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16 December 2014

Hon. Lisa Raitt  
Minister of Transportation  
Government of Canada  
Transport Canada  
330 Sparks Street  
Ottawa, ON  
K1A 0N5

Cc **Honorable Dave Emerson, P.C., O.B.C.**  
Chair, Canada Transportation Act Review

Dear Madam Minister

RE: NATIONAL HIGHWAY POLICY for CANADA  
CANADA TRANSPORTATION ACT REVIEW

The governance of Canada is based on the Canada Act of 1982 the primary component of which is the allocation of jurisdiction between the Provinces and the Federal Governments. Highways have been a designated jurisdiction of the provinces since Confederation in 1867. The Government of Canada is responsible for highways on lands controlled but the Government of Canada such as National Parks.

The import of the above comments is that Canada is one of the few countries in the world that does not have a "National Highways Policy". The only exception to this history is the single initiative of the 1950's to build a Trans-Canada Highway. That project was completed in 1962. Since that time there has been no national initiative to develop a truly national highway of superior standard to link Canada from sea to sea. The only standard that does exist is the National Highway System which is an inventory of roadways across Canada that the Provinces and the Government of Canada have agreed to qualify for cost sharing. The National Highway System is not a policy since it has no funding and no plan for the development of these highways.

The Trans Canada Yellowhead Highway Association believes that a "National Highway Policy" is needed that would create a Trans-Canada Highway System of high standard to link Canada from sea to sea. There are many models of such initiatives in the world that share many of the geographic and jurisdictional characteristics of Canada. These countries have found the means to share a vision and to collaborate in building national highways. The most important and closest example is the Interstate Highway System in the United States. The Interstate Highway System was initiated by the US Federal Government under

TRANS CANADA YELLOWHEAD HIGHWAY ASSOCIATION

~ est'd 1947 ~

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President Eisenhower. There is perhaps no more dramatic example of how such an investment resulted in unequalled prosperity for a nation. The railway systems developed in the 1800's created the same impact but on a much more limited scale.

Canada remains a country of small concentrations of population separated by long distances. In many cases we have better links north and south to the United States than we do east-west between our own cities. The jurisdictional structure of our Canada has made it more difficult to move east west than north south. This observation is not new. While efforts are being made to negotiate common regulatory regimes amongst provinces there is no formal way to enhance investment in infrastructure that has a national benefit.

This is not to suggest that the Government of Canada has been derelict. The Government of Canada has participated in many highway investments that have significantly improved ground transportation. For example the Asian Pacific Gateway program which has invested in major improvements to Trans Canada #1 in the Kicking Horse Pass. There are many other examples in other provinces. Such investments are however ad hoc and are bilateral agreements with specific provinces. What is needed is a National consensus on a program to create a high standard highway across Canada that will encourage and give Canadians confidence in building commercial and social relations between ourselves. Such a network would consist of links between major Canadian communities of four lane freeway standard highways. The alignment of such links may be coincident with some of those highways that currently carry the designation as a Trans-Canada Highway or could be highways on new alignments that offer new benefits. Such a system would include not only highways in rural areas but also in urban areas. Such a system would be restricted to east – west alignments given that the purpose of such a system is to enhance domestic connectivity between provinces. Those roadways designated would be improved to a common four lane freeway standard and a given a consistent identification for the benefit travellers.

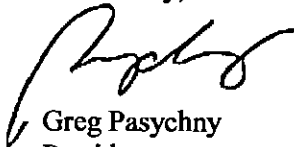
A common four lane freeway standard is an essential criteria for the system except where geographic factors and/or other physical limitations make such a standard prohibitive.

The Western Canada portions would consist of the current Trans Canada #1 Highway in its current alignment from the Manitoba- Ontario border to Vancouver and the Trans-Canada Yellowhead Highway on its current alignment from Prince Rupert to Saskatoon and a new alignment from Saskatoon to a connection point with Trans-Canada #1 at the Manitoba- Ontario border.

We would suggest that as part of the Canada Transportation Act that Government of Canada initiate new Trans-Canada Highway Act to address the development of selected parts of the current Trans-Canada Highway network to a four lane freeway standard which would give Canada a system comparable to the United States Interstate Highway System or the Autobahn system in Germany.

Please feel free to contact me directly on my cell at 780.723.0302 or email [mayor@edson.ca](mailto:mayor@edson.ca).

Yours truly,



Greg Pasychny  
President

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