

Advocacy for Highway 17/417 Expansion and Improvement

Thank you!

We'd like to thank the Province of Ontario for their considerations over the years for several of our projects and look forward to a stronger relationship moving forward.

Your Ministry's commitment to the expansion of Highway 17, from Scheel Drive near Arnprior to Bruce Street, 3 kilometres west of Renfrew, will further assist us with attracting residents to our region.

The County of Renfrew

The County of Renfrew is geographically the largest municipality/County in Ontario, with a significant transportation network of over 1,600 lane kilometres of County-owned roadways and infrastructure, including 252 bridges.

Expansion and Improvement to Highway 417/17

With the discontinuation of rail service in 2010, all goods and services for the County of Renfrew arrive by truck, thus making Highway 417/17 a crucial transportation artery that links the Provinces of Ontario and Québec provinces, while also servicing multiple communities in and around Renfrew County. The interconnected network of Provincial, County and Municipal roads, which creates the cohesive transportation infrastructure to effectively move people and goods to locations within the County; as well as other significant destinations such as the City of Ottawa, the Greater Toronto Area, the City of Montréal, and the Highway 401 corridor, makes this corridor exceedingly valuable to the traveling public.

For the TransCanada Highway, the main access and supply route to Garrison Petawawa and the Canadian Nuclear Laboratories Inc., it is absolutely critical that the Minister of Transportation continue to extend Highway 417 and improve Highway 17 through the County of Renfrew.



New Interchange Highway 17 and County Road

Strategic Options

The County of Renfrew is aware of the complexities involved in such a substantial highway expansion and has developed interim options for consideration. The County of Renfrew is requesting that these options be constructed, where practical, in an effort to increase safety with the knowledge that four-laning the entirety of Highway 17 has an exceptionally long completion horizon.

1. 2 + 1 Highway

A 2 + 1 highway is a three-lane highway with a centre passing lane that changes direction approximately every two to five kilometres. The highway model is used in other jurisdictions around the world and is more cost efficient than twinning a highway. Currently a pilot project is underway on Highway 11 north of North Bay.

2. Interchanges

Currently there are several interchanges along the Highway 417 corridor that enable a controlled access to a lower-order facility, such as arterial, or collector roads. Construction of interchanges at arterial road intersections ahead of the Highway 17 expansion would immensely improve safety and traffic flows. The severity of collisions at any of these currently signaled or stop controlled intersections usually result in severe injuries or death of the individuals involved.

3. Roundabouts

Intersections play a crucial role in facilitating the movement of traffic, ensuring safety, and optimizing transportation networks. Traditionally, intersections controlled by traffic signals have been the standard choice for managing traffic flow. However, in recent years, highway roundabouts have gained popularity as a viable alternative. Highway roundabouts instead of intersections with signals have the potential to enhance safety, improve traffic flow, reduce congestion, and contribute to sustainability. While roundabouts may not be suitable for all scenarios, their adoption should be considered in areas where these advantages can be maximized. As society continues to prioritize safety, efficiency, and environmental responsibility in transportation infrastructure, the utilization of highway roundabouts should be increasingly favoured in future planning and development.

Advocacy for Hwy 17/417 Expansion and Improvement

Solutions

- Include the continued extension of Highway 417 through the entire length of the County of Renfrew as a key priority program within the province's five-year capital works program.
- Allocate funding for the continued expansion of Highway 417 through the entire length of the County of Renfrew and other improvements of Highway 17, moving forward with the tender process for detailed design and construction (design-build tender) in its five-year capital programs.
- Initiate environmental assessments studies and land acquisition for the enhancement and twinning of the infrastructure connecting the high-traffic zones spanning Pembroke to Chalk River, but with an emphasis on focusing expansion from west (Chalk River) to east (Petawawa/Pembroke) with the understanding that this initiative would be concurrent to and simultaneous with the present expansion coming from Arnprior west.
- Consideration be given to the installation of full interchanges at the intersections of Paquette Road (CR 55), Doran Road (CR 26), Forest Lea Road (CR 42), Round Lake Road (CR 58), B-Line Road, Highway 41 and Whitewater Road (CR 24). These measures will result in significant improvements to the flow of traffic and assist in the preparation for the eventual twinning of this section.
- Consider alternative traffic flow designs, in the short term, while expansion plans and budgets are being finalized, such as 2+1 or roundabouts.
- For the TransCanada Highway, the main access and supply route to Garrison Petawawa and the Canadian Nuclear Laboratories Inc., it is absolutely critical that the Minister of Transportation develop a predictable multi-year program to fund the planning and implementation of Route Planning Studies, Environmental Assessment updates, property acquisition and budget allocations for the continued extension of Highway 417 and improvement of Highway 17 through the entire length of the County of Renfrew.