

Ontario Report

Transport 2000 Ontario



Oakwood at St.Clair West December 19

BIA's celebrate opening mid-section St.Clair streetcar right of way.

TORONTO'S TRANSIT COMMISSION TRANSIT CITY PLAN MOVES FORWARD

Feature story. Toronto's challenge: attract new population and employment while enhancing quality of urban life. How? Become a transit-oriented city with land use intensification along arterial corridors. For that to happen a network of rapid transit for the whole of the Toronto would be required. But building subways everywhere would be unaffordable and, besides, the medium densities of most of the city would not support subways. Is there another way to get rapid transit? It took some time to evolve into Toronto's concept of Transit City, but, yes, the answer is rapid streetcar transit, which also carries the moniker light rail transit (LRT).

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FROM THE PRESIDENT- NATALIE LITWIN

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION STARTING WITH OUR KIDS



A public elementary school in my area that I often pass has troubled me mightily over the years. It sits in a quiet residential neighbourhood, and

the one main street that some of its pupils cross is supervised by a crossing guard. Yet, at closing time, cars, waiting to pick up the youngsters circle the block. At one time, they idled as they waited, immersing the school in a cloud of toxic emissions. The cars are still there but now their motors are silent, probably on the advice of the school principal. Recently I noticed a sign near the en-

trance announcing a "Walk to School Day." How sad.

This situation is replicated in many neighbourhoods partly as a result of parents' fear for their child's safety. Screaming headlines in the media reporting rare child abductions trump reassuring data on the actual number of violent crimes.

Being bundled up and delivered back and forth like a Federal Express parcel is not only damaging to a child's physical health, but also discourages independence, exploration and the development of social skills. A lot goes on as kids walk through the neighbourhood, usually in pairs or groups. They get to know their neighbours and community; they chat, quarrel, roughhouse. Feet on the street is far better than a tush on a car seat or school bus.

The Active and Safe Routes to School program in Ontario and similar programs across the country

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work hard to counteract this trend to passive transportation. And many schools and parent groups have

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION STARTING WITH OUR KIDS

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organized successfully to get kids back on their feet or on bikes. Its too bad that even getting to school has to be an organized activity, but that is today's reality. I look back with nostalgia to the days when I grabbed my books and bolted out the door to join my friends on that daily trip. My children also made their way independently. But their children did not.

School boards are not helping. Specialized schools take children out of their neighbourhoods so the young ones have to be bussed or transported by mom or dad, and the older ones may transport themselves but lose a connection with their community. Special schools have always existed and are necessary to fill an educational need, but in my opinion, if the Toronto District School Board is an example, the education system is going to extremes.

Out of 600 schools, the TDSB has 42 alternative schools, three business and technical schools, four schools for special needs, three arts schools, one school for English as a second language, and one all-girls school. The Africentric Alternative School was recently added and an all-boys school is in the offing.

I suggest that school boards look carefully at some of their trendy decisions and balance the advantages and disadvantages of bussing or driving pupils out of their neighbourhoods. ■

C.A.P.T. TOWN HALL MEETING IN THE SAULT NOV. 27: TRACK TO THE FUTURE

The Coalition for Algoma Passenger Trains (CAPT) is a regional group of individuals and businesses who recognize the significant, economic, cultural, historical and environmental value of Algoma's wilderness passenger trains. Its Town Hall meeting of Nov. 27, held in Sault Ste. Marie, featured a panel of speakers including Serpent River First Nation Chief Isadore Day, Diane Morrell from the Canadian Paraplegic Association, Prof. Nairne Cameron from the Geography Department of Algoma University, and Amie Harnish, a student in the Community Economic and Social Development program at Algoma U. The audience was presented with a video clip of Jeff Rubin, former chief economist for CIBC, speaking on peak oil and transportation, and a musical performance was provided at the end of the meeting by the group Porter.

CAPT was founded in 2006 to fight against a cut in subsidy by the federal government to CN which resulted in a reduction of train service between the Sault and Hearst, seriously harming the tourism and resort industry in the Algoma. In 2007, CAPT published a 72-page Wilderness Tourism by Rail Opportunity Study prepared by the consulting firm of Malone Given Parsons Ltd. CAPT is concerned by the deteriorating rail infrastructure in the region, track that has a huge upside potential for local transportation and economic growth, in the context of the global rising energy costs which is forcing reconsideration of transport other than by road.

Both Chief Day and Diane Morrell stressed the extreme difficulties of getting around in Ontario's North.

Getting to appointments from out of the way places is a problem, doubly so for the handicapped. Amie Harnish noted that Algoma U is hoping to serve the region as a whole, but there is limited public transport especially east-west, handicapping attracting students from even across the North. Speakers pointed out that rail infrastructure is now present that could be the basis of a comprehensive passenger rail network in the North. One model could be government ownership of the rail beds, as with the highway system, and contracting private operators for passenger and freight train operations. Track upgrades and the introduction of passenger train service could be done in stages. As it is, while the Huron Central has a one-year reprieve for its freight line between Sudbury and the Sault, what will happen after that is unknown. It was pointed out that the cost of developing a rail system is small compared to the amounts of money that have been poured into the road system. Nairne Cameron urged that we need to transition to a lower carbon use economy, and that it is wise to develop the alternatives now, especially in the area of public transportation, rather than wait until the last minute. ■

GREYHOUND CUTS SERVICE IN ONTARIO

In September, Greyhound asked governments to help subsidize bus routes in Northern Ontario and in Manitoba. The Manitoba government has worked a deal saving some service. With no support from Ontario, Jan. 17 will see Sault-Thunder Bay service cut from twice daily to once a day. There are also service cuts to Owen Sound and elsewhere in Southwestern Ontario. ■

PARTICIPATING IN THE 407 EAST EA PROCESS, AN EXPRESSWAY TO BE BUILT MAINLY ON THE GREENBELT

Transport 2000 Ontario, as part of SHIFT (Stop Highways, Invest in Feet and Transit), an alliance of environmental NGO's, has been closely monitoring and participating in the Individual EA process for the east extension of Highway 407. The project proponent is the Ministry of Transportation (MTO). This new freeway will extend 50 km into Clarington, with two north-south links, each 10 km long, that will connect the extension to Hwy 401. The lane requirements (2031) are between 6-10 lanes. The project involves 19 interchanges, 32 over/underpasses, and 85 water crossings. A transitway right of way is being protected, but is not part of the early construction plan. About two thirds of the route is within the Greenbelt! The cost of building the extension is over \$3 Billion in today's dollars.

During winter/spring of 2009, Transport 2000 reviewed draft reports prepared by MTO and recommended that their travel demand modeling be updated to align with Metrolinx assumptions. In response, MTO indeed revised their modeling and updated their reports. We met with MTO in July to review these changes, but found that non-freeway alternatives were still not sufficiently assessed.

The EA report was finalized by MTO in August for review by the public and by the Ministry of Environment (MOE). SHIFT submitted extensive comments, focusing on the inadequate assessment of alternatives and on the environmental impacts of a new freeway. In particular, we felt that the eastern parts of the project,

known as the East Mainline and East Link (totaling about 30 km, almost all in the Greenbelt) could be replaced by new upgraded regional roads. Remarkably, MTO had not evaluated this alternative. We recommended that the Minister refuse to approve the undertaking until this alternative was evaluated and reviewed with stakeholders. Alternatively, we recommended that the Minister approve the undertaking with strict conditions to defer construction of the east portions for 15 years, and only contingent on updated travel demand modeling at the time showing justification.

The MOE published their Ministry Review of the EA in December. Although MOE acknowledged our comments, they did not highlight our concerns as a key issue still needing resolution. At press time, SHIFT is planning to again emphasize our concerns to MOE. Should the Minister not concur with either of our recommendations, we will likely request that the Minister refer the issue to the Environmental Review Tribunal for a hearing. ■

-- Peter Miasek

ST.THOMAS-LONDON RAIL DEVELOPMENTS

The Commute by Rail group in St.Thomas, Ontario, continues to hold meetings to promote a commuter rail line between St.Thomas and London, possibly extended to Port Stanley. The existing CN rail line between St.Thomas and London has little freight traffic and could easily host self-propelled commuter rail cars into downtown London. The City of London is holding public consultations regarding updating the City's Transportation Master Plan

(TMP), the process being designated as Smart Moves. The relevant website can be reached through the City's website/residents/transportation. Commute by Rail points out that the rail connection is in good condition and thus rail service could be implemented at relatively modest cost. Smart Moves is entering Phase 2 of its public outreach. The goal is a new TMP by 2011. The group has its work cut out for them as previous transportation planning both by the City and by the London Transit Commission does not contemplate any use of rail and is entirely road and bus oriented.

The City of St.Thomas has let a strategic piece of the CASO rail corridor pass into private hands. Rail has been removed so that both the spectacular Elgin County Railway Museum (once the Michigan Central Locomotive Shops) and the Port Stanley Terminal Rail have been physically severed from the national rail network. The CP Rail line into St.Thomas from Woodstock, now operated by the Ontario Southland Railway, could be extended to connect with the Museum and the PSTR. The City wants to remove three bridges that carried the CASO over north-south streets. The only way that the Museum and the PSTR could connect with the Ontario Southland is by replacing the bridges with an at grade rail connection, not unreasonable since such a link would have only occasional trains. For commuter rail to connect to Port Stanley, some illegally lifted track along Princess Avenue, St.Catherine and Station Streets in downtown St.Thomas would have to be relayed. St.Thomas trades on its rail heritage image and thus has an opportunity to safeguard and develop what remains of this heritage on the ground at this moment, saving it in real terms for future generations. ■

TTC'S TRANSIT CITY PLAN MOVES FORWARD

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Some background. While Toronto citizens were fighting to stop construction of the Spadina and other expressways, with success in 1972, others were battling to save Toronto's streetcars, the last surviving large streetcar system in North America. They also succeeded when, in 1973, the TTC agreed to keep most major streetcar routes and moved forward to acquire a new generation of streetcar vehicles as well. Citizen pressure also helped lead the TTC to reinstate streetcars on Spadina Avenue, removed in 1948. After much planning turmoil, and a five-year construction period, the 510 streetcar route re-opened in 1995. Significantly, the new line had its own right-of-way (ROW), the TTC vowing to get the most out of its major new investment by taking this form of transit out of mixed traffic and its inevitable traffic jams at peak travel hours. Note that in the 1920s, both lower Spadina and St.Clair West had streetcar routes on reserved boulevards that were eliminated in response to the car lobby's clamour to get more road space for autos. The new reserved streetcar line on Spadina delivered on being relatively fast and gaining new riders and so has become a good model of what could be accomplished with this mode of urban transit.

Amalgamation and the St. Clair West streetcar ROW. In 1998, the Harris government forced amalgamation on the six cities that made up Metropolitan Toronto. One consequence was a new city Official Plan that envisaged a main streets and transit-oriented form of future growth. The plan called for a network of "higher order" transit on a

grid of selected major arterial roads. St.Clair Avenue West, the route of the 512 streetcar, used by 32,000 riders per day, was selected for a streetcar ROW following the model of Spadina. The street itself was 23m (75 ft.) in width, just barely wide enough for a reserved streetcar line. Also the tracks of the 512 route were in bad condition and urgently needed replacement. The required environmental assessment (EA) process was begun in 2003. Well financed opposition arose, followed by mobilization of a citizens' group supporting the streetcar ROW. Extra EA public meetings were held, and when all the written comments generated were analyzed, over 60% were in favour of the ROW for streetcars.

The 6.8km project was broken down into segments with the segment from Yonge Street to the St.Clair West subway station opening in 2007, and the section between the subway station and Lansdowne opening December 20, 2009. The final quarter of the line to Gunns Road is to open in the spring of 2010. To celebrate the opening of the second segment, the Wychwood Heights and Hillcrest Village BIAs rented the TTC's historic PCC streetcars and offered free rides on December 19 from 11AM to 4PM along the route, one car featuring commentary by Toronto historian Mike Filey, and the other the Hillcrest Choir singing/calling the station stops.

The St.Clair West project envisaged a total rebuilding of the street including the tracks. The project has taken much extra time as, serially, gas lines in the street were renewed, followed by undergrounding of hydro lines, followed by renewal of city water mains. In addition to the excessive construction time, complaints have been made about the street

lighting choice, the use of centre poles instead of span wiring for the trolley wires, and in places more than enough left turn lanes leading to destruction of mature trees, loss of parking, and to sidewalk narrowings. However, the public response to the re-opening of streetcar service west of Bathurst as of a few weeks ago has been overwhelmingly positive, due to the return of the smooth riding and quiet red rocket streetcars, much more comfortable than the temporary buses. With the ROW, St.Clair is also benefiting from more orderly vehicle traffic and substantial traffic calming. The problems getting the St.Clair ROW up and running mirrored the much earlier Spadina experience. The challenge of Transit City is to avoid these problems as it moves forward.

Transit City: branding a transit revolution for Toronto. Transit City can be traced back to the TTC's Ridership Growth Plan of 2002, spearheaded by David Miller and other councillors on the Toronto Transit Commission at the time. Among other things, the Growth Plan envisaged increasing TTC ridership by significant service improvements and surface transit ROWs, proposals that fit with Toronto's Official Plan (2002) and the vision of Toronto's city planners. As the Province moved towards a major announcement on funding for transit in March of 2007, the TTC's Chair, Councillor Adam Giambrone, announced Transit City, a \$6 billion plan to build a network of seven rapid streetcar lines on their own ROWs mainly using arterial roads in Scarborough, North York, and parts of

York and Etobicoke, parts of the city that would never qualify for subway extensions. David Miller, elected mayor of Toronto in 2003, went to bat for Transit City with the Province, successfully having it included in the Province's \$17.5 billion Move 2020 plan, a 12-year transit funding plan announced by Premier Dalton McGuinty in June of 2007. Transit City was subsequently included in Metrolinx's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) of November, 2008, Metrolinx being the Greater Toronto and Hamilton area transportation planning and funding body first established in 2006, named Metrolinx in 2007, and reorganized in 2009.

Transit City consists of seven separate projects totaling over 120km for a cost now estimated to be \$8.3 billion. Its routes will require arterial road widths of 36m. Six routes consist of the Sheppard East LRT (14km), Etobicoke-Finch West (18km), Scarborough Malvern (18km), Waterfront West (11 km), Don Mills (18km), and Jane (17km) LRTs. The seventh LRT is the Eglinton Crosstown line (33km) which will have a 12km tunneled centre section because Eglinton between Jane and Laird is not wide enough to add in a streetcar ROW. An eighth Transit City project is the conversion of the Scarborough automated RT (6.4km) to LRT and its extension to Sheppard Avenue and to the Malvern Town Centre. (See Page 8 for the TTC's Transit City map.)

Urgency and legacy. In its RTP, Metrolinx acknowledged that the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) decades of little investment in the kind of transit infrastructure and increased service that the Toronto-based urban region deserved. Consider Toronto's situation: the TTC is well on its way to completely renewing its bus fleet with hybrid buses. Subway car replacement is to begin in 2010 when the TTC receives another new generation of Bombardier subway cars. The need to completely replace the automated Scarborough RT cars is the occasion to fold this short rapid transit route into the the Transit City network taking shape in Scarborough. The TTC's current streetcar fleet is at the end of its useful life. In 2007 the TTC started the tendering process for 204 100% low-floor extra-length streetcars for its legacy streetcar routes that largely serve the old city of Toronto. Ultimately, in 2009, Bombardier was selected to build the 204 cars for Toronto at its Thunder Bay, ON plant at a cost of \$851 million, with one-third of the cost to be provided by the Province, and two-thirds by the City. This is currently the largest single order for streetcars in the world. A prototype is to be delivered in 2011 with the rest to be delivered between 2012 and 2018. Approximately 400 additional LRT cars will be needed for the Transit City routes.

The concept of Transit City is to bring fast transit to all corners of Toronto quickly and affordably. Toronto is taking advantage of a new environmental assessment regime put in

place by the Province to speed up transit projects in the GTA. In February of 2008 the provincial Cabinet approved a six-month EA process for transit projects which in particular limits the scope of public consultation. EAs have now been completed for the Sheppard East and Scarborough Malvern LRTs, and are concluding for the Etobicoke-Finch West, Eglinton Crosstown, and Scarborough RT extension LRTs. Transit City has received a boost from the competition that included Toronto for the site of the Pan American Games of July 2015. On November 6, 2009, it was announced that Toronto and the Greater Golden Horseshoe area would host the Games. One result is that major transit projects will now need to be completed in time for this summer event. For example, the University of Toronto Scarborough campus is to receive major new sports facilities for the Games. This location will be served by Transit City. Construction of the first of the Transit City line, Sheppard East, started on December 21 with an official ground breaking ceremony at the Agincourt GO Transit Station. The TTC is considering a 2011 start for the conversion and extension of the SRT, originally scheduled for 2012, so that this project can be completed for the opening of the Games. The City is also pushing for the funding of the Scarborough Malvern LRT so that it might be built in time for the Games. This route is to pass through the U of T Scarborough campus as it heads north on Morningside Avenue.

The Etobicoke-Finch West LRT is slated for construction between 2011-2015. The Eglinton Crosstown is to be opened in three stages between 2016 and 2020. The remaining three projects will get underway later, ...continued on PAGE 6

TTC'S TRANSIT CITY PLAN MOVES FORWARD

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beyond 2020. Learning from the St. Clair West ROW experience, the TTC and the City will likely select one large contracting firm for each Transit City route, with this one contractor also being responsible for utilities relocation and upgrading. The idea is to avoid the delays that result from multiple contractors working serially on a project leading to overly long construction periods. For comparison, note that the Spadina subway extension to York University and the Vaughan Corporate Centre is an 8.6km, \$2.6 billion, project that has taken five years to plan and will have a five-year construction period starting in 2010 and opening in 2015.

Finally, a word about Toronto Mayor, David Miller. On September 25, Mayor Miller announced that he would not seek a third term as mayor. Stepping back to evaluate some of his accomplishments as Mayor since 2003, it is clear that he has stood out for his support of transit. While Transit City has multiple origins, as mayor he pushed very hard to make Transit City happen. It is important to remember that the concept of Transit City is unique to Toronto. It was made possible by a pre-existing grid of wide concession line roads laid down by surveyors in and around Toronto many years ago. Modern low-floor streetcars, however, date from Europe in the 1990s. The concept of exclusive streetcar ROW is

as old as streetcar technology itself having a long history in Toronto. But using dedicated streetcar lanes as extensively as now planned for Toronto is a first in North America. We need to remember that Transit City is designed for local transit, for trips of short or medium distances. In the GTA the role of moving people across wide areas of the region now falls to GO Transit. Transit City will provide fast local trips in the comfort of an LRT vehicle that far surpasses what buses can offer and at lower cost on heavily used routes. David Miller championed the affordable fast surface "subway," as he liked to characterize Transit City streetcars lines. In his blog, transit advocate Steve Munro describes Transit City as revolutionary, as "...completely chang[ing] thinking on how rapid transit would be provided across a wide part of the City of Toronto." ■

VIA RAIL NEWS

After a long and distinguished career with VIA, Paul Côté, President and CEO, has retired. We thank him for his outstanding leadership and wish him all the best. As of January 4, the government's newly appointed President and CEO will be Marc Laliberté. Lalibertée has an engineering background and previous employment at Hydro Québec, Gulf Canada, CN for many years, and most recently he served as President and CEO of a major short line railway in Quebec.

VIA's track and station upgrades on the Montreal-Toronto corridor are moving forward. By adding and improving passing tracks VIA hopes

to be able to raise average speeds of its trains, add trains, and improve on-time performance, thereby drawing new customers to its services. The upgrade of the tracks and trains on the North Main Line from Toronto to London through Guelph, Kitchener, and Stratford is still stalled. There is hope that this funded project could get underway this spring. Under the VIA Fast proposal of a few years ago, VIA would have switched to using the CP tracks between London and Windsor which would have given VIA a downtown Windsor station and a possible future connection to Michigan cities and Chicago through the Windsor-Detroit rail tunnels. This project has substantial costs and it appears that VIA is not in a position to go forward for now with this plan, in spite of its clear merits. As a consequence, VIA will replace or substantially modify its existing Windsor train station in Walkerville.

VIA's LRC car rebuilding program is underway. Ten cars are currently at the IRSI plant in Moncton, NB; three have been completely dismantled to aid in determining how rebuilding should proceed. The first rebuilt car will be ready in June of 2010, with the rebuild completed by 2013. The rebuilt cars will have all new seats and their energy requirements will be reduced by 20% by adopting the latest technologies in areas such as heating and cooling. Twelve cars of VIA's *Canadian* stainless steel fleet are undergoing a reconfiguration by Avalon Rail Inc. of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Eight Chateau cars will receive six enlarged cabins that sleep three adults, and four Park

cars will have their sleeping quarters reconfigured into two larger cabins. These cars will improve accessibility on the *Canadian* and will increase space for premium sleeping car service.

Following the brief strike by locomotive engineers in late July, VIA introduced a 60% off promotion that was a huge success. The promotion generated more than \$14 million in revenues, about 369,000 people purchased at least one ticket, and of these, 37% rarely or never traveled with VIA, and 19% chose VIA after originally having decided to travel by other means (plane, car, or bus). ■

UNION STATION REVITALIZATION - FULL STEAM AHEAD

On December 1, 2009, Mayor David Miller announced the contracts that will lead to the revitalization of Toronto's Union Station. Acquired by the City from CN and CP in 2000 (with GO Transit acquiring the train shed and tracks), it has taken two tendering processes and ten years of planning to reach the point where major reconstruction will now get underway. Construction of the new GO Transit concourses (two concourses totaling 126,000 sq. ft.), the new lower-level retail space (some 160,000 sq. ft.), and the Northwest PATH connection from the station, will be carried out by Vanbots Construction of Vancouver, a firm acquired in 2008 by the Gt. Britain-based international construction firm Carillion PLC. The retail space of Union Station will be managed by Redcliff Realty Group, a subsidiary of Osmington Inc., a large

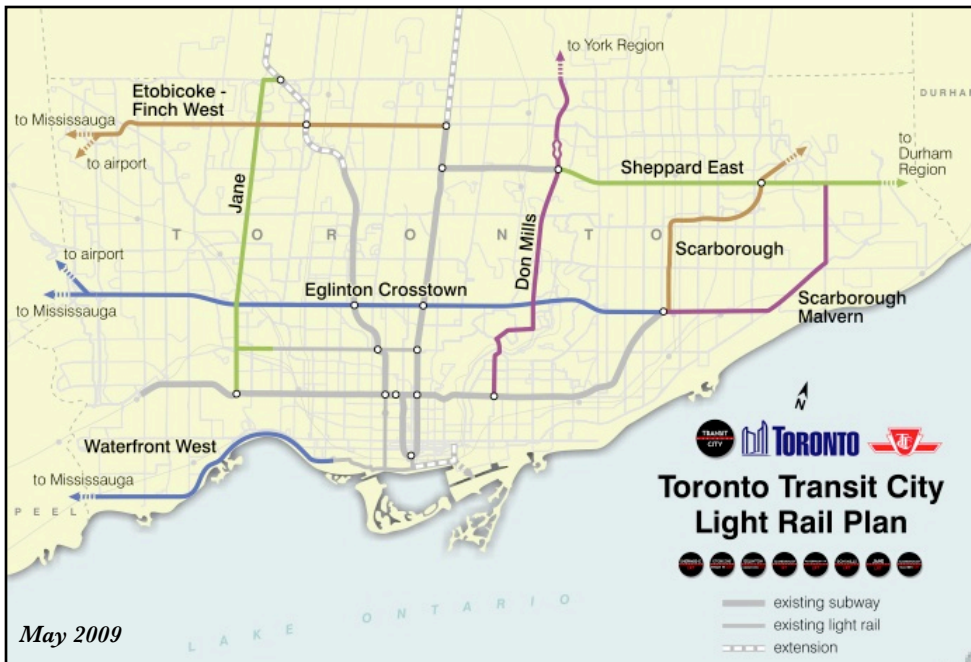
Canadian real estate management and developer firm. The mayor also announced that the finalization of the sale of the GO Transit concourses and West Wing office space to Metrolinx. The total cost of the revitalization is \$640 million, with \$133 million in support from the federal government, and \$172 million from the Province. VIA will have its first class lounge to the west of the Great Hall. Construction is to be completed by 2015. Some 50 million passengers use Union Station annually making it the largest transportation terminal in Canada by passenger count.

The Canadian construction firm AeCON Group has been awarded a contract worth \$196 million by Metrolinx to refurbish Union Station's train shed and tracks, including building the new glass atrium center section reaching 50 ft. above the tracks. This contract includes building 50 new stairs to the concourses below along with nine new passenger elevators. The station's train shed covers 13 tracks and 23 platforms. Construction is to be completed by 2015.

The TTC is also to rebuild its Union Station subway station, called the second platform and concourse improvements project. Overall platform space is to be doubled. The existing mezzanine level above the subway tracks will be on the same level as the lower level concourse being added to Union Station. Subway riders will thus not need to climb steps in moving from the subway station into Union Station. The project has a price tag of \$137.5 million, with construction to take place between 2010 and 2014. Planning for this project began in 2003 and in the past four years there has been major sewer pipe relocation necessary for this subway station project to start. ■

OTTAWA LIGHT RAIL TUNNEL UPDATE

On December 18, 2009, in a surprise announcement, the Ontario government provided \$600 million for transit to the City of Ottawa. In the Sept.-Oct. issue of this newsletter, we reported on Ottawa's latest proposal for a 3.2km deep downtown tunnel as part of a 12km LRT line on the central portion of the City's main east-west busway, a project carrying a price tag of \$2.1 billion. We questioned the value of the plan noting significant design flaws and the continuing dependence on every more busways. On Jan. 13, Council will be asked to approve the plan, kicking off a six-month EA process. Even though Provincial funding is sizeable, it leaves a large funding gap, and McGuinty has made it clear the Province has no more funding to give, meaning that the City alone will have to be responsible for the gap and any cost overruns. Besides the tunnel, the City plans expensive busway expansions. Currently, the federal government is not showing much interest in matching the Province's funding largess. Tunnel construction would start in 2012. It will be interesting to see how the City will use the Provincial funding if there is no federal contribution. Some critics suggest that it will stick with more busways. In the meantime, municipal elections in November 2010 might result in a Council that has second thoughts. The June 2007 Collette Transportation Task Force report provides many useful ideas for rail-based transit development in the National Capital Region. ■



BOARD MEETINGS

Our Board usually meets evenings on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Our next meeting is Jan. 20, 2010. We meet at 215 Spadina Ave., Toronto, starting at 5.30 pm. If you wish to attend or participate, please contact Natalie Litwin at 416-498-0612 or by email at n.litwin@sympatico.ca to confirm as date, time and place are subject to change. Our Mar. 27 AGM replaces the March Board meeting. ■

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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, 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 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.

OUR NEW NAME FOR A NEW DECADE: TRANSPORT ACTION ONTARIO

We are pleased to announce that on December 29, 2009, the Province of Ontario authorized Transport 2000 Ontario to change its name to **Transport Action Ontario**. This change harmonizes our name with Transport Action Canada, formerly Transport 2000 Canada. The Atlantic, Prairie and British Columbia regions are in the process of following suit. In order to avoid confusion, our website will be accessible under both names for the time being. Our new website address is www.transport-action.ca/ontario and our email is ontario@transport-action.ca. ■

AGM PLANNED FOR TORONTO, SATURDAY, MAR. 27, 2010

The Annual General Meeting of Transport Action Ontario will be held at Metro Hall, 55 York Street, Toronto, on Saturday, Mar. 27, 2010. The AGM meeting takes place from 10:30am to 12:00 noon, followed by a lunch break. Our Public Forum will be held from 1:30pm to 3:30pm. We have lined up an exceptional and impressive panel to deal with the controversial Detroit River Crossing (DRIC) at Windsor. We have speakers from Michigan,

from the Ambassador Bridge, and from Ecojustice Canada. Issues to be discussed: Do we need DRIC? Does the EA process work? Have rail alternatives been properly explored? The Forum is free though seating is limited. Reserve your place by calling our infoline at 416-504-3934 or contact us by email (n.litwin@sympatico.ca).

Transport 2000 Ontario Report

ISSN 1713-6539

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 Contributions of news and items are welcome. We are looking for correspondents. 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 2000 Ontario. Thanks to all who helped out with this issue: Natalie Litwin, Nairne Cameron, Peter Miasek, Chris Vazquez, Bob Weare, David Jeanes and volunteers at the National Office in Ottawa. Photos on p.1 by the Tom Turritin. News to Dec. 31, 2009.