

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL.**

**FROM: Laura Qualey, Community & Business Development Specialist**

**SUBJECT: Letter of Support for Progressive Rail's Application for Minnesota Rail Service Improvement Program**

**DATE: November 16, 2023**

**BACKGROUND.**

Dave Fellon of Progressive Rail has requested a Letter of Support from the Mayor and Council for his application for MnDOT's Minnesota Rail Service Improvement Program. This program will focus on Bridge Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements to the rail line which can increase capacity and load.

Although Progressive Rail is considered a Class III Railroad, it is an important, crucial (and only) connection for Cannon Falls and Randolph to the Class I Railroads and Ports.

The application is due in early December so this is a very time-sensitive request. Mr. Fellon and his team at Progressive Rail are only requesting a letter of support, no financial support for this request.

**REQUESTED COUNCIL ACTION.**

The City Council is asked to approve the accompanying Letter of Support for Progressive Rail to submit with the Minnesota Rail Service Improvement Program application for 2024 for improvements and repairs.



November 16, 2023

Minnesota Department of Transportation  
MnDOT Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations  
395 John Ireland Boulevard  
Saint Paul MN 55155-1899

RE: Letter of Support for the Progressive Rail in Cannon Falls

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing this letter on behalf of the City of Cannon Falls to express our support for Progressive Rail and their application for the Minnesota Rail Service Improvement Program.

Our economy requires a sound transportation system that supports economic activity by connecting businesses, jobs, and resources. For Cannon Falls and surrounding communities, Progressive Rail plays a vital role in supporting that system by serving our area businesses.

While a majority of the 'over-the-road' freight transportation needs are served by the Highway 52 and Highway 19 corridors, our only connection to ports and other Class 1 rail connections lies with Progressive Rail. Any new construction, upgrades or reinforcement for the rail system or bridges along the rail will only increase and improve access, safety, and mobility of goods and services to and from the Cannon Falls area. More importantly, it will allow our prosperity to grow as a community as our industrial park expansion depends on this transportation system.

We appreciate the continued efforts that Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) continues to make to improve transportation not only for safety, but also to support the economy that depends on it as well. We hope you will consider this application a priority for MRSI funding.

Sincerely,

Matt Montgomery  
Mayor  
City of Cannon Falls