

Transport Action Canada
(formerly Transport 2000)

Hotline 1060

February 19, 2010

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Calendar

February 24: Wolfville: Transport Action Atlantic presentation on Acadian Lines bus service cuts: Old Orchard Inn, Conference room: 10:30 am

March 27: Toronto: Transport Action Ontario Annual General Meeting: Metro Hall (55 John St.), Room 302: 10:30 a.m. 1:30 the Detroit River International Crossing and Environmental Assessments

Avril 27-28: Québec: Le Groupe TRAQ 14e Colloque ferroviaire: L'Hôtel Plaza Québec

<http://www.groupe-traq.com/>

April 27-28: Quebec: Le Groupe TRAQ 14th annual railway conference: L'Hôtel Plaza Québec

<http://www.groupe-traq.com/>

The Detroit River International Crossing: Road-Based Infrastructure in the Era of Climate change

On March 27 Transport Action Ontario will hold a panel discussion on the Detroit River International Crossing project (DRIC). The panel will include Dr. Dietrich Bergmann of Ann Arbor, Michigan, Albert Koehl from Ecojustice, the Ambassador Bridge Company's Paula Lombardi, and a Sierra Club representative to be announced. The event will take place in Toronto's Metro Hall (55 John St.), Room 302: at 1:30 pm. Transport Action Ontario will hold its Annual General Meeting starting at 10:00 am at the same location. For information: Dan Hammond danielshammond@gmail.com or Natalie Litwin n.litwin@sympatico.ca

Regina Citizens Public Transit Coalition supports new plan

"(Regina Community and Protective Services committee) gave its approval to two interconnected sets of plans for transit. The first, prepared by a Burnaby-based consultant, provides recommendations for investing in transit over the next 10 years. A second document, an "action plan" prepared by the city's transit department, sets out some specific actions to be taken based on the consultant's report, noting the availability of resources will in part determine what improvements can be made to the transit system, which costs the city much more money each year than it brings in," the Leader-Post reported on Feb. 18.

"It is our feeling we need to invest the necessary resources to complete this plan as soon as possible," (Jim) Elliott stated, on behalf of the Regina Citizens Public Transit Coalition," Joe Couture reported for the Leader-Post.

<http://www.leaderpost.com/news/Rate+hike+proposal+awaits+council+approval/2579570/story.html>

Long-awaited Train de l'Est on track for summer 2012

"... Quebec Transport Minister Julie Boulet is saying the Train de l'Est, a proposed commuter rail line linking downtown Montreal with the North Shore municipality Mascouche (52-kilometre \$400 million), will finally be carrying passengers - by the summer of 2012," the Gazette reported on Feb. 16.

"This is a file that dates from 1981, it's a very old project," said Jean Léveillé, head of Transport 2000 Quebec, a lobby group for transit users. "But I've taken a tour of the work that's being done and, frankly, I think the date she announced is the most realistic," the Gazette's James Mennie wrote.

"Boulet made the announcement while she was the featured speaker at Transport 2000 Quebec's annual luncheon ... "The good news, the very awaited news, is that the minister of the environment has authorized the environmental certificate to begin work on the Repentigny-Mascouche section of track," Boulet told her audience of about 500 people," the Gazette reported.

<http://www.montrealgazette.com/Long+awaited+Train+track+summer+2012/2568892/story.html>

CAPT urges Ministers to invest in Soo to Sudbury rail line

"Time is critical on this decision if the rail maintenance needed is to proceed in time to make continued freight operations possible this summer," Al Errington Co-chair of the Coalition for Algoma Passenger Trains wrote to Transport Minister John Baird and Brad Duguid Ontario Minister of Energy and Infrastructure on Feb. 16.

"It is very concerning that this infrastructure investment decision is taking so long and involves so much negotiation with the federal and provincial governments. If \$30 million were needed for repairs to almost 300 km of highway, it would be done already," Errington wrote.

"Privately-owned rail infrastructure with the inherently restricted opportunities is not a good competitive position for Ontario and Canada, but it is what we have. This situation should not restrict government from using the taxes they collect to invest in the rail infrastructure that is so important to the long-term sustainability of our economy, communities and global competitiveness," the CAPT's Al Errington wrote.

Transport 2000: On a opté pour les pneus

« Selon le président de Transport 2000, Jean Léveillé, Zhuzhou devrait respecter le choix de la Société de transport de Montréal (STM) pour les pneumatiques et ne pas tenter d'imposer les roues d'acier. «J'ai beaucoup de respect pour les entreprises chinoises, mais s'ils [les dirigeants de Zhuzhou] veulent expérimenter le métro sur acier, qu'ils aillent le faire ailleurs, parce qu'à Montréal, on a opté pour les pneus et les citoyens sont entièrement satisfaits», a indiqué M. Léveillé hier » Le Devoir a rapporté le 12 février.

Transit has many hidden advantages: George Bechtel

"Too long we have showered great advantages on cars and short changed public transportation. It will take a major shift in thinking to realize that public transportation systems produce cities that have less traffic congestion, and cities with massive highways have unbearable traffic jams," Transport Action's George Bechtel wrote in the Waterloo Region Record on Feb. 11.

"A good transit system is a vote for reduced car crash costs, lower auto insurance costs, reduced health and pollution costs and savings in delay for delivery trucks which wait millions stuck in traffic

jams. A seven minute walk to the bus or train stop means 70 minutes of exercise a week for better health," Bechtel wrote in the Waterloo Region Record.

New Métro cars delayed by steel-wheel bidder

"'Are we going to be dictated to controversy over steel wheels by Chinese firm?' Transport 2000 asks. The final details of the contract awarded to Bombardier Inc. and Alstom SA, that had originally been slated to replace 336 of Montreal's métro cars, was to be announced in December after nearly five years, a lawsuit and many delays and renegotiations," the Montreal Gazette reported on Feb. 12.

"But Chinese firm Zhuzhou Electric Locomotive Co. Ltd. brought the proceedings to a clunking halt when it requested it be allowed to submit a (steel-wheel system) bid. ... Five weeks later - and after saying it was far too late to re-open the bidding - the Société de transport de Montréal did just that. It relaunched the bidding process, saying it was doing so because because the terms of the deal had changed radically (it is now 765 cars, and 1,053, including options). But the specs for the relaunched request for proposals specified the cars had to have rubber wheels," the Gazette's Francois Shalom wrote.

<http://www.montrealgazette.com/Métro+riles+lobby+group/2553204/story.html>

Newfoundland Bus company wants 12% rate hike

"The company that operates the province's only cross-island scheduled bus service, DRL Coachlines, is seeking approval from the Public Utilities Board (PUB) for a 12 per cent rate increase. ... The PUB, which regulates the rates, is accepting comments from the public until Feb. 19, and will make a decision sometime after that," the Telegram reported on Feb. 10.

"DRL Coachlines took over the former CN Roadcruiser service in 1996, and continues to operate a seven-day-a-week service between St. John's and Port aux Basques. It employs 35 people and operates 12 motorcoaches that travel some two million kilometres annually. An adult fare from coast to coast - some 905 kilometres - currently costs \$107 (HST included). If the rate hike is approved, the cost will be just under \$120. The fuel charge is an added cost," Terry Roberts reported for the Telegram.

<http://www.thetelegram.com/index.cfm?sid=325704&sc=82>

U.S. Public Interest Research Group: The Right Track

On Feb. 9, the U.S. PIRG released "Building a 21st Century High-Speed Rail System for America". The report says "America's highways and airports are increasingly congested. Our nation's transportation system remains dependent on oil. And our existing transportation infrastructure is inadequate to the demands of the 21st century. Intercity passenger rail can help America address each of these challenges." The U.S. PIRG report

<http://www.uspirg.org/home/reports/report-archives/transportation/transportation2/the-right-track-building-a-21st-century-high-speed-rail-system-for-america>

Manitoba's CentrePort will find its own reason for being

With both Calgary and Regina moving quickly to establish multi-modal transportation hubs, the Free Press reported on Winnipeg's plan for "CentrePort Canada, the inland port that is being developed

near the airport."

"Diane Gray, CEO of CentrePort, is pretty clear already about what CentrePort will not be -- and that is an import-driven consumer-oriented distribution operation, essentially the kind of function the new Calgary Wal-Mart development will serve. "Consumer distribution is what's made some of the big inland ports in the U.S. work," Gray said. But Winnipeg does not have the population size that could support an inland port operation that depends heavily on import distribution," Martin Cash reported for the Winnipeg Free Press on Feb. 18.

<http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/business/centreport-will-find-its-own-reason-for-being-84681087.html>

Corridor Québec-Windsor - Seul un TGV serait viable, juge Bombardier

« Selon le président de Bombardier Transport pour l'Amérique du Nord, Raymond Bachant, seul un projet de TGV serait viable pour la desserte Québec-Montréal-Toronto-Windsor, et ce, sans arrêts dans d'autres villes » Le Devoir a rapporté le 17 février.

«Si on veut un projet pour relier ces villes, il faut aller avec le train à grande vitesse et avec des infrastructures nouvelles. Ça prend des voies dédiées; on ne peut pas partager les voies avec le transport de marchandises», a déclaré M. Bachant hier à Québec » Isabelle Porter a rapporté pour Le Devoir.

<http://www.ledevoir.com/economie/transport/283255/corridor-quebec-windsor-seul-un-tgv-serait-viable-juge-bombardier>

Open access to city documents on transit

Barry Wellar, Distinguished Research Fellow, Transport Action Canada, is calling on Ottawa to open access to all transit documents. "Public access to city documents about both the capital and operating costs of transit and about transportation opportunity costs and externality costs would help elevate the debate," Dr. Wellar said. Mayoral candidate Jim Watson opened his campaign by expressing his concern over the cost of the city's \$2.1 billion light rail plan. On Feb. 2 Wellar published "The Bottom Line in Tran\$it Financing 101: They're all taxpayer dollar¢ at

<http://www.transport-action.ca>