

## **Resolution 23A**

### **TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY (PASSED)**

⇒ Halifax Regional Municipality

**WHEREAS** dependable, affordable transportation services are important elements in linking communities and people across the province; and

**WHEREAS** Via Rail has announced that at the end of October, the Halifax to Montreal passenger rail service will be cut in half to three departures per week thereby significantly cutting back the province's sole passenger rail link to the rest of Canada; and

**WHEREAS** Acadian Bus Lines announced in August that it will shut down all operations by November 30, 2012; and

**WHEREAS** these planned rail and bus cuts will leave people with limited travel options; and

**WHEREAS** Nova Scotians without access to private cars will face severely constrained travel futures;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities request that the Province initiate a review of transportation services across the province with a view to developing a transportation strategy that will better meet the needs of the citizens of Nova Scotia.

Forwarded to:

*Minister of Transportation & Infrastructure Renewal*

### **RESPONSE:**

*The Province of Nova Scotia believes it is important that the citizens of Nova Scotia have a range of choices in the way they travel. The Federal Government provides passenger rail service through VIA Rail. The private sector provides inter-city bus service. While the Province does not have direct responsibility for these transportation services, we closely monitor the situation and advocate with the transportation carriers on behalf of Nova Scotians.*

*In discussions with the Federal Government, we have been advised that the primary factor in reducing the frequency of the Ocean run is a decline in ridership by 50% over the past 15 years. We have been assured that the new schedule will meet customer demand and service levels will be adjusted if customer demand warrants it. The Province has reinforced its position that a three day a*

*week level is the minimum level of service acceptable for our region of the country.*

*The Province is pleased that private bus operators have stepped forward to ensure that inter-city service will continue after Acadian Lines ceases operation on November 30, 2012, thereby avoiding an interruption in service. For its part, the Province will be streamlining regulatory requirements to enable bus carriers to make service changes without undue delays and expensive hearing processes, thereby enhancing the future business environment in which these companies operate.*

*The Honourable Maurice Smith, QC  
Minister  
October 23, 2012*