

January 27, 2026

The Right Honourable Mark Carney
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

SENT BY EMAIL: pm@pm.gc.ca

Subject: A Nation-Building Opportunity for Highways 11 & 17; and a Clear Federal Signal

Dear Prime Minister,

On behalf of the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM), I am writing to follow up on our delegation meetings in Ottawa earlier this winter, where representatives from Northern Ontario municipalities met with members of your team, including Zachary Nixon, to discuss the growing challenges facing our 110 member municipalities.

Chief among those challenges is the urgent need to modernize Highways 11 and 17, Ontario's northern Trans-Canada corridors, through a combination of four-laning and the proven 2+1 highway model.

During our Ottawa meetings, we heard a consistent and encouraging message: **if the Province of Ontario were to formally advance this project as a priority, the Government of Canada would be prepared to participate at a 50-per-cent funding level.** That clarity matters deeply to Northern communities.

At present, however, a trust gap remains. The Province has indicated hesitation to proceed without a clear, public federal commitment. In short, Ontario needs to hear plainly and publicly that Ottawa is ready to be an equal partner.

We are therefore respectfully urging you to make that commitment explicit.

This is not an abstract policy discussion. People are dying on these highways. Families, truck drivers, and first responders face unacceptable risk every day on corridors that carry **more than \$200 million in goods daily**, serve as the primary access route to the Ring of Fire, and are critical infrastructure for national defence, emergency response, and continental supply chains.

Highway 11, in particular, is increasingly indispensable: a more reliable east-west trade corridor, less vulnerable to weather disruptions, and central to Canada's critical minerals, forestry, agriculture, and energy future. It is also essential to Canada's internal resilience at a time when secure domestic trade routes matter more than ever.

Your government's Building Canada Act and nation-building criteria speak directly to this moment.

Upgrading Highways 11 and 17 meets every test: safety, economic growth, national security, Indigenous participation, climate resilience, and shovel-ready execution. Ontario has already taken important steps with its planned 2+1 pilot. What is now required is a clear federal signal to unlock full provincial participation.

Prime Minister, if you were to publicly state that the Government of Canada is prepared to invest 50-cent dollars in this corridor once Ontario brings it forward, it would be heard loudly and clearly at Queen's Park and across Northern Ontario.

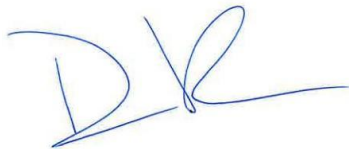
Should you wish to do so, FONOM would welcome the opportunity to make that announcement at our 2026 FONOM Conference in Timmins, alongside Premier Doug Ford and in the heart of the region most directly affected. It would be a powerful nation-building moment, rooted in partnership, safety, and confidence in Canada's future.

Northern Ontarians are not asking for special treatment; we are asking for equal treatment on a national highway that has always been vital to this country's cohesion and prosperity.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further at your convenience and remain ready to work with your office, the Province of Ontario, and federal partners to advance this critical project.

Thank you for your leadership and for your continued attention to the needs of Northern communities.

Respectfully,



Dave Plourde
President, FONOM

Cc'd Premier Doug Ford
Honourable Steven MacKinnon
Honourable Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria
Honourable Patty Hajdu