

# DEPUTATION REQUEST

REGIONAL COUNCIL  
MARCH 18, 2021

**Subject:** GTA West Corridor

**Spokesperson:** LCol (ret'd) Susan Beharriell

**Name of Group or person(s) being represented (if applicable):**

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**Brief summary of issue or purpose of deputation:**

My name is Susan Beharriell and I would like to submit the attached for consideration at the York Council meeting on 18 March.

I also request to register as a deputant for item F.4.2 concerning the GTA West Corridor staff report.

Letter to York Region Council, Council Meeting

18 March 2021

York Region Council,

My name is LCol (ret'd) Susan Beharriell, and I am a long-time resident of King Township. I am writing to implore Councillors and the Chairman NOT to endorse the report before you (F.4.2.) today concerning the GTA West Corridor. Instead, I ask you to support the federal EA request and to remove York Region's support for the GTA West Highway.

I question several of the report's assertions. It correctly cites supportive statements made in the past. However, it does not consider any recent and future changes. The pandemic has changed the nature of work and commuting. Canada and most communities have declared a Climate Emergency and the urgency of reducing Green House Gas emissions. Self-driving and electric vehicles, including trucks, are coming

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much sooner than anticipated along with the accompanying traffic management technology. The huge population growth increases, once predicted in the GTA, have not occurred and are unlikely to do so according to experts. Calls for a Green and Just Society include the need for mass transit of people and goods rather than more roads. The need for green space, local food, preventing “Nature Deficit” particularly in children, and increasing biodiversity has become increasingly urgent as the Pandemic continues. How can paving a wide swath right through protected wetlands, forests, farmland, and vital waterways possibly enhance these vital needs? The world has changed significantly since the idea of the GTA West Corridor was formed. Yet this report does not take any of these changes into account.

The report also asserts that York is confident that the present EA under way by the Province will sufficiently consider and account for the concerns of all stakeholders and residents. However, it provides no evidence to support this statement. Given the continuing and strong opposition to the corridor from many groups and individuals, the EA is clearly NOT meeting the concerns of all residents and stakeholders. Therefore, York should support the designation request from Ecojustice and Environmental Defence for a Federal EA rather than express casual satisfaction with the present and inadequate process.

Finally, the report concludes that continuing uncertainty about the corridor may cause harm within the region. I maintain that relying on an outdated EA process, ignoring significant environmental, workplace, and societal changes, making hurried and ill-advised decisions, and destroying provincially protected lands, will most certainly harm the region.

Transporting goods, people and services throughout the region is a growing need. However, this corridor, as presently planned, will not fulfil that need by producing only a 30- second transit improvement at a cost of more than \$10 billion.

The public has no indication of why you are being asked to take the positions in this report. Why and how does the York staff reach completely opposite conclusions to Halton Hills, Peel, Vaughan, Mississauga, Toronto, Caledon, and Brampton? Have you asked this question and received convincing answers? Can you explain those answers to your voters? If not, then how can you possibly support this report?

Please re-consider the issue, do not continue to support the corridor as presently planned, do not accept the present EA process, do support the ED request for a Federal EA and send this report back for a re-write!

Thank you for your consideration and the work you do on our behalf.

Sincerely,

LCol (ret) Susan Beharriell

O.M.M., CD

Nobleton, King Township