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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Northern Ontario Highway Upgrade Proposal Aims to Unite Canada Safely and Boost the Economy**

Temiskaming Shores, ON – The Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM) is spearheading a major infrastructure proposal (see Appendix A) to improve economic efficiency, safety and national connectivity by calling on the Governments of Canada and Ontario to invest in a transformative upgrade of Northern Ontario’s Highways 11 and 17 — the Trans-Canada Highway — by upgrading to the innovative 2+1 model on those highways.

The plan, aligned with the *Building Canada Act* and Prime Minister Carney’s five-nation-building criteria, outlines a two-phase approach to modernize key segments of the Trans-Canada Highway system:

#### **Phase 1 of 2+1 expansion:**

- Highway 11: North Bay to Cochrane
- Highway 17: Renfrew to Sudbury

#### **Phase 2 of 2+1 expansion:**

- Highway 11: Cochrane to Nipigon
- Highway 11/17: Thunder Bay to Kenora
- Highway 17: Sault Ste. Marie to Sudbury

“This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to invest in infrastructure that promotes enhanced trade between the east and west within Canada. It also focuses on the development of major nation-building projects that will likely involve the transportation of large industrial materials for construction. With a vast land area and diverse geography, an efficient transportation network is crucial for connectivity and facilitating the movement of materials,” stated Danny Whalen, FONOM President.

The 2+1 model, prominent on European highways, features alternating passing lanes, offering a cost-effective and safer alternative to full highway twinning. This model is particularly suited to long-distance routes with moderate traffic volumes, such as those in Northern Ontario.

**Why It Matters:**

- Safety: Reduces head-on collisions and improves traffic flow.
- Economy: Supports Canada's busiest trucking corridors and reduces operational costs.
- Sovereignty: Strengthens internal trade routes and national resilience.
- History: Echoes the original nation-building spirit of the Trans-Canada Highway, first funded during the Great Depression.

"These vital highways, which are linked to much of the country's economic activity, need to be considered for continued expansion beyond their existing two-lane profile. From their early days, they have formed part of Canada's critical national corridor, from playing a foundational role in connecting Canada's frontier communities to enable economic development and assert national sovereignty across the North," noted Pauline Rochefort, Member of Parliament for Nipissing—Timiskaming. "Highways 11 and 17 are more than roads — they are lifelines for communities, commerce, and Canada's future."

The proposal comes as the federal government consults on national interest projects under the *Building Canada Act*, which prioritizes east-west trade, industrial development, and strategic infrastructure.

**Media Contact:**

Danny Whalen  
President, FONOM  
705-622-2479  
[fonom.info@gmail.com](mailto:fonom.info@gmail.com)