

**Ministry of Transportation**

# GTA West Transportation Corridor

York Region Council Meeting  
March 18, 2021

# Purpose of Presentation

To provide an update on the status of the GTA West Environmental Assessment and Preliminary Design.

# Project Rationale

## **Connecting Communities: The GTA West highway will give drivers another option for travelling around the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH).**

- The proposed GTA West multimodal transportation corridor will address transportation needs in a study area covering portions of York, Peel and Halton regions and will help alleviate traffic congestion and improve the movement of people and goods across the province.
- The Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) is an economic driver for the province and addressing transportation needs in the GGH is essential to the competitiveness of our economy.
- By 2051, the population of the GGH is expected to grow to 14.8 million people (1 million people every 5 years) who will represent approximately 7 million jobs.
- Without more transportation infrastructure, Ontario will suffer from even worse gridlock. The major highways in York and Peel regions are all forecasted to be operating over capacity by 2031, even with significant investments in transit.
- Motorists and trucks that travel the entire length of the GTA West highway during rush hours will save about 30 minutes when compared to the time it would take via Highways 401 or 400.
- MTO's traffic modelling data indicates that the level of congestion in the GGH would be more than doubled by 2041.

# Project Background



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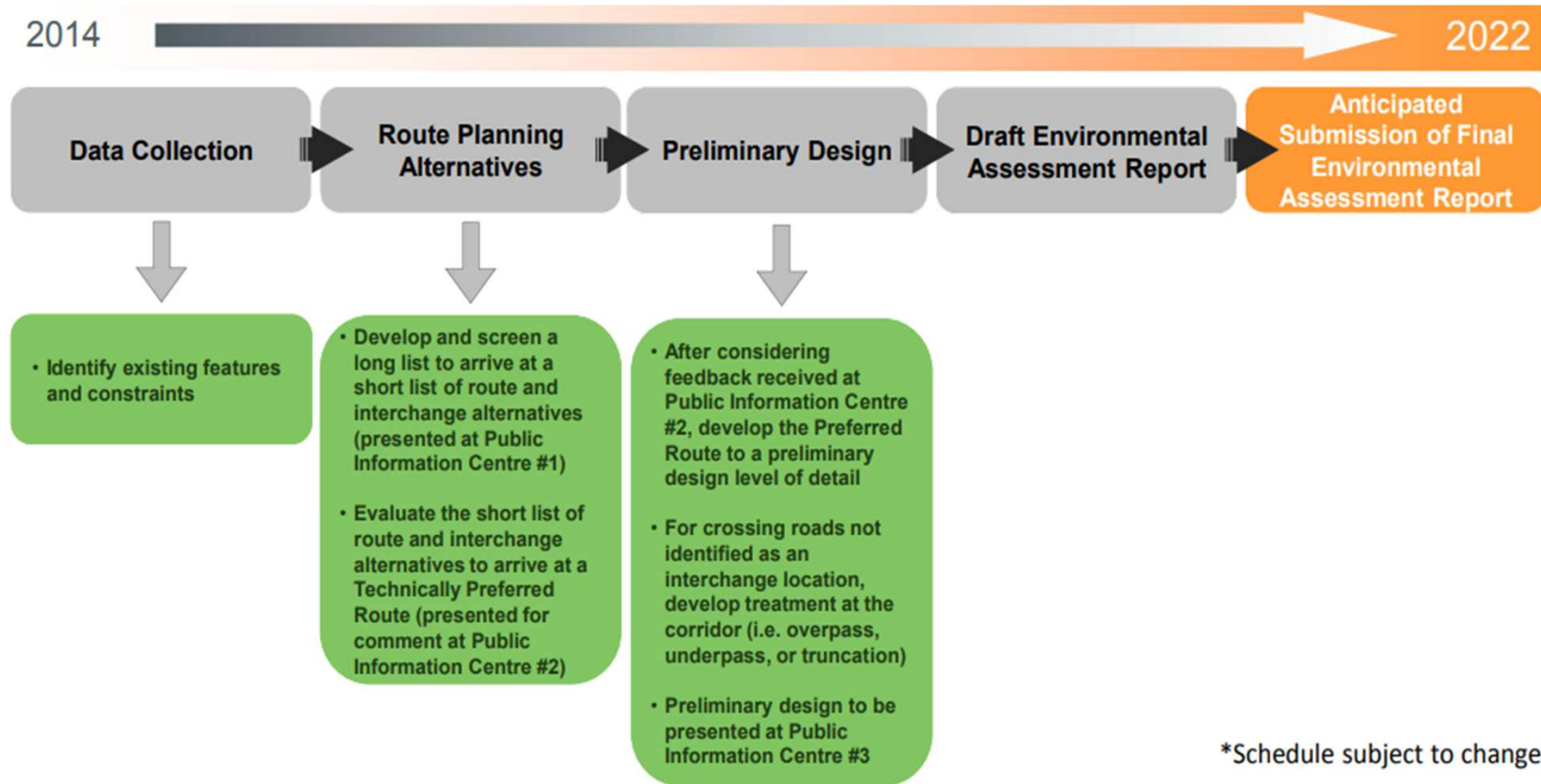
- The Study is being undertaken as an Individual Environmental Assessment (EA) consistent with a Terms of Reference approved in March 2008.
- Stage 1, which was completed in November 2012, produced a long term multimodal transportation strategy with various recommendations, including the need for a new transportation corridor.
- Stage 2 of the GTA West Study focuses on a new multimodal transportation corridor which:
  - Extends from Highway 400 in the east to the Highway 401/407 ETR interchange area in the west.
  - Includes a 400-series highway, a transitway, and the potential to include goods movement priority features.

# Planning with Vision, Planning for People

- The need for the GTA West Study remains and is strengthened by the GGH population and employment growth forecasts, reflecting more people and jobs by 2051. It is good practice to do long-range planning for areas under development pressure.
- Committed to an open and transparent process that provides opportunities for all stakeholders to help shape the outcome of the project.
- Strive to arrive at a solution that provides the best balance of benefits and impacts for the local communities and the users of the transportation system.

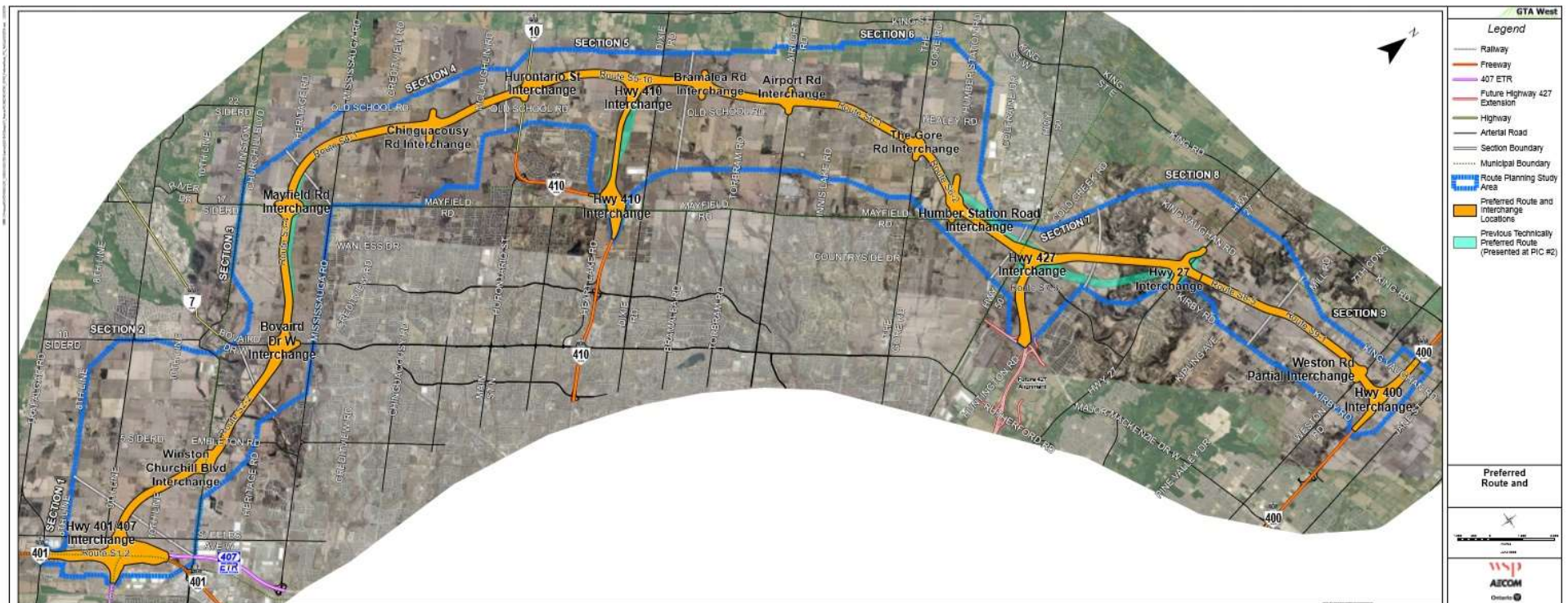
***To accomplish this, we are committed to engaging our municipal and agency partners in open two-way communication that leads to meaningful discussions, proactive information exchange and a constructive working relationship.***

# Study Overview – Current Stage 2 Process



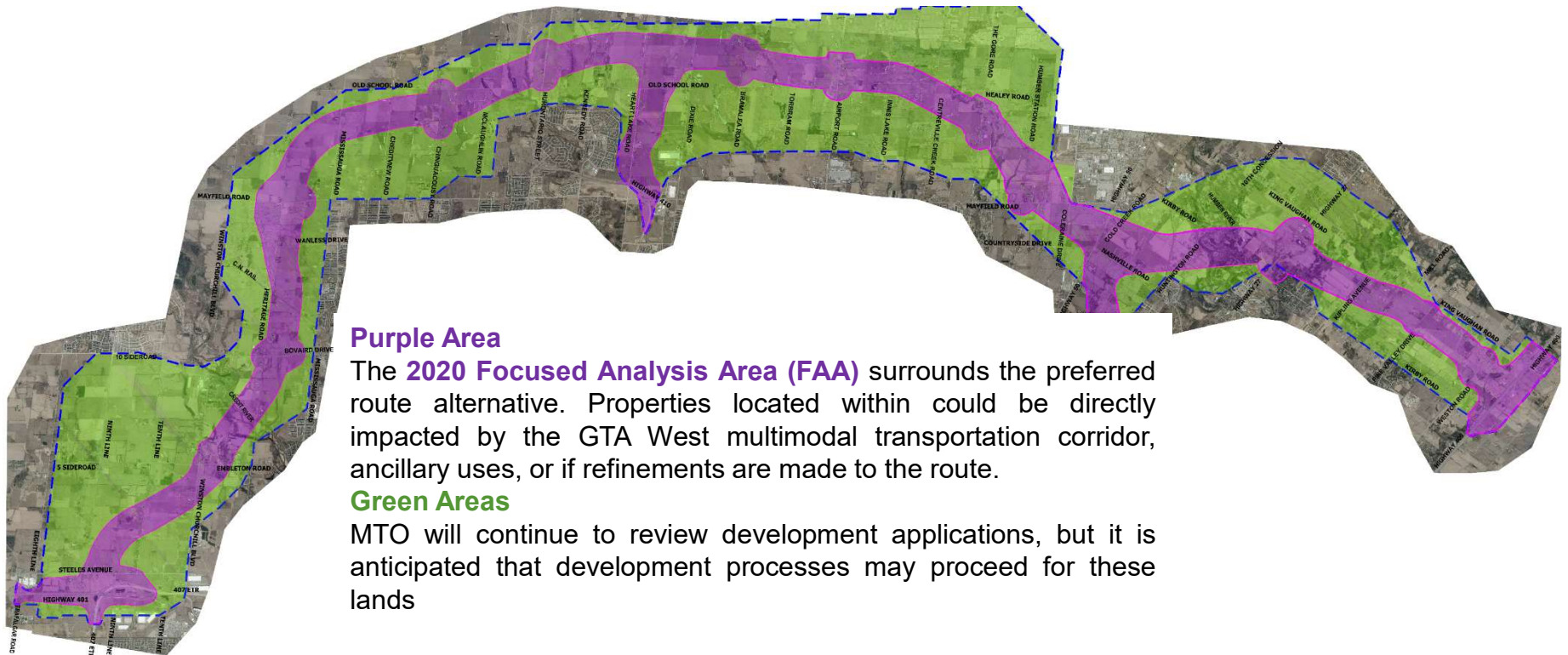


# Preferred Route – August 2020



- On August 7, 2020 the Preferred Route and 2020 Focused Analysis Area were confirmed and announced. The Preferred Route incorporates feedback received from Indigenous partners, stakeholders and the public as well as new land use and environmental information.

# 2020 Focused Analysis Area (FAA)



## Purple Area

The **2020 Focused Analysis Area (FAA)** surrounds the preferred route alternative. Properties located within could be directly impacted by the GTA West multimodal transportation corridor, ancillary uses, or if refinements are made to the route.

## Green Areas

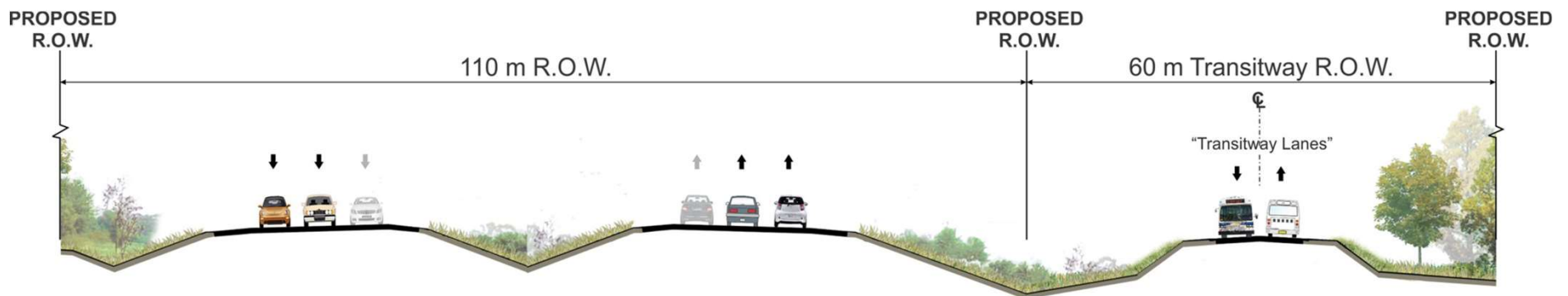
MTO will continue to review development applications, but it is anticipated that development processes may proceed for these lands

- The FAA has now been refined based on feedback from PIC #2, input from Indigenous communities, stakeholder input, updated land use and environmental information. The 2020 FAA defines which properties continue to be within an area of interest as the study progresses.



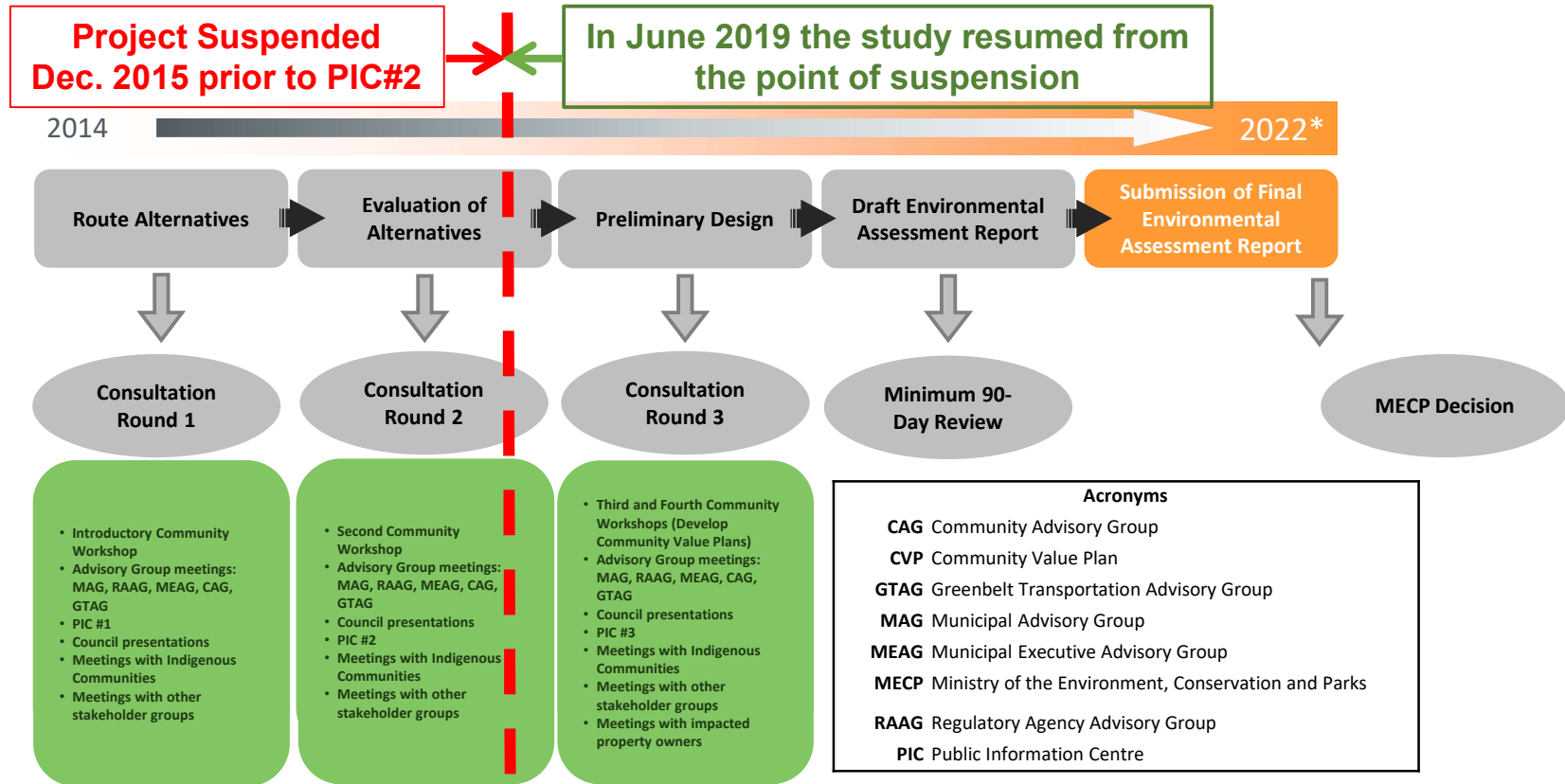
# The GTA West Multimodal Corridor

- The multimodal transportation corridor will initially be designed as a 4 to 6 lane highway with a separate adjacent transitway
- The total proposed right-of-way (ROW) will be 170m through straight section of the Highway.



- Other features of the corridor include: interchange at all key municipal arterial roads, freeway to freeway connections at 400, 427, 410, and 401/407ETR, commuter parking lots, commuter vehicle inspection facilities and opportunities for future service center locations.

# GTA West EA – Stage 2 Consultation Process



\*Submission of EA to MECP is anticipated to be by the end of 2022

All feedback received (email, telephone line, in-person, letters and forms) forms part of the study record.

# EA Consultation

- Meaningful stakeholder and Indigenous consultation is important in shaping the outcome of this study. The Project Team has developed a comprehensive consultation program that is:
  - Providing stakeholders with access to study information in a timely manner that enables them to provide input and participate in a meaningful way.
  - Engaging the broader community and considering all input and differing points of view.
  - Promoting a cooperative and productive consultation environment that recognizes the value of dialogue and that everyone may not agree with every decision.
  - Using innovative strategies and methods to maximize outreach and engagement.
- It includes Public Information Centres, Community Workshops, as well as meetings with municipal and agency staff, members of the public and Indigenous communities.
- A key element of the consultation program involves the development of Community Value Plans in consultation with members of the local communities and Indigenous communities.
  - The Community Value Plans are being developed during the preliminary design phase and will feature context sensitive design that will transform community goals and expectations into concrete design proposals. The CVP will consider design elements such as: landscaping, trails, wildlife crossings, commemoration of heritage sites, etc.

# Greenbelt Impacts

- The Greenbelt Plan permits existing, expanded or new infrastructure in the Greenbelt provided that the infrastructure serves the significant growth and economic development expected in southern Ontario beyond the Greenbelt.
- A GTA West corridor crossing of the Greenbelt cannot be avoided in some parts of the study area since Greenbelt designated lands run the entire width of the study area in locations such as the Humber River Valley and the Credit River Valley.
  - One of the key considerations in selecting a preferred route was minimizing Greenbelt impacts.
- During Stage 1 of the EA a Guideline *Planning and Design of the GTA West Corridor Through the Greenbelt* was developed to identify key planning and design principles and further recommendations for mitigation measures when crossing areas of the Greenbelt.
  - Recommendations from the Guideline were considered during selection of the Preferred Route and will continue to be implemented during preliminary design of the GTA West multimodal transportation corridor where impacts to Greenbelt areas are unavoidable.

**While crossings of the Greenbelt cannot be fully avoided, the ministry is very carefully considering the impacts and will be developing mitigation measures.**

# Agriculture Impacts

- A new GTA West transportation corridor cannot completely avoid impacting agricultural land in some parts of the study area since this land use is predominant in some sections.
- As part of a rigorous and comprehensive evaluation of the shortlisted route alternatives used to arrive at the Preferred Route, a variety of factors related to agriculture were considered in the evaluation, such as change to access/travel time, loss of agricultural facility, long-term alteration/disruption, etc.
- As we go through the preliminary design phase, we will be undertaking an Agricultural Impact Assessment (or equivalent study) for the Preferred Route and are currently determining the scope of this work while working with Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA).

**While impacts to agricultural lands cannot be avoided, the ministry is undertaking impact assessment and considering further mitigation, compensation and/or enhancement measures during the preliminary design phase of the study.**



# Summary

- The Project Team will continue to consult with York Region staff along with other municipalities, Indigenous Communities and stakeholders as the project advances.
- The Project Team is planning for additional public outreach this spring/summer.
- Next project milestone is late 2021/early 2022, to present preliminary design of the preferred route at Public Information Centre #3 and share with Indigenous communities and stakeholders.
- We welcome your input as the project progresses!

# Project Team Contact Information



A graphic with a light grey background and a black vertical bar on the left. The black bar contains four white icons: a globe, an envelope, a telephone handset, and the Twitter bird. To the left of the black bar are four green rectangular buttons with white text: 'WEBSITE', 'EMAIL', 'TOLL-FREE', and 'TWITTER'. To the right of the black bar, the corresponding contact information is listed in black text.

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**The project team welcomes feedback at any time and responds to all comments received.**