



United Counties of
Stormont Dundas Glengarry
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June 8th, 2022

Hon. Caroline Mulroney
Minister of Transportation
777 Bay Street, 5th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1Z8

Via email to caroline.mulroney@ontario.ca

Reference: The United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry (SDG), Comments on the Province's Draft Transportation Plan for Eastern Ontario

Dear Minister Mulroney:

It was very nice meeting you again several weeks ago in Prescott-Russell when the provincial plan to increase highway capacity in the National Capital region was unveiled. I hope you will recall that we met at the AMO conference in Ottawa in 2019 when I was part of our County delegation to discuss the expansion plans for Highway 138. Unfortunately, since that time, the province has taken no action to improve the safety of Highway 138, and the death toll continues to mount. That is why I am writing to you today.

The United Counties of SDG has had the opportunity to review and consider the *Draft Transportation Plan for Eastern Ontario*. While SDG Council supports many of the actions contained within this Plan, our Council was **extremely disappointed to note that improvements to Highway 138 were not identified** as a provincial priority, particularly given that this project aligns well with the Plans overarching goals of *Connecting People and Places, Improving Safety, and Preparing for the Future*.

Highway 138 is a crucial north-south commuter link through our County and region, connecting many of our communities (and the United States via the Seaway International Bridge) with the City of Ottawa. There is no other word to describe Highway 138 other than dangerous, due to the frequency and severity of motor vehicle collisions, the most recent fatality occurring only one week after release of the Plan. For decades, SDG, its local municipalities and the City of Cornwall have lobbied the province to make Highway 138 safer, and residents of our region continue to petition for action (<https://www.change.org/p/make-highway-138-safer>) In fact, our County CAO has attended at least 5 delegations with various Ministers of Transportation over the past 10 years, including you.

As your office is aware, in 2017, the Ministry of Transportation completed the Preliminary Design and Class *Environmental Assessment Study* for Highway 138 between Highway 401 and Highway 417. Through this report, the following improvements have been recommended to be implemented within the short to medium term:

- Construction of carpooling lots (completed in fall 2019)
- Intersection improvements at County Road 44

Where Ontario Began

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- Intersection improvements at County Road 18
- Construction of passing lanes at various locations, and
- Other intersection and traffic safety improvements.

The recommended improvements noted above are significant in scope and value and were positively endorsed by our community. SDG is confident that when these improvements are all implemented, they will positively improve the safety along Highway 138.

Respectfully, I cannot overemphasize the need to commence construction of passing lanes as soon as possible. Over the years, too many people have lost their lives or been seriously injured for the province to continue to ignore our requests. If you are not familiar with the grim statistics related to Highway No. 138, I encourage you to take a look. These statistics are widely available, either through the East Region OPP, Ministry staff, or open sources.

In light of the above, I request a meeting with you as soon as possible so concrete steps can be determined to move forward to make Highway 138 safer. Action is required now.

Sincerely,



Carma Williams, Warden

c: Media
MTO Eastern Region
All local (6) SDG municipalities
Mohawk Council of Akwesasne
City of Cornwall
SDSG MPP-elect Nolan Quinn