



 Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition

July 19, 2023

To: Ontario Minister of Transportation, Caroline Mulroney
Submitted via email to: minister.mto@ontario.ca

From: RescueLakeSimcoeCoalition@gmail.com

Dear Minister Mulroney,

We are writing to ask that you stand up for Lake Simcoe, taxpayers, and due process on the Bradford Bypass.

On June 1st, the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) released its [Draft Environmental Impact Assessment Report](#) for a 30 day comment period. In it we found that many impacts and problems were articulated, but few solutions were offered, and even fewer commitments were made by the province to remediate environmental impacts.

Our full and detailed submission can be read here: <https://rescuelakesimcoe.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/RLSC-letter-re-Draft-IA-report.pdf> .

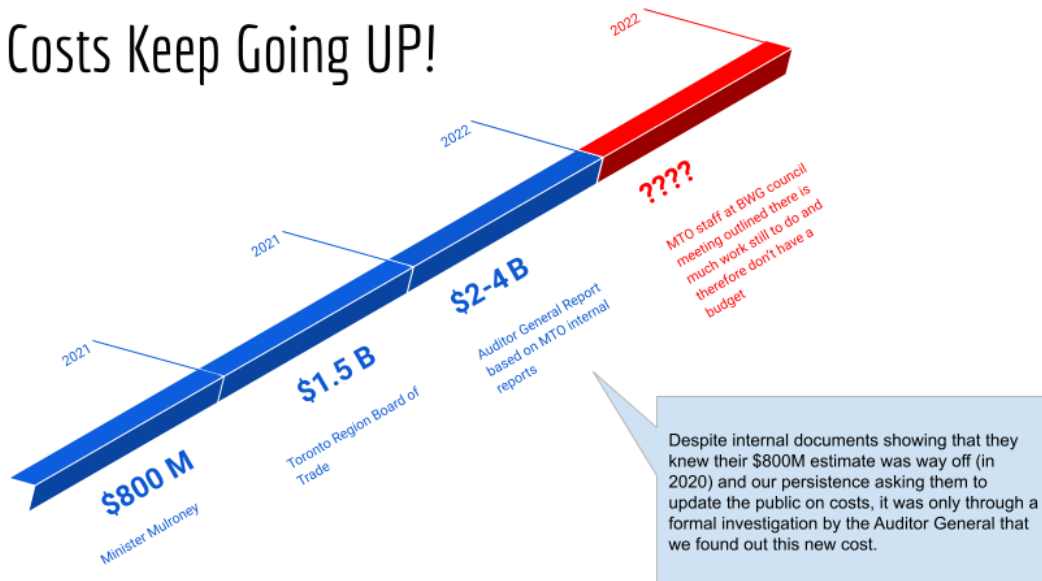
Here are some highlights of our observations of the process:

- The price tag has ballooned to nearly \$4 billion according to Ontario's Auditor General;
- **There are no public traffic studies that support MTO's time-saving claims;**
- Traffic analysis that we have seen shows traffic WORSENING on many nearby roads - in particular Highways 400 & 404 - WITH the Bradford Bypass (see following pages for your own maps);
- Traffic is only marginally improved for Bradford West Gwillimbury;
- The Project website acknowledges that the scenarios were with Bypass and without Bypass. Are these really the only two scenarios that were run? No analysis about whether regional roads could do the job for less damage and money? No consideration of transit use or the planned all day two way GO train to Barrie? We really need more information here.

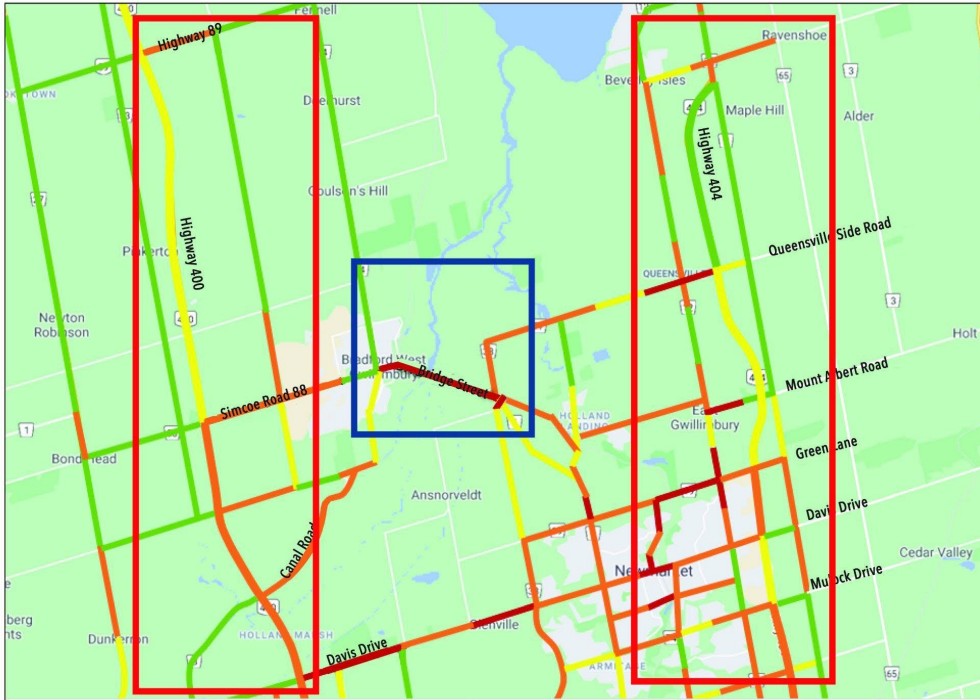
- The chosen route, with 5 interchanges, is no longer a freeway to freeway connector; it now combines local and long distance travel and promises to improve local traffic, so why is that not a regional road improvement as opposed to a provincial “highway”?
- **The province estimates the project completion at 2032; and the Bradford Bypass will be congested 5 years after it is built;**
- The EA does not include studying impacts to Lake Simcoe;
- **There are no air quality standards that the province has to meet** while bringing a new highway into an existing residential neighbourhood. People affected by elevated levels of air pollution get no notice, explanation, or health warnings from the government of Ontario. There are plans to BUILD a NEW SCDSB school in the affected area;
- There was a regulatory requirement to create a groundwater plan which you can find here: <https://www.bradfordbypass.ca/draft-groundwater-gpwmp/>; it finds there are several inorganic / metal parameters which exceed the provincial water quality objectives in the groundwater of the proposed groundwater taking locations, which would have to be dewatered for construction. This water cannot be released to the natural environment without being treated. There is nowhere nearby to treat it. There is no nearby sanitary sewer. The contractor that makes the bridge piles will have to manage and mitigate these impacts. This is an incomplete plan. This is an identification of serious issues and a dereliction of duty;
- This streamlined Environmental Assessment process is how the province proposes to build another 54 KM of highway connecting Hwy 404 and Hwy 12. We submit that this is not the way to advance a sustainable region, and we are asking for your help to support sustainable planning and development.

According to Ontario’s Auditor General, this highway could cost \$4billion.

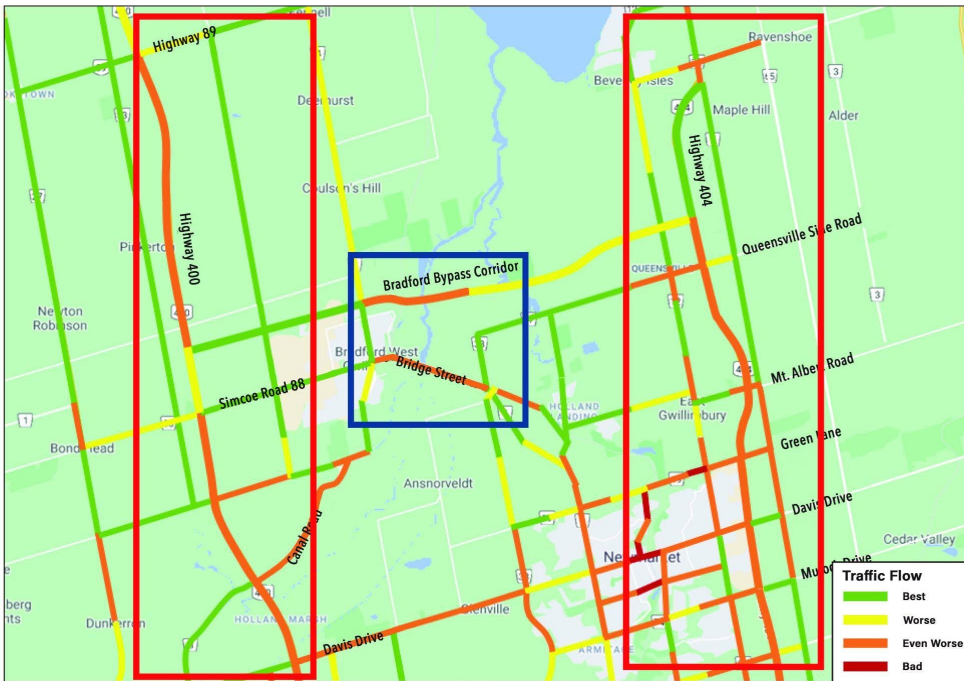
The Costs Keep Going UP!



Please compare impacts to traffic and in particular to Highways 400 and 404, and ask yourself if this little traffic improvement is worth \$4 billion? These maps are from the MTO's Public Information Centre #1. <https://www.bradfordbypass.ca/2021/04/09/5-considerations-for-the-bradford-bypass-project/>



2041 Forecasted travel volumes without Bradford Bypass



2041 Forecasted travel volumes with Bradford Bypass

We are asking MTO and the Province of Ontario for:

- Real traffic solutions that are quicker to implement and cheaper than a 4-8 lane highway;
- Complete studies that are not being done - impacts to Lake Simcoe, cumulative climate impacts, cumulative health assessments and cumulative water impacts;
- Value for money audit of the Bypass versus other alternatives (which have not been considered in a serious way for decades);
- Provincial policies that encourage development that is affordable, makes use of existing roads and infrastructure, protects farmland, and gives people a range of housing options enabling people to downsize, get a starter home, and options for local workers to live and work in their chosen community.

It has been incredibly frustrating to watch Ontario gut our EA legislation and provide misinformation to Councils and residents about this project. As Hospital ER's are shut down, as portables come to more and more poorly ventilated schools, as working people are unhoused, and as our environment experiences more stress than ever, this is an irresponsible expenditure. It does not resolve Ontario's most pressing issues, it contributes to a worsening climate and local environment, it will not solve the problems it seeks to solve, and it could cost \$4 billion dollars. People want answers. Your Ministry owes it to people to be honest and do your due diligence.

We await a formal response from the MTO regarding our points above.

Sincerely,

Claire Malcolmson, Executive Director, Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition
Margaret Prophet, Executive Director, Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition
Bill Foster, Chair, Forbid Roads Over Greenspaces (FROGS)

CC:

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