



Ontario Report

Transport 2000 Ontario

METROLINX TO APPROVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN NOV. 27

Assessing the plan's pluses and minuses

On Sept. 23, Metrolinx issued its draft Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton (GTAH), asking for one more round of public comment. On Nov. 27, the Metrolinx Board meets to approve the final version of its RTP, to then be forwarded for review to Queen's Park. T2000 Ontario members attended many Metrolinx public meetings. T2000 Ontario and SHIFT Ontario, a coalition 12 environmental groups including T2000 Ontario, have now sent Metrolinx a joint letter with their final thoughts. Two key documents were reviewed, the main draft RTP entitled "The Big Move," and an accompanying draft "Investment Strategy" (IS). Metrolinx also published four "backgrounder" papers, the most significant being "Modeling Methodologies and Results..." providing ridership data on the regional transit system envisaged for 2031. ...continued on PAGE 2

CALIFORNIA VOTERS BACK HIGH SPEED TRAINS

52% voter approval for Proposition 1A

With the problems of the economy top of mind in the U.S. general election of Nov. 4, California voters still gave thumbs up on their ballots to Proposition 1A, the "Safe, Reliable High Speed Passenger Train Bond Act for the 21st Century," authorizing a bond issue of \$9.95 billion for North America's first dedicated high speed railway. This outcome is a tribute to the community outreach and sensitivity of the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) as it went about its environmental assessments, and to public transport advocacy groups in the state, efforts that occurred over more than a decade.

A significant starting point in the process was public support of state-wide bond referenda in 1990 that funded specific inter-city rail, commuter rail, and transit projects. With proponents pushing for more study of ...continued on PAGE 3

FROM THE PRESIDENT NATALIE LITWIN



A Visit to Italy. For years I have heard glowing reports about passenger rail in Europe. It is almost a cliché that Euro-

peans do passenger rail well, and North Americans do freight rail well.

On a trip to Tuscany, Italy in September, I put Italian train serv-

ice to the test, and, in my opinion, it does not live up to expectations. On the plus side, they are electric, frequent, and are still punctual since that second World War dictator, Mussolini, famously made the trains run on time.

But service? There isn't any. There are no crews, except for the invisible engineer. There is nobody around period. No one to ask questions, no one to help with luggage, and no one to announce stations. The only ones around seem to be the graffiti artists who cover the cars with their colourful images. Unless you have studied a detailed schedule, you don't know

In this Issue

- Board Member Tony Turriffin
- Wilf Walker Remembered
- Ontario News Roundup
- VIA's Toronto-Vancouver Train
- Windsor Rail Relocation Study
- Safety Issue with LCV Trucks
- Letter to the Editor

which stop is yours until you are there, so you had better move fast. Luggage is stored behind a closed door in your car, so unless you sit very close to the luggage compartment, fellow passengers can take off with your bag, and they do.

...continued on PAGE 2

**FROM THE PRESIDENT**

...continued from PAGE 1

Despite the system's limitations, we managed pretty well. Italians are good natured and helpful. There was always a gentleman to help two ladies d'un certain âge with their bags, and always someone with enough English to tell us which stop was ours.

So, in comparison, our poorly supported VIA Rail system has its merits. In spite of chronic underfunding, it offers crews with a customer service orientation, comfortable seats, and safe and convenient storage for luggage. Now if we just had more trains, and if only the freight companies on whose rails VIA runs could help them to run on time...

Business as usual in the auto sector. Unless you have been living in a cave, you must be aware that the North American auto sector is in serious difficulty, to say the least. In the U.S., GM, Ford, and Chrysler got \$25 billion in federal government support for retooling and developing fuel-efficient cars. As the plight of the Big Three continues to deepen, they are back requesting another \$25 billion bailout. In Southern Ontario, the auto industry has asked the province to push for federal assistance to help it through this economic downturn. Thousands of families in Windsor, Oshawa and other towns are devastated as well-paid auto and auto-parts jobs disappear.

Japan and Germany are hurting as well from the worldwide economic slowdown, but not as badly, Germany because it produces luxury vehicles and Japan because it produces modern, fuel-

efficient, quality vehicles, vehicles that deal with climate change and escalating petroleum prices as the end of cheap oil is upon us.

Europe and Asia have been facing the future while Detroit and Ontario put their fingers in the dike and hoped that drivers will continue buying SUVs. Why were they not designing for tomorrow when times were good and the money was there so they would not now have to go to taxpayers now that the perfect storm of high fuel prices, climate change and a faltering economy has knocked them for a loop? ■

METROLINX PLAN

...continued from PAGE 1

Our joint letter stated that, "On balance, there is much to admire about the RTP and IS," in particular its statement of goals and its outlining of the modern practices of achieving a transit-oriented GTA. Still, there are some major shortcomings of the plan. The plan's main elements include an expanded road network, active transportation for the region (cycling, walking), a regional rail network with some bus rapid transit (BRT) links, transit centres called mobility hubs that provide major transfer points between the regional system and local transit, and improved local transit systems with more bus service but especially light rail transit (LRT). In the plan is the extension of the University-Spadina subway to York University and on to the Vaughan Town Centre, and an extension of the Yonge Street subway to Richmond Hill. There may be a north-eastward extension of the TTC's RT line in Scarborough. In Toronto the ma-

major innovation is the TTC/City's Transit City Plan for fast streetcars (LRT) on dedicated right-of-way on arterial roads, with the proposed Eglinton LRT route being in subway to the immediate east and west of Yonge Street.

We have a major concern regarding the RTP's regional network. Two levels of rail-based transit are indicated in the plan. The first is regional rail with speeds of 30-50 kph, headways as low as 10 minutes between trains, stations 2 to 5 km apart, with capacity of 5,000 to 20,000 passengers per hour. The second is express rail, averaging 50-80 kph, headways as low as 5 minutes, stations 2 to 5 km apart, with capacity of 25,000-40,000 passengers per hour. We support the concept of regional rail evolving into express rail. Utilizing the CPR's east-west mainline through Toronto as part of the regional network is a major step forward. While the report characterizes express rail as "typically" electrified, there is no explicit commitment in the RTP to an explicit program of electrification for regional rail. Electrification is the world's standard for regional rail networks and pays big dividends in achieving faster and more frequent train service and in energy savings. The modeling report assumes that the Highway 407 transitway is express rail, but the RTP doesn't show this route as either regional or express rail. A regional rail line across the top portion of the GTA is essential to achieve a complete regional rapid transit network in our view.

We support the concept of multiple rapid transit lines serving Pearson Airport, including an express rail service that could be run



by GO Transit since the Georgetown GO rail line is to be upgraded to express rail status. We therefore wonder if a premium service between downtown Toronto and the airport is required if a regional express route could make the same trip in 30 minutes (close to the 22 minutes proposed for the premium service)? Speaking of airports, we note that the RTP assumes that there will be a second international airport in Pickering, which T2000 has long opposed and which makes little sense especially now with oil depletion clearly on the horizon.

We find unacceptable the current situation where Metrolinx must accept as given 400 series highway extensions and 4,600 lane-km of regional road widenings, extensions that Metrolinx's own modeling data show add to sprawl, air pollution, increased fuel consumption, and a shift away from transit use. The MTO road building agenda removes billions of dollars that could potentially be invested in public transit causing the RTP to fail in achieving any greenhouse gas emission reduction. Turning four-lane roads into six-lane speedways is especially negative, leading to degraded safety and to major barrier effects undermining evolving local neighborhoods and communities.

There is little in the RTP regarding projects for goods movement. Consideration ought to be given to possible new rail corridors for freight that would help free up track for the regional transit network. Reshaping the GTA's rail freight network is an alternative to highway expansions as railways have a significant potential for

taking goods movement off the highway system.

The most glaring deficiency of the RTP is its investment strategy. One promise in particular sums up the scope of the RTP: 75% of GTA residents are to be within 2 km of rapid transit. The RTP openly laments that the GTA has suffered 25 years of transit investment neglect. To recover from this neglect and bring transit in our urban region to an acceptable world-class standard will cost \$50 billion over the next 25 years.

While the "big moves" begin to move the Toronto city region towards becoming transit oriented, finding funding solutions has been set aside as if that were a hot potato. The "quick win" projects identified in the RTP are basically local transit projects that already have funding. The medium term projects of the RTP were earmarked as funded earlier by the Province's MoveOntario 2020 initiative, the Province announcing \$11.5 billion for this group of some 15 projects, with an additional hoped for \$6 billion from the federal government. With its eyes wide open, Metrolinx has stepped away from asking for any new dedicated funding sources for itself, preferring further study until 2013. By that point in time the funding gap catches up with the RTP. At that point in time, major additional projects will still need to be undertaken, there will be increased operating costs as local transit agencies and GO Transit expand services, and maintenance costs similarly increase as a result of the added inventory of new infrastructure. Avoiding any "big moves" on new sources of revenues for transit has observers

wondering if once again green papers, white papers, backgrounders, drafts, and final reports end up as documents for library archives with some new transit, yes, but not much of the network we so desperately need.

On November 7, it was announced that the Metrolinx chair, Rob MacIsaac, is to become president of Mohawk College in February, but will stay on as Chair of Metrolinx on a part-time basis. (November 10, 2008) ■

CALIFORNIA HSR TRAINS

...continued from PAGE 1
high-speed rail (a private sector effort to build HSR between Los Angeles San Diego failed in the early 1980s), the state's CHSRA was founded in 1996. It received \$25 million in 2000 to begin the many environmental impact reports necessary for a HSR system between Sacramento and San Diego via the Bay Area and Los Angeles leading to the November vote.

Envisaged is an 800 mile system, \$9 billion will only cover half of the core system from San Francisco to Los Angeles. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger only backed Proposition 1 once it had been modified to require matching funds from non-state sources. In October the U.S. Senate passed a Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act which may provide from \$10 to \$12 billion as a first matching grant. The U.S. House of Representatives has yet to pass similar legislation.

Some \$4.5 to \$7 billion is expected from the private sector in the form of debt financing, vendor financing, system operations and some limited private ownership of some facilities. ■



MEET BOARD MEMBER TONY TURRITTIN



Tony Turrittin has been active in Transport 2000 since joining in 1981, attracted by its advocacy of the rail mode. He

edited the Ontario T2000 newsletter from 1982 to 1988 and served as president 1984-1987. He was president of Transport 2000 Canada from 1987 to 1989 during which it launched its Rails into the Future Campaign initiated by executive director Roy Jamieson. He recently returned to editing the Ontario newsletter and is also National Secretary of T2000 Canada.

Tony was raised in Minneapolis, Minnesota and obtained a PhD in sociology from the University of Minnesota. He recalls his family making a trip to Europe in 1949, taking a Cunard Line boat from Quebec City to Southampton, a seven day trip on that route. On the way to Quebec City, his family also visited Niagara Falls, Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal. Tony took up his first teaching position at St. Paul's College at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg in 1964, moving to Toronto in 1966 to teach at the newly opened York University. He retired from York University in 2004.

One key campaign for Transport 2000 Ontario in which Tony was deeply involved was the fight to retain Toronto's trolleybuses in the early 1990s. T2000 successfully obtained provincial government backing for reinvesting in this urban transit mode, only to have the initiative dropped when

the economic recession of the early 90s intensified in 1993. This long neglected urban transit technology may have a return as the economic advantage of electric propulsion become more appreciated in this decade.

Tony participated in a citizens' group movement that supported a dedicated streetcar right-of-way (ROW) on St. Clair Avenue West in Toronto. Streetcar right-of-way had already been adopted by the TTC for two shorter routes on Spadina Avenue and also on the Queen's Quay. The St. Clair West dedicated ROW would be on a major road outside the downtown, the 6.7 km 512 streetcar route from Yonge Street west to Gunn's Road. While controversial at first, eventually public support was built and the City decided to move forward with the ROW. The use of new streetcar ROW on many of Toronto's major arterial roads is now at the core of the TTC's recently adopted Transit City plan to improve transit across the city.

Transport 2000 has advocated balanced transportation alternatives since its founding. Its focus on rail and transit investments and improvements reflects the relative neglect of these important modes of transportation. With oil depletion and global warming, Tony believes that now is the time for a shift in public policy to recognize the need for upgraded inter-city train service, rail-based transit, and compact land use, as critical to a future for transportation much less dependent on auto and air travel.

Tony current is Vice-President of T2000 Ontario and is our representative on the City's Union Station Revitalization Public Advisory Group. ■



Vancouver's fleet of new trolley buses entered service in 2007, manufactured in Winnipeg by New Flyer Industries

WILFRID WALKER 1926-2008

On August 26, 2008, long-time Transport 2000 member Wilf Walker passed away. Transport 2000 Ontario was founded in 1979, with Don Bradury as president and Wilf as secretary. Wilf served as president between 1980 and 1981. Wilf grew up in Toronto, graduating with a BA from Victoria College. He later attended Ryerson in civil engineering, becoming a Professional Engineer. In the early 1950s, he worked for the consulting engineering firm of DeLeuw, Cather (now Delcan) on Toronto's first subway. The firm wanted to reassign Wilf to projects overseas. With a young family, Wilf decided to stay in Toronto, obtaining a post with the Ontario Ministry of Housing. About 1981, Wilf switched to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, taking up a post in the Rail Office. He retired from the Rail Office at the end of 1991. Interestingly, Wilf's father, a medical doctor turned historian, edited a biographical book on two of Canada's famous railway engineers, Walter and Francis Shanly (Frank Norman Walker, *Daylight through the Mountain*, Engineering Institute, 1957).



In the early years of T2000 Ontario, its executive worked for the return of rail service between Toronto and New York City and against major cuts to VIA service that the federal government made in 1981. The VIA-Amtrak joint train to and from New York began service in 1981 with Amtrak using Conrail trackage rights across the Whirlpool Bridge at Niagara Falls to overcome a CN refusal to handle the train. On September 17 of 1981, T2000 Ontario held a protest, part of a national day of protest against the Pépin train cuts, unfortunately without success.

Over the years as a member of the executive of T2000, Wilf offered thoughtful counsel and research. He wrote briefs and attended a variety of public meetings and consultations on behalf of our organization. Wilf was committed to balanced transportation for Ontario. Even before Transport 2000 came into being, Wilf joined many others in Toronto in opposing the Spadina Expressway, ultimately killed by Bill Davis in 1971. Wilf was dedicated to a modern concept of transportation that offered people rail and transit alternatives. We honour him in our memories and extend our condolences to his his family. ■

ONTARIO NEWS ROUNDUP

Prepared by Jim Appleby

Ottawa Valley commuter rail. Ottawa area politicians and interest groups are supporting a rail network for commuters on existing rail lines from Smiths Falls-Fallowfield, Pembroke-Arnprior-Kanata and Alexandria-Casselman all terminating at the

Ottawa VIA Station which is well connected to the Ottawa busway network. An agency like GO Transit would operate the service ignoring the transit planning dysfunctional city of Ottawa. Ottawa Valley mayors, local politicians and interested supporters participated on Sunday, October 5, in a demonstration in support of commuter rail on the Ottawa-Pembroke route. Ottawa Valley Rail operated a special train from Walkley Yard in Ottawa to Beachburg near Pembroke.

GO Transit extensions. GO Transit is conducting customer surveys to determine direction to expand service to Niagara Falls and Guelph. Recently, bus service to Stoney Creek connecting to Burlington GO trains was established. It is anticipated that this service will be expanded to Niagara Falls next year.

Northern Ontario. The Coalition for Algoma Passenger Trains (CAPT), located in Sault Ste. Marie, supports upgraded passenger service on the Algoma Central (CN) rail line from the Sault north to remote communities and tourist operations. On September 19, CAPT sponsored a successful celebration of the Group of Seven's use of a moveable boxcar studio on the ACR to paint landscapes of the Algoma area. The celebration took place at the Searchmont Resort just north of the Sault. Some 200 people traveled by train, bus and car to participate in the festivities, a sold out event. CAPT is also actively promoting restoration of passenger rail service between Sudbury and the Sault, and elsewhere in the Norhland region to aid mobility in the area and unlock its tourist potential.

Other short news items:

❖ Owen Sound Council is investigating the restoration of rail service to Orangeville connecting with the Brampton and Orangeville Railway. Rail has been lifted north of Orangeville but much of the right of way is intact as a trail. A passenger train service would connect with GO Transit commuter service in Brampton and perhaps also further south in Streetsville.

❖- Kitchener/Waterloo/Cambridge city councils support a 'spine' LRT instead of a busway to connect these municipalities.

❖ Hamilton Mayor Fred Eisenberger supports LRT instead of busways on two core routes within that city and to Munro Airport.

❖ Kingston is expanding and actively promoting greater transit usage in the city and surrounding area with a provincial capital grant of \$1.7M.

❖ VIA Rail is using part of its recent Federal grant to upgrade portions of its infrastructure, including sidings, Centralized Traffic Control, rail/road crossings and welded rail, on lines they own from Ottawa to Coteau, Quebec, and from Federal (Ottawa) to Smiths Falls. VIA is experiencing regrettable delays negotiating with CN officials on their lines on which they operate in Ontario. VIA operates over 90% of total services on CN lines.

❖ Pending Ontario legislation will curb drivers using cell phones while operating a vehicle but will allow devices that are not handheld. T2000 Ontario believes speaker phones are also distractions and should be banned. ■

VIA'S TORONTO-VANCOUVER TRAIN GOES ON LONGER SCHEDULE

Once again VIA has added more hours to the Canadian, its Toronto-Vancouver train operating on CN track through Capreol (Sudbury), Sioux Lookout, Winnipeg, Melville (Regina), Saskatoon, Edmonton, Jasper and Kamloops. The reason given is increased freight traffic on CN. More likely it is a combination of not enough sidings, and the need for longer sidings as CN routinely operates freight trains exceeding siding length.

The attached table compares the schedules of the present Canadian with the new, longer schedule that comes into effect on Dec. 2, 2008. The table also shows schedules of CN's Super Continental in 1971, and its 1955 Continental Limited.

In 1971, the Super Continental made the Toronto-Vancouver run in 68 hours over 2775.6 miles (4466km), close to the best time ever on the route. Westbound, the Toronto-Winnipeg portion of the trip was 29¾ hours in length, and the Winnipeg-Vancouver portion 38¼ hours including stops. VIA's Canadian currently takes 31¾ hours Toronto-Winnipeg, and 42¼ hours for the Winnipeg-Vancouver portion, for a total of 74 hours, or 6 hours longer than the 1971 time. As of December 2, the trip from Toronto to Winnipeg will be 35 hours long, an extra ¾ hours, with a 4 hour layover in Winnipeg, and then a Winnipeg-

Schedules of CN/VIA's Toronto-Vancouver premier passenger trains at selected dates

VIA's Canadian as of November 2008
 VIA's lengthened schedule of the Canadian as of December 2, 2008
 CN's Super Continental 1971
 CN's Continental Limited 1955
 Arrival times unless otherwise indicated

Read down (westbound)				Station	Read up (eastbound)			
1955	1971	Dec. 2	Now		Now	Dec. 2	1971	1955
23.00	17.45	22.00	09.00	Lv. Toronto .	20.00	09.30	16.04	07.00
04.02	22.25	02.42	12.58	Parry Sound	16.17	05.10	11.55	02.29
07.40	01.15	05.38	17.00	Capreol	12.30	01.20	08.30	22.20
11.55	05.30	11.16	20.40	Foleyet	08.19	20.50	04.55	18.30
15.05	07.50	14.20	22.58	Oba	05.58	17.50	.....	15.05
16.00	08.45	15.15	00.25	Hornepayne	04.30	16.15	01.15	14.15
18.33	11.25	18.26	03.15	Longlac	01.59	13.50	23.00	11.31
22.30	14.55	22.19	06.50	Armstrong	23.05	10.25	19.00	06.45
01.25	17.00	00.56	09.05	Sioux Lookout	18.35	05.45	15.55	03.05
.....	.....	03.15	10.54	Red Lake Road	16.33	03.45	.....	.....
08.45	22.30	08.01	15.45	Winnipeg Lv.	12.25	23.30	10.50	19.45
09.35	23.00	12.00	16.55	Lv Winnipeg	11.20	20.30	10.20	18.55
16.40	04.00	18.42	22.30	Melville	05.50	13.15	03.10	12.00
20.45	07.30	23.22	02.05	Saskatoon	01.45	08.45	23.35	06.10
05.50	12.55	06.37	08.05	Edmonton	17.30	23.00	16.10	21.50
12.40	18.30	13.00	14.05	Jasper	11.00	16.00	11.00	14.30
21.45	02.10	23.09	22.10	Kamloops Nrth	01.50	06.00	03.15	05.45
07.00	10.45	09.42	07.50	Vancouver Lv.	17.30	20.30	19.15	20.30

Vancouver time of 47¾ hours, an increase of 5½ hours, for an overall trip increase of 12¾ hours. In 1955, CN was running the westbound Continental Limited in 83 hours compared to VIA's new timing of 86¾ hours!

Because the Canadian will now leave Toronto in the evening westbound, connections to it can be made from other VIA trains going to Toronto. The night timing is poor for Parry Sound and the Sudbury area. First Nations communities between Armstrong and Winnipeg will now be served in the middle of the night. Two nights to Winnipeg is not attractive for the Toronto-Winnipeg city pair. Further west, the Canadian will have better times of arrival in Melville and Saskatoon, but there will be a very early arrival in Edmonton. As with the current schedule, a connection is still not possible between the Canadian and the Skeena that operates between Jasper-Prince George-Prince Rupert. Eastbound,

the Canadian will better serve Saskatoon and Melville. There will only be a 3 hour layover in Winnipeg. But First Nations communities east of Winnipeg will get their train in the middle of the night. Still further east, the Sudbury area and Parry Sound will also be served late at night and early morning, respectively, for travel to Toronto.

One has to wonder if this change was really necessary? Surely some investments could have been made on sidings and CN given incentives to have retained the present schedule. Many believe that passenger train service needs to be restored between Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary, Banff, and Vancouver on the CP, a route that was heavily patronized when it was abruptly cut by the federal government. There should be a major re-thinking regarding passenger train services in Western Canada to meet public transport needs. ■



CONSTRUCTION WASTE TO MOVE BY RAIL

First Waste Transload Inc. has opened a waste receiving facility at CN's MacMillan Yard, north of Toronto, to receive waste destined for land fills. It has invested some \$30 million in the facility and 164 water-tight rail cars manufactured by National Steel Car of Hamilton, Ont. It is estimated that 12 million tons of construction waste annually is produced in southern Ontario. Moving one million tons of waste by rail saves 31,000 truck trips, many that would use Hwy 401. The company states that it can move one 100-ton capacity rail car for the same price as one truck carrying 30 tons of waste. One market not yet tapped is the transport of municipal garbage. (Toronto Sun, April 19, 2008) ■

WINDSOR STUDY RECOMMENDS RAIL LINE RELOCATIONS

On October 27, the City of Windsor received a report from its public works department on the ongoing Community Based Strategic Rail Study. This plan recommends the abandonment of the CN's Chatham subdivision within the city and relocation of the VIA station to the CPR mainline. VIA recommended a station location on the CPR near the downtown. The VIA relocation and CP upgrade would cost an estimated \$175 million.

Further track abandonment would include the CN's CASO track in favour of CN using CP track based on a joint agreement. This upgrade would cost \$38 million.

Also explored was freight yard changes and the building of an intermodal yard on land next to

Windsor's airport. Freight yard relocation would free up some land for development. It was noted that neither CN nor CP was interested in an intermodal yard in Windsor, saying that they had such yards outside of Toronto.

The report emphasized that all freed up rail right-of-way be retained by the City for use as transitways (bus rapid transit and potentially light rail) and for bike-ways. The time frame for relocations and redevelopment was given as from five to 10 years. ■

LARGE DOUBLE-TRAILER TRUCKS TO BE ON ONTARIO ROADS

On Nov. 6, the *Toronto Star* transportation reporter Tess Kalinowski wrote that Ontario will allow large double-trailers trucks onto Ontario roads as a pilot project. Currently, a long and short trailer combination truck is allowed with a total length of 25m (82 ft). The trial would allow a tractor to pull two trailers each 16m (53 ft) in length for a total length that will exceed 100 feet. The trucking industry claims this will lead to reduced shipping costs and lower CO₂ emissions.

Critics are very concerned about Ontario's adoption of long combination vehicles (LCVs). Safety is a major part of this concern. The Ontario Road Safety Annual Report shows that, in 2005, there were 121 fatal truck collisions, 3,074 personal injuries due to truck accidents, and trucks were involved in 14,651 instances of property damage. A Washington State study found that LCV trucks were between two and three times

more likely to be involved in crashes than other heavy trucks. This study also found that the longer a truck driver was driving his rig, the greater the chance of a crash. Other research in Ontario shows that double trucks have a higher rate of fatal accidents than other trucks on the road.

Truck driver fatigue remains a major issue in Canada where hours of service regulations permit commercial vehicle drivers up to 13 hours of driving and 14 hours on duty within every 24 hour period. In the U.S., hours of service are limited to a maximum of 11 hours after 10 consecutive hours off-duty. A driver must also not drive beyond the 14th hour after coming on duty following 10 consecutive hours off duty. Given Canada's already high hours of service, adding the stress of driving an LCV is bound to increase truck collisions that are already too high. ■

WORTH REPEATING...

Tom Kent, former principal assistant to Prime Minister Lester Pearson, wrote in the *Globe and Mail*: Sept. 8th, that "...Federal politicians long ago saw the building of the railway as building the nation. Perversely, public funding has since provided highways for long-distance trucking... We'll probably follow Europe and East Asia in having electrified lines for high-speed trains in our more congested areas. Meantime, much can be done to shift freight traffic [to rail] and, incidentally, improve passenger service. There are many sections of line across Canada where an additional track could be laid..." ■

**TO THE EDITOR:**

George Bechtel of Kitchner, Ont. writes that he was impressed by VIA Rail's initiative in providing the Bike Train to Niagara Falls. Nearly 1,000 bike passengers were accommodated on selected weekends. For \$35 one-way, passengers were treated to a smart T-shirt with the insignia of the 21 sponsors of the Bike Train. There was free wine tasting of Niagara wines in the Glen Fraser lounge car. Similarly, VIA operated a special train from Stratford to Toronto on June 14 for a Blue Jay's baseball game attracting 550 excursionists from Stratford. Kudos to VIA.

Given the deepening U.S. recession, George wonders if building rail infrastructure might not help economically and help bring about a badly needed transport revolution in the ways we move people and goods? He notes that Californians have backed high speed trains on an 800 mile system which potentially will provide some 450,000 new permanent jobs for the state. The system will provide affordable travel with fares lower than flying or driving the same distance. It will save energy, and free up gates at airports for long-distance flights.

World production of 16 million cars but only a demand for 12 million cars annually is not sustainable.

The economic downturn has resulted in analysts recommending a new wave of infrastructure investment by governments. David Brooks, *New York Times* columnist, on Oct. 30, called for a National Mobility Project for the U.S. Government would fix what can be fixed, and plan longer term regarding congestion pricing, new rail

and air technologies, smart highways, etc. George urges that in Canada we should add passing tracks on Canada's railways to get back passenger train services. And, yes, keep our roads in good repair. Then build high speed rail in the Quebec City-Windsor corridor and between Calgary and Edmonton. ■

BOARD MEETINGS

Transport 2000 Ontario Board Meetings are usually held evenings on the 3rd Wednesday of the month (no July or August meetings). We meet at 215 Spadina Avenue, Toronto. If you wish to attend, please contact Natalie Litwin by e-mail at n.litwin@sympatico.ca or call 416-498-0612 to confirm date, time and place which is subject to change. ■

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Join Transport 2000 to help us advocate for sustainable transportation. By joining Transport 2000 Ontario, you also become a member of Transport 2000 Canada. Members receive Ontario *Report*, as well as our national newsletter *TransportAction*.

To join, send your name, address, telephone number, e-mail 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 2000 Canada is a registered charity and donations to it receive a tax-credit receipt.

Our website is www.transport2000.ca/ontario. A membership form is available at this website.