



Transport Action News - December 2023



Stainless steel cars being serviced at VIA Rail's Toronto Maintenance Centre. This equipment must be replaced to ensure the future of Canada's passenger rail network outside the Quebec-Windsor corridor.

Hello ,

VIA Rail's modernized reservation system is now live, with many improvements including cheaper flexible fares and better accessibility, together with a new baggage policy we have some (ahem) "reservations" about... details of both are below.

The next major step in the transformation of VIA Rail must be securing the future of long-distance and remote services, the backbone of Canada's travel network. The stainless steel cars, despite the best efforts of maintenance teams as shown above, must now be replaced to keep these services operating into the next decade, let alone grow them. The [RFI](#) for new equipment was issued earlier this year, but government approval is needed to proceed, and the process of designing, building, testing, delivering new equipment is expected to take up to a decade.

We're delighted to have had an article on the importance of investing in VIA Rail's long-distance fleet featured in a special section on transport policy published by the [Hill Times](#) on November 13th. The newspaper is circulated throughout Parliament Hill, to all MPs' and Senators' offices,

Transport Canada, and equally importantly the Ministry of Finance. If VIA Rail doesn't get the go ahead for the procurement in Budget 2024, it will be a costly mistake.

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!

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New reservation system brings changes to VIA Rail fares

The new system brings many improvements, including seat selection, and its launch has been accompanied by changes in pricing, including considerably cheaper flexible "Plus" fares, but there are some changes that are not so welcome. These include...

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What you need to know about VIA Rail's new baggage policy

With the launch of VIA Rail's new reservation system on November 18, 2023, a new baggage policy will also come into effect. This has been anticipated for some time because of changes in the amount ...

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Chicago-Toronto train service to return by 2027

The business case for a cross-border passenger rail connection was submitted by Amtrak and VIA Rail late October, and the mayors of Detroit and Windsor have both sent letters of support to Transport Canada.

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Brantford Report on GO Rail Extension

Interest continues to be high among southwestern Ontario municipalities for improved intercity passenger rail service. In November, Brantford completed a report entitled Brantford on Track: Paving ...

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Québec City tramway facing headwinds

The province has mandated CDPQ Infra to review the project, following the cancellation of the tendering process.



Amtrak Cascades service increase announced

Amtrak Cascades services will see a significant increase from December 11, 2023, with daily round trips between Seattle and Portland increasing from four to six, which combined with the Coast Starl...

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Transportation Newsround

Halifax Transit launches long-awaited smartphone tickets

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/halifax-transit-app-smartphone-1.7016304>

GRT wants to expand transit service by more than 50,000 hours to meet demand

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/kitchener-waterloo/grt-expand-50-000-hours-of-service-asks-for-community-feedback-1.7020007>

\$2bn needed for Toronto Waterfront transit

https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/we-are-already-many-years-behind-more-than-2-billion-in-public-transit-needed-for/article_038f407d-dd7a-5dfa-8faf-0279ff4b6700.html

Mario Pélouquin speaks to CTV News Atlantic

<https://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=2804481#2804481>

Amtrak propose run to Windsor, connecting Chicago-Detroit route to Toronto

<https://www.iheartradio.ca/am800/news/dilkens-believes-amtrak-via-rail-link-is-an-exciting-opportunity-1.20532111>

Metrolinx releases East Harbour transit hub visualizations

<https://www.cp24.com/news/metrolinx-releases-renderings-of-future-toronto-transit-hub-1.6645978>

OC Transpo digs into reserves, weighs layoffs to fill \$50M hole

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/oc-transpo-ottawa-budget-2024-savings-cuts-1.7028583>

Two years on, Kingston-area islanders continue to wait for new ferries

<https://www.thewhig.com/news/two-years-on-kingston-area-islanders-continue-to-wait-for-new-ferries>

UofT study finds transit deserts impacting night shift workers

<https://toronto.citynews.ca/2023/11/19/toronto-mississauga-brampton-transit-evenings-nights/>

BNSF derailment in Delta, BC causes Amtrak Cascades service disruption

<https://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/train-derails-near-burns-bog-in-delta>

Funding from the Green Municipal Fund will put 21 electric buses on the road in Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine

<https://electricautonomy.ca/2023/11/13/quebec-electric-buses-gaspesie-iles-de-la-madeleine/>

VIA High-Frequency Rail project conducts community consultation in Peterborough

<https://globalnews.ca/video/10106634/via-high-frequency-rail-project-conducts-community-consultation-in-peterborough/>

CN-Exo collision causes only minor injuries but severe disruption

<https://montreal.citynews.ca/2023/11/22/two-trains-collide-in-saint-leonard-transportation-safety-board-investigating/>

Windsor City Council supports cross border rail connection

<https://windsornewstoday.ca/windsor/news/2023/11/25/windsor-to-support-rail-connection-with-detroit>

Kingston Transit invests in new terminals

<https://www.thewhig.com/news/as-ridership-rebounds-kingston-transit-invests-in-new-terminals>

Quebec's intercity public transit model is 'in tatters'

<https://montreal.ctvnews.ca/quebec-s-intercity-public-transit-model-is-in-tatters-study-1.6662139>

Concerns with transit, homelessness raised at Halifax accessibility town hall

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/transit-homelessness-halifax-accessibility-town-hall-1.7036352>

Mexico: Presidential decree to restore passenger rail

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/mexico-president-urge-freight-train-companies-use-rail-passengers-2023-11-08/>

Mexico: CPKC cooperating with government on passenger rail

<https://toronto.citynews.ca/2023/11/17/cpkc-says-its-unshaken-by-mexican-presidents-decree-to-host-passenger-rail-service/>

USA: North Carolina set trail ridership record after adding fourth daily service

<https://ca.news.yahoo.com/aboard-record-ridership-north-carolina-195332042.html>

USA: Amtrak, Metro North and NJ Transit collaborate on New York Metro concept

<https://www.railwaygazette.com/new-york-metro-concept-in-updated-northeast-corridor-modernisation-plan/65382.article>

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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