

# Passenger Rail in Southwestern Ontario

*Seeking the optimum solution  
for travelers and taxpayers.*

[www.intercityrail.org](http://www.intercityrail.org)



# Premier Wynne, who told you that?



**You are mis-informing the public**

**SWO travellers did not ask for HSR**

**They asked for passenger rail that's:**

- **Frequent**
- **Affordable**
- **Accessible**
- **Serves their communities better**
- **Connects with adjacent communities**
- **Provides a viable alternative to the automobile**
- **Improvements in 5 years or less**
- **Does not add to the \$320bn provincial debt**

# Premier Wynne, what's really behind the HSR or nothing decision?



- A London, UK based consultant with a Google map?
- An initial cost budget that was low by a factor of about 10?
- Avoiding early, independent, expert opinion from other HSR operators?
- Selling the project to uninformed politicians and the general public?
- An international HSR club wannabe?

# Premier Wynne, here's what you must do now

## *Open the Environmental Assessment process to alternatives!*



- Listen to what people and politicians in SWO are telling you
- Discuss a master public transportation plan with the federal government
- Understand that passenger rail improvements in SWO cannot wait another 15 years or more
- Stop trying to justify HSR with incomplete information
- Eliminate job and investment killing uncertainty in southwestern Ontario

# What and who is intercityrail.org?

- ❖ **A group seeking answers from the provincial government on HSR justification and why other options are not being studied in the Environmental Assessment**
- ❖ **The agricultural community needed to make themselves heard**
- ❖ **We built an informative website with news and information**
- ❖ **Supporters and volunteers signed up – rural and urban**

# What and who is intercityrail.org? (cont'd)

- ❖ **Co-operation and alignment with municipalities with shared concerns**
- ❖ **We research, educate and communicate**
- ❖ **We help individuals and communities share their concerns and provide them with a voice**
- ❖ **No one gets a pay cheque – donations cover larger expenses**
- ❖ **Our focus is evidence-based solutions to passenger rail needs in southwestern Ontario**

# The Intercityrail Steering Committee

**Shirl Muxworthy - Tavistock**

**Jim Muxworthy - Tavistock**

**Eleanor McIntosh - Tavistock**

**Bill McIntosh - Tavistock**

**Lynne Ross - Tavistock**

**Terry Ross - Tavistock**

**Crispin Colvin - Thames Centre**

**Harold Bickle - Tavistock**

**Kelly Elliott - Thames Centre**

**Maureen Ralph -Tavistock**

**Mike Marshman -Haysville**

**Nicole Langlois - Embro**

**Paul Stevens - Thorndale**

**Steve Bottoms - Haysville**

**Terry Lupton - Embro**

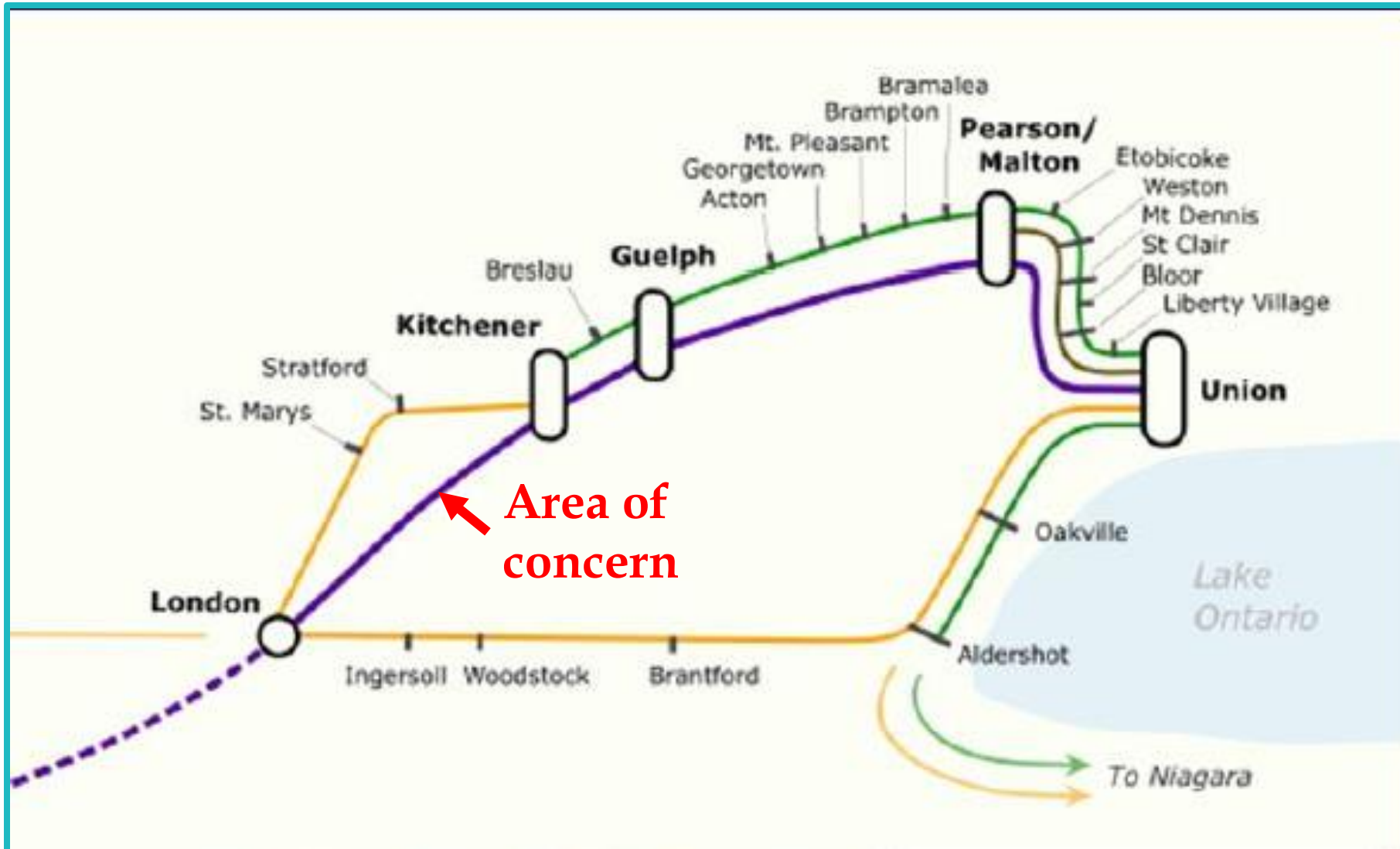
**Mary-Jane Govers - Thames Centre**

**Ken Westcar - Woodstock**

**Marcus Ryan - Zorra**

*(Not all Steering Committee members are here tonight)*

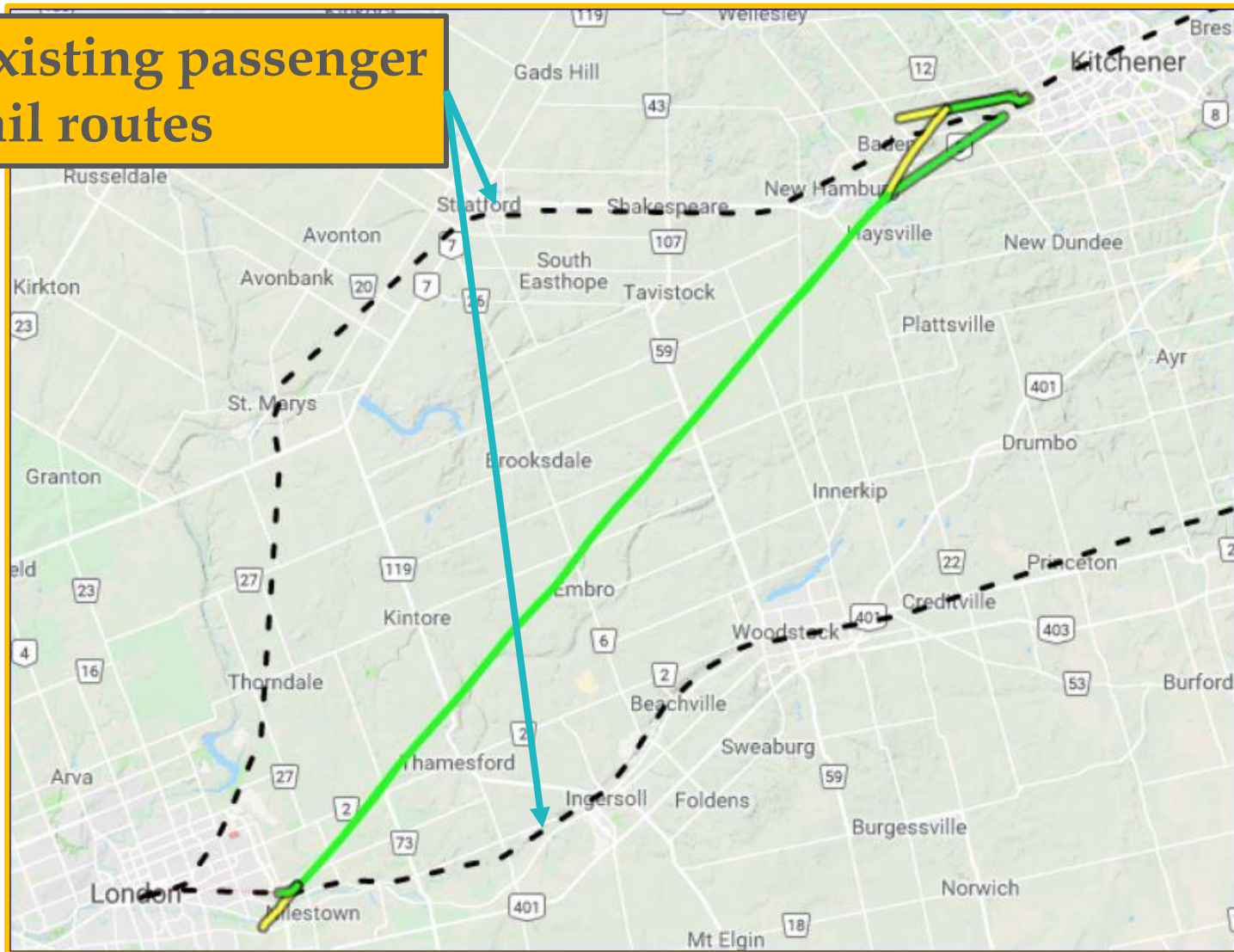
# What is the core issue (1)?





# What is the core issue (2)?

Existing passenger rail routes



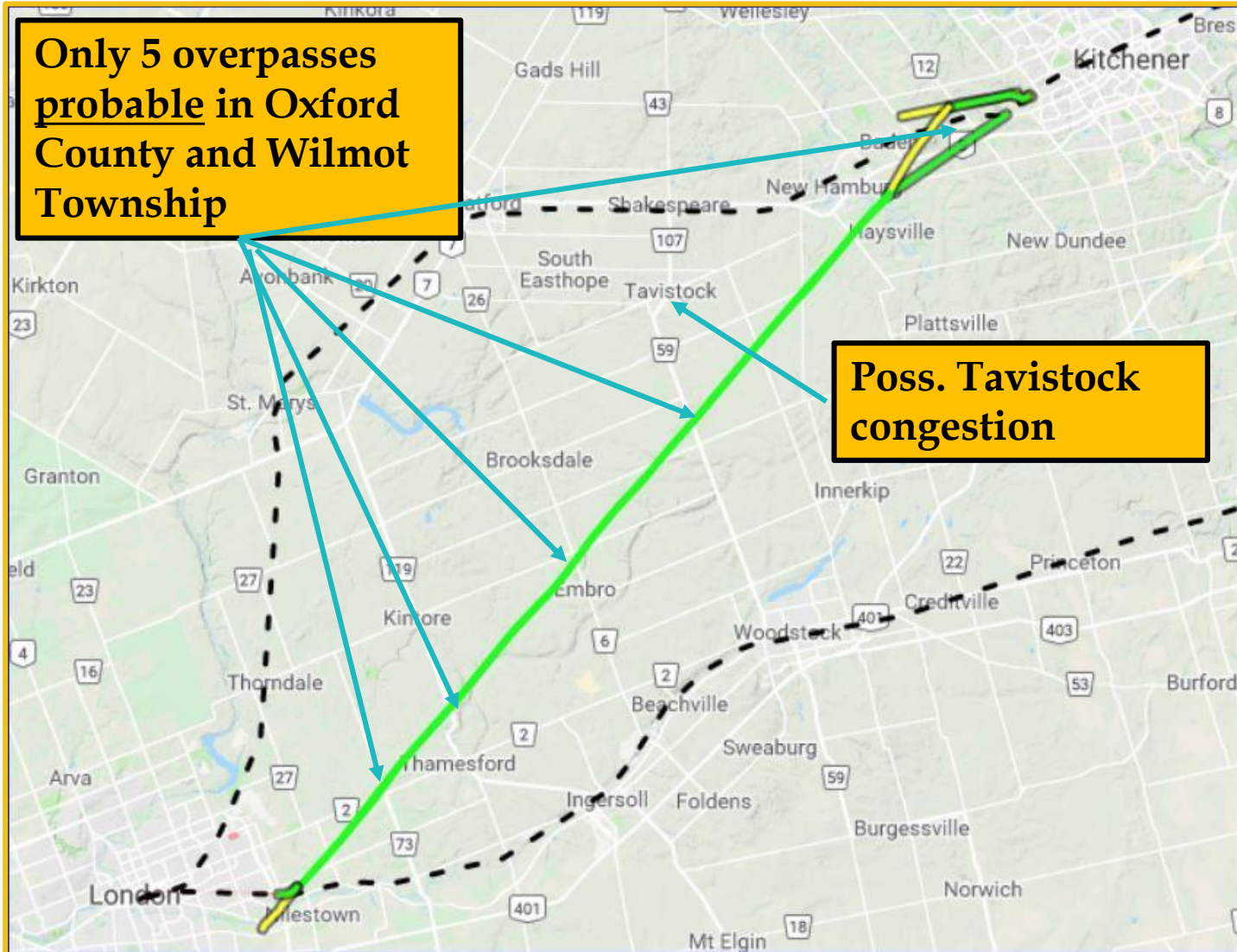
- The two existing routes, currently operated by VIA Rail, cannot co-exist with HSR due to insufficient ridership.
- Other than for London and Kitchener all other communities currently with passenger rail may lose it.
- Many travelers will drive to Aldershot to access cheaper GO trains.

# Typical high-speed rail infrastructure



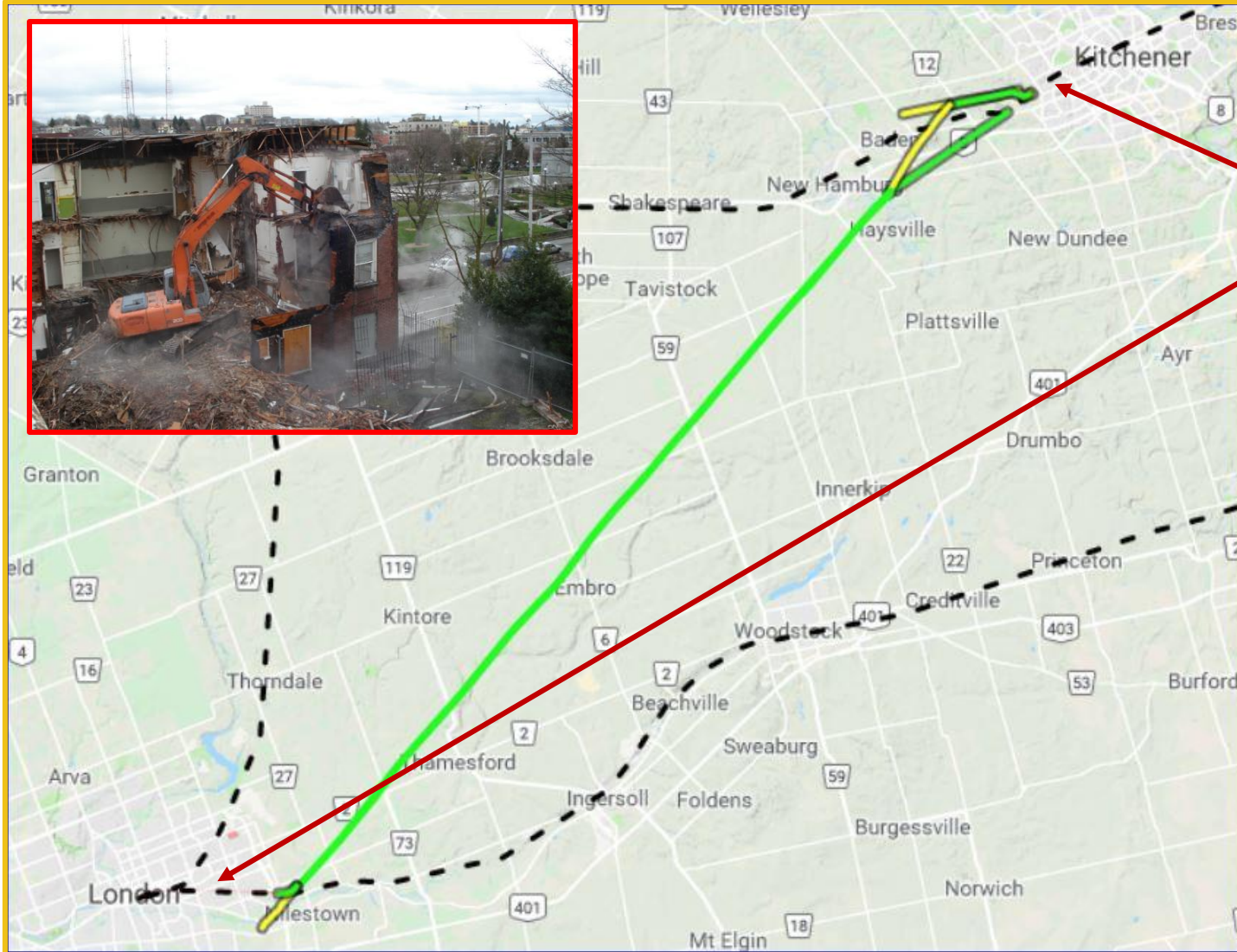
- Approx. 50m wide corridor
- Approx. 2m high chain-link fencing
- Kitchener to London will require approx. 1000 acres of prime farmland
- Must be level and straight for 250kph
- Grade crossings not allowed
- Wildlife migration, habitat/diversity loss and land drainage problems
- Train noise similar to row of heavy trucks at 100kph
- Possible stray voltages

# Potential traffic problems – *subject to change*



- Significant increase in farm and community transportation costs and time
- Increased conflict between vehicle and farm machinery traffic
- Farm machinery cannot use 4 lane roads
- MTO significantly underestimates farm traffic in EA process
- Same problems with #7/8 widening through Shakespeare have gone unresolved for approx. 10 years

# Possible land and property expropriation



❑ Property expropriation along entire route

❑ Expropriation and heavy demolition probable in west Kitchener and east London for straight track. Tunneling cost prohibitive

❑ Reluctance of business to invest on proposed route (livestock, storage and other industry) until route planning is final

# What the province is claiming:

<b><u>Serious Concern</u></b>	<b><u>No Concern</u></b>
<b>\$11 billion cost (Toronto to London) (Does not include \$8bn for Brampton bypass)</b>	<b>Significant social and economic benefits for southwestern Ontario</b>
<b>HSR operating by 2025 (EA not complete until 2022)</b>	<b>More trains and better schedules</b>
<b>Shorter journey time (73mins London to Toronto?)</b>	<b>Less reliance on personal automobiles</b>
<b>Fares 20% above VIA (which VIA ticket?)</b>	<b>Environmental benefits</b>
<b>Union-Pearson Express subsidy is \$52.26 per ride since service start. HSR?</b>	
<b>London can generate needed ridership? (Typically HSR only serves cities with 2million people or more)</b>	

# The HSR speed reality (1) – *Travel time*

- The Government has said that the time between London and Toronto will be 73 minutes.
- They have not published how this is calculated.
- Most high speed train systems average 125 kph.

*Therefore, we have calculated the travel times based on the following assumptions:*

- **Since there are no safety standards for high speed trains in Canada so we have assumed the US standards apply.**
- **Trains accelerate at the maximum allowed for coaches without handholds.**
- **Trains decelerate into the stations using maximum braking.**
- **Unload and load times in the stations is 2 minutes.**
- **There are no curves or crossovers that restrict maximum speeds.**
- **There are no VIA, GO or Regional Express Rail trains in the way.**
- **The effects of rain, snow and wind are not allowed for.**

## The HSR speed reality (1) – *Travel time(cont'd)*

- In order to travel from London to Toronto in 73 minutes, trains will have to go through residential areas at 175 kph.
  - (Usual is 50kph-80kph. Faster = more noise)
- At 80 kph in residential areas, the time will be 100 minutes, or 37% longer than promised by the government.
- Going by way of Stratford and minimizing the impact on farmland will add less than 8 minutes to the travel time.

# Uncomfortable HSR truths (1)

- HSR is an alternative to short-haul flights – approx. 200 – 800km. It is not an alternative to the car or express regional rail.
- It is generally defined as 200kph or higher with high average journey speeds of 150-175kph.
- It is *only* effective when supported by robust local and regional transport integration.
- HSR will need greater reliance on imported technology than other rail options.



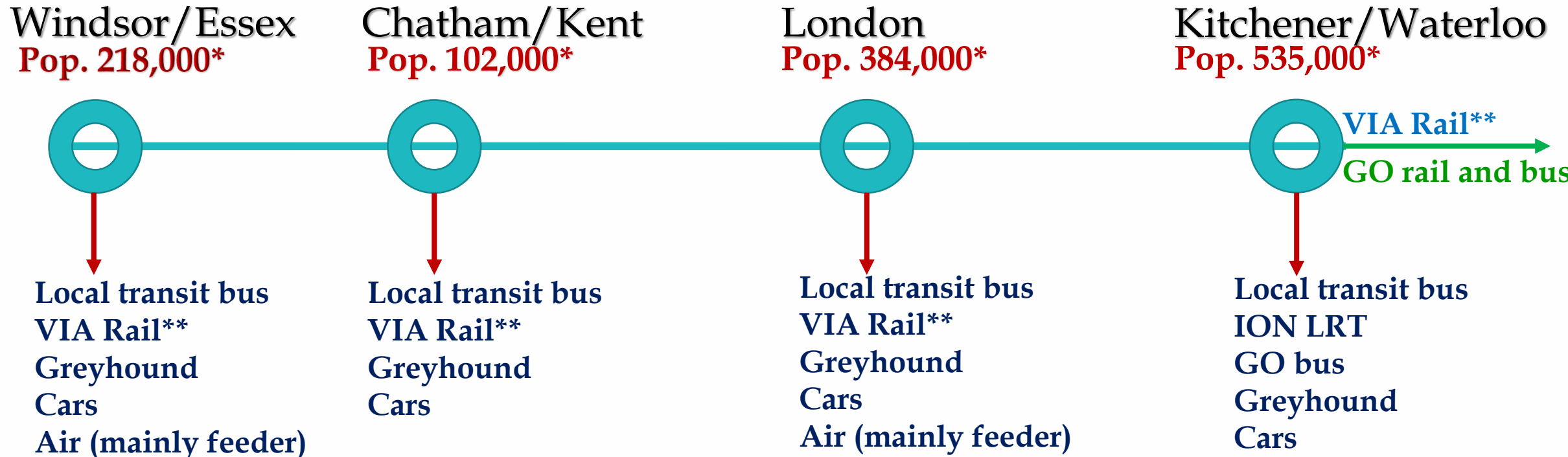
## Uncomfortable HSR truths (2)

- London – Toronto trips on VIA currently average approx. **1,800/day**. Must be **8,000/day or more** to justify HSR.
- Province indicates **25,000** passengers total daily capacity each way to/from London.
- HSR is used between cities with populations of **2 million or more**. London has only **385,000** and cannot generate adequate ridership.
- Discretionary travel is very price and frequency sensitive = default to car for most
- Will not integrate with VIA's High Frequency Rail in E. Ontario or Amtrak in USA. *HSR in SWO will be a stand-alone project*

# Uncomfortable HSR truths (4)

## *HSR requires city populations of 2 million or more*

### *But entire HSR corridor has only about 1.25m population:*



### *Inadequate regional public transportation to feed HSR*

\* 2016 data

\*\* VIA Rail services will be withdrawn if HSR built

# Uncomfortable HSR truths (5)

- **HSR services west of Kitchener will require a very large ticket subsidy to attract passengers (VIA average one-way subsidy is \$22 in SWO)**
- **Essential regional public transportation (buses and rail) to feed HSR is absent**
- **Province heavily subsidises driving (auto sector loans/grants, electric/autonomous vehicle purchase subsidies, limited tolling)**
- **London has not formally joined “Innovation Corridor” (only Toronto-Kitchener)**
- **Loss of VIA Rail services to Ingersoll, St. Marys, Stratford, Woodstock and Brantford would result in damage to economic growth, poverty reduction and sustainability strategies and increased highway traffic.**
- **Average disposable income will likely decline for many with employment changes**

But, there's another way:

*Expand the  
Environmental  
Assessment to include  
alternatives*



- None of the MPPs and municipal leaders we have spoken with were aware that the Environmental Assessment only covered the Kitchener-London HSR option.
- Responses to questions from the HSR team at MTO have been vague and contradictory.
- The Province doesn't recognise farming as an industry in the EA and has excluded it from consultations.
- The province declines to answer: Why only HSR?

# What's happening now?








<b>Intercityrail Steering Committee</b>	<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Municipal Governments</b>
Public/group outreach and education meetings. Research and media relations	Outreach to other councillors in affected communities to support wider EA scope motions	Emphasizing best practice in SWO public transportation needs
Web site and contact list maintenance	Non-partisan advice to Steering Committee	Incorporating personal mobility into municipal sustainability and poverty reduction plans
Municipal, agribusiness and MPP liaison and coordination	Constituent engagement	Supporting continued and improving passenger rail service to their communities
Developing and maintaining policy documents and letter templates		

# Alternatives that need inclusion in the Environmental Assessment



- **Upgraded track infrastructure on both north and south CN routes for reduced journey time and improved safety**
- **New trains, improved frequency, updated business model and integration with transit (best practice)**
- **Consider GO, VIA or hybrid services to encourage switch from personal vehicles**
- **HSR on 401 corridor in place of lane additions**

# Here's what you can do:

-  Spread the word with friends and acquaintances
-  Challenge reporters and politicians who repeat misleading statements
-  Check the *intercityrail.org* web site regularly for updates and information
-  Contact our Steering Committee with your questions
-  Attend public meetings
-  Donate - every penny counts!
-  Mail letters to Transport Minister McGarry, Premier Wynne and other politicians

## Stop press! (April 16 -19<sup>th</sup>)

- **Transport Minister McGarry has officially declined all requests to expand the Environmental Assessment process to include alternatives. No reasons given.**
- **VIA Rail announces \$29 London – Toronto “Escape” one-way fare.**
- **The Freedom of Information request filed at the MTO for data supporting the SWO HSR project will cost \$761 – *your generous donations will help fund this.***

**Lack of transparency, when taxpayer dollars and people's livelihoods are at stake, is an election issue**



# Letters to ministers:



- Sign the letters requesting *all alternatives to be included in the EA* (available at this meeting)
- Download these and others from our web site
- Be respectful when adding your own thoughts
- Mail (use stamp) or e-mail to the ministers

# Questions and answers?

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[www.intercityrail.org](http://www.intercityrail.org)

E-mail: [info@intercityrail.org](mailto:info@intercityrail.org)

*Let's insist on evidence-based decision making for passenger rail improvements in southwestern Ontario*