

March 2, 2021

Anjala Puvananathan
Impact Assessment Agency of Canada
Ontario Region
600-55 York Street
Toronto ON M5J 1R7

Sent via email: conor.anderson@canada.ca

Dear Ms. Puvananathan

RE: Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury Comments – Designation Request for the Proposed Bradford Bypass Project under the Impact Assessment Act

We are in receipt of your letter dated February 12, 2021, regarding the designation request for the proposed Hwy 400-404 Link project (Bradford Bypass), under the federal Impact Assessment Act. The following provides the town's comments on the matter.

The proposed Hwy 400-404 Link is a long-planned transportation corridor that will provide a critical inter-regional link between Simcoe County and York Region. The Link is an integral component of the official plans for both regions, the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury, Town of East Gwillimbury and other nearby municipalities. This much-needed addition to inter-regional highway capacity will improve the movement of goods, including agricultural products, grow and retain business investments, and create new investment opportunities throughout the regions.

The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury has consistently supported the Hwy 400-404 Link project and has long advocated for its advancement. Much of the inter-regional traffic noted above presently travels through BWG and overwhelms our local road network. With the advent of the highway we anticipate a significant reduction in traffic congestion, carbon-dioxide emissions, traffic accidents, property damage and health costs.

Staff have reviewed the designation request letter submitted by Ecojustice. The town shares their interest in ensuring that environmental impacts are appropriately mitigated. The town also has an interest in ensuring that the project addresses social, economic and health impacts and that a meaningful public consultation program is conducted.

With those interests in mind, the town is entirely satisfied that all relevant matters will be thoroughly addressed through the work currently being undertaken by the Ministry of Transportation. As very clearly stated on MTO's project website, this work includes:

- an update to the previously-approved Environmental Assessment through the preparation of a preliminary design;
- undertaking a minimum of 15 detailed environmental studies;
- a public consultation program with at least two Public Information Centres and the engagement of local Indigenous Communities; and,
- the issuance of a Transportation Environmental Study Report that will be available for public review.

In our view the provincial process is comprehensive and sufficiently covers the necessary reviews requested by Ecojustice.

We recommend that the Minister not order the designation of the project as it will result with a duplication of work already being undertaken and would unnecessarily delay this critical infrastructure investment.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or require additional information.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Geoff McKnight', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Geoff McKnight, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer