

Subject: The United Opposition to CN Builds -- Plan to Attend July 23 Aurora Rally!

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Conversation: The United Opposition to CN Builds -- Plan to Attend July 23 Aurora Rally!

Under the umbrella of The Regional Answer to Canadian National (TRAC) Coalition, the City of Naperville, along with the City of Aurora and the Village of Plainfield, will be hosting a call to action meeting regarding the proposed Canadian National (CN) Railway acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet Eastern (EJ) Railway later this month.

The call to action public meeting will take place at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, July 23 at Waubonsie Valley High School's Gold Campus, 1305 Long Grove Drive, Aurora. A formal presentation begins at 7 p.m. The goal of the event is to provide residents with the most recent information about the proposed purchase and a project timeline and then activate their involvement in fighting this proposed transaction.

"It is important that Naperville, Aurora and Plainfield work collaboratively to make our voices heard on this issue," Naperville Councilman Darlene Senger said. "Naperville has significant concerns as it relates to this acquisition, including impacts on the proposed STAR Line system, as well as excessive train noise and increased congestion on area roadways due to increased train traffic. I urge all residents to attend this call to action meeting and also to contact our federal legislators with their individual concerns."

In fall 2007, CN announced its proposed acquisition of the EJ Railway, which runs along the western perimeter of Naperville. Top concerns related to the acquisition include street traffic congestion due to increased train traffic, impacts to the proposed STAR Line system and implications on the city's proposed Quiet Zone designation. Due to the potential impact on residents, staff has been engaged in the process as it has moved forward.

Aurora Mayor Tom Weisner, who serves as the co-chair of The Regional Answer to Canadian National Coalition (TRAC), said he welcomes the opportunity to work with Naperville and Plainfield to present a united front against the potential railway merger.

"None of our communities can afford to take a wait-and-see attitude while CN threatens to cause gridlock by nearly quadrupling the amount of freight traffic on our rail lines," Weisner said. "Working together is going to be key to stopping CN in its tracks."

"Plainfield joins our neighbors Aurora and Naperville to confront Canadian National Railway's attempt to purchase the EJ Railway without providing any mitigation for the serious consequences that will result from a massive increase in the number of freight trains passing through our communities," Plainfield Mayor James Waldorf said. "CN's proposal will impact the entire region due to the regional travel patterns of commuters who use state, county and local roadways within our area to reach and return from their job destinations. The impacts on the safety, the congestion, the noise, the home values, the environment and the overall quality of life in our communities are central to our concerns and are why we are confronting this issue head on."

Naperville, Aurora and Plainfield are encouraging residents to write letters to the STB and federal legislators about how the impacts of this transaction could affect their life. Sample letters will be available at the Rally for concerned citizens to sign.

Federal and state elected officials, as well as officials from other impacted municipalities, will also be invited to attend the call to action meeting.