

2.0 PROJECT SUMMARY

2.1 PROJECT LOCATION AND HIGHWAY CLASSIFICATION

The Highway 17 study area is located between the Manitoba / Ontario border and the Municipality of Kenora, as shown in **Exhibit 2-1**.

The limits of the project are from the Manitoba / Ontario border 5 km easterly, to 700 m west of Gundy Lake Road (5 km).

Exhibit 2-1: Highway 17 Study Area Location



In this area, Highway 17 is a two-lane highway, and is part of the Trans-Canada Highway. Highway 17 is classified as a rural arterial undivided highway, and has a posted speed limit of 90 km/h.

2.2 STUDY SECTIONS

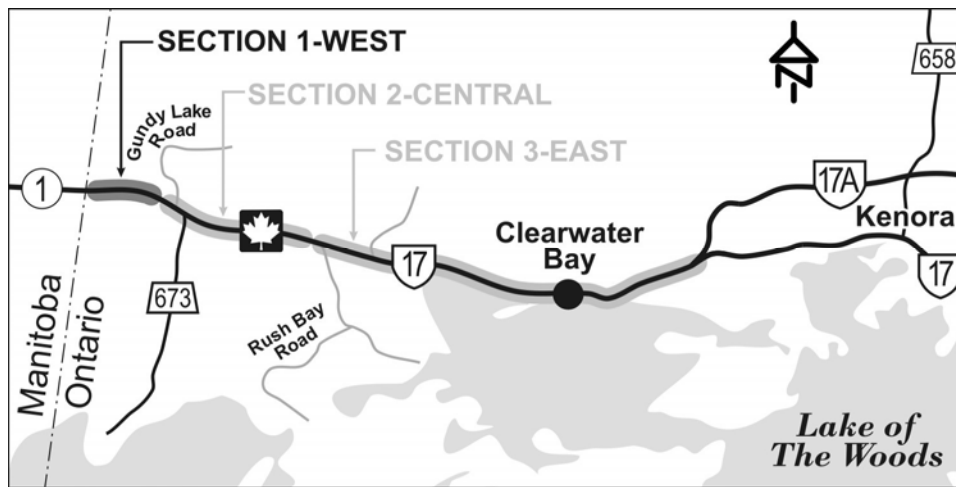
The Highway 17 study area is comprised of the following three project sections, as shown in **Exhibit 2-2**.

Section #1: From the Manitoba / Ontario border 5 km easterly, to 700 m west of Gundy Lake Road (5 km).

Section #2: From 700 m west of Gundy Lake Road 9.8 km easterly, to 100 m west of Rush Bay Road (10 km).

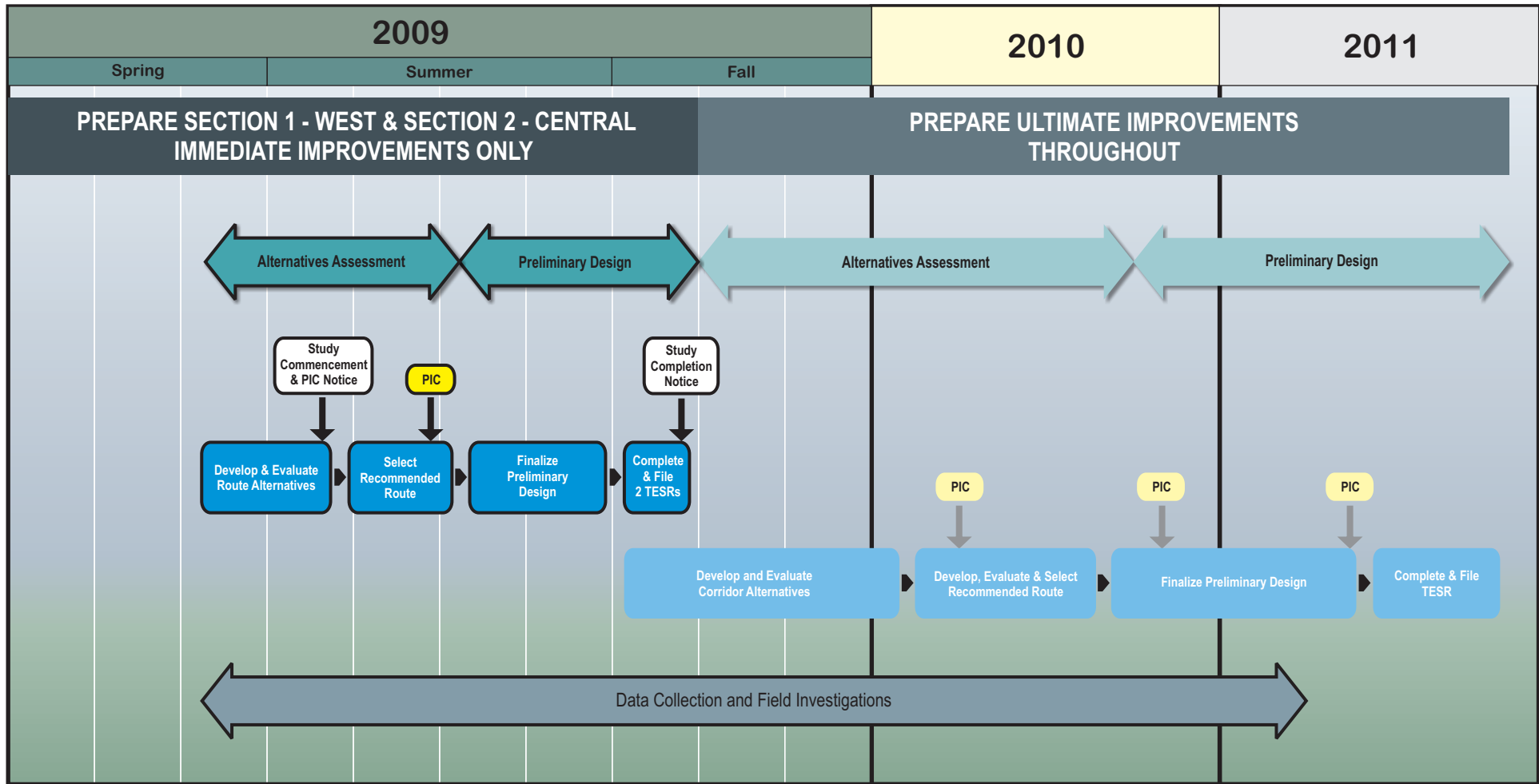
Section #3: From 100 m west of Rush Bay Road easterly to the junction of Highway 17 and Highway 17A (24 km).

Exhibit 2-2: Highway 17 Study Sections



This TESR focuses on the initial improvements for Section 1. Initial improvements for Section 2 are also available for review, but are presented in a different TESR. Initial improvements for Section 3 and ultimate improvements for all three sections will be reviewed in a subsequent Transportation Environmental Study Report. Long range, ultimate improvements will include reviewing options for Highway 17 being further upgraded to a controlled-access highway in the future. **Exhibit 2-3** provides an overview of the Highway 17 process and timelines.

Two TESRs are currently available for review, this one presenting the immediate improvements for Section 1.



TESR - Transportation Environmental Study Report PIC - Public Information Centre



G.W.P. 6053-03-00
 Highway 17 Four-Laning between
 the Manitoba/Ontario Border
 and Gundy Lake Road

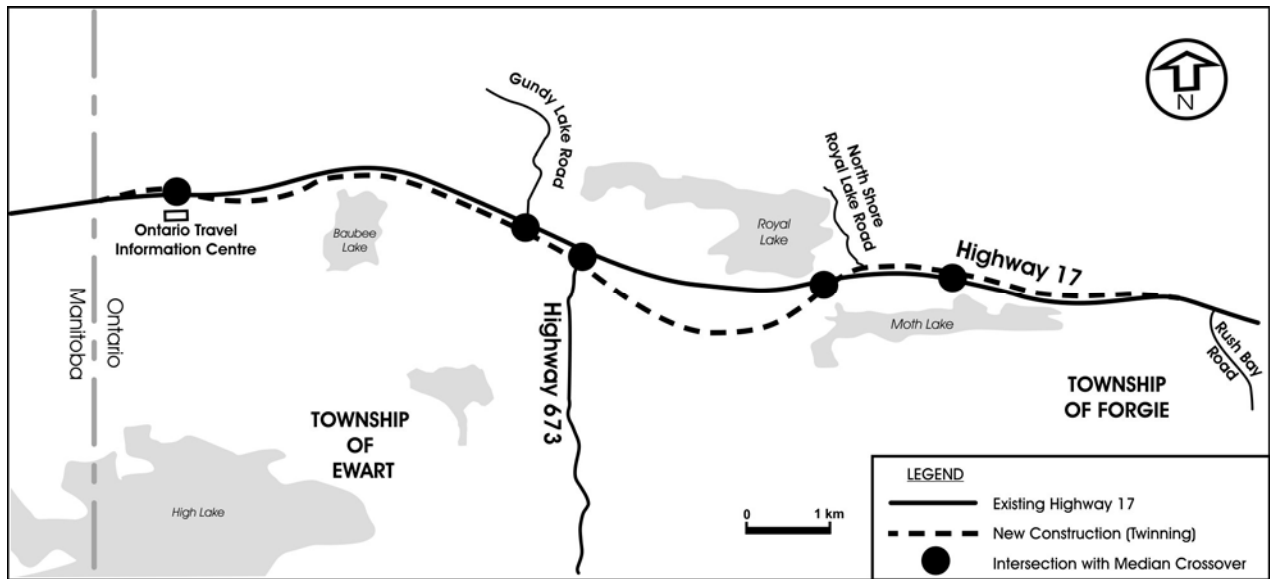
Highway 17 Process and Timelines

EXHIBIT
 2-3

2.3 SELECTED ROUTE

Route alternatives were evaluated based on a comprehensive review and analysis of alternatives for the improvements to Highway 17 within the project limits, and comments received from external agencies and stakeholders. The selected route for both Section 1 and Section 2 is shown in Exhibit 2-4 and described below. In addition, Appendix C contains detailed Preliminary Design Plates of the Selected Route.

Exhibit 2-4: Highway 17 Selected Route



East of the Manitoba border, the existing two-lane Highway 17 transitions to a four-lane divided highway with a 30 m open median. Two new westbound lanes will be constructed on the north side of Highway 17, while the two existing lanes will be used as the eastbound lanes.

The north-side twinning continues approximately 1 km to just east of the existing Ontario Travel Information Centre at which point the twinning transitions to the south; this transition avoids a lengthy crossing of a large swamp to the east. In this section the existing Highway 17 lanes will become the westbound lanes, and the new lanes to the south will be the eastbound lanes.

The south-side twinning continues easterly to the end of the Section 1 project area, where the alignment will extend into the proposed south-side twinning at the west limit of Section 2.

2.3.1 Related/Adjacent Studies and Projects

Improvements to Highway 17 Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Transportation Facilities Group 'B' Project (2006) – Between the Ontario/Manitoba boundary and Rush Bay Road (Contract 2008-6011, G.W.P. 48-96-00)

A Class EA (EA) study was completed in 2006 for improvements of Highway 17 from the Manitoba / Ontario border 16 km easterly. The original proposed improvements included the following:

- Improvements to the vertical alignment;
- New snow plough turnarounds;
- Left and right turn lanes at Gundy Lake Road, Highway 673/Shoal Lake Road, Royal Lake Road, and Rush Bay Road;
- Drainage improvements including ditching and culvert replacements, as required;
- Guide rail replacement;
- Pavement rehabilitation for the length of the project.

Passing lanes were proposed in the study area, and were partially constructed; however, in light of the current study, these features were not completed. This project was completed by the time of the submission of this TESR.

Manitoba Trans-Canada Highway

At the Manitoba/Ontario border, Manitoba's Highway 1 (part of the Trans-Canada Highway) has a two-lane cross section that transitions to a four-lane cross section approximately 60 m west of the border, in order to accommodate a median truck inspection station. Immediately to the west of the inspection station, the highway transitions back to two lanes for approximately 14 km. West of this, Highway 1 is a four-lane divided highway.

Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation (MIT) have stated that they intend to four-lane Highway 1 to the Manitoba/Ontario border; however, a firm timeline for this work has not been presented.

If project scheduling permits, MTO is prepared to coordinate with the Province of Manitoba in a harmonized approach to border area improvements.