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Subject: Update on Inter-Community Bus Service for Northwestern Ontario
Date: Friday, May 11, 2018 12:51:06 AM

TO: NOMA MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES
CVNW Board and Transportation Task Force

At the NOMA AGM in Kenora last week, the Premier was asked to explain why there was no subsidy being offered to private inter-community bus transportation providers. This information had been provided to NOMA President Wendy Landry and myself as a follow up to a meeting we had with Minister Gravelle about our concern over what appeared to be a lack of action in the implementation of the Government's announcement last fall.

The Premier categorically stated that there was a subsidy and referenced a \$5.2 million contribution to Ontario Northland Transportation Corporation designed to fund the expansion into Northwestern Ontario. A subsequent review of a prior announcement by ONTC, referenced the expansion of their service to include 20 new communities, with the westerly communities being added being Hearst and Wawa only.

I followed up with Minister Gravelle and Mauro in Thunder Bay on Saturday. Minister Mauro felt as I had, that the Premier had misspoken. Minister Gravelle, who is responsible for ONTC, was insistent that there is in fact a subsidy and committed to providing me with the details that he was able to make public. The following is the full text of an email I received from the Minister on Monday.

"Thanks Iain...the subsidy will be provided through increased investment and support for the ONTC's expansion of inter-community bus service in Northwestern Ontario..... while all the routes have not yet been determined (much of it depends on the discussions we're having with Kaspar Transportation).....but, as I said when we spoke about this on Saturday, we are committed to filling in the gaps in service all across Northwestern Ontario.....the support the ONTC receives in Northeastern Ontario for its motorcoach services will be supplemented (or subsidized) in order to meet the motor coach/bus route needs in Northwestern Ontario. All the best. Michael"

On a related note, the Province announced a grant under the Community Transportation Program and that information can be seen via these links:

<https://www.owensound.ca/Modules/News/index.aspx?feedId=a8948dec-a55d-48b4-a542-ffccb981c074&newsId=13715514-805d-488b-9a68-baf2eb765d3>

https://icreate7.esolutionsgroup.ca/230002_iCreate_NewsV2//Management/Attachment/Download/2da7d03d-5ff2-44d4-8701-70072d45dd1b

NOMA and CVNW will continue to monitor the roll-out of the inter-community bus system for Northwestern Ontario

Iain Angus
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