



# Ontario Report

## Transport Action Ontario

### The VIA 1-4-10 Plan

A Recovery Strategy for  
Canada's Rail Passenger Service



For  
Transport Action Canada  
By Greg Gormick  
On Track Strategies  
November 6, 2015

### In This Issue:

- > Report on securing VIA's future released in St.Marys, Ontario, Nov. 6 (story p. 2)
- > Transport Minister Marc Garneau says "no" to jets at Billy Bishop Airport (pp. 6-7)
- > Kitchener-Waterloo light rail transit ION: construction well underway (pp. 3-5)
- > Liberal Party stand on rail safety for hazardous goods (pp. 7-8)

### Op-ed analysis

#### Reprieve for VIA Rail Canada?

by Greg Gormick

We've got a new federal government. The question now for rail passenger advocates is, "What does this mean for VIA?"

It would be easy to regard the change of government as not having much impact on the strange course VIA travelled under the now-defeated Harper government. Not only was VIA not an issue in the October 19th election, neither was the whole question of transportation. There were some statements about investment in urban transit, but even they weren't very meaty.

...continued on PAGE 2

### FROM THE PRESIDENT - PETER MIASEK



#### Raised Expectations in Ottawa

With the election of the federal Liberal majority government, there are raised

expectations among many Canadians on many items. The Liberals had between 150 and 200 promises in their platform and have stated that they intend to meet them all.

While Transport Action Ontario's primary focus is on transportation and infrastructure, this article will discuss two other very important areas - action on climate change and restoring the profile of science in government decision making. These are foundation areas affecting numerous other areas of policy, including transportation.

#### Climate Change

As stated in my last article "Comparing election platforms of Canada's major political parties", in the July/August issue of *Ontario Report*, the Liberals intend to work with the provinces to develop national emissions targets, provide targeted funding, phase out subsidies for the fossil fuel industry, work on climate resilience and invest in clean technologies.

It is early days, but we are seeing an encouraging tone by the government. The Prime Minister is taking a full entourage to the Paris Climate Change conference, including

provincial premiers and opposition leaders. Momentum for action is definitely building in Canada. Climate change deniers have been very silent - perhaps at last all the misinformation on the science has faded away. A new poll by Nanos Research reports that a strong majority of Canadians want Ottawa to play a leadership role in reducing greenhouse gases, and a large majority would accept higher taxes on petroleum fuels to cut emissions, if the revenue is used to support a greener economy. Alberta is scoping phase out of coal-fired power plants, and Ontario is about to announce details of its cap and trade system. Upon return from

...continued on PAGE 2

#### This Issue's Table of Contents

- \* Reprieve for VIA Rail? Op-ed analysis by Greg Gormick.....Pages 1 and 2-3
- \* Release of the VIA 1-4-10 Plan Nov. 6 in St.Marys, Ontario.....Page 2
- \* Kitchener-Waterloo ION light rail construction report.....Pages 3, 4 and 5
- \* Federal government says "no" to jets at Billy Bishop Airport....Pages 5, 6 and 7
- \* Liberal stand on rail safety for hazardous goods.....Pages 7 and 8
- \* TAO activities and events & contact/membership information.....Page 8

**FROM THE PRESIDENT**

*...continued from PAGE 1*

Paris, the mandate letter for the Minister of Environment and Climate Change directs the minister to work in partnership with provinces and territories and develop a pan-Canadian framework to address climate change, including national emissions-reduction targets. The targets will recognize the economic cost and catastrophic impact that a greater-than-two-degree increase in average global temperature would represent, as well as the need for Canada to do its part to prevent this.

A recent study has shown that Canada still subsidizes its fossil fuel industry to the tune of \$2.7B/yr, despite a 2009 commitment by G20 leaders to phase out these subsidies. A subsidy was defined as any dollar value associated with direct government spending or lost government tax revenue. The subsidies are largely in tax breaks to promote exploration, field development and extraction and in relief from provincial royalties. The industry also benefits from loans and loan guarantees, chiefly through Export Development Canada, a crown corporation. It is good to see that the recently published mandate letter for the Ministers of Finance and of Environment and Climate Change includes “phaseout subsidies for the fossil fuel industry over the medium term.”

**Restoring the Role of Science**

The Harper government was notorious in downgrading the role of science in decision making. Major irritants included eliminating the mandatory long-form census, pulling the plug on the Office of the National Science Advisor, killing the 25 year old National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy, closing seven Department of Fisheries and Oceans libraries, defunding the world-renowned Experimental Lakes Area, eliminating 700 environmental scientists from Environment Canada and slapping a media gag order on the remaining researchers.

The initial steps by the new government are promising. The mandatory long-form census has been restored. Two new portfolios have been created: Minister of Science and Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development. A Chief Science Officer will be created. The mandate letters for various Ministries include restoring funding for water research and monitoring, making new investments in the Experimental Lakes Area, ensuring that government scientists are able to speak freely about their work and directing that scientific analyses are considered when the government makes decisions.

The mandate letters raise very high expectations for major improvements in the performance of our federal government. Let’s hope the plans all get fulfilled! ■

**VIA 1-4-10 Plan launched in St.Marys on November 6**

A recovery strategy for Canada’s rail passenger service was released in St.Marys, Ontario on Nov. 6. The date for the launch was chosen to coincide with Canada’s National Rail Day, Nov. 7, the date in 1885 when the last spike was driven at Craigellachie, B.C. opening the Canadian Pacific Railway as Canada’s first transcontinental rail line.

Commissioned by Transport Action Canada and its regional affiliates, the study written by rail policy consultant Greg Gormick, surveys how VIA Rail can be modernized and expanded so that there can once again be a popular rail passenger system across the country. The study can be found on the Transport Action website.

Transport Action thanks the Save VIA Committee of St.Marys for hosting the event at the city-owned VIA Rail station. The event got considerable media attention.

The plan documents the decline of VIA Rail as federal governments almost routinely cut trains rather than modernize the system. VIA is in

desperate need of new locomotives and cars. It also requires legislation and stable dedicated funding. The legislation should also set out the obligations of the freight railways that host VIA’s trains.

A modernized VIA Rail, based on a new generation of bi-level passenger cars and a national network, with high performance rail in the Toronto-Montreal-Ottawa corridor, with frequent service in the Windsor-Quebec City corridor, will attract a substantial ridership, providing Canadians with an alternative to driving, also contributing to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. The report demonstrates that this can be done with a modest investment. The report shows how routes and service can be expanded in steps, by the end of year one, by the end of year four, and over a decade. The report has been well received in the media. ■

**Reprieve for VIA Rail?**

*...continued from PAGE 1*

On the VIA front, the sole exception was the Green Party’s platform, which included a positive plank on rail passenger service, calling for a substantial increase in funding over a five-year period. The NDP’s did include a reference to VIA, but there was not a word on the subject in the Liberal or Conservative policy books. VIA simply wasn’t an issue.

Because it became apparent early that few, if any, transportation issues were going to figure in the election campaign, Transport Action held back the release of *The VIA 1-4-10 Plan*. There was no point in putting forward a vision for VIA when it not only wouldn’t get picked up by the candidates or their parties, but it would get lost in the swirl of the media’s campaign coverage. It was obvious that any attempt to get rail passenger service into the news and into the public’s thinking was best left until the electioneering was over and the dust had settled in Ottawa.

It also must be said that the Liberals hadn't shown any real interest in VIA during their period in opposition between 2006 and 2015. True, they did unanimously support the NDP's proposed *VIA Rail Canada Act* when it came up for debate earlier this year. Was that an indication of the party's interest in VIA or just a symbolic gesture designed to demonstrate it didn't support the Harper government, which defeated the bill?

However, if advocates want to take a more optimistic view of the change of government, there are some encouraging signs. As TAO president Peter Miasek points out in his column in this issue of *Ontario Report*, there is a large Liberal commitment to dealing effectively with climate change. Given the impact of transportation on fossil fuel consumption and the generation of greenhouse gases, and the well-known superiority of rail in terms of energy usage and emissions, that offers a selling point for advocates of VIA when dealing with the members of the new government.

There is also the Liberal commitment to increase public investment in "infrastructure." The word has been horribly misused by politicians of all stripes in recent years, often being applied to transportation services and not just the actual infrastructure on which those services are dependent. In fact, when Liberal candidates in Southwestern Ontario were questioned about their party's commitment to a rejuvenation of VIA, they said it was covered by their endorsement of infrastructure spending. Well, maybe.

Perhaps the brightest ray of hope is supplied by the known views of some of the members of the Liberal caucus. Before the election campaign even began, former Hamilton Mayor Bob Bratina made his interest in improved rail service known by attending the St. Marys release of our report, *Out of Steam: The Urgent Need to Modernize VIA Rail Canada*. Since his election as the

new MP for Hamilton East-Stoney Creek, Bratina has restated his hope that he will be able to advance the issue of improved rail service in his new federal role.

There are other members of the new government who certainly have shown an interest in rail matters in their previous careers. And there are also some who are regular users of VIA. Two of them are Transport Minister Marc Garneau and Minister of Foreign Affairs Stephan Dion, both of whom use VIA to travel between Ottawa and their Montreal homes. Add to the list Halifax MP Andy Fillmore, who travelled to Ottawa with his family on the *Ocean* for the November 4 swearing-in ceremony.

It will be vital for TAO and its associated advocacy groups to build bridges to these MPs who at least don't have to be convinced that there is a role for rail passenger service. Also to be considered are those opposition MPs who were re-elected and have previously demonstrated a genuine, non-partisan concern for VIA. Foremost among these is London-Fanshawe MP Irene Mathysen. She says she intends to point the new government in the right direction by introducing a private member's bill on VIA and continuing to advocate for the vital legislation that it has always lacked.

So, is the glass half-full or half-empty? My personal view is the former. While the new government remains pretty much a blank slate when it comes to VIA, that creates the opportunity for us to educate MPs and convince them that improved rail passenger service fits snugly with their party's stated aims on climate change, infrastructure investment and national unity. At the very least, we're not dealing with a government that is hostile to VIA.

What we also must remember in continuing our campaign for better rail passenger service is that the hour is growing late for government action. Thanks to the inaction and inadequate

investment of previous governments, VIA's resources are limited and its assets are growing weary. The new government didn't create this situation, but they've inherited it. If VIA is reduced further because of the accumulation of its multiple problems, it is the new government that will be left holding the bag with the public.

As Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said in his election victory speech, "In Canada, better is always possible." It will now be the job of TAO and other advocacy groups to demonstrate that there is a better way to run a passenger railway. *The VIA 1-4-10 Plan* shows how such a course of action is possible, affordable and desirable. Now, we must sell the new government on that idea.

As Shakespeare wrote in *Henry the Fifth*, "Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more." ■

© 2015 by Greg Gormick

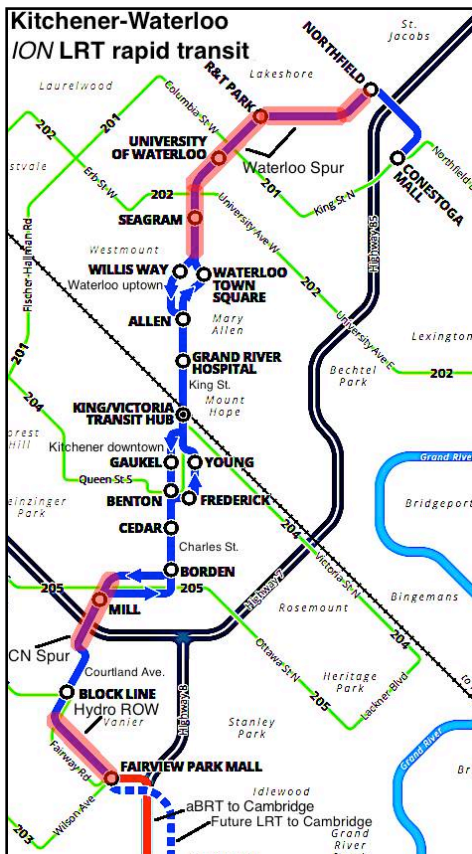
---

## Kitchener-Waterloo LRT construction report

ION is the branding name of the light rail transit (LRT) now under construction in Kitchener-Waterloo. Proposed in a 2009 environmental assessment (EA), along with "adapted bus rapid transit" (aBRT), after much public input and expert advice, light rail was chosen for the King Street corridor through Waterloo and Kitchener, extended into Cambridge along Hespeler Rd. ION is a project of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo and its transit agency, Grand River Transit.

The EA established majority support for the LRT alternative. Leading up to the June 10, 2009 Regional Council meeting that would decide the matter, supporters of LRT started the Facebook group "I support light rail transit for the Region of Waterloo" which reached some 1,600 followers. Also formed was the Tri-Cities Transport Action Group (TriTAG) that successfully organized pro-LRT deputations at the June 10

...continued on PAGE 4



**Kitchener-Waterloo light rail**  
*...continued from PAGE 3*

council meeting. TriTAG organized a "Rally for Rails" in December of 2010 to show continuing public support for light rail. TriTAG is still active, and the "I support..." Facebook group is closely following ION construction. LRT received strong support from Regional Chair Ken Seiling, and Kitchener Mayor Carl Zehr during the key decision-making years. Opposition to the LRT came from a small taxpayer group.

The June 10 regional council decision in favour of LRT also decided that it would be built in two phases. The first phase would be a 19km LRT from Conestoga Mall in the north of Waterloo, to the Fairview Park Mall in the south of Kitchener, with adapted bus rapid transit connecting from there to Cambridge. Waterloo Region has currently started the EA to extend ION to Cambridge (18km), an undertaking that has not yet been

funded.

In the summer of 2010, the first phase of ION obtained \$300 million from the province and \$265 million from the federal government. The Region's share would be \$253 million. The Region passed an innovative property tax with small tax increases over several years. The tax increases were explicitly set out to fund ION, major improvements to the regional bus system, and some road improvements.

In July of 2013 it was announced that the ION vehicle would be the Bombardier Flexity Freedom to be obtained as an add-on to the new streetcar contract that the TTC placed with Bombardier. There would be an initial 14 trains that would arrive starting in 2015, with completion of the order in the summer of 2016 and an option for an additional 16 trains. Bombardier is very much behind schedule in providing the TTC with its new streetcars. Regional officials are aware of this issue, but believe that Bombardier will complete the order for 14 trains without much delay.

Following the provincial mandate that the project be a P3, after a tendering process, in July of 2013 the Grandlinq consortium was given a 30-year design, build, finance, operate, and maintain contract for the ION. Though utility relocation began in 2013, the official groundbreaking for



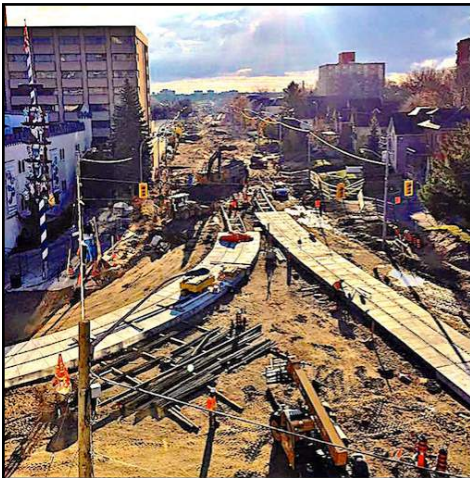
New double-track on Waterloo Spur awaiting electrification for the ION. Photo by Iain Hendry.

ION was August 21, 2014. All of ION will be on dedicated right-of-way (ROW). Efforts were made to keep costs down by utilizing off-street ROW such as building next to existing railway lines and in a hydro corridor. Phase 1 will have 19 stations (6 of which serve one direction only). ION will open in late 2017.

The ION will start in the north of Waterloo at the Conestoga Mall. It will travel north on King Street for a short distance, then turn west on Northfield Drive, until it reaches the Waterloo Spur. This is a freight railway line between Elmira and the CN railway line that cuts across Kitchener. (The tourist train of the Waterloo Central Railway operates on this line between St. Jacobs and Elmira.) The spur is being double-tracked using rail, concrete ties, and ballast. One of the LRT tracks will be used by the occasional freight train that will use the line at night when the ION is not operating. The Region of Waterloo acquired the spur in 2001. A yard for storage and maintenance of ION cars is being built next to the spur just north of Weber Street North.

Heading south along the Waterloo Spur, south of Columbia Street, the ION passes through the University of Waterloo. At the Seagram Drive stop, it is 0.7km west of Sir Wilfred Laurier University.

The LRT continues south cutting through Waterloo Park at an angle heading to Waterloo's business district called uptown Waterloo. It is off-road until it arrives at Erb Street. At that point, the southbound track heads south on Caroline Street while the northbound track continues on the spur to King Street where the track turns off from King Street. Waterloo Square is flanked by the rail spur on the north, and the ION on Caroline and King Streets. The southbound ION makes a left turn onto Allen Street to King where it joins the northbound track, with double-track continuing south on King. South of Union Blvd.,



Downtown Kitchener looking southeast on Charles Street. The northbound track in the picture makes a right turn onto Benton/Frederick Street heading to Duke Street. Track has been freshly embedded in concrete. Photo by Iain Hendry.

ION enters Kitchener.

ION enters downtown Kitchener on King after passing under the CN line from Toronto and London via Kitchener. King Street is now closed to allow the construction of an underpass below the CN, an 18 month project started last April, now behind by six months. Just east of the underpass will be the King/Victoria Transit Hub, an intermodal station for VIA and GO Transit commuter trains, as well as intercity buses, ION and other transit lines. The construction of this station has not yet started. The Region-owned site next to the CN at King/Victoria is large and will easily accommodate the transit hub with room to spare for other uses yet to be determined.

King Street is not used for ION in downtown Kitchener. Rather, at Victoria, the southbound track heads west for one block, and then turns south on Charles Street. The northbound track stays on King, turns east onto Francis Street, in one block turning south on Duke Street. At Frederick the northbound track turns west to Charles. At Charles the now double-track line heads south to Borden and Ottawa Streets. The

southbound ION turns west on Borden to the CN Huron Park Spur, turning left onto the spur to head south. This track is joined by the northbound track which heads west on Ottawa Street, turning left and going south on the spur returning the line back to double-track.

ION travels south next to the CN freight track for only a short distance. At Hayward Avenue the double-track swings onto Hayward briefly, then makes a turn onto Courtland Avenue where it operates on the west side of the road. Going south on Courtland is really to head in a southwesterly direction. At the Hydro Corridor, ION swings onto the corridor with a 90-degree turn, following the corridor in a south-easterly direction to the Fairview Park Mall where it reaches its terminal station. At this station riders can change to aBRT express bus service continuing on to Cambridge.

The various segments of ION are at different stages of construction. Track laying has moved swiftly on off-street alignments, with some track on roads now in place. But much more needs to be done, such as station construction and electrification. The



Laying of the southbound ION track on Borden Avenue. The camera is looking northeast from Bedford Rd. Note the track construction. A rebar mat is laid in the track trench. Vertical bolts that can be adjusted for height hold up tie bars on which rubber encased track has been placed. Concrete will then be poured from the rebar mat to the top of rail. Photo by Iain Hendry.

construction has generated many detours of road traffic and transit service. ION has generated new development along King Street.

One aim of bringing light rail to the tri-cities is to retain farm lands around the cities and to concentrate growth along the ION corridor. The Regional Official Plan intends stopping further sprawl on adjacent rural areas. This was challenged at the OMB. While the OMB opened up some additional lands for development in its decision, it upheld the principles of the plan to move the region to transit-oriented development along the light rail corridor. ■ - Tony Turriffin

### New federal government says "no" to jets at Billy Bishop

On November 12, new Transport Minister Marc Garneau announced that Ottawa would not re-open the Tripartite Agreement that limits Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport to turboprop-based commercial airline service. This effectively ends Porter Airline's request to have Toronto Island airport's (TIA) runways lengthened so that Porter can convert its fleet to jets. The Tripartite Agreement was first negotiated in 1983 between the City of Toronto, the Toronto Port Authority (now PortsToronto), and Transport Canada. This agreement was the culmination of years of struggle by Toronto citizens to curb commercial airline operations on Toronto's waterfront. The agreement was amended in 1985 to allowing use of Dash-8 turboprop planes.

TIA runway expansion for jet planes was an issue in the federal election of October 19. Toronto area Liberal and NDP candidates were opposed to airport expansion for jets. Last June, the Liberal Party's GTA caucus sent a letter to the Toronto City Council affirming opposition to jets. The day following the federal election, re-elected MP Adam Vaughan (Spadina- Ft. York) announced the Tripartite Agreement would not be reopened. Lingering concerns that the Liberals would back down on this

....continued on PAGE 6

## No to jets at Billy Bishop

*...continued from PAGE 5*

promise have now been largely laid to rest by Garneau's pronouncement.

Porter's push for jets began April 10, 2013 when it announced a major expansion plan based on the purchase of Bombardier's CS100 regional jet not yet in production. New routes would take Porter to western Canada, California, Florida and the Caribbean. With fleet expansion would come more daily flights. Passenger volumes using Porter at TIA would double from the current 2.4 million boardings; Toronto would end up having the equivalent of an Ottawa airport on its waterfront. Porter officially asked that the Tripartite Agreement be amended in a letter sent to Mayor Rob Ford on April 22, 2013. It asked for inclusion of the CS100 plane on the list of planes allowed to use the airport, and for a runway extension at both ends of 168m, a figure later extended to 200m by Porter (Sept. 17, 2013).

Needless to say, opposition to expansion and jets was swift and vocal. Opposition did not just come from Toronto Island residents, but from residents and developers along the length of Toronto's waterfront. It coalesced around two groups, the smaller No Jets T.O. with a considerable web presence, and the larger Greater Waterfront Coalition (GWC) representing some 50 non-profit groups in the Toronto area. Early in the public debate, in March of 2014, TAO contributed a technical paper on safety issues which significantly broadened the content of that debate raising concerns that were not being addressed by Porter.

Porter pushed hard for an early adoption of its plan, but that was not to be. A municipal election was on the horizon for October of 2014. Mayor Rob Ford had already lost control of Council by 2012. But councillors still remembered how David Miller was elected mayor by opposing a proposed bridge to TIA in 2003. With the TIA airport expansion potentially dividing voters, in April 2014 Council took the issue off the table by postponing any decision to 2016 by requiring that a comprehensive environmental assessment (EA) be completed. Council's decision set out the required

EA in great detail, including setting up a stakeholders group to monitor the process. The rigorous terms of the Council's decision were in no small measure the result of citizen activism on the issue.

A full EA has many steps. The Council decision mandated an Airport Master Plan that has recently been completed. At the end of August the draft scoping document became public along with an independent third-party peer review of the scoping. More documents were in progress as the new federal Liberal government announced that there would be no re-opening of the Tripartite Agreement. The EA itself has started raising the question of whether or not the EA should be completed given the new stance of the feds.

Several other recent developments should be noted. On April 2 of this year, for the first time, Air Canada came out forcefully against jets at TIA. The Air Canada position is that, if jets were allowed, it would also operate jet services from TIA. But it prefers to keep jets at Pearson airport and says that TIA can thrive with only turboprops.

On September 15, Air Canada revealed that it had commissioned the internationally recognized New York consulting firm Oliver Wyman to assess the proposed expansion of TIA for jets. While the full report has not been released, copies have circulated to the press which has reported many of its findings. Its assessment largely supports the concerns that Transport Action has formulated. But the Oliver Wyman report has gone further and has identified additional key issues.

The report pointed out that real costs have been grossly underestimated. For airside safety requirements, costs would be closer to \$1 billion, with a similar level of cost for the City on landside improvements, such as providing for parking for an airport with a projected 4-5 million passengers annually. The added size and weight of the CS100 aircraft will require runways of 6000 ft. or 1830 meters, and much wider marine exclusion zones including extensive runway lighting. As do cars on roads, greater runway length is required for take-offs and landings in wet weather due to rain, snow and ice conditions.

The report estimates that as much as a quarter of all jet flights would be diverted to Pearson airport without full-length runways given the normal frequency of wet weather conditions on Toronto's waterfront. It is also not clear whether a safe missed approach can be found for a CS100 jet given the tall buildings now on the waterfront. A longer lower slope flight path would be necessary for a situation where a fully loaded CS100 loses the power of one of its engines on take-off. As of this September, Transport Canada has strengthened its safety requirements for airports, standards that Porter has expected will not apply to their plan because the design process is already underway. Porter has already benefited from grandfathering and this is not likely to continue for its jets.

The Greater Waterfront Coalition set out its safety concerns in a report dated June 22, 2015. The Oliver Wyman concerns, some especially serious, can now be added to those of the Coalition.

It should be noted that TAO is a member of the GWC steering committee and has provided key technical and background information employed by GWC in its reports, deputations, press conferences, and television appearances. In addition to the safety report mentioned above, GWC released a report on its economic concerns April 12, 2015.

**Editorial comment.** We speculate that Porter came forward with its expansion plan in part because it perceived an alignment of the stars. The Toronto mayor was on side, the council had taken a more conservative turn, and it had a supportive federal government including the Minister of Transport. But Porter clearly underestimated the depth of citizen response and the sophistication of that response. There is still a level of public support for continuing short-distance regional commercial air service at TIA. Porter has painted jets as if they were just stretched turboprops. But they are not. It has taken a major public effort to dig out the truth about the negative impacts jets will have. They are for long-haul and that's a very different function for TIA and one that should be left to Pearson airport built for that purpose.

It is becoming clear that jets at TIA would be a major public works project with a massive runway, much enlarged marine exclusion zones additional lengths of approach lighting, large jet blast deflectors, huge new investment in parking and road connections, and, of course, more flights means more noise. The disruption of boating in the Toronto inner-harbour will be permanent. And for what?

Looking at what is proposed dispassionately, Porter's plan is about unfair advantage. A downtown airport all to itself is Porter's competitive edge in the short-haul air travel market to which it now wants to add long-haul flights. There really isn't physical room for additional providers at TIA. So Porter has motive beyond hyping its convenience and flying refined. Estimates of the cost of transforming TIA are now approaching \$2 billion in public monies. But Pearson airport is already in place, and the province has recently opened a fast train service to it from downtown Toronto. With capacity at Pearson, expanding TIA is a gross misallocation of scarce public funds which would be better invested in other badly needed transportation projects in the GTHA.

A misallocation of resources to expand TIA for jets has the effect of trashing investments that have already been made to revitalize the Toronto waterfront. Over \$1 billion in public dollars has been invested in waterfront revitalization in the last 10 years along with an estimated \$2.6 billion in private investment. The lakefront has become a residential area and a location for offices and new cultural and entertainment businesses. They all depend on a livable public space that is contemplative, relaxing and part playground, where people can move about with active transportation. An industrial use like a jet airport is incompatible and in the long run destructive of the new waterfront now in place.

The EA is currently being rushed to a conclusion. It will have many shortcomings as a result. Expect one

last push by Porter to get approval of the EA if it somehow manages to marginalize the findings to date of expansion opponents.

TAO supports the decision to keep jets out of TIA. We do support investments in the intercity passenger rail system, the development of High Performance Rail that could at lower cost provide frequent intercity transportation in southwestern, central and eastern Ontario. That would be a worthy use of infrastructure funds that Ontario and the new federal government are now considering spending. And a quality, fast and reliable train system would make excellent use of Toronto's Union Station on dry land just up from Lake Ontario. ■

Toronto City Councillor Joe Cressy in a *Toronto Star*, Nov. 18, 2015 op-ed paraphrasing Premier Bill Davis when he said "no" to the Spadina Expressway: "If we want to build a city to leave from, flying jets out of the island airport would be a great place to start. But, if we want to build a city to live in, flying jets out of the island airport is a great place to stop."

### Liberal policy on rail safety

August 31, the rail safety watchdog group Safe Rail Communities (SRC) wrote to Canada's four main political parties requesting a clear policy on the rail transport of hazardous goods. As the Liberal Party has now formed the federal government, we print below the Liberal Party's response to SRC. The response clearly sets a high expectation for positive action on the issue of rail safety. The Liberal Party wrote back:

September 18, 2015

Thank you for your interest in the Liberal Party of Canada's position on rail safety in Canada.

There is no question that it is the government's responsibility to protect the safety of Canadians who travel on the rails, live near railway tracks and those who operate the railways. Unfortunately, Transport Canada's rail safety division is understaffed, underfunded and undertrained.

In recent years federal regulators have failed to address serious weaknesses in rail safety. The investigation into the Lac-Mégantic tragedy revealed that the rail company had an ineffective safety management system and a weak safety culture overall. It is the Government of Canada's job to audit those safety management systems and to make sure they are effective. While shipments of crude oil have skyrocketed, the Harper government has slashed spending on rail safety. According to the latest Public Accounts, spending on rail safety is down by approximately 20 per cent since 2009-10.

Even after the terrible tragedy in Lac-Mégantic, the Conservative government still refuses to treat rail safety in Canada with the urgency required. Despite a series of recent piecemeal announcements, the Transportation Safety Board suggested that the Conservative's new rail standards do not go far enough. The three derailments in Northern Ontario within a month earlier this year would seem to support this claim. In two of those accidents, tank cars carrying crude oil burst into flames. In light of these incidents, it is completely unacceptable that the most stringent of the Conservative's new tank car standards will still not come into effect for 10 more years.

A Liberal government will prioritize Canadians' public safety. We will increase government regulation and enforcement for the transportation of dangerous substances over rail and provide Transport Canada with the necessary funding and resources to hire and train an adequate number of dangerous goods and rail safety inspectors to ensure proper oversight of the rail industry. We will also ensure that risk analysis is comprehensive and performed by experts in the field. Further, we will ensure train speed limits are determined through rigorous, evidence based methods, are closely monitored and strictly enforced. A

...continued on PAGE 8

**Liberal Party on rail safety**

*...continued from PAGE 7*

Liberal government will also accelerate the phasing out of the older DOT-111 tank cars and base upgrade requirements on the best information available to ensure the safety of Canadians.

Moreover, a Liberal government would review the efficacy of stabilization or treatment of volatile crude at the point of departure, and review options for better use of technology for track and car inspection, maintenance and monitoring.

Liberals also understand that Canadians deserve much more transparency and accountability from their government, especially regarding the critical issue of rail safety...A Liberal government will amend the Access to information Act so that all government data and information is made open by default in machine-readable, digital formats. Further, we will work with the rail industry and the public to ensure we find a better balance between the public's right to know, public safety and the protection of commercially sensitive information. We will also make sure that first responders have access to the information necessary to ensure the safety of Canadians and minimize the risk to their safety while performing their critical jobs.

Additionally, a Liberal government will implement a comprehensive review of the liability and compensation regime for rail to ensure that victims and their families obtain the compensation they deserve. We will ensure that the polluter-pays principle is upheld, and that taxpayers are not left on the hook to pay for compensation, remediation, and reconstruction costs in the event of a rail disaster.

We also believe that the general public and organizations like Safe Rail Communities must be meaningfully engaged as partners as we strive to protect their safety and deliver the

government Canadians deserve. Technology is evolving quickly and allows more rapid connections between citizens and their government. These technologies are being used today by organizations to engage their clients and partners. The Canadian government must catch up. We will mobilize experience and knowledge of Canadians and incorporate their input into our decisions and evaluations of existing programs and policies. This means working with residents, industry and regulators to minimize the negative impacts of rail traffic on affected communities. This is not only important in terms of rail safety, but on issues such as scheduling and idling that impact the broader wellbeing of communities.

Canadians deserve a government dedicated to presenting a clear plan and taking definitive action on rail safety to protect our communities, railway employees and our environment.

On behalf of our Leader, Justin Trudeau, and the entire Liberal team, thank you for writing to identify the major concerns of your membership.

We appreciate your interest in the Liberal Party of Canada's policies as they relate to the issues that affect you.

Sincerely, Anna Gaaney, President  
Liberal Party of Canada

*Ontario Report* is published by Transport Action Ontario bi-monthly in Feb., Apr., June, Aug., Oct. and Dec. Contributions of news and items are welcome. Submissions, including articles and letters, are subject to acceptance and editing. Statements in this publication are those of the respective authors and are not official policy which is approved by the Board of Transport Action Ontario. Photos by the editor unless otherwise indicated.

Thanks to all who helped out with this issue, including Greg Gormick, Gordon Woodmansey, Dan Hammond, Michael Druker, and Iain Hendry. News to November 18, 2015.

Editor: Tony Turriffin (turritti@hotmail.com).  
ISSN 1923-1040 (Print)  
ISSN 1923-1059 (Online)

**TAO Activities/Events**

**VIA 1-4-10 Plan available**

Greg Gormick's plan for the recovery rail passenger service across Canada, prepared for Transport Action Canada (see P. 2) is available on the TAO website (see bottom of page). ■

**Letter to Premier Wynne on federal gov't transit funding**

Transport Action Ontario was a signatory to a letter (Oct. 23) sent by the Move the GTHA collaborative to Premier Wynne reminding her of the federal Liberal party promise to boost investment in public transit, and asking her to impress upon the new government the urgency of rapidly funding transit and active transportation in the GTHA. ■

**MEMBERSHIP AND CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Mail and email addresses/phone:**

Transport Action Ontario, Box 6418, Sta. A, Toronto, ON M5W 1X3.  
[ontario@transport-action.ca](mailto:ontario@transport-action.ca).

Telephone: 416.504.3934 or toll free long-distance 1.866.542.1067 or contact our President, Peter Miasek, at 905.477.8636 or by email at [peter.miasek@rogers.com](mailto:peter.miasek@rogers.com).

**Website:** //transport-action-ontario.com

**Join Transport Action** to help us advocate for sustainable transportation. By joining Transport Action Ontario, you also become a member of Transport Action Canada.

Members receive *Ontario Report* as well as our national newsletter *Transport Action*.

To join, send your name, address, telephone number, email address (if any), and membership fee to our box address above. Our annual membership fees are: introductory (1st year only) \$20; regular \$35; senior \$30; student \$25; low income \$20; family \$50; non-profit affiliate \$75; business \$170. Transport Action Ontario is requesting a \$10 supplement on a membership for mailing a paper copy of its newsletter, *Ontario Report*.

Transport Action Canada is a registered charity. Donations to it receive a tax-credit receipt. Its website address is //www.transport-action.ca.

**Board meetings:** July 30, Sept 9, Oct 1, and Nov 5 at 5:30pm at Centre for Social Innovation, 215 Spadina Ave., Toronto. If you wish to participate, contact Peter Miasek