

From: Debbie Gordon
Sent: Monday, March 15, 2021 1:58 PM
To: Regional Clerk <ClerkGeneralLine@york.ca>
Cc: Sylvia Bowman
Subject: York Region Council

Dear Clerk,

Please include our letter for the March 18th York Region Special Council Meeting.

regards,

Debbie Gordon Keswick, ON

Sylvia Bowman East Gwillimbury ON

York Region Council
17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1

Debbie Gordon

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Keswick, ON [REDACTED]

Sylvia Bowman

[REDACTED]
East Gwillimbury ON [REDACTED]

Regarding the Bradford Bypass Project F.4.1

We are writing to implore York Region Council to support the request for a Federal Environmental Assessment for the proposed Bradford Bypass submitted by Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition and Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition.

Recently, the provincial government, through provisions in [Bill 197. COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act](#), moved to fast-track 400 series highways, such as the Bradford bypass, through protected greenbelt lands.

The Bypass was approved in 2002, nearly two decades before most current provincial policies were in place to protect the natural environment. As such, it is essential that an updated Environmental Assessment be completed in order to sufficiently address impacts to: the Lake Simcoe Watershed, stormwater run-off, agricultural land, human and environmental health, as well as traditional Indigenous lands.

Currently, is anticipated to negatively impact:

- 22.1 hectares of high quality woodlands;
- 17.2 hectares of Holland Marsh (designated environmentally sensitive area);
- 9.5 hectares of designated provincially sensitive wetlands; and
- and 32.7 hectares of significant wildlife habitat.

Some politicians justify the destruction of 81.5 hectares (over 200 acres) of sensitive habitat, claiming it will stimulate the post-pandemic economy by creating new jobs. Unfortunately, this short-sighted vision will cause long-term and irreparable impacts, not only to Bradford, but the larger Lake Simcoe Watershed. Additionally, by destroying agricultural lands, this project raises food security and human health concerns.

The COVID-19 crisis has taught us how utterly dependent we are on natural areas and farmland for our health and well-being. Instead of destroying natural areas, governments should take action to protect more natural lands and farmland by adding them to the Greenbelt. After all, preserving this “natural capital” today will help us mitigate the growing challenges of our climate crisis tomorrow.

Sylvia Bowman
Debbie Gordon