

Type of Decision									
Meeting Date	Friday, May 7, 2010				Report Date	Wednesday, May 5, 2010			
Decision Required	X	Yes		No	Priority	X	High		Low
Direction	x	Information Only			Type of Meeting	X	Open		Closed
REPORT TITLE									
Support for Federal Conservation of Railway Infrastructure Corridor Report 07/05/10/203									

Subject: Consideration of support for the Federal government to step in and preserve the rail line infrastructure corridor for possible future use.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council adopt the following resolution supporting in part the county of Renfrew's position and making its own position known.

WHEREAS rail service is a vital transportation link required for the maintenance and development of sustainable and vibrant communities throughout rural Ontario;

AND WHEREAS the loss of rail service from Smiths Falls to Sudbury would represent a significant economic impact to an area that has been severely impacted by the current economic recession and requires improvement to all transportation infrastructure to compete on a level playing field for community sustainability;

AND WHEREAS Canadian Pacific has issued a Notice of Sale or Discontinuance of Railway Line in accordance with the Canadian Transportation Act for the Chalk River rail line between Smiths Falls and Petawawa;

AND WHEREAS Canadian Pacific has also indicated that a Notice of Sale or Discontinuance will be given for the rail line between Petawawa to Mattawa and that a short-line operator will be sought for the line between Temiscaming and Sudbury only;

AND WHEREAS the federal and provincial governments have a responsibility to all Canadians and Ontarians, respectively, to ensure that vital transportation infrastructure that was established to serve all Canadians, with substantial investments by Canadian taxpayers, is not lost to the detriment of existing and future citizens or rural Ontario;

AND WHEREAS rail transportation is an environmentally responsible means of transporting goods particularly in the face of rising energy and transportation costs;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the United Townships of Head, Clara & Maria does hereby request that the federal and provincial governments commit to a program of funding or conserving the current railway transportation infrastructure corridor, thereby maintaining valuable railway infrastructure for potential future use once the global economy recovers;

AND FURTHER THAT this situation be monitored on a regular basis with a full review to occur after a global recovery from the current economic downturn to ensure that a decision to close this line was not made in haste during an economic downturn;

AND FURTHER THAT this resolution be forwarded to the Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus, our local MP – Cheryl Gallant, our local MPP – John Yakabuski, John Baird - Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, Kathleen Wynne - Ontario Minister of Transportation, Geoff Hare - Chair and Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Transportation Agency, and Rick Poznikoff - Canadian Pacific Railway, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, The County of Renfrew and all local municipalities between North Bay and Sudbury for support.

BACKGROUND/EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This resolution is further to *Ownership of CP Rail Line Report 19/03/10/204* where Council made it clear that they did not wish to become part owners or support municipal ownership of a rail line and in response to current direction. I have included a copy of the resolution of the County of Renfrew. We have received similar resolutions of support from Smith Falls, the Town of Petawawa, the Township of Laurentian Valley, the City of Pembroke, Calvin Township, and Lanark County. We have received one resolution from the Township of Montague which defeated the resolution to support the County of Renfrew's position as it was written.

Based on conversation around this table, our resolution acknowledges the importance of the railway to economic sustainability but also clearly states that this is not a business for municipal governments. It supports the County's position to a certain extent but is then changed to reflect Council's direction to request that the Federal government maintain/conservate the rail line for possible future use, with a final decision being made once we have recovered from this current economic downturn.

Financial Considerations/Budget Impact: There is no budget impact for HCM currently.

Policy Impact: None. Simply providing support to local initiative to help sustain a future for the area.

Approved and Recommended by the Clerk

Melinda Reith,
Municipal Clerk

Melinda Reith