

Highway 62 North gets connecting link funding



by KRISTENA SCHUTT-MOORE, Staff

The Town of Bancroft has announced that work on Hastings Street North will be able to proceed next year thanks to the Connecting Link Program. Last year, the town applied for this funding, but by the start of this summer roads manager Perry Kelly was saying that they had not heard a reply and believed they were unsuccessful in getting the grant funding. Then on Thursday, July 2 it was announced that they received \$2,186,279 in funding from the Ministry of Transportation's 2020-2021 Connecting Link Program. The town's project became eligible for the grant through Ontario's Action Plan: Responding To COVID-19, which made \$10 million available to the municipalities of Ontario to help repair connecting link roads and bridges. The funding will cover 90 per cent of the costs of the project that will repair and improve close to one and a half kilometers of Hastings Street North. This project includes resurfacing the road, upgrading the crosswalks, improving stormwater management, replacing culverts, and upgrading traffic signal lights along Hastings Street North from the intersection on Bridge Street East to roughly the entrance of Bancroft Sport and Marine. "Once again, Bancroft has been recognized for its role as the gateway to the North and the heavy toll this traffic takes on its key thoroughfares," said MPP Daryl Kramp. "It seems everyone who lives in or passes through Bancroft uses North Hastings Street. This investment will make that travel safer for motorists and pedestrians." In July 2019, Bancroft received \$1,689,918 through the Connecting Link funding to rehabilitate roughly 1.54 kilometers of Highway 28 South. This project is going through the tendering process and construction is believed to take place later this summer. This means that the design and engineering for the Hastings Street North project will follow behind the Highway 28 South Project and construction will be in 2021. "Without funding through the Connecting Link Program, the town would be unable to complete any significant rehabilitation to the 11.1 of provincial highway that runs through Bancroft. More than five million vehicles travel on our Connecting Link highway each year, and the cost of maintenance and repair is significant. These two projects are highly visible improvements to our highway infrastructure and I'm pleased that the province has recognized the need in our community," says Bancroft Mayor Paul Jenkins. Together the two grant and road projects will repair a total of three kilometers of Bancroft's roads.