



**GREAT LAKES AND
ST. LAWRENCE**
CITIES INITIATIVE



December 2023

*A resolution submitted by the City of Detroit to the board of directors
of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative*



**SUPPORTING THE PROPOSED PASSENGER RAIL LINK BETWEEN
TORONTO AND CHICAGO BY CONNECTING DETROIT, MI AND WINDSOR, ON**

WHEREAS, efficient passenger and commuter rail links foster economic growth, strengthen ties across communities and across borders and promote environmental sustainability; and

WHEREAS, connecting the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin by rail will contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, offer an alternative mode of transport to tourists and business travelers and promote further integration in our \$6-trillion regional economy; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak and Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC) announced an agreement to allow passenger trains to once again pass through the Detroit River tunnel owned by the company; and

WHEREAS, Via Rail and Amtrak are in discussions to link their train lines across the Canada-U.S. border to revive passenger service between Toronto and Chicago through Amtrak's existing *Wolverine* service connecting Chicago and Detroit and Via Rail's existing Windsor-to-Toronto service; and

WHEREAS annual ridership is projected to be 66,500 additional passengers yearly on a once-daily round trip between Toronto and Chicago; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak last served Windsor, Ontario, from New York and Buffalo with its *Niagara Rainbow* service, which continued through to Detroit until the end of 1979; and

WHEREAS, this renewed rail link would service 21 other communities between Chicago and Toronto; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak proposes to begin service on this new rail connection as soon as 2027; and

WHEREAS, Via Rail and Transport Canada have not committed to financing this project at this time.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the board of directors of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (Cities Initiative) expresses its support for the proposed passenger rail link between Via Rail and Amtrak connecting Detroit and Windsor; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Cities Initiative calls on Amtrak and Via Rail to identify pathways to finance the project to restore binational rail service between Chicago and Toronto, through the Detroit-Windsor connection, as soon as 2027; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be put forward to the entire membership of the Cities Initiative at its next annual general meeting; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be sent to the President of Amtrak, the President of Via Rail, the U.S. Secretary of Transport, the Canadian federal Minister of Transport, the Director of the Michigan Department of Transportation and the Ontario Minister of Transport.