

Ministry of Transportation

Northwest Operations
Operations Division
615 South James Street
3rd Floor
Thunder Bay, ON P7E 6P6
Tel: (647) 638-5359
Fax: (807) 473-2165

Ministère des Transports

Opérations nord-ouest
Division des opérations
615, rue James Sud
3^e étage
Thunder Bay (Ontario) P7E 6P6
Tel: (647) 638-5359
Fax: (807) 473-2165



May 7, 2021

Mr. Roger Nesbitt
Chief Administrative Officer
City of Dryden
30 Van Horne Ave
Dryden ON P8N 2A7

mesbitt@dryden.ca

Dear Mr. Nesbitt:

Re: Extension of Highway 502

As you may be aware, the Ministry of Transportation finalized a route Planning Study in 2006 that selected a preferred route to provide better linkage of Highway 502 with Trans Canada Highway 17. This preferred route would extend Highway 502 along Highway 594, Gordon Road and Marguerite Street, terminating at Grand Truck Road in Dryden.

While the ministry owns Highway 594, Gordon Road and Marguerite Street are jointly owned by the City of Dryden and the Ministry of Transportation, with the ministry's portion being administered as a Local Roads Board road. In recent years, there have been concerns raised about the shared administration of this road as well as its very poor condition. The ministry hopes to resolve these issues by moving forward with the planned extension of Highway 502.

In addition to eliminating issues around shared administration, the ministry would also assume full liability for all immediately necessary capital rehabilitation costs (currently estimated at \$400,000 in total), all future maintenance costs, and all costs associated with the railway crossing.

As such, we are seeking your assistance in bringing this issue forward to City Council for their support.

It is likely two questions may be raised by City Council about this assumption. Firstly, the noted Planning Study also included the selection of the preferred route for a Highway 17 bypass north of Dryden. However, this Gordon Road initiative is separate and distinct from the Highway 17 bypass plan. The ministry has no plans to proceed with that bypass at this time, and this initiative will not influence that.

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Secondly, because the assumption of Gordon Road would provide a direct and practical route for highway through-traffic, Duke Street would no longer meet the policy requirements for a Connecting Link designation. While the ministry would eventually need to examine this designation should the assumption proceed, this would not be undertaken until after the assumption process and the needed capital rehabilitation of the route was fully completed. The potential loss of capital funding from the Connecting Link Program would be somewhat offset by being relieved of all costs for Gordon Road. The Connecting Link designation for Highway 17 would not be impacted.

We would like to start a dialogue to explore moving this proposal forward. Ultimately, we are seeking a resolution from the City of Dryden indicating:

The City of Dryden approves of the ministry's proposal to proceed with establishing the new route for Highway 502 along the corridor that was selected as part of the Dryden Area Highway Planning Study.

We would appreciate hearing back from you about this initiative and are willing to address any concerns you may have. Please feel free to reach out to John McClelland at john.mcclelland@ontario.ca for further discussion. We would be willing to address City Council directly if desired.

Sincerely,



Franca Sacchetti
Director

cc Blake Poole, Manager of Public Works, bpoole@dryden.ca