

# *Getting to Network Southwest*

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This presentation has adapted some slides from previous slide shows prepared for Transport Action Ontario. The presenter is solely responsible for this presentation.



# High Performance Rail (HPR) - *the international norm*

- High quality track, signaling, structures
- Maintained for 120 – 176 kph (75 – 110 mph)
- Frequent passenger train service

**HPR: Amtrak's New York-Albany  
Empire Corridor  
13 weekday trains – 227 km**



# HPR: Amtrak's Hiawatha Corridor

## Chicago – Milwaukee –

### 7 weekday trains (soon 10) – 137 km



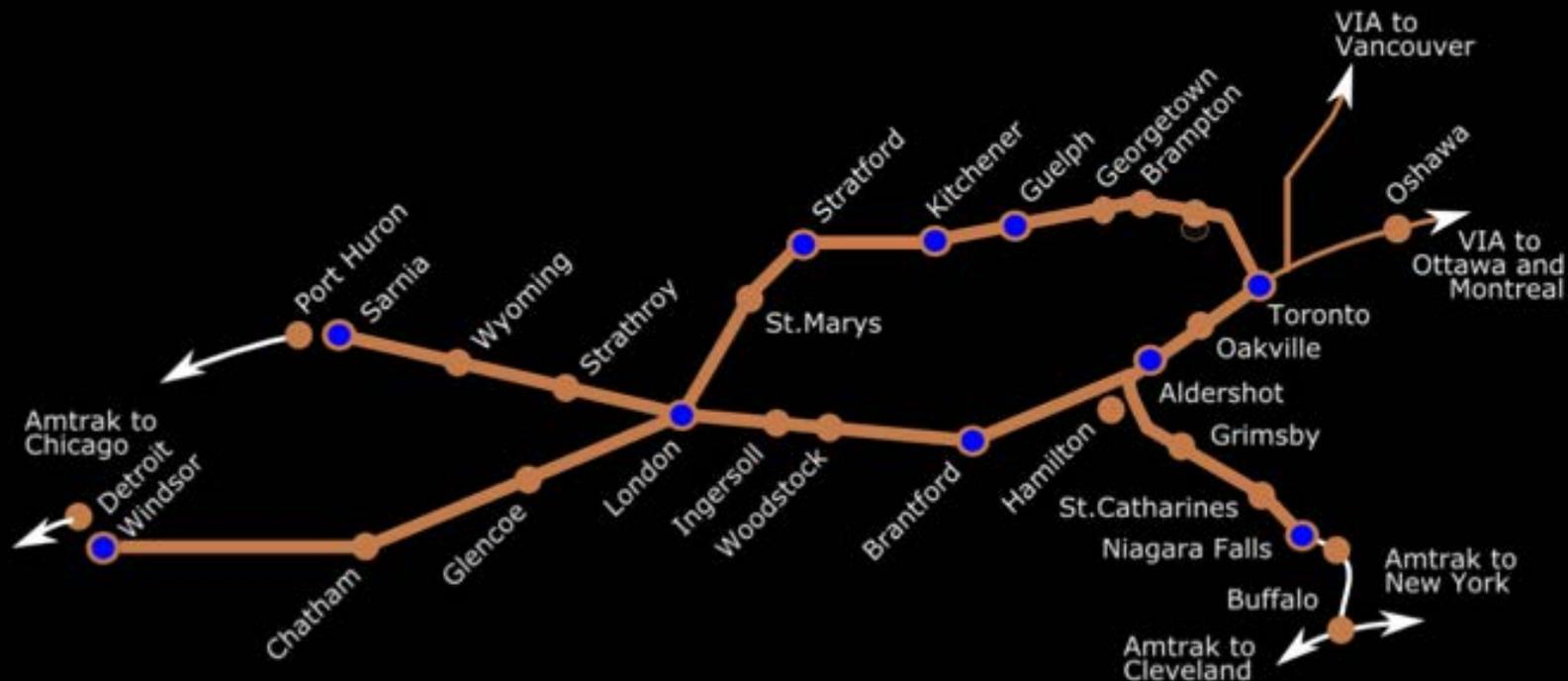
Room for  
15 bikes; \$5  
Added fare;  
Saturday  
night 11pm  
extra train

**HPR: Amtrak's  
Pacific Surfliner  
Los Angeles – San  
Diego**

**14 weekday  
trains – 205 km**  
(photo: train arriving in San  
Diego)



# VIA's Southwestern Ontario Routes





## Our objective:

**Build awareness of HPR as part of the solution to the mobility gap in SW Ontario. How do we get beyond “drive everywhere to everything”?**

- Rail and bus services have deteriorated
- Transit needs help from upper levels of government
- Rail, bus and transit don't connect
- Few alternatives to the car today
- Highways no solution for people without cars
- Highways prone to congestion, disruptions/closures, huge GHG effects, not fun to drive, dangerous



# VIA Rail is in serious decline in Southwestern Ontario

- Poor service and schedules
- Chronically unreliable making connections a joke
- Accessibility poor

## Elite carriage >>>

- Fares high; narrow choice of markets being served
- Fares set by "yield management;" deters travel on short notice
- Restrictive baggage limits



# The cry for HELP!

## We need all-day two-way GO trains

- Who's asking? Kitchener-Waterloo, Guelph, Brantford, St.Catharines, Niagara Falls - all places beyond GO's designated commuter shed
- Why? GO is a known quantity: frequent service, low fares, reliable, high capacity trains
- What does it bring? Connectivity locally, regionally, and between regions

# Why invest in rail?



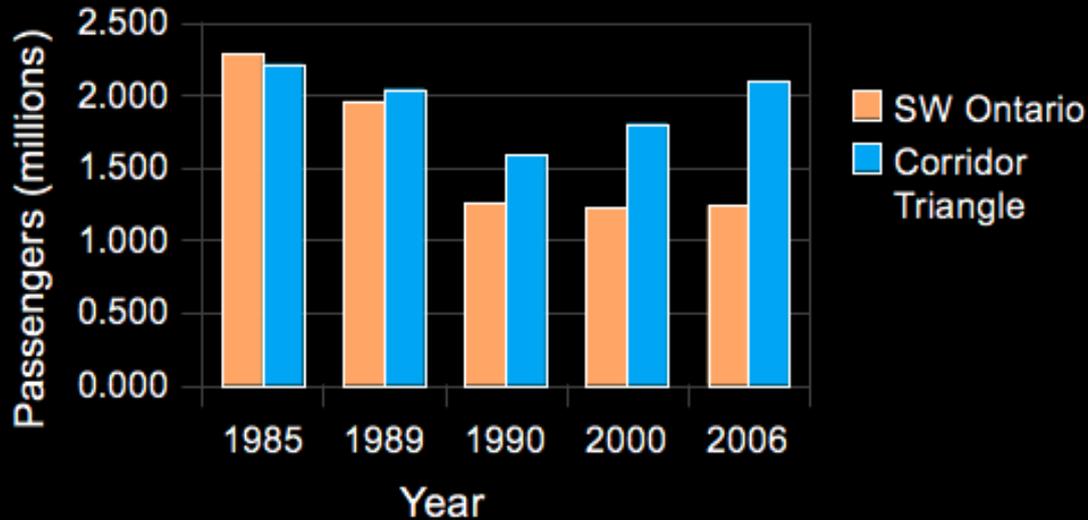


# Shifting gears: towards express rail in SW Ontario

- BUT GO is a commuter train not suited to longer distance regional intercity passenger rail now badly provided by VIA
- *Is there a way to rebuild the passenger train network in SW Ontario that melds the best elements of GO and VIA? Hint: it is HPR in a network springing from provincial-federal co-operation.*

# VIA Rail Canada Ridership by Region

## Southwestern Ontario vs. Corridor Toronto-Ottawa-Montreal



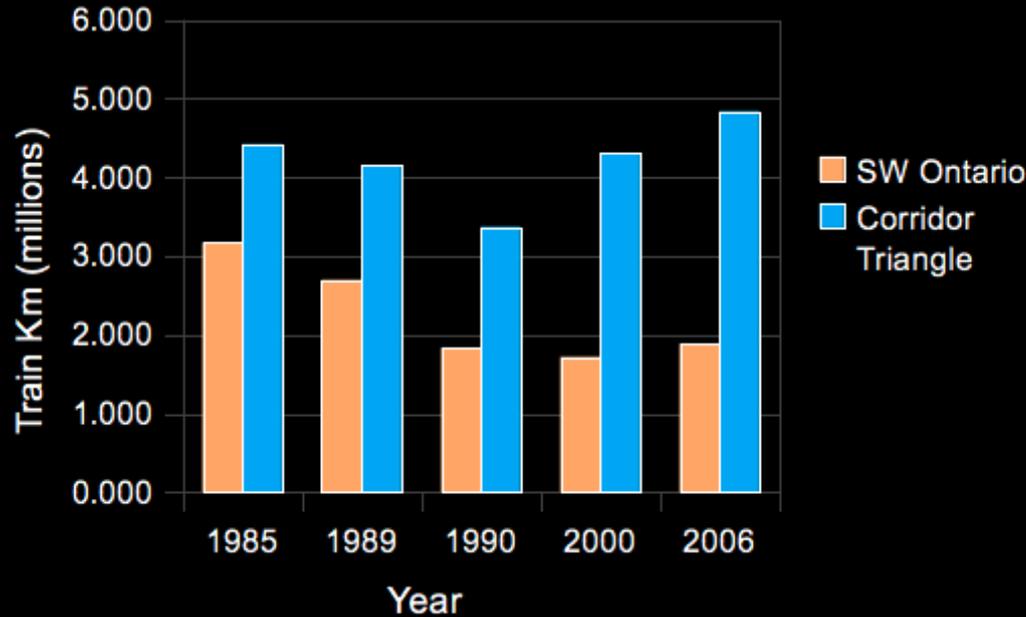
Ridership was once as high in SW Ontario as in the Corridor Triangle, until service was cut in 1990 and in 2011-2012

2.288	1.956	1.259	1.226	1.238
2.212	2.041	1.588	1.802	2.098

Data courtesy Prof. John Bakker

# VIA Rail Canada Train Kilometres by Region

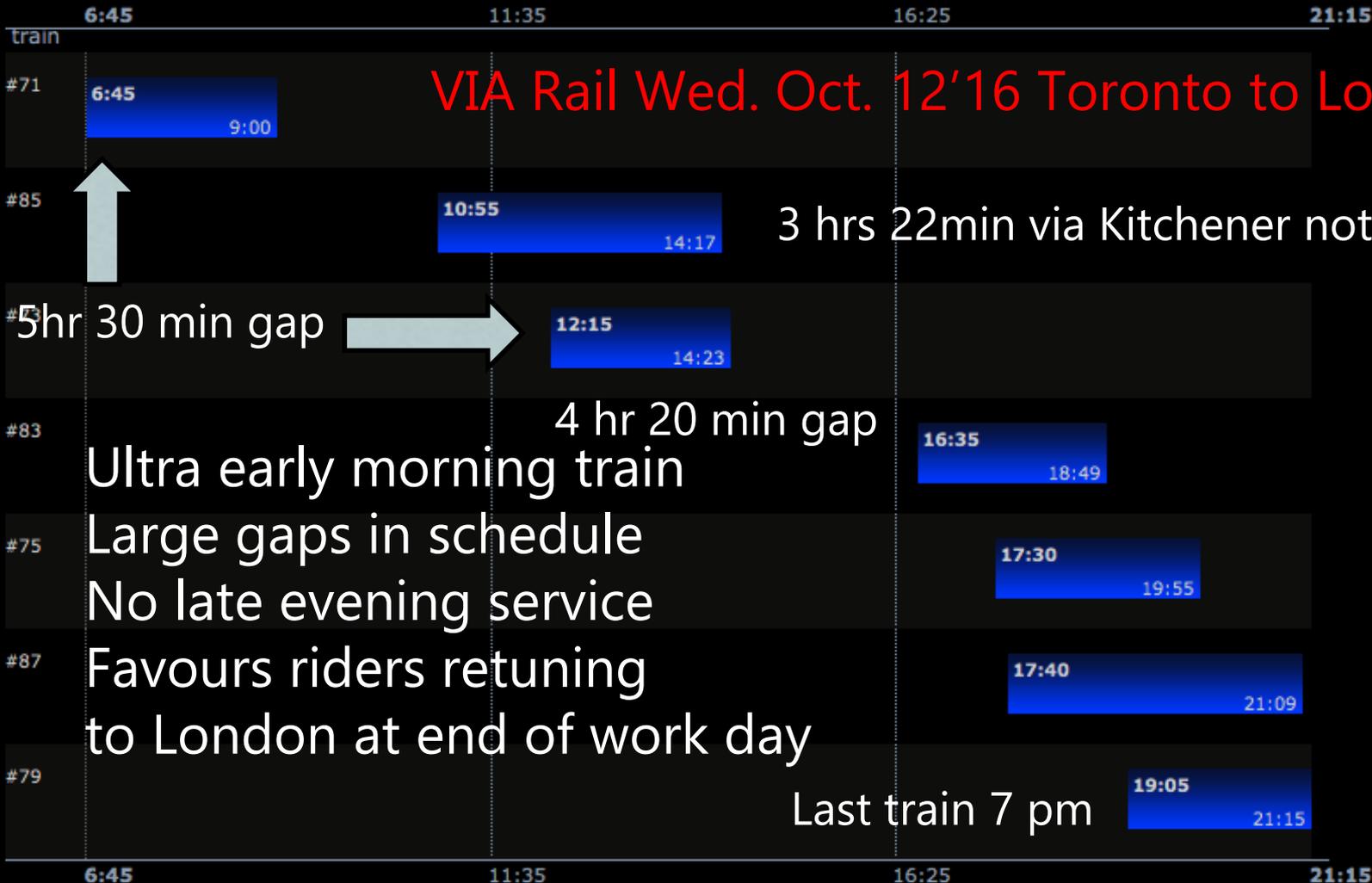
## Southwestern Ontario vs. Corridor Toronto-Ottawa-Montreal



Train kilometres have been cut in SW Ontario, rising in the Corridor Triangle after 1990

3.171	2.698	1.835	1.720	1.887
4.422	4.153	3.371	4.306	4.839

Data courtesy Prof. John Bakker



# VIA Rail Wed. Oct. 12'16 Toronto to London

3 hrs 22min via Kitchener not useful

5hr 30 min gap

4 hr 20 min gap

Ultra early morning train

Large gaps in schedule

No late evening service

Favours riders retuning to London at end of work day

Last train 7 pm



# Comparing some fares Toronto-London

## Next day / one week in advance

- If GO would serve Toronto-London (equivalent zones: Clarington to Kitchener): one-way adult, **est. \$25.65** (no HST on GO fares)
- *Buy date: October 5; for October 6 and October 12, 2016*
- VIA Rail round trip: in advance, one-way \$64/\$71/\$97  
Escape/Economy/Economy Plus
- VIA Rail next day: to London 6:45, \$71 Economy/\$97 Econ+; return at 15:34, only two seats available, \$97
- Greyhound, in advance: to London, \$48 (web), \$51.30 (adv.purchase), \$69.50 (std.non-refundable); return trip included. \$7 fee fpr web ticket
- Greyhound, next day: \$52 (web), \$73 (std.non-refundable); return incl.



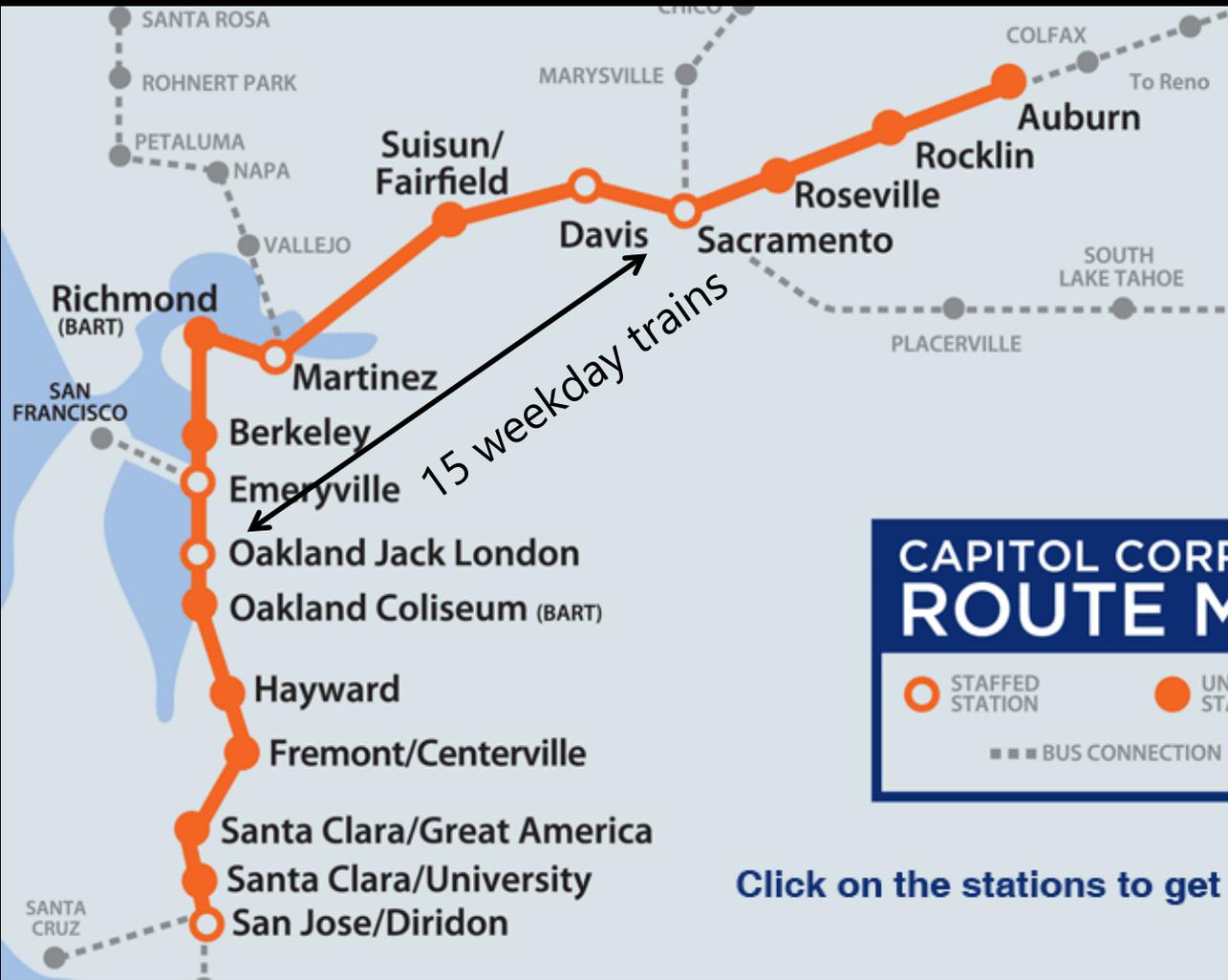
**The public is ready -**  
*Around the world improved mass transit  
(local, regional, intercity) draws millions  
of new riders*

- Amtrak in the U.S. showing ridership gains year after year
- New LRT and streetcars attract thousands
- Cycling and walking make gains when safe infrastructure is provided

# HPR for Southwestern Ontario

## *Intercity passenger rail as MASS TRANSIT*

- High quality track, etc.
- Fast (120 – 176 kph / 75 – 110 mph).
- Frequent all-day two-way service
- High capacity bi-level cars with comfortable seating
- Affordable, low fares
- Rail, bus and transit interconnected in a network; *leave no one behind!*
- Requires investment and operating subsidies



# CAPITOL CORRIDOR ROUTE MAP

Click on the stations to get more information

# Capitol Corridor bi-level push-pull train



High capacity  
No need for seat reservations  
Quick loading with double wide doors  
Accessibility lift on board  
Large accessible washroom on lower level  
Ample baggage area  
Bike storage



Photo: Jack Snell

Fare: Oakland – Sacramento \$29 anytime unreserved coach



## Amtrak's Capitol Corridor

**15 trains weekdays**

0-km San Francisco 865K



San Francisco Bay Area 7.65M

## VIA's North Main Line Innovation Corridor

**2 trains weekdays**



Greater Toronto Area 6.6M



# Imagining what HPR would look like for Southwestern Ontario

- Keeping to the GO ideal (intercity mass transit) >>>
- A new fast train system complementary to commuter rail
- Clock-face schedules across the day (i.e. frequent)
- High capacity bi-level cars with comfortable seats, plentiful baggage space, and great wi-fi, accessible (lift on-board)
- Affordable, fixed low fares at all times of the day
- Reliable connections at hubs such as London, Aldershot, Toronto



# Getting to express rail in SW Ontario: *Challenges*

## The Federal Level

- Over the decades, stream of cuts to VIA and other federal transport downloading
- VIA: all eggs in the Corridor Triangle basket / unrealistic plans
- Transport Canada to study VIA's needs: report due in three years time!

Not acceptable!

# Getting to express rail in SW Ontario: *Challenges*

## The Provincial Level

- Many expensive transit projects in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, in particular GO electrification and Regional Express Rail – funding in jeopardy, timelines stretching
- On Toronto-Georgetown-Kitchener line: flyover of the CN freight line needed for passenger trains at Bramalea, and additional track for freight
- Network Southwest has a modest cost and fits well with GO expansion and upgrades to the west of Toronto

# Getting to express rail in SW Ontario: *Prodding to get the political will*

HUGE OPPORTUNITY for the provincial government:

- Feds sitting on their hands but pay out the VIA subsidy and have the infrastructure bucks
- Ontario has the opportunity to seek a new kind of provincial-federal co-operation implementing express rail in Southwestern Ontario
- Network Southwest has a modest cost and fits well with GO expansion and upgrades to the west of Toronto



# **Getting to express rail in SW Ontario:** *Prodding/challenging to get the political will*

Change can happen with broad public support. Join in supporting a new public transportation deal for Southwestern Ontario. Help make Network Southwest a reality. We all have much to gain.

Thanks for  
listening!

