

1 April 2019



### **Budget 2019 announces increase to Gas Tax Fund**

The federal government has provided a one-time injection of \$2.2 billion into the municipal sector, and transit is an eligible category for funding. The government's budget, titled [Investing in the Middle Class](#), laid out its financial plans for the coming year and sets the stage for the upcoming federal election, anticipated on or before October 21, 2019. You can [read our analysis here](#).

The most relevant announcement for the transit industry was that the federal government will double its commitment to municipal infrastructure through its Gas Tax Fund (GTF) in 2018-2019. This money is meant to help municipalities address their most serious infrastructure deficits and to address short-term priorities. This is a one-time increase to the fund, after which the GTF will return to distributing \$2.2 billion (indexed to inflation at 2%) to municipalities and First Nations annually.

*For more information, please contact [Jeff Mackey](#) at 613-782-2454.*

### **The economic impact of transit investment in Canada**

CUTA has released a new issue paper about the economic impact of transit investment in Canada. Public transit is vital to the efficient movement of people and goods throughout Canada and especially in its cities. Every year, federal, provincial and municipal governments invest billions of dollars to operate, preserve, improve and expand Canada's transit systems.

But what is the return on that investment? What is the value of the benefits enjoyed by Canadians? Find out in CUTA's [new issue paper](#).

*For more information, please contact [Jeff Mackey](#) at 613-782-2454.*

### **Accommodation at the Symposium in St. John's, May 14-16, 2019**

[Delta Hotel Discount](#) - Don't miss out on CUTA's discounted hotel room rate! For your convenience, several hotel rooms are reserved for the CUTA spring symposium delegates. Book your room before the **deadline of April 12, 2019** to take advantage of these great rates.

To book at the discounted CUTA rate, please **call 709-739-6404** and mention that you are attending the CUTA spring symposium. Your **discounted rate is \$219.00** (taxes not included) for a Delta king room.

### **Register now for the CUTA 2019 spring symposium**

We are fast approaching the CUTA 2019 spring symposium in St. John's and we have a very exciting program for you. If you haven't already registered, [make sure you do it soon!](#) Note that as of **May 8, a \$50 late registration fee will apply**. Connect with old and new colleagues in the industry and take advantage of the new format and diverse program that's in store for you, including great speakers, networking opportunities and the Metrobus technical tour.

Registration for the technical tour is strictly on a first-come, first-served basis at the registration desk onsite.

*For more information, please contact [Paulina Cadena](#) at extension 118.*

### **Sponsorship opportunities**

CUTA is offering a range of [promotional opportunities](#) to showcase your business at our spring symposium in St. John's. If you become the exclusive sponsor of our popular event app, delegates will see your name on every app page. Want to maximize your company's visibility at this great networking event? Sign up to sponsor the welcome reception, break or lunch. These are excellent opportunities to promote your brand. If you would like to discuss a custom sponsorship opportunity or package, please drop us a note!

*For more information, please contact [Paulina Cadena](#) at extension 118.*

### **St. John's keynote speaker – Nora Young**

Join your transit industry colleagues at CUTA's Technology in Transit Symposium to hear well-known tech guru Nora Young, host of CBC Radio's [Spark](#).

Nora is an informed and ideal guide for anyone looking to examine and plan for the ever-changing high-tech landscape. She helps audiences understand trends in social media, big data, wearable tech and more, while showing them how to better protect their privacy in our increasingly digital world. The host and creator of *Spark* on CBC Radio and the author of *The Virtual Self*, she demystifies technology and explains how it is shaping our lives and the larger world in which we live.

If you have not yet registered for [CUTA's 2019 spring symposium](#) in St. John's, do it today!

*For more information, please contact [Jason Allen](#) at extension 102.*

### **Learn transit planning and apply your planning skills in the transit industry**

CUTA will be holding a transit planning course hosted by our member the West Vancouver Transportation Department from **June 10–14, 2019**. This is an in-depth course covering development requirements, service standards, the uses of intelligent transportation systems, and performance monitoring. You can find the registration form on the [course description page](#).

*For more information, please contact [Kevin Brown](#) at extension 121.*

### **Request for service**

CUTA's Research and Technical Services department is seeking professional support to develop Fact Book reports using SQL Server Reporting Services (SSRS). We are hoping to work with a CUTA member on this initiative. Please visit CUTA's [tenders and RFP page](#) for more details.

*For more details please contact [techservices@cutaactu.ca](mailto:techservices@cutaactu.ca).*

### **CUTA membership renewal 2019**

If you have not already done so, we invite you to renew your membership today. [Click here](#) to view, print, or pay your membership invoice, or please forward the invoice to the most appropriate person at your organization.

If you have any questions about your membership, please do not hesitate to contact [membership@cutaactu.ca](mailto:membership@cutaactu.ca).

### **Tires and Wires – The story of electric trolley coaches serving 16 Canadian cities**

The topic of electric buses is forefront in the transit industry today with new vehicles being developed and tested, and demonstrations under way or planned in many cities. But electric bus technology, albeit using overhead wire infrastructure, has existed for decades dating back to the 1920s with major investments after World War II. Known as trolley coaches or trolley buses, a number of cities around the world including Vancouver continue to operate them, with new vehicles and propulsion systems supplied by New Flyer Canada and Kiepe Electric. At one time, 16 cities across Canada operated them.

The Canadian Transit Heritage Foundation (CTHF) and Railfare\*DC Books have just released a new book called *Tires and Wires* about the history and story of the electric trolley coach in Canada. Transit operators of the 1930s and 1940s turned to this quiet, powerful and efficient technology to replace their worn-out streetcar systems and retain transit riders in an era of rapidly increasing automobile ownership. While trolley coaches were replaced by diesel buses in most cities for a variety of reasons, the large Vancouver system demonstrates its many benefits.

*Tires and Wires* contains a chapter for each city's system, with more than 200 photos (54 in colour), illustrations and overhead wire maps to show the streets where they operated. Also included are trolley coach rosters, vehicle illustrations, a description of the 9 coach manufacturers, and preserved equipment. The book also includes short histories of cities which once considered investing in trolley coaches, such as Nelson, Victoria, Saint John and St. John's.

The author, Tom Schwarzkopf, is co-author of *Edmonton's Electric Transit* and *Calgary's Electric Transit*, as well as other rail and transit publications.

This book can be purchased at the [CTHF website e-store](#). This superb book should be a welcome addition to your public transit library.