

From: Jack Campbell

Sent: Monday, March 15, 2021 3:32 PM

To: Regional Clerk <ClerkGeneralLine@york.ca>; Emmerson, Wayne <Wayne.Emmerson@york.ca>

Cc: Steve Pellegrini <spellegrini@king.ca>; Bill Cober <bcober@king.ca>; jcescolini@king.ca; dboyd@king.ca; jschneider@king.ca; Debbie Schaefer <dschaefer@king.ca>; aEEK@king.ca

Subject: Hwy 413 / Bradford Bypass

Dear York Region Councillors

Thank you for the opportunity to address a very important issue at this time, the proposed development of more provincial mega-highways, namely, the the GTA West (413) and Bradford Bypass. I write this as a long time resident of King Township, living just outside of Schomberg. I am semi-retired and a rural landowner operating a small tree farm servicing the landscape industry. I have an acute appreciation of the farming industry and of rural landscape, having grown up on a multi-generational dairy farm in Southwestern Ontario. As well, I understand land use issues from the perspective of having spent a 45 year career in the commercial landscape construction and site development field. I appreciate the need for job-creating development and "progress" created by the private sector.

What concerns me today, and has for quite some time, is that open farm land and natural areas in the GTA are more often considered as a land bank for future development than not. The highest and best use of the land is, for those with a vested interest, bulldozing it for highways and the "sprawl-style" development that follows, be it endless subdivisions of low-rise houses or enormous warehouses feeding our insatiable demand for throwaway consumer goods. How is that sustainable?

It isn't of course. We should be valuing the highest and best use of available land as farmland and green space first, and where development is deemed necessary, a much smarter, compact form of building is needed.

This includes going back in to redevelop hundreds of brownfield sites in all urban centres to take the pressure off the need for more and more greenfield sites. It is a well-known fact that thousands of acres of Class 1 & 2 farmland will be destroyed by the construction of either of the 413 and Bradford Bypass highway projects, along with hundreds of hectares of forests and wetlands.

For the purposes of this letter, there has been an obvious need identified to better manage congestion in the GTA, be it commuter or heavy truck traffic. The previous Liberal government spent years of consultation as to how best manage GTA traffic and freight demands and their independent consultants recommended not proceeding with Hwy 413 as part of the solution. Having personally studied the long list of alternatives to reduce gridlock during a similar discussion of alternatives to the proposed Hwy 427 north extension, back in the early 2000's, the same principles apply to today's discussion about 413 and the Bradford Bypass. Along with better inter-regional public transit, expanded movement of freight by rail and better utilization of existing regional/provincial roads, there is one new option on the table.

Thanks to a reduction in commuter traffic on Hwy 407, which may become permanent due to increased work from home preferences during the course of the pandemic and beyond, there is a huge opportunity to make better use of the 407 to take pressure off surrounding roadways. Yes, the tolls are unaffordable for many commuters and truckers, but the Province would be better off directing funds to subsidize an existing expressway than creating another new one nearby (413), one that could easily turn into a toll road as well.

Speaking of financing, I know many taxpayers like myself who are growing increasingly alarmed at the staggering levels of debt being accumulated by provincial and regional governments to accommodate

infrastructure spending for future population growth. Let's make sure that taxpayer dollars spent are truly warranted. I would like to see all levels of government investing in things that are truly for the public good, such as the expansion of broadband internet, which coincidentally could help thousands of people to be able to work from home and leave their cars parked. More and more it seems that those pushing for new highways stand to benefit from the land speculation game, when new development follows.

Of equal concern is the watering down and fast tracking of the Provincial Environmental Assessment process. At a time when the Province of Ontario plans to expand the Greenbelt and supports the preservation of farmland, these two new highway proposals make no sense whatsoever.

I ask you today to take the position of requesting a full Federal EA for both highways and vote that York Region withdraw its support immediately for both 413 and the Bradford Bypass.

Thank you for your time.

Jack Campbell

Schomberg, Ont.