



Welcome to Public Information Centre

Highway 11/17 Widening to Four Lanes from Kakabeka Falls
Easterly to Thunder Bay Expressway

Preliminary Design and Class Environmental Assessment Study
(GWP 6023-21-00)

hwy11-17-kakabekafalls-east.ca

June 18, 2026



Land Acknowledgement

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation acknowledges that the project is located within the traditional territory of First Nation and Métis communities and is situated in the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850, which established an enduring relationship between the Anishinaabeg and the Crown. The ministry respects the significant contributions that Indigenous communities make to Ontario by continuing to live on and care for these lands.



Welcome

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) has retained WSP Canada Inc. to complete the preliminary design and class environmental assessment (Class EA) study for Highway 11/17 widening to four lanes from Kakabeka Falls easterly to Thunder Bay Expressway.

This session shares an update on the study and will:

Review the background and earlier planning work;

Explain why changes may be needed now and in the future;

Show the options considered and the recommended design; and

Outline environmental considerations, next steps and how to provide feedback.

Please sign in at the front desk. We encourage you to ask questions or fill out a comment sheet before you leave. Comments can be left in the comment box provided or forwarded to the project team by July 18, 2026. You can also use the comment form on the project website (Under “Contact Us”).

Information presented today is also available online at:

hwy11-17-kakabekafalls-east.ca

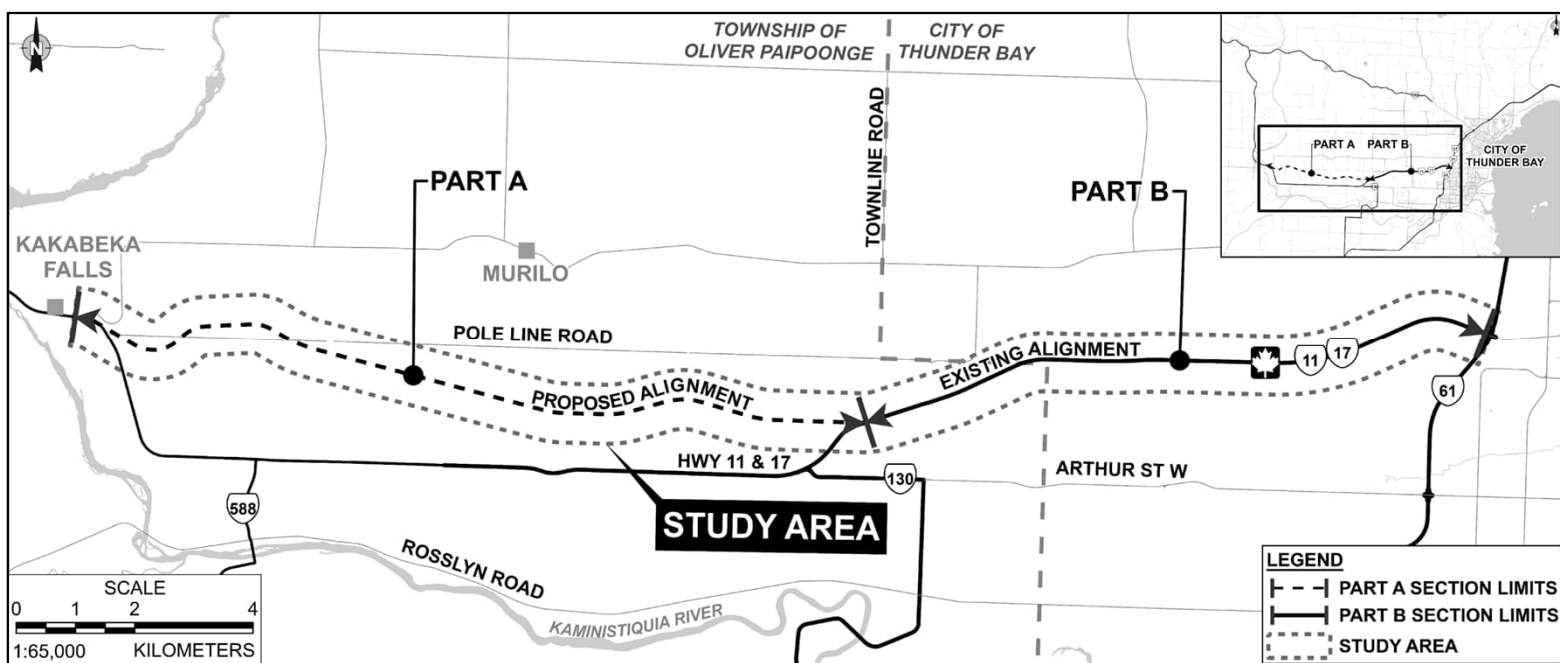




Study Area

The study area includes two corridors of Highway 11/17:

- Part A (West Section): About 14 km of new highway will be built along a new route, from Kakabeka to just east of Vibert Road.
- Part B (East Section): About 10 km of the existing highway will be widened to add a second set of lanes (twinning), from just east of Vibert Road to the Thunder Bay Expressway





Study Background

- This work builds on planning studies dating back to the 1970s that identified safety and traffic concerns and the need for improvements.
- A corridor for a future four-lane highway was set in 1979 and updated in the eastern (Part B) portion in 1992.
- This study will update the design to reflect today's conditions, meet current standards and follow through on previous commitments.
- The project is part of a broader plan to create a four-lane highway between Thunder Bay and Shabaqua.

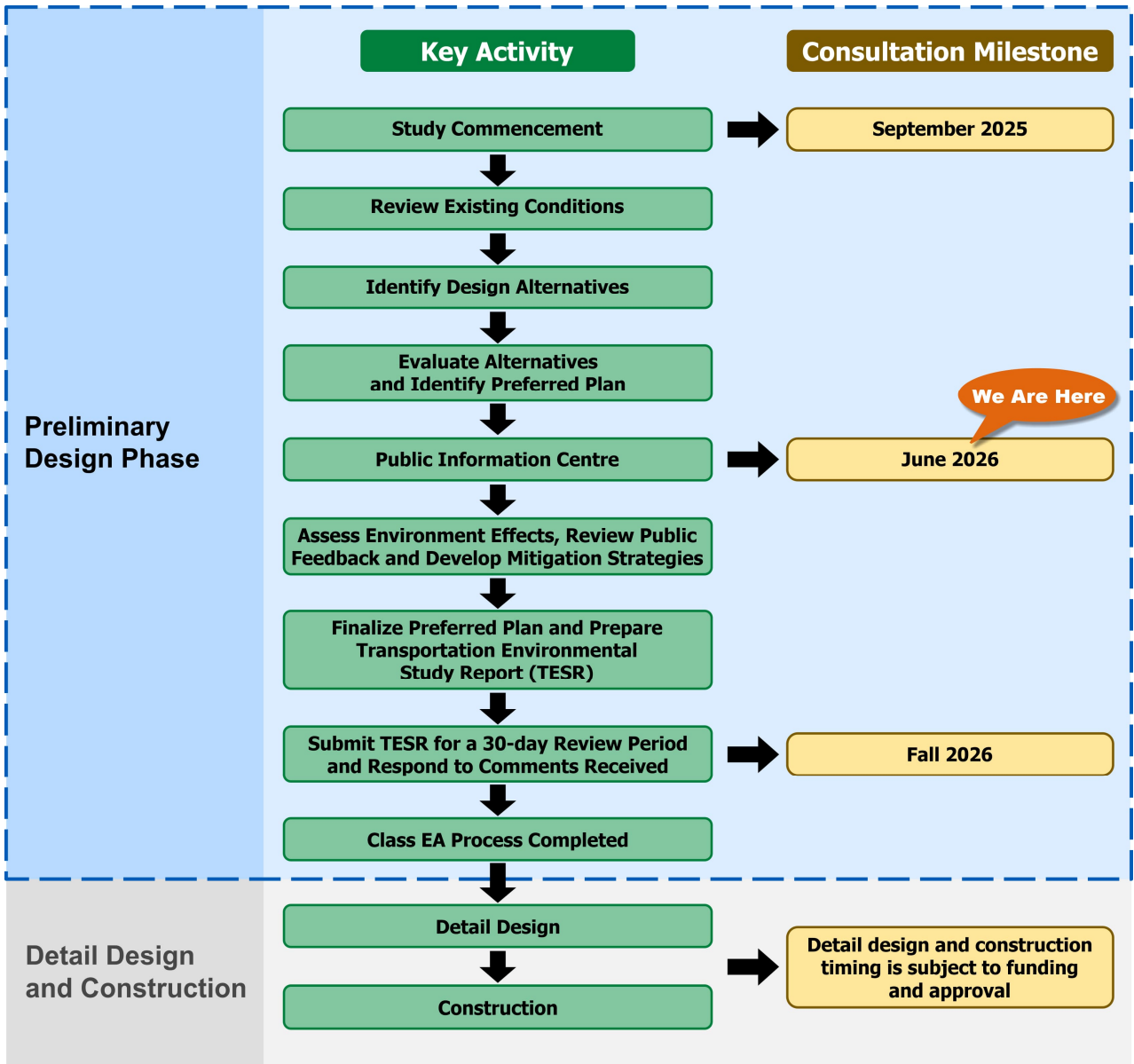


Existing Highway 11/17



Class Environmental Assessment Process

This preliminary design and class EA study is following the approved environmental planning process for Group ‘A’ projects under the *Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Transportation Facilities and Municipal Expressways* (2024).





Overview of Environmental and Engineering Studies

We are completing environmental and engineering studies to understand existing conditions and potential impacts:



Terrestrial Ecosystems



Archaeology



Noise



Fish and Fish Habitat



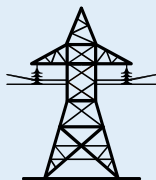
Erosion and Sediment Control



Geotechnical



Drainage



Utilities



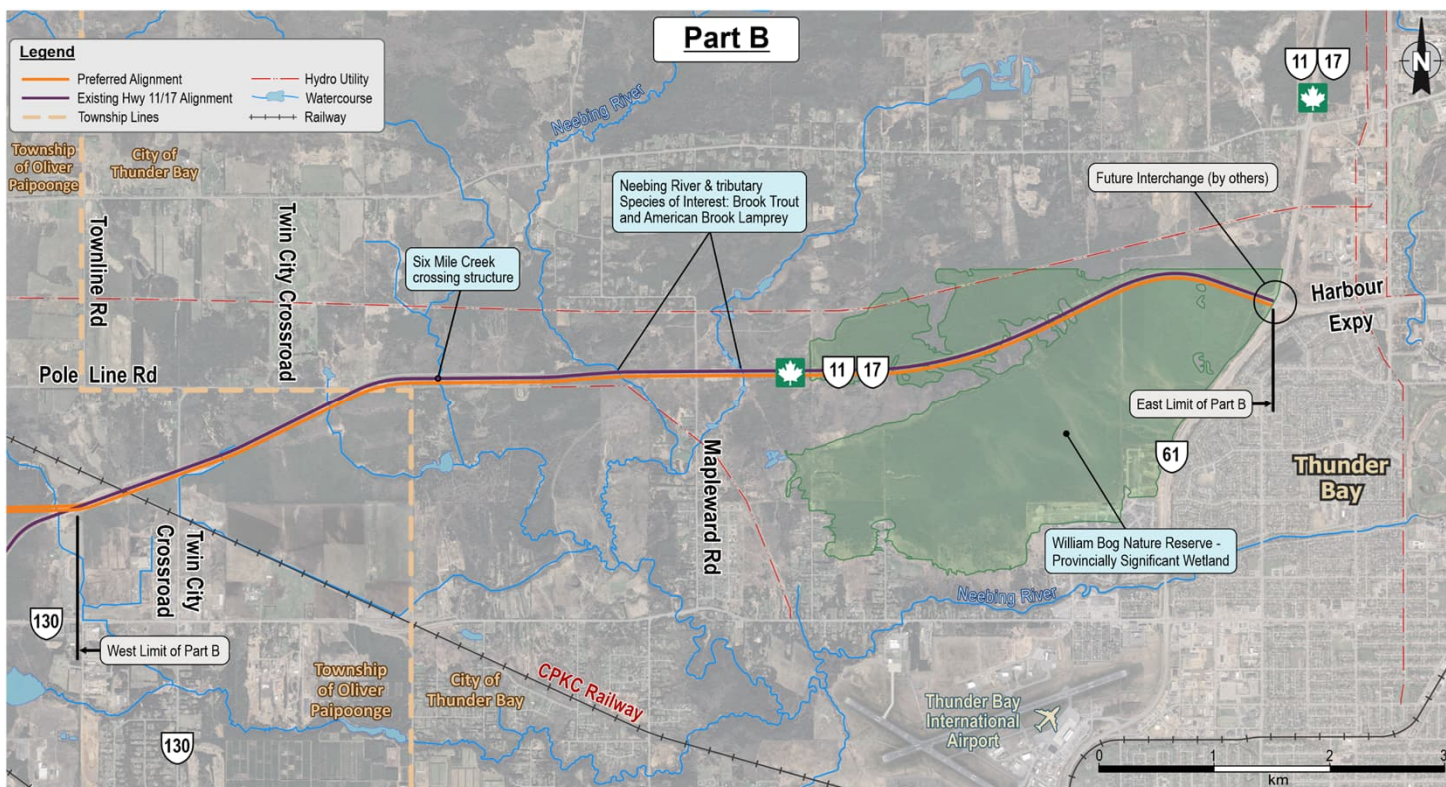
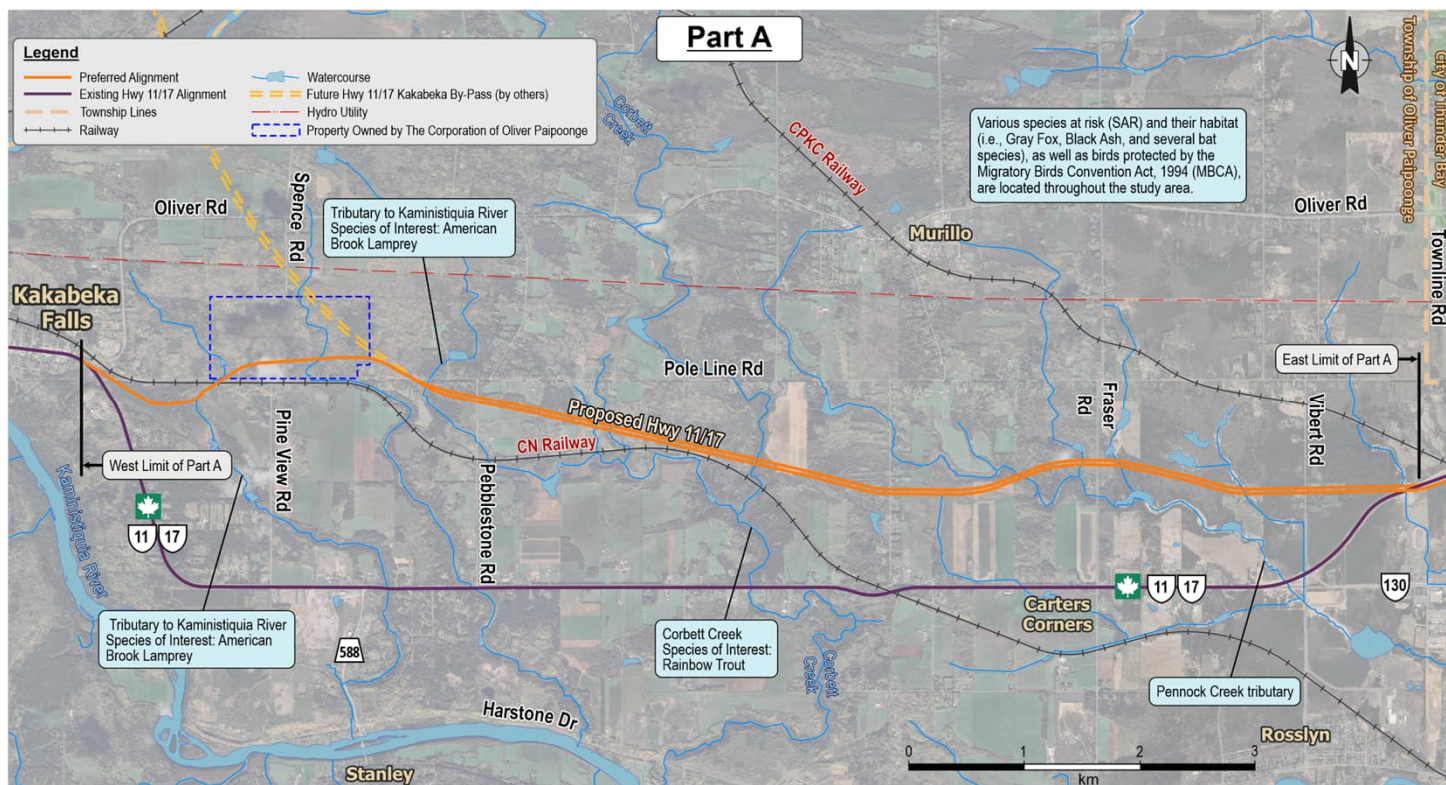
Site Contamination



Traffic

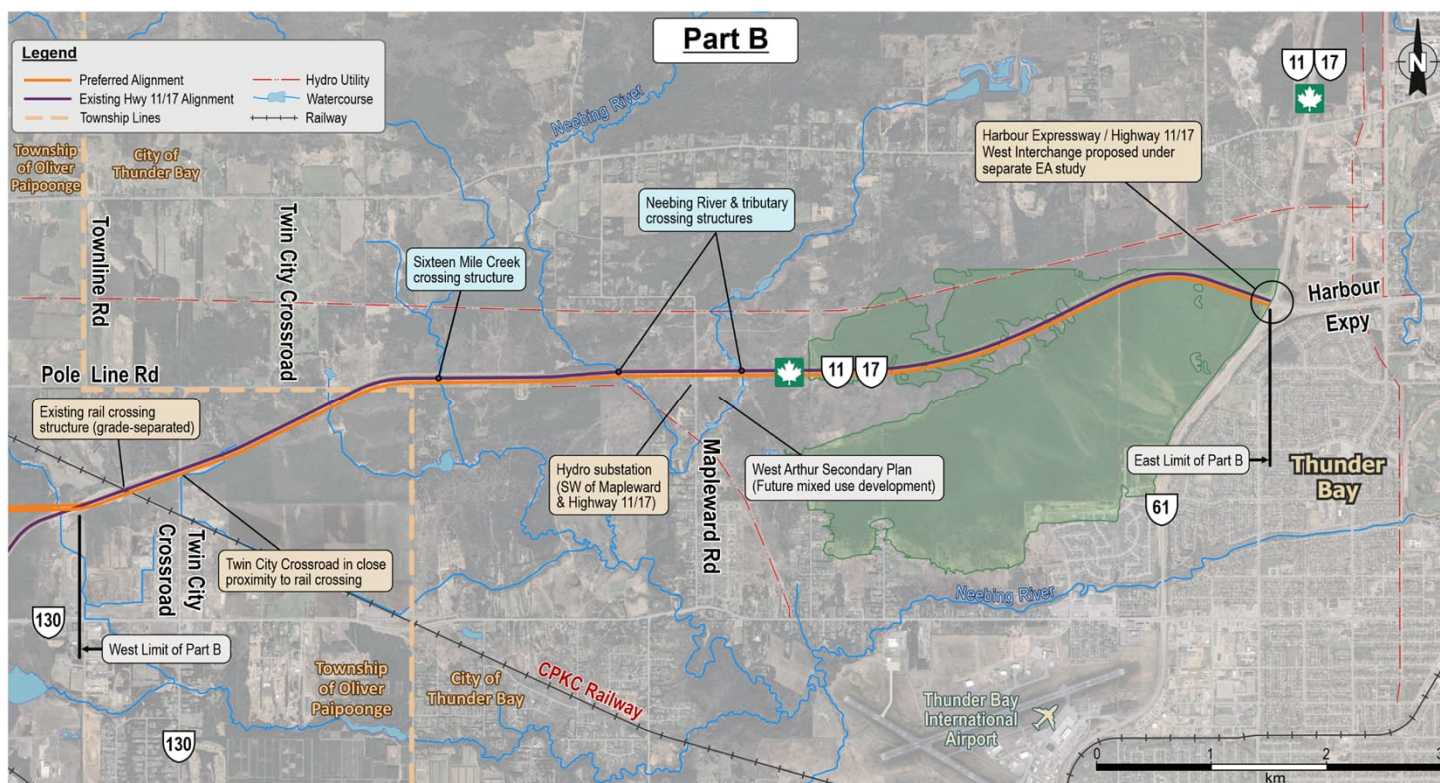
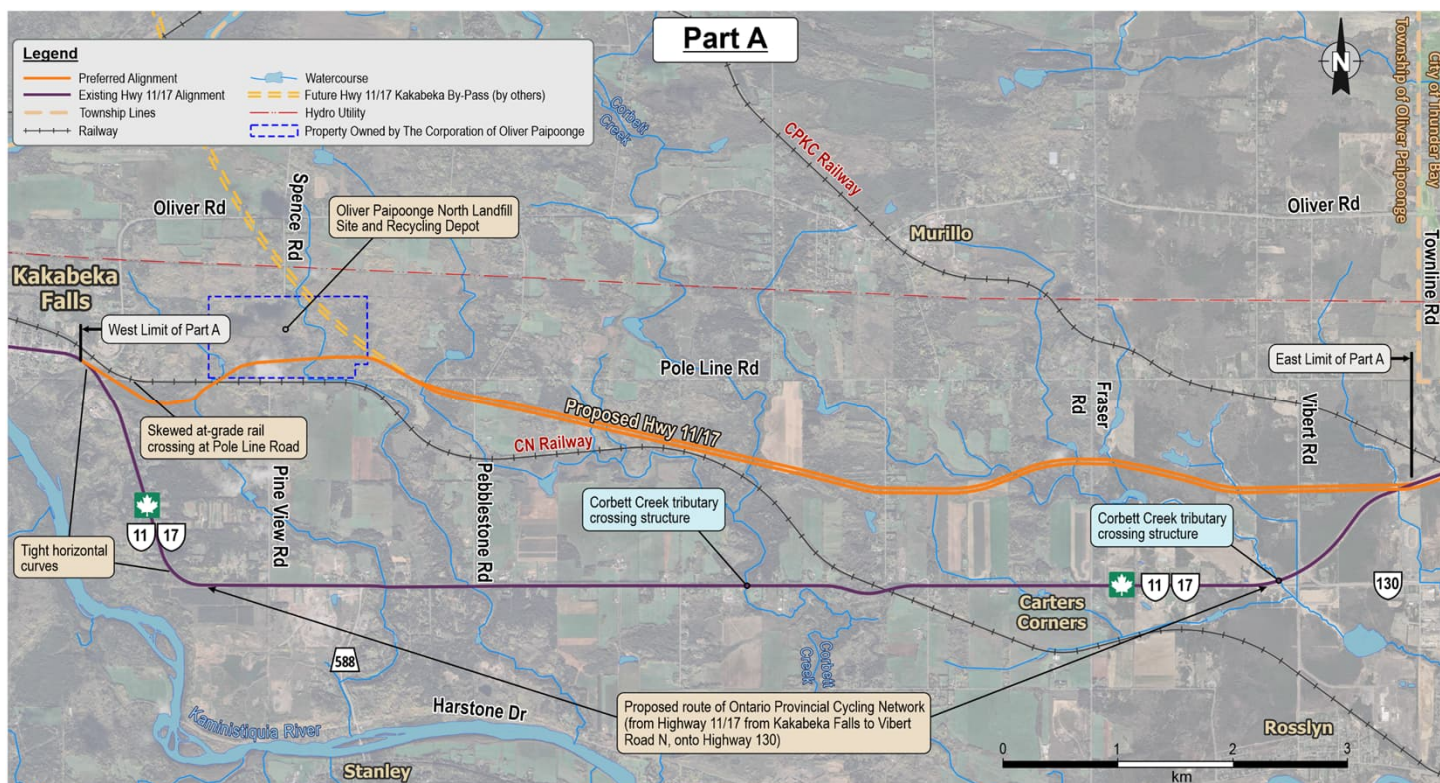


Existing Environmental Conditions





Existing Transportation Conditions





Benefits of Realigning and Four-laning Highway 11/17



Smoother Traffic Flow

Improve traffic flow by reducing delays caused by slower moving vehicles.



Stronger Economy

Improve movement of goods and services, which will have a positive economic impact on the area.



Future-Ready Capacity

Address future travel demand along the highway.



Safer Highway

Reduce risk of collisions and decrease severity of some types of collisions.



Reliable Connection

Providing an alternative connection between Shabaqua Corners to Thunder Bay to ensure a reliable access route.



Project Vision

The intent of this study is to plan and design a future four-lane divided corridor with interchanges to improve traffic flow and connectivity.



Highway 11/17 Designated Corridor



The study builds on the route identified in earlier work.

- The preferred Highway 11/17 route* was identified in earlier studies.
- Development within the corridor has been limited over time to protect space for the future highway
- Property owners are aware of these long-term plans
- The four-lane highway will generally remain within the corridor established in 1979, with adjustments to meet design standards.
- The existing right-of-way will be expanded from the 90 metres established in 1979, to the current standard of 110 metres.
- This study also looks at how the highway connects to local roads, including alternative interchange options based on current and future use.
- Additional land will be required; MTO will work to minimize additional property impacts.

*The previously designated corridor is shown on the preferred plan



Summary of Interchange Alternatives Evaluated

We are looking at how to connect to local roads and developed alternatives for the following interchanges:



- 1 Kakabeka Access
- 2 Fraser Road
- 3 Twin City Crossroad
- 4 Mapleward Road
- 5 Pole Line Road /Pineview Road Configuration

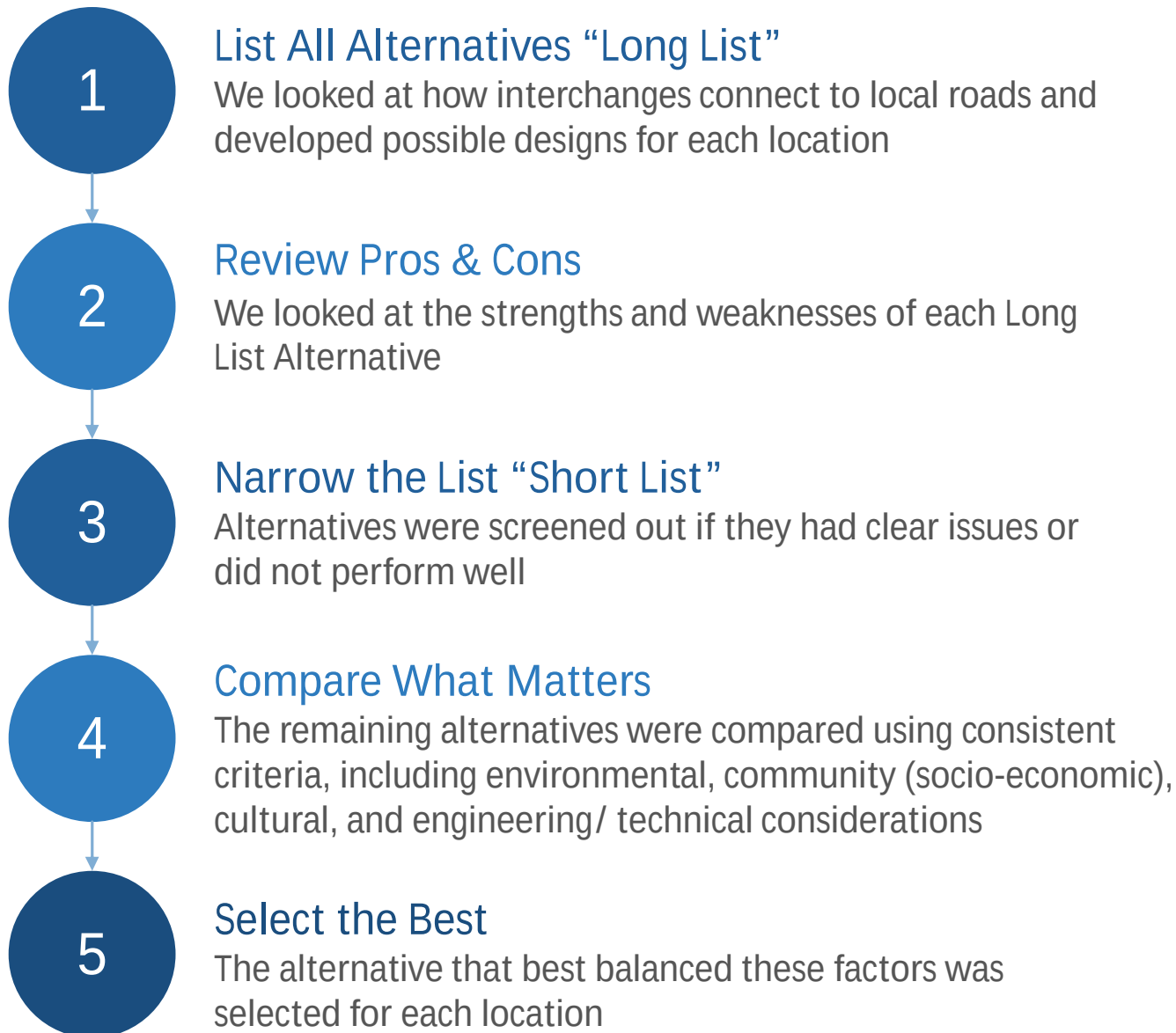


- The evaluation is still ongoing and will be finalized in the Transportation Environmental Study Report (TESR).
- The preferred plan shown reflects what the project team thinks is the best option right now, based on the information available.
- We will continue to review and refine this plan as we complete studies and review feedback from the public and stakeholders.



Interchange Alternatives – Evaluation Process

We followed five steps to find the best design for each interchange location along Highway 11/17:



The full evaluation will be documented in the Transportation Environmental Study Report.



Evaluation Criteria

The following factors have been considered in the evaluation of interchanges / access options:



Socio-Economic Environment

- Number of properties and access points affected
- Number of properties that may need to be relocated
- Potential impacts on nearby homes and other noise-sensitive areas, and ability to reduce noise
- Potential effects on air quality and greenhouse gas emissions



Cultural Environment

- Impacts to known or potential archaeological sites
- Impacts to protected or listed heritage properties (under the *Ontario Heritage Act* or municipal registers)
- Impacts to identified built heritage resources and cultural landscapes
- Overall extent of potential impacts to Indigenous lands



Natural Environment

- Potential impacts to water, wildlife, and natural areas, including species at risk (SAR)
- Effects on sensitive environments and wetlands
- Possible impacts to nearby properties
- Consideration of drainage, erosion, and groundwater
- Effects on Williams Bog



Technical Considerations

- Handles traffic and supports future growth
- Minimizes impacts to major infrastructure
- Limits changes to local travel and emergency access
- Can be constructed efficiently with manageable staging
- Overall cost considerations

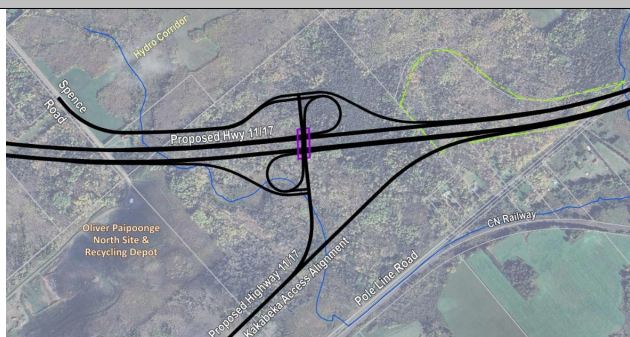


Screening of Long List of Alternatives



Kakabeka Access Interchange

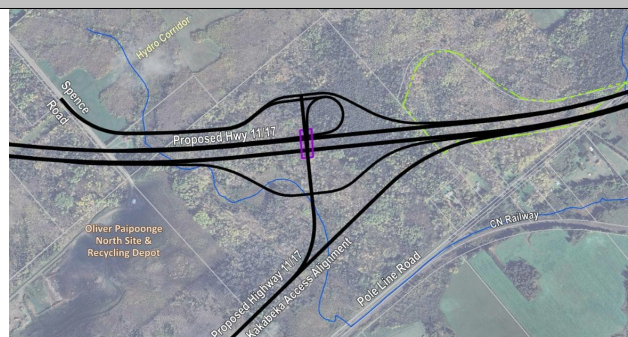
Alternative 1 – Parclo A2



- ✓Accommodates expected traffic, supports future growth, and improves access to Spence Road and nearby connections
- ✗Some existing highway sections would no longer be needed, additional land would be required, and this option may have greater environmental impacts due to more stream crossings

Do not carry forward

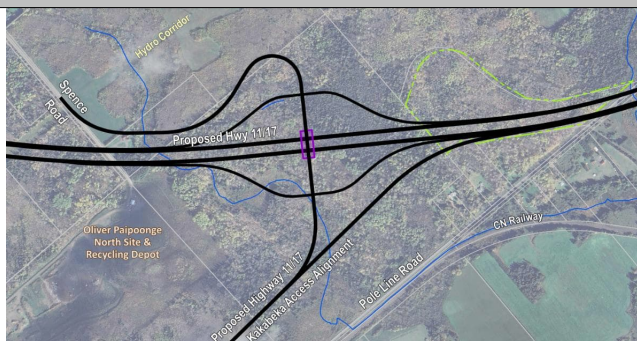
Alternative 2 – Partial Diamond/Parclo A2



- ✓Accommodates expected traffic, supports future growth, and improves access to Spence Road and nearby connections
- ✗Some existing highway sections would be removed, additional land would be needed, and environmental impacts are expected to be moderate compared to the other options

Carry forward

Alternative 3 – Diamond



- ✓Uses intersections instead of ramps, slightly limiting capacity but still meeting traffic needs while improving access to Spence Road
- ✗Some existing highway sections would be removed, additional land would be needed, and environmental impacts are expected to be moderate compared to other options

Carry forward

Alternative 4 – Trumpet A – No Spence Road Connection



- ✓Provides full access in all directions, requires some additional land, and has the lowest environmental impact by avoiding stream crossings
- ✗No direct connection to Spence Road

Carry forward



Short List of Alternatives Evaluation Summary



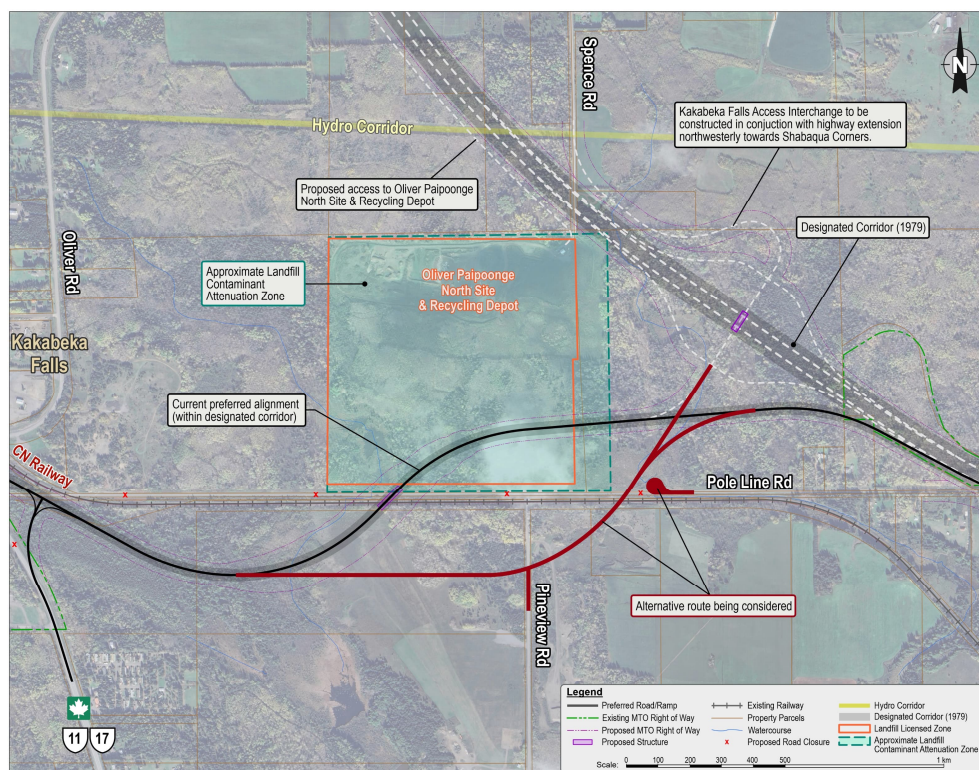
Kakabeka Access Interchange				
Factor / Criteria	Alternative 2 - Partial Diamond / Parclo A2 (with Spence Road connection)	Alternative 3 – Diamond (with Spence Road connection)	Alternative 4 - Trumpet A (with Spence Road connection)	Key Benefit / Disadvantage
Natural Environment				Alternative 4 has the least impact, minimizing effects on wetlands and waterways and requiring the least new roadway and vegetation clearing.
Socio-Economic Environment				Alternatives 2 and 3 have slightly less impact on private property, while all options have similar noise levels and no expected air quality impacts.
Cultural Environment				All alternatives have similar potential impacts on archaeological and cultural heritage resources (there are no known heritage features nearby).
Transportation / Technical Considerations				Alternative 3 meets traffic needs at a lower cost than Alternative 2 and allows for future expansion, with a simpler design that reduces maintenance compared to Alternative 4.
Recommendation				Preferred Alternative: Alternative 3 – Diamond (with Spence Road connection) Provides sufficient capacity at a lower cost, supports future expansion, uses a simpler perpendicular design for easier construction and maintenance, and limits impacts to private property, with only minor environmental differences that can be mitigated.

Legend	
	Best performing alternatives
	Between best to moderate performing alternatives
	Moderate performing alternatives
	Between moderate to least performing alternatives
	Least performing alternatives



Kakabeka Falls Access Road

- The proposed two-lane access road from Highway 11/17 to Kakabeka Falls follows a route selected through a public process in the 1970s. Part of this route passes through the landfill buffer area (known as a contamination attenuation zone, or CAZ).
- Based on the work completed to date, MTO expects the road can be designed so it does not interfere with the municipality's ability to use or expand the landfill.
- In response to concerns, MTO is also reviewing a route that avoids the landfill buffer area. This option would impact additional private properties; further study is needed to fully understand this and other impacts.
- MTO will continue consultation and evaluation of both alternatives. The preferred alternative will be identified in the study report, which will be available for public review and comment.

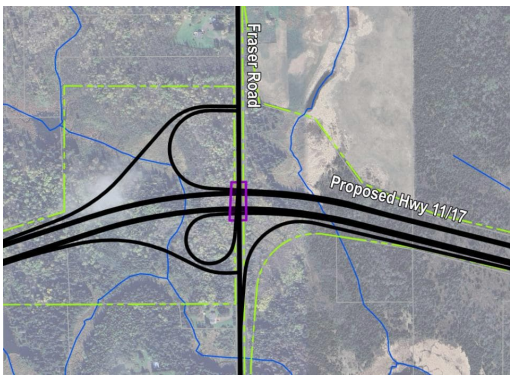
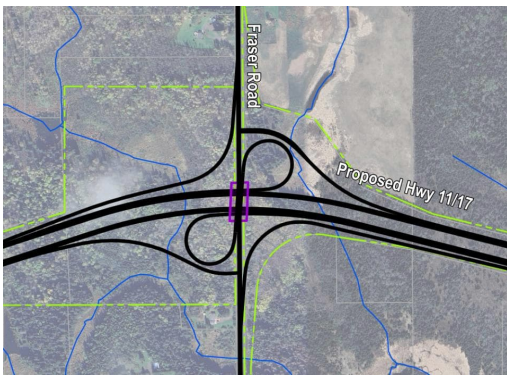
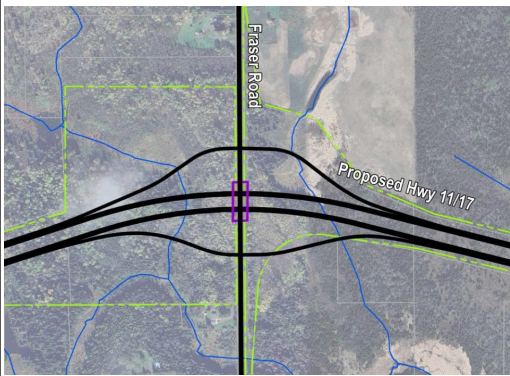


This figure shows an alternative to the previously designated access road for Kakabeka Falls



Screening of Long List of Alternatives



Fraser Road Interchange		
Alternative 1 – Parclo AB	Alternative 2 – Parclo A4	Alternative 3 – Diamond
		
✓ Handles expected traffic while requiring minimal additional land beyond the existing highway corridor ✗ Limited ability to support future growth, less effective for traffic flow, greater environmental impact, and higher cost due to larger structures	✓ Can be built in stages as traffic grows, provides efficient traffic flow, and requires minimal additional land ✗ Greater environmental impact and higher costs due to larger structures	✓ Meets traffic needs, has the lowest environmental impact, and is the most cost-effective option ✗ Limited ability to support future growth, less efficient for traffic flow, and requires additional land
Do not carry forward	Carry forward	Carry forward



Short List of Alternatives Evaluation Summary



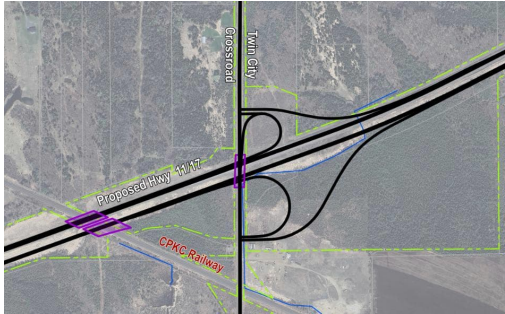
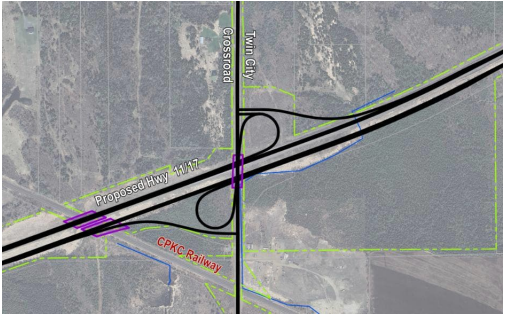
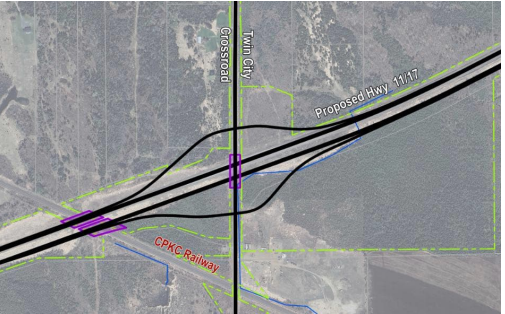
Fraser Road Interchange			
Factor / Criteria	Alternative 2 - Parclo A4	Alternative 3 – Diamond	Key Benefit / Disadvantage
Natural Environment			Alternative 3 has lower impacts on wetlands, waterbodies and wildlife habitat compared to Alternative 2, reducing potential disturbance and the need for erosion and sediment control measures.
Socio-Economic Environment			Alternative 2 has slightly less impact on private property, while both options have similar noise and air quality effects.
Cultural Environment			Both alternatives have similar potential impacts on archaeological resources and Indigenous lands (there are no known heritage features nearby).
Transportation / Technical Considerations			Alternative 2 offers better traffic operations and supports future growth, although the cost is higher than Alternative 3.
Recommendation			Preferred Alternative: Alternative 2 - Parclo A4 Higher cost, but provides better traffic operations, supports future growth, and reduces impacts to private property; environmental differences are limited and can be mitigated.

Legend	
	Best performing alternatives
	Between best to moderate performing alternatives
	Moderate performing alternatives
	Between moderate to least performing alternatives
	Least performing alternatives



Screening of Long List of Alternatives



Twin City Crossroad Interchange		
Alternative 1 – Parclo AB	Alternative 2 – Parclo A4 / A2	Alternative 3 – Diamond
 ✓ Meets traffic needs, reduces impacts on nearby properties, and offers a lower-cost solution ✗ Limited ability to support future growth, less efficient traffic flow, and greater environmental impact due to additional stream crossings	 ✓ Can be built in stages as traffic grows, offers efficient traffic flow, and requires less additional land than some options ✗ Greater environmental impact than Alternative 3 due to additional stream crossings, and higher costs from larger structures	 ✓ Meets traffic needs while minimizing environmental impacts by avoiding stream and waterway crossings ✗ Limited ability to support future growth, less efficient traffic flow, requires more land, and has higher costs due to larger structures
Carry forward	Carry forward	Do not carry forward



Short List of Alternatives Evaluation Summary



Twin City Crossroad Interchange			
Factor / Criteria	Alternative 1 - Parclo AB	Alternative 2 - Parclo A2/A4	Key Benefit / Disadvantage
Natural Environment			Alternative 1 reduces impacts on water features and areas of erosion concern compared to Alternative 2; although it affects more vegetation and wildlife habitat, these impacts are outweighed by the benefits to water resources.
Socio-Economic Environment			Both alternatives have similar impacts on private properties, noise levels, and air quality.
Cultural Environment			Both alternatives have similar potential impacts on archaeological resources and Indigenous lands (there are no known heritage features nearby).
Transportation / Technical Considerations			Alternative 2 has a higher cost, it provides better traffic operations and supports future growth, although the cost is higher than Alternative 1.
Recommendation			Preferred Alternative: Alternative 2 - Parclo A2/A4 Higher cost, but provides better traffic operations and supports future growth (Parclo A4), with reduced impacts to vegetation and wildlife habitat; while it affects more water features, these impacts can be mitigated.

Legend	
	Best performing alternatives
	Between best to moderate performing alternatives
	Moderate performing alternatives
	Between moderate to least performing alternatives
	Least performing alternatives

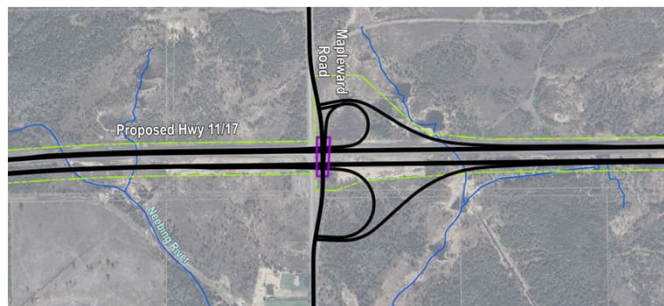


Screening of Long List of Alternatives



Mapleward Road Interchange

Alternative 1 – Parclo AB

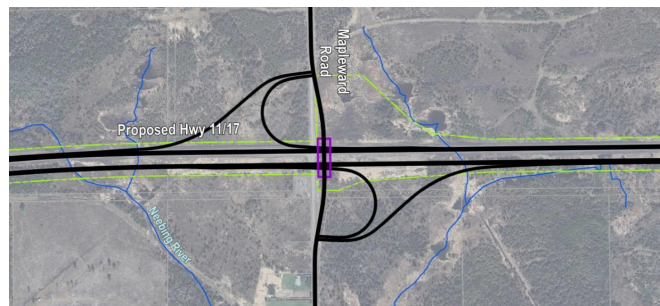


✓ Meets traffic needs and future growth from development of the West Arthur Secondary Plan area, requires less additional land than some options, and is expected to have lower impacts on archaeological resources

✗ Less efficient traffic flow, greater environmental impact, and higher cost

Carry forward

Alternative 2 – Parclo B2

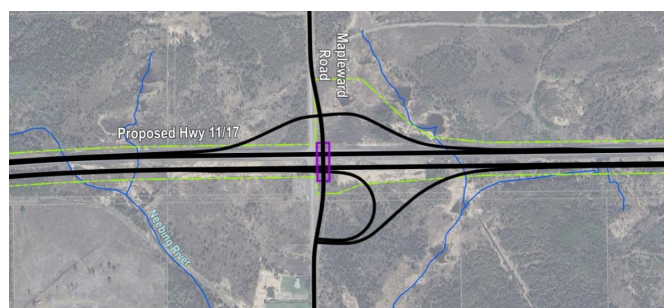


✓ Lower cost (similar for Alternatives 2 and 3).

✗ Less effective for traffic flow, requires the most additional land, has greater environmental impacts, and poses the highest potential impact on archaeological resources

Do not carry forward

Alternative 3 – Partial Diamond North side / Parclo B Southeast

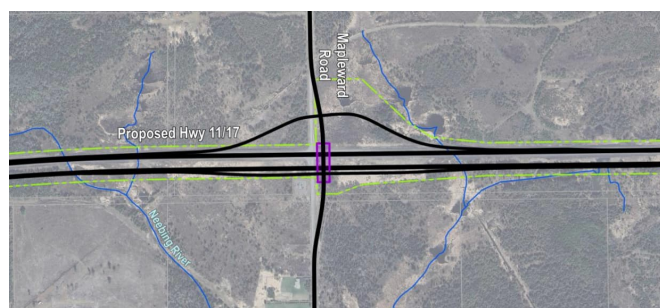


✓ Expected to have lower impacts on archaeological resources and is a lower-cost option, similar to other alternatives

✗ Limited ability to support future growth, requires more additional land than some options, and has greater environmental impacts

Carry forward

Alternative 4 – Diamond



✓ Best supports future road connections, requires less land, has the lowest environmental impact, and is expected to reduce impacts on archaeological resources

✗ Limited ability to support future growth, higher cost, and increased construction risk due to nearby infrastructure

Carry forward



Short List of Alternatives Evaluation Summary



Mapleward Road Interchange				
Factor / Criteria	Alternative 1 - Parclo AB	Alternative 3 - Partial Diamond / Parclo B	Alternative 4 - Small Diamond	Key Benefit / Disadvantage
Natural Environment				Alternative 4 reduces impacts on water features while keeping vegetation clearing similar to other options.
Socio-Economic Environment				Alternative 4 impacts slightly less private property, while all options have similar noise levels and no expected air quality impacts.
Cultural Environment				Alternative 4 has a smaller impact near the core area of the Cummins archaeological site; all options have similar potential impacts on archaeological, and Indigenous resources (there are no known nearby heritage features nearby).
Transportation / Technical Considerations				Alternatives 1 and 4 both offer benefits—Alternative 1 provides higher capacity, while Alternative 4 has a simpler ramp design with adequate capacity, though it involves higher construction complexity and cost
Recommendation				Preferred Alternative: Alternative 4 - Small Diamond Alternative 4 is preferred, as it has the smallest overall footprint, resulting in reduced impacts to private property, lower archaeological potential, and fewer impacts to water features

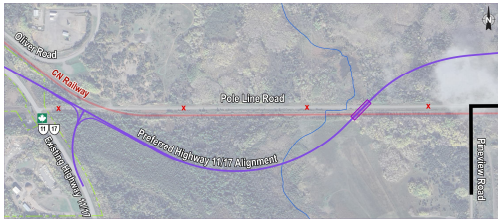
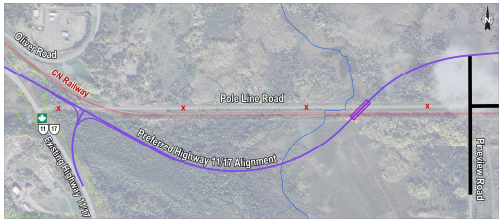
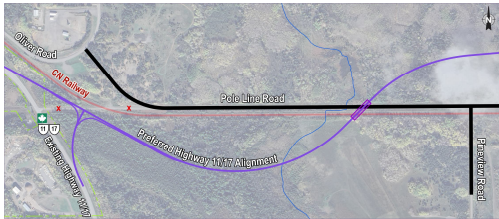
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	Moderate performing alternatives
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	Least performing alternatives

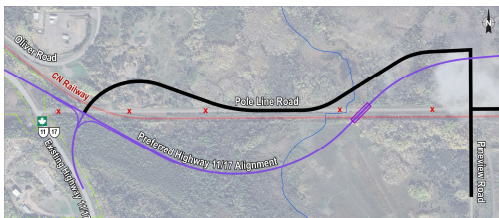


Screening of Long List of Alternatives



Pole Line Road /Pineview Road Configuration

Alternative 1 – Close Pole Line west of Pineview Road	Alternative 2 – Close Pole Line Road & Extend Pineview Road (at-grade intersection with Highway 11/17)	Alternative 3 – Connect Pole Line Road to Oliver Road
		
✓ Provides efficient traffic flow, requires no additional land, has the lowest environmental impact, and is the most cost-effective option ✗ Significantly affects local access, requiring a detour of about 3 km for east–west travel	✓ Maintains existing access via Pineview Road, requires no additional land, has lower environmental impact, and is a cost-effective option ✗ Increased potential for conflicts due to an additional intersection at Highway 11/17 and Pineview Road	✓ Eliminates the need for a rail crossing, avoids impacts to the nearby landfill, and reduces overall environmental effects ✗ Adds a new intersection, changes travel patterns with longer trips, may affect nearby properties, and increases costs
Carry forward	Carry forward	Carry forward

Alternative 4 – Extend Pineview Road (at-grade intersection), Realign Pole Line Road north of highway and connect to Oliver Road	Alternative 5 – Connect Pole Line Road to Highway 11/17	Alternative 6 – Extend Pineview Road (at-grade intersection), Realign Pole Line Road north of highway and connect to Highway 11/17
		
✓ Eliminates crossing of Pole Line Road with CN Rail. ✗ Adds new intersections that may affect traffic flow, changes travel patterns, impacts nearby properties (including the landfill area), and increases environmental impacts and costs	✓ Improves rail crossing with a better alignment, maintains local travel, and reduces impacts to nearby areas and the environment ✗ May affect nearby properties and increase costs due to road changes, a longer structure, and rail crossing relocation	✓ Improves rail crossing at Pole Line Road and better maintains existing travel patterns ✗ Adds another intersection on Highway 11/17, increasing potential for traffic conflicts, impacts nearby properties (including the landfill area), and results in higher environmental impacts and costs
Do not carry forward	Carry forward	Do not carry forward



Short List of Alternatives Evaluation Summary



Pole Line Road /Pineview Road Configuration

Factor / Criteria	Alternative 1 - Close Pole Line west of Pineview Rd	Alternative 2 - Close Pole Line Rd & Extend Pineview Rd	Alternative 3 - Connect Pole Line Rd to Oliver Rd	Alternative 5 - Connect Pole Line Rd to Highway 11/17	Key Benefit / Disadvantage
Natural Environment	●	◐	◑	◒	Alternative 1 avoids negative impacts, minimizes disturbance, protects drainage, and offers stormwater management benefits.
Socio-Economic Environment	●	●	◐	◑	Alternatives 1 and 2 avoid additional impacts to private properties and have lower noise impacts than other options.
Cultural Environment	●	◐	◑	◒	Alternative 1 is preferred because it involves little to no ground disturbance and therefore has the least potential archaeological impact and least potential impact to Indigenous Lands.
Transportation / Technical Considerations	●	◐	◑	◒	Although Alternative 1 requires the most out-of-way travel, traffic volumes in the area are relatively low and this alternative provides significantly better operations than the other alternatives.
Recommendation	✓	✗	✗	✗	Preferred Alternative: Alternative 1 - Close Pole Line west of Pineview Rd Since it proposes to close Pole Line Road, it does not impact any private property, and it minimizes potential archaeological impact, potential to impact Indigenous land and environmental impact.

Legend	
●	Best performing alternatives
◐	Between best to moderate performing alternatives
◑	Moderate performing alternatives
◒	Between moderate to least performing alternatives
○	Least performing alternatives



Summary of the Proposed Improvements

Highway Improvements



- New four-lane alignment of Highway 11/17 from Kakabeka Falls Access interchange to east of Vibert Road, within the 1979 designated corridor.
- Twinning of Highway 11/17 from east of Vibert Road to Thunder Bay Expressway, south of the existing highway.
- New two-lane connection road from Kakabeka Falls access interchange and Kakabeka Falls, within the 1979 designated corridor.
- To meet current requirements, some additional land will be needed to increase the existing right-of-way from the 90 metres established in 1979, to the current standard of 110 metres.

Road Closures



- Wing Road (at new Highway 11/17)
- Vibert Road (at new Highway 11/17)
- Sections of Poleline Road (west end, within Part A)

Interchanges



- Kakabeka Falls access
- Fraser Road
- Twin City Crossroad
- Mapleward Road

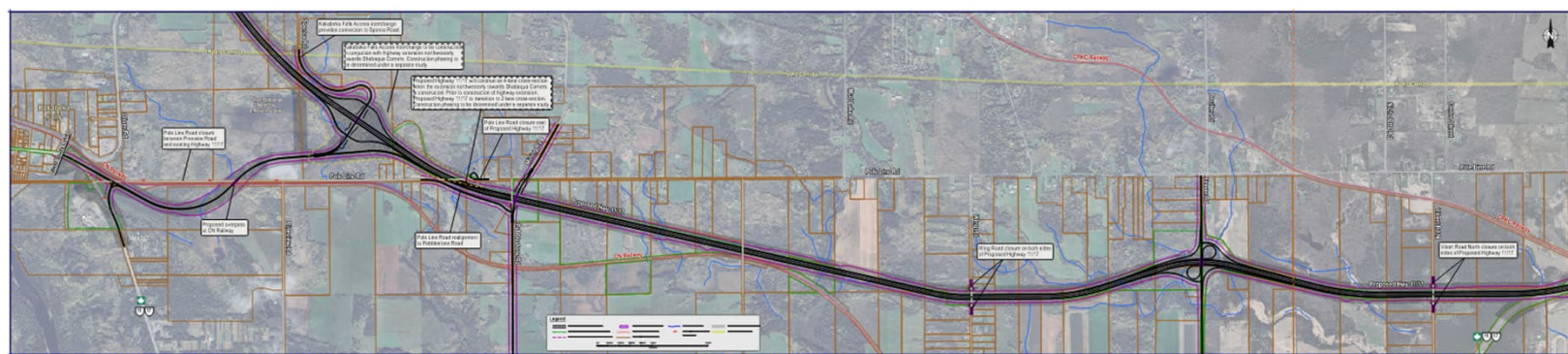
Flyovers



- CN Rail
- Pebblestone / Mining Road

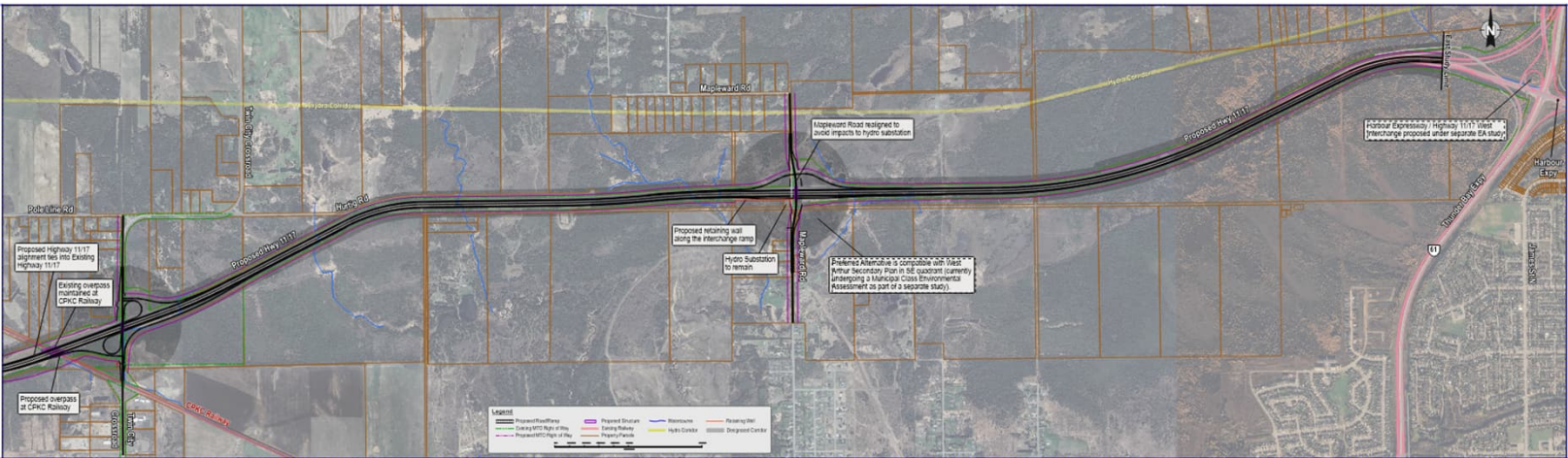
- The evaluation is still ongoing and will be finalized in the Transportation Environmental Study Report (TESR).
- The preferred plan shown reflects what the project team thinks is the best option right now, based on the information available.
- We will continue to review and refine this plan as we complete studies and review feedback from the public and stakeholders.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE – Part A





PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE – Part B





Anticipated Impacts and Proposed Mitigation Measures

The environmental factors anticipated to be impacted and proposed mitigation are described below. More details will be provided in the Transportation Environmental Study Report.

Anticipated Impacts	Proposed Mitigation Measures
Terrestrial Environment 	• Tree removals will occur outside the sensitive time periods to avoid potential impacts on nesting migratory birds, roosting species at risk bats, and denning gray foxes. • Temporary Erosion and Sediment Control measures will be implemented to protect wetland habitats.
Fish and Fish Habitat Environment 	• Temporary Erosion and Sediment Control Areas will be established around all watercourses prior to construction. • In-water construction will be completed within the permissible in-water works timing window (June 16th to August 31st) of any given year. • Isolation using temporary cofferdams, with fish rescue and relocation are to be completed prior to any in-water works.
Archaeological Assessment 	• A Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment was completed. Further archaeological assessments will be undertaken to meet Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism (MCM) requirements.
Noise 	• A Noise Assessment is currently underway in accordance with the MTO Noise Guide. • MTO's standard mitigation to control construction noise will be implemented during construction.
Access to Side Roads 	• As the proposed highway will be a fully controlled access facility, side road access will be provided at select locations for operational and safety purposes. Property owners will be notified of proposed sideroad closures in advance.
Property 	• MTO will negotiate with individual owners for property purchase in accordance with standard MTO procedures. • Access to private properties will be maintained during construction.
Water Resources 	• Water-taking permit(s), if required, will be obtained from the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) prior to start of construction. • Water well surveys will take place in Detail Design, as required. • Protection of groundwater resources at Williams Bog will be considered during the Detail Design phase.
Traffic Impacts 	• Traffic studies are currently underway including updated traffic data collection to evaluate and identify operational and safety impacts and improvements to be incorporated into the design. In evaluating alternatives, overall traffic operations and impacts to the existing local road network are being considered.
Utilities 	• Utility impacts are anticipated for the proposed improvements and will be identified as part of this study for future relocation.



Next Steps

After this Public Information Centre, we will:



- Review and respond to feedback;
- Complete remaining field work and finalize environmental studies;
- Confirm measures to reduce impacts;
- Refine the preliminary design based on input from Indigenous communities, the public and agencies;
- Plan the order of construction (phasing) —for example, start by building two lanes with intersections, and add more lanes and highway interchanges later;
- Prepare and share the study* report for a 30-day review period (anticipated fall 2026); and
- Following this, the project will move to detailed design and then construction. Timing will depend on funding and approvals.

- The evaluation is still ongoing and will be finalized in the Transportation *Environmental Study Report (TESR).
- The preferred plan shown reflects what the project team thinks is the best option right now, based on the information available.
- We will continue to review and refine this plan as we complete studies and review feedback from the public and stakeholders.



Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Information will be collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. All comments will be maintained on file for use during the study and, with the exception of personal information, may be included in study documentation and become part of the public record.

Contact Information

You are encouraged to contact the Project Team members noted below if you have questions or concerns on the study.

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Please feel free to ask questions and fill out a comment sheet before you leave.
Comments can be left in the comment box provided
or forwarded to the project team by July 18, 2026.

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