

**NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 11th, 2019

**PROVINCE ANNOUNCES EXPANSION OF 417 to RENFREW**

**Minister John Yakabuski Confirms Expansion of Highway from Scheel Drive to Renfrew**

**RENFREW, ON:** Today 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 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. The ten year project will begin construction in the next 2 to 3 years, and will include four new interchanges.

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 last year 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. Earlier this year in January, 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.

Warden Jennifer Murphy shared this comment, *"I want to thank the Premier and the Provincial Cabinet for their decision to move this project forward. This announcement will promote growth in the region that supports economic development, tourism and improves this key transportation link to large employers in the County. I want to take a moment to specifically thank Minister John Yakabuski, Councillor and former Warden 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 dialogue with stakeholders. Their dedication to this project without a doubt has contributed greatly to the realization of today's announcement."*

Councillor Tom Peckett, Chair of the County of Renfrew Operations Committee had this to share, *"The Operations Committee thanks 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 also to all those who have worked long and hard to bring attention to the Highway 17 expansion as a vitally important issue for Renfrew County."*

Councillor Peter Emon, Chair of the Highway 17 Extension Advisory Committee and Reeve of the Town of Renfrew shared this comment, *"The County of Renfrew, Minister John Yakabuski and the community have worked hard to demonstrate the need for the development of this critical piece of Provincial and community infrastructure. I believe our partnerships with and the support of North Eastern Ontario also demonstrated the importance of the expansion of Highway 417 in serving Ontario and Canada."*

**For More Information Please Contact:**

Paul Moreau	Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk of the County of Renfrew	613-735-7288
Michael Barber	Media Relations/Grants Coordinator, County of Renfrew	613-735-7288