



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 6, 2019

Collaboration on Major Work on Meech Lake Road and Changes to Gatineau Parkway's North Loop

Canada's Capital Region—The National Capital Commission (NCC) and the Municipality of Chelsea, today announced a major collaboration on the Municipality's rehabilitation project for Meech Lake Road and the future use of the North Loop, the Gatineau Parkway section between P8 and P9.

As of Spring 2021, after the Municipality has repaired the Meech Lake Road between Gatineau Park lots P8 and P9, the NCC will permanently dedicate the North Loop to non-motorized forms of transportation (e.g. pedestrians, runners, in-line skaters and cyclists). This safe new route will contribute to the Municipality's goals to ensure that there is a dedicated cycling lane avoiding the need for widening Meech Lake Road which would add both significant additional costs and potentially significant adverse impacts on the Park ecology. This closure will also provide a stretch of the Gatineau Parkway for the exclusive use of all active users.

Over the last decade, the NCC has worked with users, community groups, municipalities, and emergency services on safety concerns on the Parkways and "Share the Road" practices. The NCC continues to encourage all park users to obey speed limits and to respect the rules of the road.

QUICK FACTS

- The Municipality of Chelsea has identified that Meech Lake Road needs major rehabilitation work and has already been studying different construction scenarios, including channeling most non-motorized users towards the North Loop. The Municipality appreciates that some cyclists will choose to continue using Meech Lake Road therefore it will continue studying options for a safe shared route without requiring that it be widened.
- Given the importance of Meech Lake Road as a key access point for the Park, Chelsea remains hopeful that the federal government will contribute financially to the various phases of the project. The Municipality appreciates the ongoing assistance of the NCC in gathering information to make this case to the federal government.
- Closing the North Loop to motorized traffic supports several safety-enhancing transportation measures the NCC began implementing in early 2019, which includes a review of regulations, public outreach, police presence and roadside messaging.

- Motorized vehicles will be permitted to access the North Loop during construction work on Meech Lake Road.
- Gatineau Park is increasingly busy with Park visitors, being the second most visited park in Canada behind Banff. Its Parkways are a way to enjoy the Park during the snow-free period, both as a destination and as a means to access popular sites such as Pink Lake.
- The NCC is currently undergoing a Gatineau Park Master Plan review that will broadly consider other transportation issues inside the Park.

QUOTES

“The National Capital Commission is committed to improving safety of cyclists and other non-motorized users of Gatineau Park. During the series of public consultations towards renewing the Gatineau Park Master Plan, we heard significant support for increased Parkway closures. Today’s joint announcement with the Municipality of Chelsea is a good example of collaboration that benefits both local residents and Park visitors.”

— Tobi Nussbaum, Chief Executive Officer, National Capital Commission

“The Municipality of Chelsea and the National Capital Commission share the common goal of enhancing safety and improving the conditions on Meech Lake Road as it is a key access route for Gatineau Park visitors. Our collaboration is based on Chelsea’s Active Transportation Master Plan and the NCC’s Gatineau Park Master Plan renewal process.”

— Caryl Green, Mayor of Chelsea

“I am pleased that the National Capital Commission and the Municipality of Chelsea have come together to ensure that local residents and users of Gatineau Park – the Pontiac’s most popular destination – will be provided with a stretch of the Gatineau Parkway free of motorized vehicles. Providing a safer route and increasing user experience makes sense for everyone.”

—William Amos, Member of Parliament for the Pontiac

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LINKS

[Gatineau Park](#)

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