



Approval of railway line construction (Lac-Mégantic rail bypass)

The Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA) is an independent regulator and quasi-judicial tribunal with a mandate to ensure the transportation system runs efficiently in the interests of all Canadians. This includes approving the construction of railway lines.

When is CTA approval required?

Federally regulated railway companies must obtain the CTA's approval for their railway line construction projects.

What must a railway company do when seeking approval?

A railway company (in the case of the Lac-Mégantic rail bypass, CPKC in conjunction with Transport Canada) has several obligations to fulfill. These include, but are not limited to:

- describing its railway line,
- preparing technical reports,
- considering input from localities, including Indigenous groups, and
- identifying measures to address any concerns.

The railway company and Transport Canada are expected to be transparent about the proposed railway line construction. Meaningful engagement with the localities is a prerequisite to the application.

What is considered when reviewing an application?

The construction of the railway line will be approved if the location of the railway line is found to be reasonable. In making this decision, two things are considered:

1. the requirements for railway operations and services; and
2. the interests of the localities affected by the railway line, which may include local residents and indigenous communities.



What process is followed?

1

Assess for completeness

- Assess completeness of application

2

Public Consultation

- post completed application (in the case of the Lac-Mégantic rail bypass on Transport Canada's website)
- invite interested parties to provide comments

3

Deliberations

CTA Members assigned to the file:

- review the application
- consider the information
- seek additional information if required

4

Decision

- CTA Members issue the decision
- a decision can include conditions to address issues identified in the application or during the consultation process
- decision is posted on the CTA's website

How can you make your views known?

Once a complete application is received, the CTA will open a consultation process. During this six-week period, a web page with information on the proposed railway line will be posted where you can submit your views via email or mail.

You can submit your views, on how the railway line will impact you. This could cover a wide range of issues such as noise and vibration, lighting, traffic on roads, water-related impacts, property impacts, rail service improvements, or construction activities.

How will your views be used?

All submissions will be publicly accessible. Transport Canada in consultation with CPKC will be given an opportunity to respond to any concerns identified during the public comment period. These responses will also be published. The Members assigned to this case will then consider everything on the file, including your views, to determine whether the location of the line is reasonable.

When will a decision be issued?

Once the public comment process concludes, a decision is typically issued within four months.

For more information about this process, see How to Apply for Approval to Construct a Railway Line on www.otc-cta.gc.ca/eng

Media inquiries can be directed to media@otc-cta.gc.ca