The strength of public transit in Canada has many benefits, but the contribution of transit suppliers to economic growth receives less recognition than some others. CUTA has about 250 business members that serve not only Canadian transit systems but also those in countries around the world. They provide planning and design services, manufacture buses, parts and equipment, fabricate shelters and other passenger amenities, and develop new technologies for fleet management and operations. Indeed, transit systems from Victoria to St. John’s have very high “Canadian content” levels—and the suppliers that make that possible are, in many cases, strong performers in other countries as well. The export of transit products and services brings substantial value to Canada’s economy, and creates jobs within our borders for a range of workers, from assembly technicians to engineers.

Consulting services

Canadian consulting firms are among the world’s most respected and sophisticated. Across Canada and around the globe, they are involved in rapid transit planning and design projects, operational reviews, terminal studies and construction management. The most active and successful firms include AECOM, Delcan Corporation, Dessau, Dillon Consulting, ENTRA Consultants, Hatch Mott Macdonald, IBI Group, iTRANS Consulting, McCormick Rankin Corporation, MMM Group, Morrison Hershfield, Roche-Deluc, Stantec and Tecsys.
Transit vehicles
Canada is one of the world’s leading centres for transit vehicle manufacturing. Bombardier is the largest global supplier of rail cars, with substantial design, research and development and production facilities in Ontario and Quebec. New Flyer, Nova Bus and Orion (a line of Daimler Buses North America) are three of North America’s largest urban transit bus manufacturers, and together they supply nearly 70% of the entire North American market from their Canadian roots. They employ almost 3,000 workers at design, development, and production facilities in Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba. In contrast to the light vehicle automotive industry, these bus manufacturers have headquarters in Canada and branch plants in the United States to meet American procurement regulations. Canada is also home to leading specialists in bus refurbishment such as Eastway and MTB Truck & Bus Collision.

The strength of Canadian bus manufacturers has fostered a number of tier-two suppliers that manufacture elements such as bumpers, frames, flooring, seats, multiplex wiring systems, mirrors, and other components. These companies include Amobi, Baultar Concept, Lucerix International, T-Ji Talfourd-Jones and the Electronics Control Division of Parker Hannifin’s Hydraulics Group.

Customer amenities
The design and manufacture of transit shelters, electronic signs and customer information systems is another area of Canadian expertise. Companies such as Axion, Daytech and Enseicom are based in Canada, and have become internationally renowned for their innovations in design and technology.

Software and systems
Canadian firms such as GIRO and Trapeze have become world leaders in transit operations and scheduling software. Other applications including systems for fleet management, transit priority, vehicle location and security surveillance are designed and produced in Canada by companies such as Grey Island Systems, Infodev, Novax, Seon Design and Thales Rail Signalling Solutions.

The rest of this issue paper contains profiles of representative CUTA business members that have a significant number of domestic employees devoted to consulting, engineering or manufacturing for customers in the transit industry.

With continued support from transit systems and all levels of government, Canada’s transit suppliers will surely continue to compete and win, at home as well as abroad.

AECOM
AECOM is a global provider of technical and management services in transportation and other sectors. In Canada, its 4,300 employees in over 40 locations have played major roles in many bus rapid transit, light rail transit and heavy rail projects including those in Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Waterloo, Hamilton, Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal.

Among its other endeavours, AECOM has developed a handheld computer-based transit facilities information management system. The integrated GPS capabilities of this customizable mobile solution allow users to gather information on the physical location and condition of assets at transit stops.

AXION Technologies
AXION supplies software and hardware for audio and visual communication systems in the bus and subway industries. The firm has offices in St. Nicolas and La Pocatière, Quebec with about 200 employees, and other locations in New York State and Denmark.

AXION’s products are used by about 35 major transit systems in Canada, 50 in the United States and 30 in Europe. AXION’s exports make up 80 to 90% of its annual sales, and the firm’s communication systems were recently selected for over 1,400 new London Underground subway cars, based on the performance of their ethernet IP technology.

Bombardier
From its roots and corporate headquarters in Canada, Bombardier has become a global leader in rail transit. With 45 production sites in 22 countries, the company has more than 2,500 employees in Quebec and Ontario.

Bombardier Transportation offers a broad product portfolio including rail vehicles and propulsion systems, control and security solutions, and modernization and maintenance services. It has over 100,000 vehicles in operation around the world. In Canada, Bombardier Transportation is major vehicle supplier to subway and commuter rail services in the metropolitan areas of Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver.
Enseicom

Located in Montreal, Quebec, Enseicom manufactures electric signs, advertising structures and sheet furniture for transit systems across Canada and the United States. The company recently added solar-powered shelters to its product lineup, and has delivered them to communities such as Toronto, Mississauga, Montreal, Winnipeg and San Francisco. The use of solar power reduces emissions and energy consumption, eliminates the need to connect to the grid, and lets transit systems relocate shelters as needed. Enseicom currently has 55 full-time employees.

Eurovac (Clean Air Technologies)

Clean Air Technologies supplies transit systems with Eurovac bus wash systems and vacuum systems for cleaning buses, extracting dust from brake lathes and for dust extraction with source capture sanders and grinders. From Concord, Ontario it has supplied products to transit systems in seven Canadian communities including Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver, and over 50 in the United States including New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and Boston. The firm has about $4.5 million in annual exports.

GIRO

GIRO’s flagship HASTUS software is used by public transit systems for planning, scheduling, operations and analysis. Advanced technology software modules for HASTUS include the HASTINFO web-based trip planning tool and BidWeb, a tool for online work selection by transit vehicle operators. The Montreal-based company has 212 employees. Its clients include 21 Canadian transit systems (including those in Montreal, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Quebec City, Ottawa, Calgary, and Halifax), 47 in the United States, 83 in France and 113 in Spain, Germany, Austria and Australia and elsewhere. GIRO’s annual exports are valued at more than $26 million, two-thirds of which are destined to Europe.

Imagi

Le Groupe Imagi produces transit advertising media including bus boards (exterior and interior), bus wraps and transit shelters. It also produces frames for different kinds of displays. The company’s turnkey services include computer graphics, printing and installation. With 30 employees in its Montreal headquarters and offices in Gatineau and Saguenay, Imagi counts over 30 transit systems across Quebec among its clients.

LED Smart

LED Smart is located in Edmonton, Alberta and Surrey, British Columbia. The firm’s LED lighting systems are designed and made in Canada, and are suitable for both new and retrofit installations in buses and trains. LED lamps are brighter and more reliable than mercury-containing fluorescent lamps, thereby increasing passenger comfort and safety and virtually eliminating maintenance needs. LED Smart products have been used to retrofit 72 of Calgary’s CTrain cars, and are being tested by transit systems in Winnipeg, Edmonton, Montreal and Vancouver, as well in several major American cities.

New Flyer Industries

New Flyer is the largest manufacturer of heavy-duty transit buses in Canada and the United States. Its broad product line offers a variety of bus models, lengths and propulsion systems. The firm maintains corporate headquarters and manufacturing facilities in Winnipeg, and employs 1,400 workers in Canada and 1,000 others across North America.

New Flyer buses are in use at 250 transit systems throughout North America. Recent high-profile projects have included bus rapid transit systems in Ohio and Oregon, electric trolley bus contracts in Philadelphia and Vancouver, and the provision of fuel cell buses to BC Transit for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games.
Nova Bus

Nova Bus is a manufacturer of heavy-duty transit buses and a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Volvo Bus Corporation. It offers energy-efficient, high-capacity transit buses and integrated intelligent transportation systems, all supported by a dedicated parts and service network. Nova Bus has over 1,100 employees in North America, including 900 at two Canadian facilities.

Over 40 Canadian transit authorities operate Nova buses. In 2008, with the delivery of four Nova LFS HEV diesel-electric hybrid buses, the Town of Banff became the first Canadian community with a 100% hybrid fleet. TransLink, in Greater Vancouver, has ordered 141 hybrids, and Nova Bus is preparing to deliver 322 articulated buses to transit systems in Montreal and Quebec City.

Orion (Daimler Buses North America)

Orion is part of the Daimler Buses North America group, with locations in Mississauga, Ontario and Oriskany, New York. The chassis and structure of each Orion bus are assembled in Canada and production is finished in New York State. The Orion production facility and administrative offices in Mississauga, Ontario employ more than 550 people, and produce more than $100 million in exports to the United States each year.

There are over 12,000 Orion vehicles in active revenue service in North America, including a significant portion running on compressed natural gas. Also among them is the company’s flagship diesel-electric hybrid Orion VII bus, which makes up the continent’s largest installed fleet of hybrid buses in New York and Toronto.

T-Ji Talfourd-Jones Inc.

T-Ji Talfourd-Jones creates and markets innovative transportation products such as energy-absorbing bus bumpers and molded fenders using reaction injection molding technology. The company has supplied 95% of transit systems in Canada and 70% of those in the United States, exporting more than two-thirds of its production in the process. It employs 15 to 20 people in Toronto, Ontario, and is a past winner of CUTA’s Corporate Innovation Award.

Thales Canada – Rail Signalling Solutions

Toronto-based Thales Rail Signalling Solutions is part of the international Thales Group. It designs, manufactures, implements and exports advanced systems for subway, light rail and automated people-mover systems.

Thales’s Canadian-developed, open-standards communications-based train control technology was first used by Vancouver’s SkyTrain for EXPO 86. It has since been applied by about 25 other rail transit systems around the world, including Toronto’s subway and systems in England, China, Malaysia, South Korea, Turkey, Dubai and the United States. Thales Rail Signalling Solutions is a major exporter of Canadian technology, with annual exports worth about $200 million. The company was recently awarded a $12.8 million green transportation innovation grant by the Ontario Ministry of Economic Development and Trade under its ‘Next Generation of Jobs Fund’ initiative, and over the next five years it plans to apply $85 million to research and development focusing on improving energy-efficient electric train operations.