

Minister of Transportation Hon. Prabmeet Sarkaria
Ministry of Transportation
5th Floor
777 Bay St.
Toronto, ON, M7A 1Z8
By email to minister.mto@ontario.ca

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Re: Bradford Bypass, Bill 212, a petition to the province asking for a value for money audit, Engineers not working, & First Nations consultation concerns

October 31, 2024

Dear Minister Sarkaria,

On October 21st your Ministry introduced Bill 212, which includes the *Building Highways Faster Act*. On October 28th you announced that you have awarded the contract to build the western portion of the highway between highway 400 and Yonge St. This, despite the absence of design or feasibility studies for building the eastern part of the Bradford Bypass, over the very sensitive Holland Marsh river valley. Until your government started piecemeal building this way, this process was illegal. This is against Environmental Assessment best practices to say the least.

Having followed the Bradford Bypass project in detail for three years, we believe that fast tracking major infrastructure projects means removing more health, environmental, and property rights, and is not in the public interest. The province has yet to reasonably defend the need or justification for this project against any alternatives such as alternate routes or transit expansions. Unless your government substantially answers these questions, we are of the opinion that your government is set on this route in order to please sprawl developers.

Further, this action is a slap in the face to First Nations rights as we understand that consultations about the Lower Landing and their buried ancestors are ongoing.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans has neither reviewed nor approved designs or mitigation plans, which they initially wanted to see before granting a permit to destroy fish habitat, as has been done by the Yonge St. early works bridge.

The Ontario government has not sought federal permissions for Endangered Species which will be impacted by this highway and appears to have little regard for its own provincial Species at Risk. Neither has it obtained permission to destroy habitats of Migratory Birds.

Please tell us how you can possibly avoid the habitats you are legally responsible for protecting with 24 hour construction?

Today, we are presenting you with a petition signed by nearly 1800 people, requesting that the Ministry of Transportation Ontario:

1. Publicly release the traffic studies, clearly indicating the points of origin and time savings to justify this project;
2. Do a value for money audit of this project comparing it to regional road and public transit alternatives;
3. If traffic studies and the evaluation of alternatives justify it, pay for regional road improvements;
4. Plan for sustainable transportation. Prioritize getting Lake Simcoe watershed area GO stations built: Innisfil Orbit, Barrie Waterfront; and all day, two way electrification of the GO line;
5. Complete studies that are not being done - impacts to Lake Simcoe, cumulative climate impacts, cumulative health assessments and cumulative water impacts;
6. Use a salt alternative on the Bradford Bypass, Highway 404, and other provincial highways that negatively affect freshwater.¹

Please read the above petition carefully. It is very reasonable. Would you please respond by explaining what you are doing on each of these points, and / or why you are not doing these things. The people of Ontario deserve to know.

We would also like to remind you that more than 11,000 people signed a previous petition to stop the Bradford Bypass, and that 63 organizations and eight Lake Simcoe municipalities supported our call for a Federal Impact Assessment for the project.

Also of note is the December 8, 2022 letter to Premier Ford from the Professional Engineers of Ontario's which strongly objected to this highway: "OSPE strongly urges the Ontario government to abide by the recommendations of your engineering subject matter experts and defer the highway projects, specifically Highway 413 and the Bradford Bypass, and reinvest that money into higher priority projects."

Further, the Professional Engineers Government of Ontario union has initiated job action relating to both the Bradford Bypass and Highway 413. They seem not to want to help you fast track this ill-conceived highway and the 413. Have you stopped to ask why? We suggest it is in

¹ <https://www.change.org/p/support-responsible-planning-and-spending-on-the-bradford-bypass> Petition signers' emails will start arriving in your inbox soon, Minister Sarkaria.

part because your government has not addressed their substantial concerns, found here:
<https://ospe.on.ca/advocacy/bradford-bypass-and-evidence-based-decision-making/>
"Infrastructure projects should not be politicized."

Finally, I would invite you to read the attached letter written by Bill Foster, who has tracked the Bradford Bypass project for decades, as he articulates some alternatives to your chosen route, and as he presents the case for a value for money audit for the Bypass. [Download it here.](#)

We await your response to the numbered points above.

Sincerely,



Claire Malcolmson, Executive Director
Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition

CC

The Honourable Diane LeBouthillier, DFO

The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, ECCC

Premier Doug Ford

The Honourable Todd McCarthy, Interim Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks

Ryan Whealey, Senior Manager, Issues and Legislative Affairs, MTO

Ontario Society of Professional Engineers

MP Leah Taylor-Roy

MP Scot Davidson

MP Doug Shipley

MP Adam Chambers

MP John Brassard

MP Tony Van Bynen

MP Erin O'Toole

MPP Sandy Shaw

MPP Jennifer French

MPP Mary-Margaret McMahon

JL Porte, Economic Development Officer, Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation

Mandy McGonigle, Archaeology Coordinator, Hiawatha First Nation

Sean Davison, Lands/Resource Consultation, Hiawatha First Nation

Shirley Brent, District Supervisor, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

Ceyda Turan, Turan Law Office

Gary Pritchard, Principal, Hiawatha First Nation, 4 Directions
Rob Baldwin, Chief Administrative Officer, Lake Simcoe Region Conservation
Authority
Margaret Prophet, Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition
Adam Weir, Fisheries Biologist, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
Laura Bowman, Ecojustice
Bill Foster, Forbid Roads Over Green Spaces (FROGS)