

**From:** Jenna Ross  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 23, 2021 6:55 PM  
**To:** Regional Clerk <[ClerkGeneralLine@york.ca](mailto:ClerkGeneralLine@york.ca)>  
**Subject:** Letter to be shared at Feb 25 York Region Council Meeting

Please see my attached letter as a written deputation in the York Regional Council meeting on February 25, 2021 regarding the following agenda items:

- F.3 Designation Request for the Proposed Bradford Bypass Project under the Impact Assessment Act
- F. 4 Designation Request for the Proposed GTA West Project under the Impact Assessment Act

I have also pasted the contents of the letter below.

Thank you,  
Mrs. Jenna Ross  
Stouffville, ON

Dear York Regional Council Members,

I implore you to support the designation requests for the proposed GTA West Project and Bradford Bypass Project under the Impact Assessment Act.

**This highway proposal is not based on effective urban planning.** Highway construction is a major factor in increasing urban sprawl, which perpetuates white supremacy and systemic racism. Building highways also increases traffic congestion, commute times, and reliance on cars; this has a serious and negative impact on quality of life and air pollution. This project would develop on rural areas, including areas protected by the Greenbelt Plan. This would cause irreparable harm to woodlands, wetlands, and endangered species' habitats, and compromise a number of major river corridors that are critical to our wildlife.

**These are indisputable facts, not a political opinion.** The advisory panel for the original proposal for this highway deemed the environmental assessment fundamentally flawed based on need and alternatives.

**There are not significant enough environmental protections in place at the provincial level.** The fact that Minister Steve Clark has proposed to exempt this project (so recently deemed flawed and redundant) from completing its environmental assessment is a clear indicator that environmental protection and conservation efforts are not a priority for our provincial government.

The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority is sounding the alarm: there is no significant protection in place for the protection of life and property or the management of resources at the detailed design stage of the GTA West.

The compelling letter from Ecojustice to MP Jonathon Wilkinson on behalf of Environmental Defence presents several alarming impacts that this project would have on our provincial wildlife and on climate change, a serious detriment to human health.

A number of organizations are speaking out about the fact that this project may also be exempt from certain requirements under the *Endangered Species Act*.

**Councillors: your constituents *need* you to speak up and support the designation requests for the proposed GTA West Project and Bradford Bypass Project.**

**Ontarians do not support these highway projects.** Premier Ford's remarks about 'opening up the Greenbelt' to developers in 2018 was met with public outrage. A barrage of media coverage about the limiting of the powers of the Ontario Conservation Authority has inspired public protest. The series of dramatic resignations from the Ontario Greenbelt Council strengthened the resolve of environmental advocates, and encouraged many others to join their efforts.

**York Region residents do not support these highway projects.** The unprecedented use of Ministerial Zoning Orders by Minister Steve Clark certainly drew increased public attention to the influence of large developer companies in provincial politics. However, a flurry of local news and information-sharing on social media groups has led to increased awareness of large corporations' influence on municipal politics as well. York Region residents are increasingly aware of not only the devastating effects it would cause, but how much developers would have to gain from these highway projects.

As a York Region resident and Stouffville constituent, **I support the designation requests for a federal Environmental Assessment for these highway projects.** As you consider your stance as a council, please keep in mind the growing anger and erosion of trust of your constituents at the weakening of environmental protections that disproportionately benefit developers. Your obligations are to the voters, not the donors.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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Mrs. Jenna Ross  
Stouffville, ON