



# FIRE UP #503 INITIATIVE

SEPTEMBER 26, 2023

# KEY POINTS

- Arms Length advisory Committee
- Local Tourist Infrastructure
- Unique opportunity
- Cash positive operating plan
- Why steam
- Local Economic impact
- How can you help



# ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ARMS LENGTH)



- Legal
- Funding/Fundraising
- Railroad operations & safety
- Tourist Operator
- Steam Locomotive Expertise
- Social media
- Governance
- First Nations



# LOCAL TOURIST INFRASTRUCTURE

- North Bay has reached a “critical mass” with respect to attracting Bus tour business
- New/Modern 4 star chain hotels, Fairfield Inn & Suites, Homewood suites, Hampton Inn, Holiday Inn Express, etc
- More attractions Quints House, Gateway Casino & Match Eatery, Steam Tourist Train
- Complements existing attractions and makes it easier for bus tours to consider overnight trip to North Bay



# UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

- No mainline steam tourist operation in Canada; nearest in NE USA (10+ hour drive)
- City of North Bay owns ONR steam locomotive #503
- Region has good railway infrastructure and capacity for additional trains (very few places have this opportunity)
- Tourist train creates a working heritage rail attraction & tourist identity that fits with the regions rail cultural heritage
- Local steel fabrication, machine shops, railway shops



# CASH POSITIVE OPERATING PLAN

- Not for Profit organization but with a business focus
- Volunteer driven
- Has to be more than a one & done experience, repeatable (i.e. not like the Timber Train)
  - Regular excursion train with specials that include First Spike train robbery themed adventure primarily targeting bus tour business;
  - Holiday trains – Christmas/Polar express, Easter, Mothers & Fathers Day, Canada Day, Halloween Ghost trains, Fire & Ice, Star train...
  - Steam photo specials, Corporate charters
  - Community partner themed trains - Rails & Ales, Fall Foliage
  - Regional event trains i.e. Plowing Match, Festivals, etc.



# WHY STEAM

- Steam locomotives have the historical romance to draw tourists from long distances
- Northern Nevada RR draws 35,000+ riders and it is 4 hours north of Las Vegas, 4 hours west of Salt Lake City and sits on the loneliest highway in the contiguous USA (Route 50). They have 3 operating steam locomotives
- Steam tourist train operators report a 30% drop in ridership and a 40% drop in revenue when they are not able to operate with steam.



# WHY STEAM

- Huge draw but huge challenge as last generation of steam expertise is mostly gone. Found FMW Solutions
- Have the management, engineering, code and mechanical knowhow, supplier contacts and hands on experience for operating restoration of mainline steam locomotives
- Offer full hands on to hands off restoration services complete with ongoing operating and maintenance training. [www.FMWsolutions.com](http://www.FMWsolutions.com)



# KAMLOOPS

- Based at their waterfront (Kamloops River)
- Started from ground zero 1994
- Tourist trains started operating in 2002 & carried 10,400 passengers in first year
- Operated excursion and event trains to start but then limited to only event trains and now not operating due to track access issues
- Website: [kamrail.com](http://kamrail.com)



# LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

## Railway Attraction

- 10,000 overnight visitors annually
- Average stay is 3.2 nights\*
- Average spend \$821/trip\* (not including attraction)
- Potential annual impact >\$8,210,000
- Attraction revenue is in addition to this (tickets, special trains, retail, donations)
- Experience events designed for avid rail fans will also provide a significant revenue stream to organization



\*Source: TOO BIG TO IGNORE - VFR TOURISTS IN NORTHERN ONTARIO (RTO13) A SITUATION ANALYSIS, May 2015, Special Tabulations, TSRC 2012/2013 Pooled/ITS US/OVS 2012 prepared by Research Resolutions.

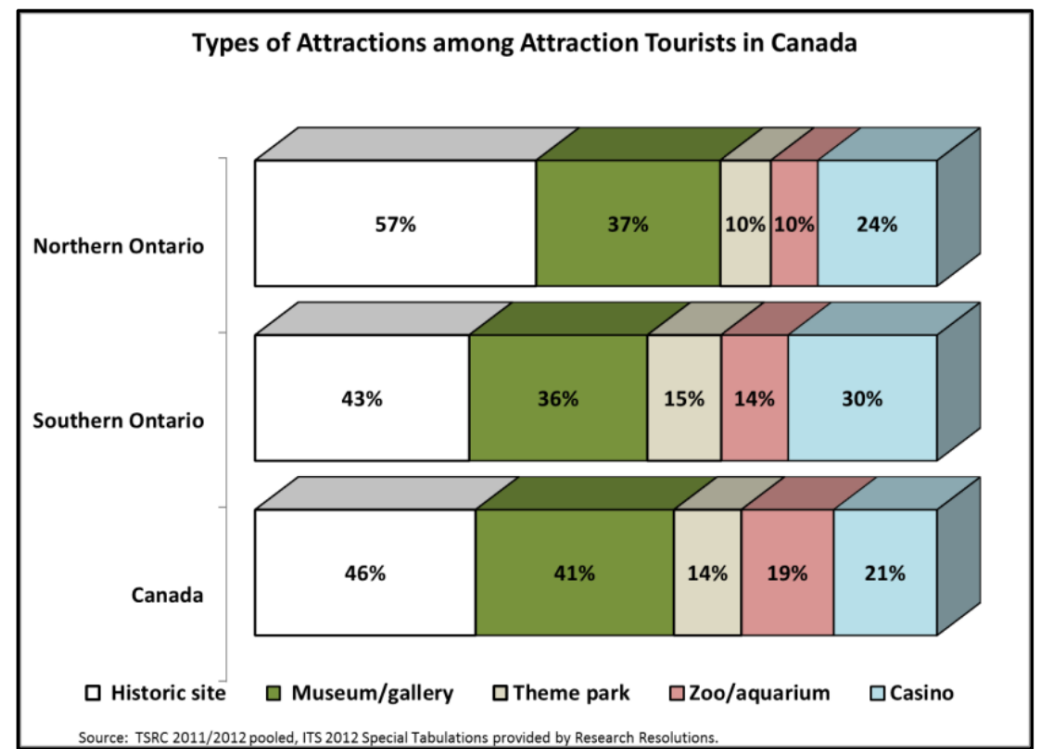


# RAILWAY ATTRACTION

## Potential Market

Northern Ontario attraction tourists account for:

- 16% of all overnight tourists spending \$179,300,000 of the more than \$1.12 billion spent in N Ontario.
- Interests of attraction tourists in Northern Ontario
  - Historical Sites - 57%
  - Museum / Gallery - 37%
  - Casino – 24%
  - Historical steam tourist train fits well with current attraction visitors to our region



\*Source: ATTRACTION TOURISTS IN NORTHERN ONTARIO (RTO13) A SITUATION ANALYSIS, July 2014, Special Tabulations, TSRC 2011/2012 Pooled/ITS US/OVS 2012 prepared by Research Resolutions.

# HOW CAN EAST FERRIS HELP?

- Council support
  - Resolution of support for the project
  - A letter from mayor / council supporting project concept to and need for access to Ottawa Valley Railway trackage



# THANK YOU/NEXT STEPS

