

## 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 700 m west of Gundy Lake Road 9.8 km easterly, to 100 m west of Rush Bay Road (10 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

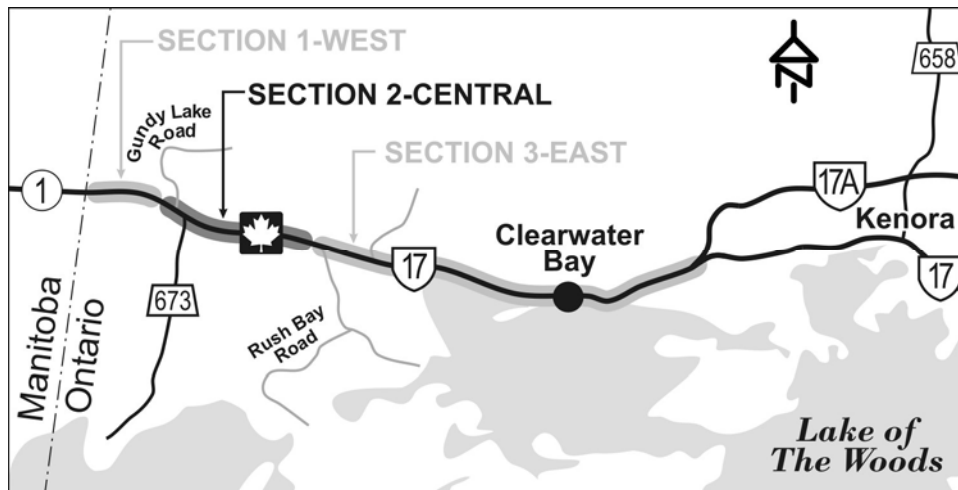
The Highway 17 study area is comprised of the following three project sections, as shown in **Exhibit 2-2**.

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).

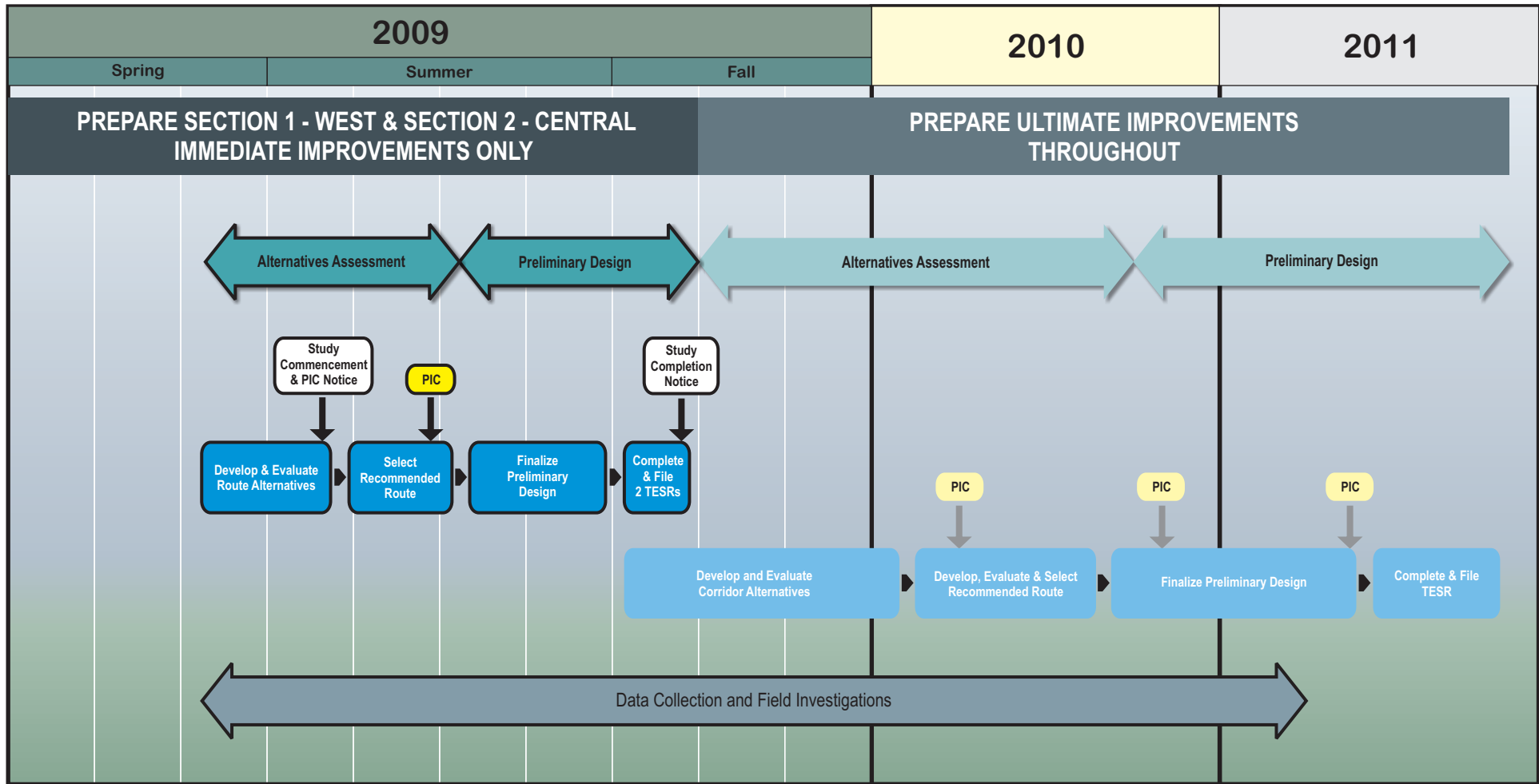
Section #3: From 100 m west of Rush Bay Road easterly to the junction of Highway 17 and Highway 17A (24 km).

**Exhibit 2-2: Highway 17 Study Sections**



This TESR focuses on the initial improvements for Section 2. Initial improvements for Section 1 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 2.



TESR - Transportation Environmental Study Report PIC - Public Information Centre



G.W.P. 6053-03-00  
 Highway 17 Four-Laning between  
 Gundy Lake Road and Rush Bay Road

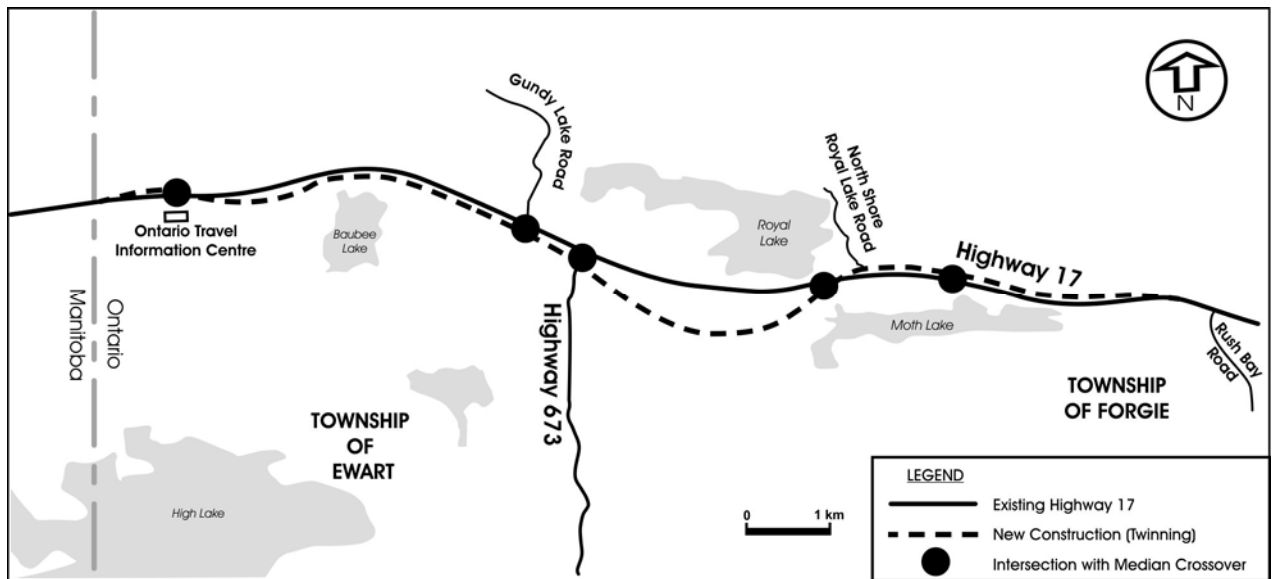
Highway 17 Process and Timelines

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**



At the west limit of Section 2, west of Gundy Lake Road, the selected route is a four-lane divided highway with a 30 m open median. The selected route extends from the proposed south-side twinning at the east limit of Section 1; at this point the newly constructed lanes will be the eastbound lanes, while the existing lanes will accommodate westbound travel.

The south-side twinning continues easterly to east of Highway 673 (Shoal Lake Road), at which point the alignment diverts to the south of the existing Highway 17 alignment. The diversion continues for approximately 4 km and curves back to the north before rejoining the existing Highway 17 alignment. The proposed diversion allows the selected route to avoid impacts to an existing watercourse between Moth Lake and Royal Lake, and to private properties on Royal Lake.

The proposed diversion can accommodate both east and westbound lanes; however, it is recommended that only the eastbound lanes of the diversion be constructed initially, with the existing Highway 17 lanes being used for westbound travel. The maximum separation between the proposed eastbound lanes and the existing Highway 17 lanes is approximately 600 m.

Where the diversion rejoins the existing Highway 17 alignment, the selected route transitions to the north side of the existing highway. At the east end of Moth Lake, an

approximately 700 m section of the existing highway will be reconstructed, in order to improve horizontal and vertical alignments.

The selected route continues westerly to approximately 1 km west of Rush Bay Road, where the highway transitions back to the existing cross-section at the east 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 and a snow plough turnaround 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.