

Purpose and Background of this Study

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to identify a four-lane highway plan for the Sudbury Southwest By-Pass (Highway 17), with access restricted to interchange locations only. A four-lane, access controlled highway will improve traffic safety and operations on this section of Highway 17.

This current study is being carried out in advance of the actual need for four-laning. The Ministry does not propose to begin construction of the four-lane Highway 17 in the near future. This study will develop a plan that will allow subsequent phases of the work (detailed engineering and property acquisition) to proceed when four-laning is warranted. Furthermore, development adjacent to the highway corridor can proceed without impacting the Ministry's plan for future widening of the highway.

Background:

A planning study in the 1960s identified a plan for the future Sudbury Southwest By-Pass (Highway 17). This plan recommended a four-lane highway that would be implemented in stages. The initial stage would be a two-lane highway with at-grade intersections at road junctions that would be replaced in the subsequent stage (i.e. four-laning) with grade-separated highway crossings. A copy of the original plan from the 1960s is on display at this public information centre.

A 1973 Highway Planning Study carried out to evaluate the Sudbury-North Bay Area Highway Network concluded that a four-lane highway by-passing the City of Sudbury would eventually be required. A two-lane by-pass was constructed in 1973/74. Before it was constructed, the Ministry of Transportation designated and acquired property for a 100 metre wide right-of-way for the Highway 17 corridor to protect for the future four-laning of this section of highway.

As a separate project, engineering and property acquisition is nearing completion for a new interchange at Highway 17 and Sudbury Municipal Road 80 (Long Lake Road). That project will be proceeding to construction shortly, and will be incorporated into the future four-lane highway.