

From: Laurel Imeso

Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 9:11 PM

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Subject: Federal Assessment of the Bradford ByPass

I am asking the York Region Council to support the request for the Federal Impact Assessment of the Bradford ByPass for the following reasons:

The studies and Environmental Assessment (EA) approval were given and conducted at a time when the Greenbelt and Lake Simcoe Protection Plans did not exist and climate change was not part of the conversation or evaluation. This project was started so long ago that the policy, social, environmental and economic environment is completely different. To suggest that a 20-year-old approval for such a large infrastructure project on environmentally sensitive land is adequate when the context has changed dramatically is concerning. Nonetheless, York Region staff state in their response to the Federal government: "The Region anticipates the current provincial Environmental Assessment process for the Bradford Bypass will continue to address environmental, social, economic and health issues as well as necessary public consultation to balance the needs for all community stakeholders."

The EA Notice of Approval is dated from 2002 and the EA was initiated in 1997. Upon reviewing the project files it would appear that only 3 public consultation sessions were completed during the late 90s on 'IF' the highway should proceed. To say that the Province and Region have completed public consultation is disingenuous, people impacted now were not old enough to be consulted or did not live in the area at the time.

The EA approval was given dependent on conditions of approval. Now almost 20 years later the government is trying to change legislation so that they can do even less than what was required then. If the proposed exemption to conditions of the EA Approval is approved the outcome will be that the government eliminates the requirement to do a Class EA and no further consultations or studies would be mandated. How can the 2002 EA approval be valid if there are exemptions to the conditions? The Minister of the day gave approval with the expectation that a Group A Class EA (Condition 4) will be done and stated specifically in the reasons for approval that public concerns about site-specific impacts would be addressed through the Conditions of Approval. To change or not fulfill the conditions would undermine the entire basis of the EA Approval

The health of Lake Simcoe is not as well as the province would like the public to believe. The Province has not met its reporting obligations under the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan and the impacts from the Bradford Bypass would be impossible to understand since the EA report is so dated and the health status of Lake Simcoe not fully understood. The Lake is under immense pressure from invasive species, urban sprawl, stormwater run-off and climate change. The Bradford Bypass would only amplify an already stressed aquatic ecosystem combined with significant impacts to wetlands and prime agricultural farmland. Please support the request for the Federal Impact Assessment for the Bradford Bypass.

Yours sincerely,

Laurel Imeson