

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF SAULT STE. MARIE

February 27th, 2018

SENT VIA EMAIL

The Honourable Marc Garneau
Minister of Transport
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Garneau,

RE: Restoration of Algoma passenger train service

You will find attached hereto a resolution passed by the Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie City Council regarding the restoration of passenger train service between Sault Ste. Marie and Hearst.

On behalf of Council, I express my support of the Coalition for Algoma Passenger Trains' (CAPT) efforts to restore the service. Missanabie Cree First Nation is the proposed operator and the Mask-wa Oo-ta-ban (Bear Train) would be the first ever First Nations run rail service.

Restoration of passenger train service is expected to bring significant economic value to our region. There are several tourism-related businesses and recreational properties located along the rail line's corridor that are only accessible by rail. Approximately 400 km of the 470 km line is not accessible by public road.

The service has been historically subsidized by the federal government and a socio-economic impact study conducted in 2014 by BDO Canada determined the federal government's annual contribution of \$2.2-million supported between 170 to 220 jobs. I understand a business case has been submitted to Sault Ste. Marie MP Terry Sheehan, and I encourage you to review the document.

In a mandate letter to you from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau dated November 12, 2015 it is stated: "your overarching goal will be to ensure that Canada's transportation system supports our ambitious economic growth and job creation agenda." As outlined in this letter and in the aforementioned business case, restoration of the service would have a significant economic impact and I urge the federal government to work with the appropriate parties to get the train back on the rails.

Yours truly,

Christian C. Provenzano, B.A., LL.B., LL.M



CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Agenda Number: 5.4
Title: Coalition for Algoma Passenger Trains
Date: Monday, January 22, 2018

Moved by: Councillor P. Christian
Seconded by: Councillor S. Myers

Whereas the Algoma passenger train has not been operating for more than two years, which has resulted in substantial hardships for residents, businesses, communities and other passengers; and
Whereas 75% of properties in proximity to the rail line are inaccessible except by rail service; and
Whereas alternate ways of access are not reliable, safe, year-round, or are non-existent; and
Whereas due to further economic downturns in Algoma district, we cannot afford this loss of train-related employment, economic impact and lack of safe, reliable access to continue, especially for small businesses; and

Whereas passenger train service is necessary for First Nations to access remote regions of their traditional territories, including spiritually significant locations; and

Whereas the Missinnabie Cree First Nation-led Mask-wa Oo-ta-ban (Bear Train) – Ontario's first First Nation train – would contribute to reconciliation through First Nation employment and economic opportunities; and

Whereas the passenger train has been the only safe, affordable, all-season access into the Algoma wilderness rail corridor for over 100 years;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that Sault Ste. Marie City Council support the Coalition for Algoma Passenger Trains to call upon the Minister of Transport to put the Algoma passenger train back in service in order to ensure the mission of Transport Canada to "serve the public interest through promotion of a safe and secure, efficient and environmentally responsible transportation system in Canada" is fulfilled;

and further that the Mayor be authorized to work with North Eastern Ontario Rail Network in its efforts to reinstate Algoma passenger train service.

Carried

Postponed

Defeated

Officially Read and Not Dealt With

Christian Provenzano