

May 29th, 2020

PROVINCE ANNOUNCES DETAILS on the EXPANSION OF 417

Minister John Yakabuski Announces Details on Expansion from Scheel Drive to Renfrew

PEMBROKE: The County of Renfrew is very pleased with the Ontario Government's announcement to move forward with the first stage of widening Highway 17 from two to four lanes between Arnprior and Renfrew. In his announcement John Yakabuski, MPP for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, identified a two-stage expansion of 22.5km of Highway 17 to 4 lanes from Scheel Drive near Arnprior through to Bruce Street, 3km west of Renfrew that will include four new interchanges.

"I want to thank the Province for their decision to move this project forward. The announcement to move forward on phase 1 is an important first step in the expansion of highway 17 that will promote growth in the region, support economic development, tourism and improve this key transportation link to large employers in the County. I want to specifically thank Minister John Yakabuski, for his continuing support of this project, and Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation for her Ministry's support. I also wish to thank the Chair of the Highway 17 Extension Advisory Committee Peter Emon, and Chair of the Operations Committee Tom Peckett for their tireless efforts to keep bringing this issue to the forefront with the Province and creating a dialogue with stakeholders. Their steadfast dedication to this project has contributed greatly to the project moving to the construction phase," stated Warden Debbie Robinson.

Councillor Tom Peckett, Chair of the County of Renfrew Operations Committee had this to share, *"The Operations Committee thanks the Province of Ontario and Minister Yakabuski for this excellent news. The Committee wishes to express its gratitude to Councillor Peter Emon for his immense contribution on this issue and to all those who have worked long and hard to bring the Highway 17 expansion project into reality for Renfrew County."*

Councillor Peter Emon, Chair of the Highway 17 Extension Advisory Committee and Reeve of the Town of Renfrew shared this comment, "I wish to acknowledge the hard work of the County of Renfrew, Minister John Yakabuski and the community. Their efforts have clearly demonstrated the need for the development of this critical piece of national, provincial and community

infrastructure. In addition, our partnerships with and the support of North Eastern Ontario have also reinforced how important this project on the Trans-Canada Highway is to all of Ontario and Canada.”

The first stage of the project will begin with the construction of a new interchange at the Calabogie Road intersection in the Township of McNab/Braeside. The County of Renfrew looks forward to more announcements related to the second stage of the project that will include building three new interchanges and widening Highway 17 from two lanes to four from Scheel Drive in the Township of McNab/Braeside to just west of Bruce Street in Horton Township.

The Province currently is requesting expressions of interest from qualified contractors for the first stage of the project. The Province has indicated that construction will begin following the awarding of the contract and completion of the design and environmental assessment.

For More Information Please Contact:

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BACKGROUND

- In 2012, the County of Renfrew requested the Province of Ontario to accelerate the extension of Highway 417 west of Arnprior, which later saw the expansion through to Scheel Drive completed in 2016.
- In 2017, the previous government had approved the detailed design phase of the expansion through to Renfrew but did not proceed to add it to their 5-year infrastructure plan.
- Premier Ford expressed during his visit to Renfrew in 2018 that the Province was supportive of the extension/expansion project, as MPP John Yakabuski continues to be a huge champion, and that he makes everyone aware of the importance of moving ahead on this expansion.
- In January 2019, a delegation from Bonnechere Valley and the County of Renfrew, met with MPP Kinga Surma, former Parliamentary Assistant to former Minister of Transportation, Jeff Yurek, along with senior staff from the Premier's Office and the Ministry of Transportation, to discuss the expansion.
- In July 2019, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, John Yakabuski (MPP Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke) was joined by Warden Jennifer Murphy and several members of County Council along with a room filled with residents, municipal elected, staff and media for the first announcement of the 22.5km expansion of Highway 17 to 4 lanes from Scheel Drive near Arnprior through to 3km west of Bruce Street near Renfrew.
- Highway 17/417 is the longest provincial highway in Ontario, stretching for more than 1,900 kilometres from the Ontario/Manitoba border to the Quebec border in Eastern Ontario.