger_rail/news/Honolulu-transit-rail-service-to-launch-June-30--69307

USA: Push for transit, walkable communities growing

<https://www.lakelandtoday.ca/beyond-local/push-for-transit-walkable-communities-growing-across-us-7028164>

European Sleeper launches first service

<https://www.railtech.com/all/2023/05/25/european-sleepers-first-night-train-is-a-fact/>

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.

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Thank you again for your continued support!

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