From the Desk of
Billy Denault, MPP
Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke

June 1, 2026

To the residents of Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke,

I am writing in response to concerns raised at a recent County Council meeting regarding the Highway 17 expansion project between Arnprior and Bruce Street.

Following the meeting, I spoke directly with the Ministry of Transportation and the Premier's Office to seek clarification on the issues that were raised. I would like to provide residents with the most up-to-date information available regarding this important project.

The Ontario Government continues to take steps to widen this highway section, supporting the safe movement of people and goods in Eastern Ontario. There are no changes to plans for the delivery of this expansion project since the February 2026 announcement.

The ministry noted that the phasing plan and timelines in the RFP are intended to help service providers prepare their bids. The plan shows contract delivery dates starting in 2028, with the final contract identified for delivery in 2032, and the design assignment concluding in 2034. However, the actual phasing and construction schedule will be determined as detailed design progresses. This will depend on factors such as Indigenous consultation, and obtaining required approvals and permits, including third-party crossings, utility coordination, and other requirements.

Indigenous consultation started in 2020/21, is ongoing and will continue through design and construction.

Significant utilities relocations have been completed to date to prepare for the twinning project. The remaining utilities are on track to be relocated prior to construction beginning.

The ministry and I recognize Highway 17 as a critical link in the Trans-Canada Highway system and a vital trade corridor, connecting communities across Eastern Ontario and supporting the movement of people and goods throughout our region.

On April 20, 2026, Minister of Transportation Prabmeet Sarkaria and Minister of Northern Economic Development and Growth George Pirie wrote to Federal Minister of Transport Steven McKinnon requesting federal support to accelerate continued widening of Highway 11 and Highway 17.

As stated in the February 27, 2026 announcement, a public information meeting will be held on June 18, 2026, at the Murray Yantha Community Centre in McNab/Braeside from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. I encourage residents to attend, speak directly with ministry staff, and learn more about the project and the next steps ahead.

Please be assured that Highway 17 remains one of my highest priorities. While work continues toward the expansion between Arnprior and Bruce Street, our government is continuing to invest in transportation infrastructure across the riding. In the northern section of Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, the Highway 17 corridor from Chalk River through to Head, Clara and Maria Township will be paved this summer, improving safety and accessibility for residents, visitors, tourists, and cottage owners alike.

As your voice at Queen's Park, I remain committed to raising this issue at every opportunity and advocating for the timely advancement of this critical project. Highway 17 is more than a roadway, it is a lifeline for our communities, businesses, and families. Because this project matters to the people of Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, you can be rest assured it matters deeply to me as well.

Sincerely,

Billy Denault, MPP
Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke

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