

**From:** [Al Strathdee](#)  
**To:** [High Speed Rail](#)  
**Cc:** [Lynn Hainer](#); [Chris West](#); s. 21(1)  
**Subject:** Attendees from Town of St. Marys  
**Date:** February-08-16 11:45:42 AM

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Sir/ Madame,

This is to confirm that Chris West, Councillor Lynn Hainer and Greg Gormick will be attending tomorrow to represent the Town of St. Marys at your information session on high speed rail. I sent an email previously, but have not received a confirmation reply.

Thank you for the invitation, and for your help in registration.

Regards,

Al

Al Strathdee  
Mayor  
Town of St. Marys  
519-284-2340 ext 246  
Cel# 519-276-9787

## **Mistry, Natasha (MTO)**

---

**From:** Karen.Vecchio@parl.gc.ca  
**Sent:** January-21-16 5:34 PM  
**To:** High Speed Rail  
**Subject:** Automated Response: Thank you for your email

Thank you for your email.

This automatic response confirms that your email has been received. Please do not reply to this automatic response.

If you have not done so already in your original correspondence, please provide your full name, mailing address, and phone number. This will allow me to respond to you in the most appropriate manner, and will assist in ensuring priority is given to my constituents in the riding of Elgin-Middlesex-London.

I may be unable to respond to your message immediately, as I receive a large volume of correspondence. However, I will reply as soon as possible if your email deals with a matter related to my parliamentary duties as a Federal Member of Parliament.

If your message can be more fully addressed by another department, I will ensure that it is forwarded to the appropriate office with a request that it be responded to as soon as possible.

If this is a constituent from the riding of Elgin-Middlesex-London and is regarding an urgent matter, please call one of our two parliamentary offices:

Constituency Office  
203-750 Talbot Street  
St. Thomas, ON N5P 1E2  
519-637-2255<<tel:519-637-2255>>

Ottawa Office  
Room 449 Confederation Building  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6  
613-990-7769<<tel:613-990-7769>>

Thank you, again, for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,  
Karen Vecchio, MP  
Elgin-Middlesex-London

## Mistry, Natasha (MTO)

---

**From:** Patricia Shantz <PShantz@stratfordcanada.ca>  
**Sent:** January-26-16 9:36 AM  
**To:** High Speed Rail  
**Subject:** City of Stratford - Attendees

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hello,


Regarding the meeting on February 4<sup>th</sup> in Kitchener, Stephanie Potter (Policy & Research Associate) and Nancy Roulston (Manager of Engineering) will be attending on behalf of the City of Stratford.

Sincerely,



**Pat Shantz**  
**Administrative Assistant to the Mayor**  
Office of the Mayor  
City of Stratford  
P.O. Box 818, 1 Wellington Street  
Stratford, ON N5A 6W1  
Phone: (519) 271-0250 Ext. 236  
Email: [pshantz@stratfordcanada.ca](mailto:pshantz@stratfordcanada.ca)  
Web: [www.city.stratfordcanada.ca](http://www.city.stratfordcanada.ca)

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## Mistry, Natasha (MTO)

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**From:** Lawrence, Justin <jlawrence@stthomas.ca>  
**Sent:** February-02-16 9:48 AM  
**To:** High Speed Rail  
**Subject:** Feb 9 session in London - Justin Lawrence reply

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Thank-you for the invitation. I will not be attending.

It is my understanding that our mayor, Heather Jackson, will be attending.

Sincerely,  
Justin Lawrence  
City Engineer – St.Thomas

## Mistry, Natasha (MTO)

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**From:** John Cicuttin <JCicuttin@regionofwaterloo.ca>  
**Sent:** January-22-16 11:36 AM  
**To:** High Speed Rail  
**Cc:** Reid Fulton  
**Subject:** February 4, 2016 Meeting in Kitchener

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

From the Region of Waterloo, John Cicuttin and Reid Fulton would like to register for the high speed rail meeting in Kitchener on February 4, 2016. Thank you.

John Cicuttin

## Mistry, Natasha (MTO)

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**From:** Chris Traini <ctraini@middlesex.ca>  
**Sent:** February-08-16 9:55 AM  
**To:** High Speed Rail  
**Subject:** FW: REMINDER: MTO Meeting Next Week on High Speed Rail

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

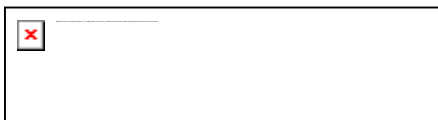
Scott,

I would be happy to attend the session tomorrow.

Chris Traini, P.Eng.  
County Engineer  
County of Middlesex  
[ctraini@middlesex.ca](mailto:ctraini@middlesex.ca)  
(519) 434-7321 ext. 2264

---

**From:** Ontario Ministry of Transportation [<mailto:highspeedrail=ontario.ca@cmail20.com>] **On Behalf Of** Ontario Ministry of Transportation  
**Sent:** Friday, February 05, 2016 3:29 PM  
**To:** Chris Traini <[ctraini@middlesex.ca](mailto:ctraini@middlesex.ca)>  
**Subject:** REMINDER: MTO Meeting Next Week on High Speed Rail



Dear Mr. Chris Traini,

The Province of Ontario is planning to bring high speed rail service to the Toronto-Windsor corridor. You were invited to a meeting next week with the Honourable David Collenette, Special Advisor for High Speed Rail.

The London will take place:

February 9, 1pm-4pm

Best Western Plus Stoneridge Inn & Conference Centre  
6675 Burtwistle Lane (401 and Highway 4)

**I am writing to see if you are able to attend and, if not, you would like to send someone in your place.**

This meeting is intended to begin a broader and long-term dialogue on high speed rail, and to explore opportunities for us to work together, in order to make High Speed Rail a reality in Ontario.

I encourage you to join us along with select staff or stakeholders, as you deem appropriate. Please RSVP, along with any additional attendees, at [highspeedrail@ontario.ca](mailto:highspeedrail@ontario.ca) by February 8 or call us at 1-877-374-2550 if you have any questions, or require special accommodation.

Sincerely,

Scott Pegg  
Director, Transportation Policy Branch  
Ministry of Transportation

Ministry of Transportation  
3rd Floor, Ferguson Block, 77 Wellesley St W  
Toronto, ON M7A 1Z8  
416-327-9200 | Toll-free: 1-877-374-2550

Thank you.

**Unsubscribe**

## Mistry, Natasha (MTO)

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**From:** Stephanie Potter <SPotter@stratfordcanada.ca>  
**Sent:** January-25-16 4:23 PM  
**To:** High Speed Rail  
**Subject:** FW: Reminder: MTO High Speed Rail Meeting

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

I will be attending on behalf of the City of Stratford.

Stephanie Potter, PhD  
Policy and Research Associate  
City of Stratford  
519-271-0250 x253  
[spotter@stratfordcanada.ca](mailto:spotter@stratfordcanada.ca)

**From:** Patricia Shantz  
**Sent:** January-25-16 4:11 PM  
**To:** Stephanie Potter  
**Subject:** FW: Reminder: MTO High Speed Rail Meeting

Steph,

Dan asked me to see if you would like to attend this meeting? It's on February 4<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 -5:00 in Kitchener.

Pat

**From:** Lainey Darlison [<mailto:ldarlison@argylepr.com>]  
**Sent:** January-25-16 2:54 PM  
**To:** Patricia Shantz  
**Subject:** Reminder: MTO High Speed Rail Meeting



Dear Mayor Mathieson,

The Province of Ontario is planning to bring high speed rail service to the



Toronto-Windsor corridor, and is looking for your input. This email is a follow-up to the invitation you received in December 2015 from the Honourable David Collenette, Special Advisor for High Speed Rail.

Mr. Collenette will be hosting a meeting with public and private sector stakeholders in your community, as well as representatives from First Nations and Métis communities, to:

- Provide an introduction to the High Speed Rail initiative, including an overview of current and future work planned on this initiative by the province;
- Engage in a facilitated discussion including considerations and opportunities associated with implementing High Speed Rail.

This meeting is intended to begin a broader and long-term dialogue on high speed rail, and to explore opportunities for us to work together, in order to make High Speed Rail a reality in Ontario.

The meeting will take place:

**Waterloo**

February 4, 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.  
Crowne Plaza Kitchener-Waterloo  
105 King Street East (Kitchener)

Space is limited - please register as soon as possible.

High speed rail will improve travel options, reduce travel times and support economic development throughout the Toronto-Windsor corridor and across the province. It will also provide an opportunity to explore new partnerships between business and government, as well as new technologies.

I encourage you to join us along with select staff members or stakeholders, as you deem appropriate. Please RSVP, along with any

additional attendees, at [highspeedrail@ontario.ca](mailto:highspeedrail@ontario.ca) by February 9 or call us at 1-877-374-2550 if you have any questions, or require special accommodation.

Sincerely,

**Scott Pegg**  
Director, Transportation Policy Branch  
Ministry of Transportation

Ministry of Transportation  
3rd Floor, Ferguson Block, 77 Wellesley St W  
Toronto, ON M7A 1Z8  
416-327-9200 | Toll-free: 1-877-374-2550

Thank you.

**Unsubscribe**

## Mistry, Natasha (MTO)

---

**From:** Mark McDonald <mmcdonald@elgin.ca>  
**Sent:** February-05-16 3:37 PM  
**To:** High Speed Rail  
**Subject:** I will attend

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Thank you.

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[<https://mail.elgin.ca/ECDisclaimerLogo.jpg>]

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## Mistry, Natasha (MTO)

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**From:** Bernie Wiehle <bwiehle@elgin.ca>  
**Sent:** January-27-16 5:06 PM  
**To:** High Speed Rail  
**Subject:** High speed rail

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

I plan on attending the session on February 9th in London

Bernie Wiehle  
Warden - Elgin County  
Mayor - West Elgin



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## Mistry, Natasha (MTO)

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**From:** Dennis Lever <DLever@puslinch.ca>  
**Sent:** February-01-16 3:30 PM  
**To:** High Speed Rail  
**Cc:** George Bridge (georgeb@wellington.ca)  
**Subject:** High Speed Rail meeting in Kitchener/Waterloo

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hello,

I will be attending on behalf of Warden Bridge of Wellington County as he has a prior commitment.

Best regards,

Dennis Lever  
Mayor  
Township of Puslinch  
226-971-2067  
[www.puslinch.ca](http://www.puslinch.ca)

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## Mistry, Natasha (MTO)

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**From:** Vance Blackmore s. 21(1)  
**Sent:** January-28-16 8:34 PM  
**To:** High Speed Rail

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

I plan on attending this event

Vance Blackmore, Mayor  
Municipality of Southwest Middlesex  
Cell (519) 494-7815  
s. 21(1)

## Mistry, Natasha (MTO)

---

**From:** Allan Rothwell <arothwell@perthcounty.ca>  
**Sent:** February-01-16 2:07 PM  
**To:** High Speed Rail  
**Subject:** high speed rail service - Waterloo Region Meeting

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

I plan on attending the meeting on Feb. 4<sup>th</sup>,

---

**Allan Rothwell** MCIP, RPP  
Director of Planning & Development  
Corporation of the County of Perth | 1 Huron St., Stratford, ON, N5A 5S4  
T. 519-271-0531 x410 | C. 519-301-7189 | F. 519-273-5967 | Web: [www.perthcounty.ca](http://www.perthcounty.ca)

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## Mistry, Natasha (MTO)

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**From:** Don McKay <dmckay@ezt.ca>  
**Sent:** February-06-16 2:10 PM  
**To:** High Speed Rail  
**Subject:** High speed rail

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Thank for the invitation to attend the meeting Tuesday at 1:00 in London. I plan to attend.  
Don

Don McKay

Mayor, Township of East Zorra-Tavistock

Email: [dmckay@ezt.ca](mailto:dmckay@ezt.ca)  
Mobile Phone: 519-532-2500

[www.ezt.ca](http://www.ezt.ca)

Sent from my iPhone



## Mistry, Natasha (MTO)

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**From:** Al Strathdee <astrathdee@town.stmarys.on.ca>  
**Sent:** January-27-16 6:14 PM  
**To:** High Speed Rail  
**Subject:** London Meeting February 9th

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Sir/Madame,

Could we please register Councillor Lynn Hainer, Chris West and Greg Gormick as representatives for the Town of St. Marys. Thank you for the invitation for our Town to participate.

AL Strathdee  
Mayor  
Town of St. Marys

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone on the Bell network.

## Mistry, Natasha (MTO)

---

**From:** Kenneth Westcar s. 21(1)  
**Sent:** February-05-16 4:22 PM  
**To:** High Speed Rail  
**Subject:** London consultation sessions (Feb 09).

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Please register me (Kenneth Westcar) for this event. I may have already been registered by the County of Oxford so please ensure there's no duplication.

Thanks and best wishes,

Ken.

## Mistry, Natasha (MTO)

---

**From:** Peter Crockett <pcrockett@oxfordcounty.ca>  
**Sent:** February-01-16 2:00 PM  
**To:** High Speed Rail  
**Cc:** Chloe Senior  
**Subject:** RE: MTO High Speed Rail Meeting

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hello

Further to confirming my attendance, I wonder if it might be possible for an invitation to be sent to Don McKay (Mayor of East-Zorra Tavistock @ [dmckay@ezt.ca](mailto:dmckay@ezt.ca)) and Ken Westcar (SWOTA @ [kenwestcar@sympatico.ca](mailto:kenwestcar@sympatico.ca)). I know space is limited, these two individuals are key stakeholders and have keen interest in the HSR issue.

Thanks  
Peter

**Peter M. Crockett, P.Eng.**  
Chief Administrative Officer

Oxford County | 21 Reeve St., PO Box 1614, Woodstock, ON, N4S 7Y3 | T 519-539-0015 /1-800-755-0394, Ext 3000  
[pcrockett@oxfordcounty.ca](mailto:pcrockett@oxfordcounty.ca)

### Oxford County is committed to 100% Renewable Energy by 2050

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**From:** Peter Crockett  
**Sent:** February-01-16 8:43 AM  
**To:** 'highspeedrail@ontario.ca'  
**Cc:** Chloe Senior  
**Subject:** RE: MTO High Speed Rail Meeting

I am confirming my attendance

Thanks  
Peter

**Peter M. Crockett, P.Eng.**  
Chief Administrative Officer

Oxford County | 21 Reeve St., PO Box 1614, Woodstock, ON, N4S 7Y3 | T 519-539-0015 /1-800-755-0394, Ext 3000  
[pcrockett@oxfordcounty.ca](mailto:pcrockett@oxfordcounty.ca)

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## Mistry, Natasha (MTO)

---

**From:** Ed Dujlovic <EDujlovic@stratfordcanada.ca>  
**Sent:** January-29-16 1:57 PM  
**To:** High Speed Rail  
**Subject:** RE: MTO High Speed Rail Meeting

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hello,

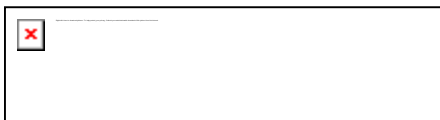
Thank you for the invitation. There will a couple of staff attending that have been registered through the Mayor's office.

Regards,

Ed

---

**From:** Ontario Ministry of Transportation [<mailto:highspeedrail=ontario.ca@cmail20.com>] **On Behalf Of** Ontario Ministry of Transportation  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 27, 2016 3:37 PM  
**To:** Ed Dujlovic  
**Subject:** MTO High Speed Rail Meeting



Dear Mr. Dujlovic,

The Province of Ontario is planning to bring high speed rail service to the Toronto-Windsor corridor, and is looking for your input at a meeting next week with the Honourable David Collenette, Special Advisor for High Speed Rail. You may have been invited through your Mayor or Head of Council as they were invited separately.

Mr. Collenette will be hosting a meeting with public and private sector stakeholders in your community, as well as representatives from First Nations and Métis communities, to:

- Provide an introduction to the High Speed Rail initiative, including an

## Mistry, Natasha (MTO)

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**From:** Mayor Heather Jackson <hjackson@stthomas.ca>  
**Sent:** February-03-16 2:10 PM  
**To:** High Speed Rail  
**Subject:** RE: Reminder: MTO High Speed Rail Meeting

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Good afternoon,

Confirming my attendance for the meeting on Tuesday, February 9<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you.

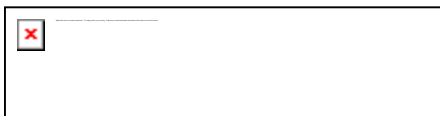
Mayor Heather Jackson  
[hjackson@stthomas.ca](mailto:hjackson@stthomas.ca)  
519-631-1680 ext: 4131  
519-902-4415 (c)  
[www.stthomas.ca](http://www.stthomas.ca)

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---

**From:** Ontario Ministry of Transportation [<mailto:highspeedrail=ontario.ca@cmail20.com>] **On Behalf Of** Ontario Ministry of Transportation  
**Sent:** January 21, 2016 5:34 PM  
**To:** Mayor Heather Jackson <[hjackson@stthomas.ca](mailto:hjackson@stthomas.ca)>  
**Subject:** Reminder: MTO High Speed Rail Meeting



Dear Mayor Jackson,

The Province of Ontario is planning to bring high speed rail service to the

## **Mistry, Natasha (MTO)**

---

**From:** Karen.Vecchio.C1A@parl.gc.ca  
**Sent:** February-01-16 11:12 AM  
**To:** High Speed Rail  
**Subject:** MTO high Speed Rail Meeting

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Good Morning Scott,

I have received your below email regarding MP Karen Vecchio attending the stakeholders meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February. She would be happy to attend but will have to leave by 3:00pm as we are hosting a passport clinic in the office at 4:00pm.

Should you need any further information, please don't hesitate to follow up.

Sincerely,

**Kaylie Kuipers**

*Member's Assistant*

*Karen Vecchio*

*Member of Parliament*

*Elgin-Middlesex-London*

*(519)637-2255*

[Karen.vecchio.c1a@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Karen.vecchio.c1a@parl.gc.ca)

*750 Talbot Street, Suite 203,*

*St. Thomas, ON. N5P1E2*

Dear Ms. Vecchio,

The Province of Ontario is planning to bring high speed rail service to the Toronto-Windsor corridor, and is looking for your input. This email is a follow-up to the invitation you received in December 2015 from the Honourable David Collenette, Special Advisor for High Speed Rail.

Mr. Collenette will be hosting a meeting with public and private sector stakeholders in your community, as well as representatives from First Nations and Métis communities, to:

- Provide an introduction to the High Speed Rail initiative, including an overview of current and future work planned on this initiative by the province;

- Engage in a facilitated discussion including considerations and opportunities associated with implementing High Speed Rail.

This meeting is intended to begin a broader and long-term dialogue on high speed rail, and to explore opportunities for us to work together, in order to make High Speed Rail a reality in Ontario.

The meeting will take place:

**London**

February 9, 1pm-4pm

Best Western Plus Stoneridge Inn & Conference Centre

6675 Burtwistle Lane (401 and Highway 4)

Space is limited - please register as soon as possible.

High speed rail will improve travel options, reduce travel times and support economic development throughout the Toronto-Windsor corridor and across the province. It will also provide an opportunity to explore new partnerships between business and government, as well as new technologies.

I encourage you to join us along with select staff members or stakeholders, as you deem appropriate. Please RSVP, along with any additional attendees, at [highspeedrail@ontario.ca](mailto:highspeedrail@ontario.ca) by February 8 or call us at 1-877-374-2550 if you have any questions, or require special accommodation.

Sincerely,  
Scott Pegg  
Director, Transportation Policy Branch  
Ministry of Transportation

Toronto-Windsor corridor, and is looking for your input. This email is a follow-up to the invitation you received in December 2015 from the Honourable David Collenette, Special Advisor for High Speed Rail.

Mr. Collenette will be hosting a meeting with public and private sector stakeholders in your community, as well as representatives from First Nations and Métis communities, to:

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Space is limited - please register as soon as possible.

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additional attendees, at [highspeedrail@ontario.ca](mailto:highspeedrail@ontario.ca) by February 8 or call us at 1-877-374-2550 if you have any questions, or require special accommodation.

Sincerely,

**Scott Pegg**  
Director, Transportation Policy Branch  
Ministry of Transportation

Ministry of Transportation  
3rd Floor, Ferguson Block, 77 Wellesley St W  
Toronto, ON M7A 1Z8  
416-327-9200 | Toll-free: 1-877-374-2550

Thank you.

**Unsubscribe**

overview of current and future work planned on this initiative by the province;

- Engage in a facilitated discussion including considerations and opportunities associated with implementing High Speed Rail.

This meeting is intended to begin a broader and long-term dialogue on high speed rail, and to explore opportunities to work together, in order to make High Speed Rail a reality in Ontario.

The meeting will take place:

**Waterloo Region**

February 4, 2pm – 5pm  
Crowne Plaza Kitchener-Waterloo  
105 King Street East (Kitchener)

Space is limited - please register as soon as possible.

High speed rail will improve travel options, reduce travel times and support economic development throughout the Toronto-Windsor corridor and across the province. It will also provide an opportunity to explore new partnerships between business and government, as well as new technologies.

Please RSVP, along with any additional attendees, at [highspeedrail@ontario.ca](mailto:highspeedrail@ontario.ca) by February 3, or call us at 1-877-374-2550 if you have any questions, or require any accommodation.

Thank you, we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Scott Pegg  
Director, Transportation Policy Branch  
Ministry of Transportation

Ministry of Transportation  
3rd Floor, Ferguson Block, 77 Wellesley St W  
Toronto, ON M7A 1Z8  
416-327-9200 | Toll-free: 1-877-374-2550

Thank you.

**Unsubscribe**

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**From:** Ontario Ministry of Transportation [<mailto:highspeedrail=ontario.ca@cmail20.com>] **On Behalf Of** Ontario Ministry of Transportation  
**Sent:** January-27-16 3:32 PM  
**To:** Peter Crockett  
**Subject:** MTO High Speed Rail Meeting



Dear Mr. Crockett,

The Province of Ontario is planning to bring high speed rail service to the Toronto-Windsor corridor, and is looking for your input at a meeting next week with the Honourable David Collenette, Special Advisor for High Speed Rail. You may have been invited through your Mayor or Head of Council as they were invited separately.

Mr. Collenette will be hosting a meeting with public and private sector stakeholders in your community, as well as representatives from First Nations and Métis communities, to:

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## **London**

February 9, 1pm-4pm

Best Western Plus Stoneridge Inn & Conference Centre  
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High speed rail will improve travel options, reduce travel times and support economic development throughout the Toronto-Windsor corridor and across the province. It will also provide an opportunity to explore new partnerships between business and government, as well as new technologies.

Please RSVP, along with any additional attendees, at [highspeedrail@ontario.ca](mailto:highspeedrail@ontario.ca) by February 8, or call us at 1-877-374-2550 if you have any questions, or require any accommodation.

Thank you, we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

**Scott Pegg**  
Director, Transportation Policy Branch  
Ministry of Transportation

Ministry of Transportation  
3rd Floor, Ferguson Block, 77 Wellesley St W  
Toronto, ON M7A 1Z8  
416-327-9200 | Toll-free: 1-877-374-2550

Thank you.

**Unsubscribe**

## **Mistry, Natasha (MTO)**

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**From:** Gary Cousins <garyc@wellington.ca>  
**Sent:** February-01-16 4:00 PM  
**To:** High Speed Rail  
**Cc:** Dennis Lever1; Aldo Salis; Donna Bryce  
**Subject:** Waterloo Meeting - Wellington County Attendees

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Mayor Dennis Lever of Puslinch Township will be attending on behalf of Warden George Bridge and he will be accompanied by staff member Mr. Aldo Salis, Manager of Development, Wellington County Planning Department.

Gary Cousins  
Planning Director

**From:** [Kenneth Westcar](#)  
**To:** [High Speed Rail](#)  
**Subject:** Westcar comments from London consultation.  
**Date:** February-11-16 5:40:08 AM  
**Attachments:** [Province of Ontario High Speed Rail consultation.pdf](#)

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Here are my expanded comments on project development. Thanks for the opportunity to attend, listen and learn in London. This document has been shared with the County of Oxford and the City of Brantford.

Best wishes,

Ken.

**Comments and observations from February 9<sup>th</sup> London session.**

**General**

The success of many high-speed rail projects (250kph+) in Europe and Asia is without doubt. They have provided significant economic, social and environmental benefit. Many of these systems are highly developed and most, but not all, used reserved land corridors. In most instances the cost/benefit is well considered before detailed planning takes place.

The MTO consultation session in London was informative and outlined the processes the Province will take before deciding to proceed with a true, all-electric high-speed project or a more modest 200kph version to allow a diesel propulsion option. The primary concern is that the Province will continue to apply human and financial resources to the project when a more assertive approach could provide an expedited conclusion to project viability.

With a positive outcome the study could move to detailed local issues. A negative outcome should lead immediately to the consideration of other available options for the enhancement of passenger rail services in South Western Ontario.

**Project cost**

The pre-feasibility report provided by FCP, a British-based consultancy, suggests a capital cost for the project of approximately C\$2.5bn for the Toronto to London section. This may be low by a factor of between 10 and 15. In other words, the actual project cost may be in the region of C\$25bn to C\$38bn or possibly as high as C\$50bn allowing for inflation.

Britain's HS2 project web-site states a GBP19.4bn (C\$38.8bn at current exchange rates) cost for the 194km Phase 1 leg between London (Euston) and Lichfield (near Birmingham) based on a 2013 estimate. This is a similar distance to Toronto/Kitchener/London.

The HS2 Phase 1 route in Britain has many similarities to the proposed HSR route in Ontario including dense urban areas at both ends and valuable agricultural and rural lands in between. Assuming property expropriation, existing rail infrastructure modification and land acquisition costs are approximately 30% lower in south western Ontario, it would seem that C\$25bn is a more realistic, low-end estimate for the Province's HSR project. It also assumes the cost of physical equipment and engineering services are similar in Canada and the UK.

Given the disparity between the pre-feasibility and UK empirical figures, priority must be given to establishing an accurate order of magnitude cost for the Province's HSR project. It would very quickly indicate whether the cost/benefit ratio is acceptable, the project is actually



affordable, and whether planning and policy work on the project should continue or be redirected to study other options.

In order to achieve this as quickly as possible the Province should engage the services of the following subject matter experts (SMEs):

- Deutsche Bahn (German HSR operator).
- SNCF (French HSR operator).
- RENFE (Italian HSR operator).
- HS1 (UK HSR operator with significant Canadian ownership).
- VIA Rail (Canada). Key stakeholder.

Their brief should be to conduct a physical, high-level review of the proposed route with regard to probable acquisition and construction costs plus that of rolling stock, track, signalling, stations and all other costs with which they have practical and historical experience. China has been omitted from the list as their costs are unlikely to be representative for a Canadian project.

Input from SMEs should be managed and analysed by an independent third-party, reviewed by the Province and then placed in the public domain.

### **Constructability**

The route options should also be examined very carefully for constructability. Factors could include:

- Conflicts with existing rail, highways and existing surface and sub-surface utility infrastructure.
- Conflicts with commercial and residential infrastructure.
- Legal and cost issues related to land acquisition including willingness of landowners to sell required properties.
- Consideration of 320kph and 200kph options (higher-speed requires more physical space).

Constructability in this instance is not the same as an Environmental Assessment. Rather, it qualifies the route for further study in the event basic constructability, in terms of major physical barriers, is economically and respectfully possible. Constructability difficulties usually result in higher costs. They should be captured in the initial project budgeting process and not contribute to surprise cost over-runs.

## **Options**

In parallel with the high-level qualification processes discussed above it is essential that the Province considers possible improvements to existing, intercity passenger rail corridors in South-western Ontario. It should be focused on restoring VIA (or VIA/Metrolinx partner services) to those levels existing in 1982 before subsequent pruning by the federal government of the day. This could include new rolling stock offering operating cost and environmental advantages and improved passenger appeal. Express services approaching transit times similar to those available from true high-speed infrastructure should be a high priority.

A financial and technical partnership with CN on significant conventional rail infrastructure improvements is needed to reduce or eliminate train conflicts, raise passenger train operating speeds to 175kph with enhanced acceleration and braking while improving existing station facilities. CN could benefit through higher average speeds and increased freight capacity with the removal of bottlenecks. Shareholder value would be protected or enhanced.

This option has the potential to deliver superior passenger experiences on an incremental basis more quickly and at considerably less cost than the proposed new HSR route. It is also compatible with Amtrak high-performance rail plans for New York and Michigan (there are currently no U.S. HSR plans for states bordering Canada).

## **Summary**

South-western Ontario, along with neighbouring Niagara, has transportation infrastructure that fails to meet evolving economic, social and environmental realities. There are already signs of structural distress related to poor infrastructure in every economic sector from technological innovation to culture and tourism.

The time lag from today to the full implementation of the proposed provincial high-speed rail project will span some 15 -20 years. Almost certainly we will witness further loss of industry, reduced competitiveness and greater social hardship in the interim. An accelerated, fact-based decision-making process and constructive dialog between our Federal and Provincial governments and the private sector could do much to mitigate this while aiding our climate-change initiatives and providing a much-needed economic stimulus.

End.

Ken Westcar ((This text has not yet been endorsed by any third-party and is solely the opinion of the author).