



## Highway #17 Twinning Update – Manitoba Border to Kenora Boundary

Good work has been achieved on Phase 1 of highway twinning from the Manitoba border to Gundy Lake – Section 1. Drivers now can experience the safety and comfort of four lanes over 6.5 kilometres.

Twinning of the highway has been an unresolved issue for more than 20 years. It took the Hon. Greg Rickford, Kenora M.P.P. and Caroline Mulroney, then Minister of Transportation in 2020, to get the project moving ahead. Minister Rickford (Northern Development and Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation) immediately engaged Niisaachewan Anishinaabe, Shoal Lake #40, Washagamis Bay and Wauzhushk Onigum First Nations in consultations about highway twinning on their Traditional Land Use Area. This led to a

further partnership with Moncrief Construction, the successful construction project bidder. A joint venture was formed to enable First Nation participation in construction. Ontario provided \$1.9 million for training, particularly youth, through the Four Winds Corporation. More on this can be found here:

<https://niwinwendanimok.com/>

Next will be Section 2 of the project which will extend to Rush Bay Road, a distance of 8.5 kilometres. A preferred route has been selected and talks are now underway with the four First Nations communities. The hope is to begin work as early as 2025. Planning and public consultation for Section 3 from Rush Bay to the Kenora By-Pass, a distance of 24 kilometres is anticipated to commence in 2025 or 2026. Routes previously proposed will have to be revisited.

For more and updates, visit:  
<https://4lanehighway17kenora.ca/>.

In addition, a group of individuals from the Clearwater Bay area known as *Keep Highway 17 North* has emerged as an advocate for an alternate route for Section 3. Their objectives are to ensure no impact to the environmentally sensitive area south of the existing Highway 17 and to ensure that safety is optimized throughout the Highway 17 corridor including the Community of Clearwater Bay. This proposal was not included in the previous routes under consideration by the province. The costs, environmental impact and safety aspects need to be reviewed as part of the community consultation process if this proposal is included as a possible route. <https://keephwy17north.ca/>

Manitoba, under the previous Conservative government, indicated that it would begin planning for highway twinning from just [west of Falcon Lake to the Ontario-Manitoba border](#).

Clearly, there is concern about highway safety. Several lives have been lost on the existing two-lane highway. Inclement weather and accidents often shut down east-west traffic movement, often for many hours at a time. Delivery of goods by transport trucks can be severely delayed, not to mention local traffic attempting to access goods and services.

DoKURA will continue to follow progress on this initiative as it moves ahead.