



March 12th, 2021

Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

via email justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

RE: Proposal of New Passenger Rail Service
Toronto – Ottawa – Montreal – Québec City

On behalf of the Council of the Corporation of the County of Lanark, I would like to take this moment to express our full support for VIA Rail Canada's dedicated tracks for High-Frequency Rail (HFR) plan as outlined in the Minister of Transport's Mandate Letter.

As shared infrastructure becomes more congested and Canadians demand more of their rail service provider, VIA's proposal for dedicated tracks for high frequency trains between Toronto – Peterborough – Ottawa – Montreal – Québec City will assure the corporation can maximize ridership and revenue and improve their on-time performance to over 95%. Dedicated tracks for passenger service will reduce trip times while also increasing VIA's profitability, effectively eliminating the need for a Government subsidy within a few years.

A dedicated passenger corridor will create significant economic development along the route, including an estimated 336,000 person years of employment, helping to assure the prosperity of our hard-working middle class. The hybrid Electric-Diesel trains running on this route will dramatically reduce carbon emissions by 12.5 Million tons of tCO₂e, the equivalent of a car-pool reduction of 2.8 million vehicles.

In addition to the benefits of more efficient inter-city travel, VIA's proposal will increase access to affordable housing in the new rail corridor and provide new residents with a transit option for commuting.

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Dedicated tracks solve VIA's congestion problems, increase its efficiency and profitability, create economic development while remaining environmentally-friendly, and will give commuters better access to communities not traditionally served by transit. It is important to note that track improvements for passenger service will offer significant benefits to current and future freight users.

This project will increase economic development, improve environmental sustainability, and allow for movement of people and goods in unprecedented ways. All of which enhance the lives of Ontarians and Canadians as a whole.

For these reasons, we ask the Prime Minister, Transport Minister, and Finance Minister to seriously consider VIA's proposal and work with the communities along the line and VIA Rail to make it a reality.

Yours truly,

Christa Lowry
Lanark County Warden

cc: Minister of Transport - Hon. Omar Alghabra
Minister of Finance – Hon. Chrystia Freeland
Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston MP – Hon. Scott Reid
Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce, Joel Wiebe
Eastern Ontario Warden's Caucus
Local Municipalities within Lanark County