

March 14, 2021

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85 DARIOLE DRIVE
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RE: GTA WEST CORRIDOR/HIGHWAY 413

York Region Environmental Alliance, along with many others, recently wrote to Vaughan Council asking them to reverse the endorsement of the Highway 413 project (letter included). They listened to the people and thankfully withdrew support. Now we ask that York Region Council do the same so we do not keep making one mistake after another.

The underused Hwy 407 was privatized for a mere \$3.1 billion when critics say that more than \$100 billion was invested in it by the province. The Harris government promised that tolls would not rise more than 30% when in fact they have risen by 200%. Instead of doing something to try and reduce tolls so Hwy 407 could actually be fully used, the foolhardy idea is to build Hwy 413. Will Hwy 407 be abandoned when motorists transfer to the free Hwy 413? Except it will hardly be free, costing taxpayers untold billions.



By contrast, the Laurentian Autoroute (A15) extending north from Montreal remained in public ownership and was never privatized. Tolls were moderate and removed when project was paid for. A lesson to be learned here.



Interest groups keen on this project going ahead are critical of 'environmental groups' who are opposed. Yet a strategic plan survey in Richmond Hill found that far and away the most important to all residents - even more so than keeping taxes low - was to PROTECT THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT. Taxpayers and voters need to be listened to.

Our politicians encourage us to shop locally by supporting independent businesses while at the same time endorsing the destruction of wetlands and environmentally sensitive areas to put up Amazon and big box distribution centres. These contradictions are disheartening and worrisome.

As our very own Joni Mitchell once said: 'Don't it always seem to go, that you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone. They paved paradise, put up a parking lot'. (or a highway). Will that be our legacy?

Sincerely
Gloria Marsh, Executive Director
York Region Environmental Alliance
Partnering for a greener planet



85 DARIOLE DRIVE
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March 1, 2021

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Dear Mayor and Council

RE: PLEASE REVERSE ENDORSEMENT OF THE PROPOSED GTA WEST CORRIDOR/HWY 413

Vaughan Council can be credited with listening to the people and this is another instance where we ask you to do the right thing and reverse the endorsement of this completely unnecessary, senseless project.

Do we really want to?:

- Pave over farms, forests, wetlands and a portion of the Greenbelt.
- Build another Highway 15 kms away from the underused Hwy 407.
- Encourage more polluting cars on the road, while doing little to relieve congestion and only saving drivers 1 minute per trip.
- Destroy the Nashville Conservation Area.
- Cost Ontario taxpayers billions thereby leaving less money to invest in crucial public transit.
- Degrade parts of the Credit River and Humber River watersheds that flow into Lake Ontario – a source of drinking water for millions of GTA residents.
- Pave over 2,000 acres of Ontario's most productive farmland when we should be conserving agricultural land to ensure permanent local food security and employment.
- Circumvent a proper Provincial EA and start building before the appropriate Federal Environmental Assessment is completed.

Although the pressure from developers has influenced the Province to make this foolhardy decision, York Region Environmental Alliance does not believe Vaughan Council truly wishes the above outcomes to become a reality. Wiser minds must prevail for the benefit of the people and the environment. Please reconsider and reverse endorsement of this project by joining Mississauga in opposition to Highway 413.

Sincerely

Gloria Marsh, Executive Director
York Region Environmental Alliance

Partnering for a greener planet