



TRANSPORT ACTION ONTARIO

(formerly Transport 2000 Ontario)

Advocating for Sustainable Public and Freight Transportation
Box 6418, Station "A" Toronto, ON M5W 1X3

MEDIA ADVISORY

WHAT: National Railway Day

WHEN: November 7, 2013

WHO: Transportation policy adviser Greg Gormick on behalf of Transport Action Ontario

WHERE: Available for in-studio or telephone interviews at (416) 802-7555

In 2010, transportation policy adviser Greg Gormick succeeded in having the current federal government declare November 7 to be Canada's National Railway Day, commemorating annually the driving of the last spike in the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) – often called “the wedding band of Confederation.”

“The completion of the transcontinental railway made Canada a united, modern and forward-looking nation back in 1885,” says Gormick. “But one is left to wonder what has happened to that national dream and the vision that inspired it. Now, our rail passenger and freight systems are once again in the news, but not in ways that should make Canadians proud.”

In recent months, Canada has experienced the tragedy of the Lac-Mégantic derailment, several other serious rail accidents, cuts to the nationwide VIA Rail Canada passenger service, a hostile takeover of the CPR by an American corporate raider and the dismantling of a 200-mile section of the CPR's transcontinental main line in eastern Ontario. In short, our rail system – once the pride of the nation – is in turmoil.

This contrasts sharply with every other G8 nation – including the United States – all of which are investing heavily in their railways to tap the vast economic, social and environmental benefits of moving people and goods with steel wheels rolling swiftly and safely on steel rails. The time has come to ponder the consequences of Canada's failure to do the same. Where does this leave Canada in an increasingly competitive world?

On behalf of the public transportation advocacy organization, Transport Action Ontario, Gormick will be available throughout the week of November 4, 2013, to discuss this troubling transportation situation and the service-proven solutions from around the world that can change it for the benefits of Canadians coast to coast.

About Transport Action Ontario

Transport Action Ontario (TAO) is the regional branch of the nationwide, non-profit advocacy group, Transport Action Canada. Founded in 1976 as Transport 2000, its goal is convenient, affordable, and sustainable public transportation for all Canadians.

TAO is involved in research, consumer advocacy, and education – touching all aspects of public transport throughout Ontario. TAO defends the interests of public transport users and is in regular contact with government, regulatory bodies, transport companies, labour and other groups. Representatives regularly attend regulatory hearings and participate in public forums.

TAO recognizes that public transportation is a key factor in accessibility to housing, education, health services, employment and leisure for all Canadians. But the organization also acknowledges that certain groups are especially vulnerable to lack of passenger transport options. Accordingly, particular emphasis is placed on the needs of the poor, the disabled, seniors, youth, the unemployed, and those who live in rural and remote areas.

About Greg Gormick

The CTV television program, *W5*, described Greg Gormick as a Toronto consultant “with a client list that reads like a *Who’s Who* of Canadian transportation.”

Gormick is a member of the fourth generation of his family to serve Canada’s railways. He has worked as a writer, strategic analyst and policy adviser in the railway and transit fields since 1978. He has reported on, for and to these industries extensively and contributed his knowledge to numerous public transportation agencies. His industry clients have included the CPR, CN, VIA Rail Canada, the Toronto Transit Commission and several major rail and transit equipment builders, including Bombardier and General Motors Electro-Motive Division.

In the public sector, Gormick has served in several notable roles as a senior transportation policy adviser. His clients have included Toronto Mayor Art Eggleton, Toronto City Council, the Government of Ontario, the Coalition of Corridor Mayors, a coalition of five New Brunswick cities concerned about the future of their rail service and MPs Bruce Hyer (Independent – Thunder Bay-Superior North), Phil Toone (NDP – Gaspé-Îles-de-la-Madelaine) and Dean Del Mastro (Conservative – Peterborough). On Del Mastro’s behalf, Gormick created the concept plan for Toronto-Peterborough rail passenger service restoration.

In 2012-2013, Gormick served as the facilitator for Transport Action’s National Dream Renewed project, conducting a series of town hall workshops from Halifax to Thunder Bay to alert Canadians to the untapped potential in public investment in our national rail passenger service, VIA Rail Canada.

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