



Motion Memorandum

SUBJECT: GTA West Corridor (Highway 413)

TO: Mayor and Members of Council

FROM: Councillor Rory Nisan, Ward 3

Date to Committee: N/A

Date to Council: April 19, 2022

Motion for Council to Consider:

1. Whereas the Province of Ontario initiated an Environment Assessment process in 2007 for the planning and construction of the proposed Highway 413; and,
2. Whereas the final recommendation of the Stage 1 Provincial Environmental Assessment (2012) was to first put in place the transportation system management components, rapid transit, freight rail improvements and expansion of existing highways prior to construction of a new expressway; and,
3. Whereas the Stage 2 Environmental Assessment (new expressway) undertaken by the previous provincial government was shelved because of strong objections by an Expert Panel in the fields of rural development, renewable cities, agriculture, environment, and efficient transportation who sounded alarms over predicted irreversible ecological harm caused by the uncontrolled, low density urban sprawl enabled by the Corridor; and,
4. Whereas the current Provincial Government revived the \$6+ billion Highway 413 proposal in 2018, saying it could relieve congestion issues in the fast-growing Toronto suburbs and boost Ontario's economy; and,
5. Whereas a significant number of reputable organizations have demanded cancellation of the Highway 413 project, including: Environmental Defense, the David Suzuki Foundation, the Federation of Urban Neighborhoods, Gravel Watch, Halton Environmental Network, National Farmers' Union-Ontario, Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition, Transport Action Ontario, Greenbelt Council; as well as formal opposition of Councils from the municipalities of Halton Hills, Caledon, Orangeville, Vaughan, Brampton, Mississauga, King and the City of Toronto; and,
6. Whereas the Federal Government has decided to conduct an Impact Assessment study for the proposed Highway 413; and,

AGRICULTURE

7. Whereas Ontario farming and food processing together employ one million persons and generate over \$35 billion economic benefits annually; and,
8. Whereas the Greater Golden Horseshoe is the third largest agricultural producer in North America after California and Chicago; and,
9. Whereas the Province of Ontario is proposing to develop the Highway 413 by razing 809 hectares of pristine farmlands, some of which are Class A and Class B farmlands and many of which will immediately cease to be farmed and other lands which over time will be developed for non-agricultural uses; and,
10. Whereas the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs has not completed an Agricultural Impact Assessment for the proposed Highway 413; and,

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

11. Whereas the proposed Highway 413 will cut across 85 waterways, and destroy protected Greenbelt lands including 7 entire woodlots, 220 important wetlands and valley land features, 10 different species-at-risk and hundreds of acres of vulnerable wildlife habitat; and,
12. Whereas the Greenbelt Plan's permission for new infrastructure which negatively impacts key natural heritage features, key hydrologic features or key hydrologic areas requires determination that there is "no reasonable alternative" and that this has not been established through a planning process; and,
13. Whereas the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), which is the regulatory authority for developments in flood plains, wetlands, and valley lands, has also raised concerns about the potential impact of the proposed Highway 413 as well as the streamlined Environmental Assessment process; and,

GREENHOUSE GASES

14. Whereas the City of Burlington has declared a climate emergency and approved a Climate Action Plan with a target to be a net carbon neutral community by 2050;
15. Whereas responding to the climate emergency requires immediate re-evaluation of all transportation plans as the transportation sector is the highest single source of emissions; and,
16. Whereas the Province must take immediate measures to decrease GHGs through alternatives such as increasing public transit, including the necessary local public transit networks, to enable broad access to the higher order transit including high-speed electric trains; and,

INDUCED DEMAND AND ROAD ALTERNATIVES

17. Whereas the Highway 407 was created as a truck by-pass in order to relieve congestion on Highway 401, but the Highway 407 was tolled, thereby limiting the amount of relief provided by the Highway 407; and,

18. Whereas it is well known that, as new road capacity (lane-km) is constructed, traffic demand grows to fill this capacity by the phenomenon known as “induced demand”, resulting in roads that are as congested as they were prior to the expansion of the road; and,

19. Whereas several reasonable highway network management alternatives to the proposed Highway 413 exist and were recommended by the Expert Panel, including possible subsidies or congestion pricing that would shift truck traffic to the under-utilized Highway 407; and,

TRANSIT ALTERNATIVES AND TRANSIT ORIENTED COMMUNITIES

20. Whereas the proposed Highway 413 will allocate limited Provincial funds to the movement of vehicular traffic instead of much needed transit investments for complete transit-oriented communities; and,

21. Whereas transit investments and good land use planning decisions are vital to creating complete transit-oriented communities which are economically vibrant, where people and goods are moved seamlessly, and where multiple modes of transportation support the community including a focus on active transportation; and,

22. Whereas the proposed Highway 413 will lead to greater demand for development with more than 13,350 hectares of Whitebelt lands in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Caledon and Vaughan) being impacted, leading to greater urban sprawl and development that is not supportive of transit investment; and,

23. Whereas analysis has shown (<https://ontario.transportation.ca>) that investment in various unfunded rapid transit projects, including GO Transit, 407 Transitway and LRT/BRT projects which can move 4-10 times the number of people as the proposed Highway 413, for the same invested dollars; and,

24. Whereas the 407 Transitway has been planned for decades but has no approved funding for its construction; and,

25. Whereas the City of Burlington has consistently supported development of the transit-oriented communities, to support long term inter-regional transportation solutions and to enhance integration of our existing communities and supported rail integrated communities along both the GO Transit rail lines and the 407 rail transitway; and,

26. Whereas uncontrolled urban growth threatens these resources and is widely seen to embed unsustainable infrastructure maintenance costs, deepen traffic congestion

problems, increase transportation-related emissions of greenhouse gases and smog precursors, and reinforce social divisions; and,

27. Whereas planning and infrastructure decisions affect the shape of communities for decades, even centuries to come; and,

28. Whereas Transit Oriented Communities (TOC) positively contribute toward more environmentally friendly and economically sustainable communities, reduce the reliance on car-dependent trips for all members of the community, therefore reducing Vehicle Kilometers Travelled (VKT) and reducing the high costs of auto ownership thus contributing to achieving affordable housing outcomes; and,

29. Whereas strategic land-use planning requires public policy that communicates TOCs as integral to a community's long-term vision with supportive official plan and zoning provisions that facilitate density and mixed land use; and,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That Burlington City Council does not support the proposed Highway 413 at this time; and,

And Further That Burlington City Council continues to support an integrated GTHA rail transit network which includes high speed rapid rail transit running beside the Highway 407 (407 Transitway); and,

That Burlington City Council supports a complete Federal Environmental Impact Study pursuant to s.9(1) of the Impact Assessment Act (I.A.A.), prior to any advancement of the proposed Highway 413 project; and,

That Burlington City Council requests that the Province undertake an economic evaluation and time travel analysis of Highway 407 versus the proposed Highway 413 including the potential for congestion and non-peak hour pricing or other highway management alternatives; and,

That Burlington City Council requests the Province of Ontario work with 407 International Inc. to devise strategies to increase 407 ETR usage and enforce penalties provided to encourage efforts at congestion relief on the 401 Hwy and all surrounding roads; and

That the capital cost for the proposed 413 Hwy be re-designated to the expansion of long term, environmentally sustainable rapid transit throughout the GTA; and

That Burlington City Council recommends that the Province undertake a comprehensive economic benefits analysis of the potential for TOCs along the 407 Transitway, GO Rail Transit Network and new LRT/BRT lines versus the cost of urban sprawl triggered by the proposed Highway 413; and,

That the Province undertake an integrated review of the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan to develop a sustainable communities strategy to provide consistent and comprehensive policies for achieving affordable housing near TOC stations. This should include policies to support intensification within the Built-Up Area, particularly within MTSA's and along high frequency (15 minutes or less, peak hour) bus transit; and,

That the Province must also update its affordable housing program to recognize the relationship between housing affordability and transit including the positive role of having housing near rail transit TOC stations to improve the operational efficiency of the Provincial investment in mass rail transit; and,

That Ontarians need serious, transparent, and accountable infrastructure planning processes, based on clear and consistent rules designed to advance the environmental, social, and economic sustainability of their communities; and,

That a copy of this resolution be provided to the Regions of York, Peel and Halton, the Cities of Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Brampton, Mississauga, Toronto and the Towns of Milton, Caledon, and Halton Hills; and further,

That this resolution be forwarded to: Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario; Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance; Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation; Kinga Surman, Minister of Infrastructure and Transit-Oriented Communities; David Piccini, Minister of Environment and Climate Change; Stan Cho, Associate Minister of Transportation (GTA); Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; Lisa Thompson, Minister of the Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; Victor Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade; Andrea Horwath, Leader of the Official Opposition & Ontario NDP Party; Steven Del Duca, Leader of the Ontario Liberal Party; All Members of Federal Parliament in Halton Region; All Members of Provincial Parliament in Halton; All Members of Halton Regional Council; All Town Clerks in Halton Region; Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada; Chrystia Freeland, Federal Minister of Finance; Omar Alghabra, Federal Minister of Transport; Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food; Melanie Joly, Federal Minister of Economic Development; Dominic LeBlanc, Federal Minister of Infrastructure and Communities; Jonathan Wilkinson, Federal Minister of Natural Resources; Steven Guilbeault, Federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change; Wayne Emmerson, Chairman and CEO, York Region; John Mackenzie, CEO, Toronto And Region Conservation Authority; Phil Verster, President and CEO, Metrolinx.

Reason:

The construction of Highway 413 is not required and will have devastating impact on critical agricultural land, sensitive waterways and protected Greenbelt lands and conservations areas, and will lead to significant increases in GHG emissions.

Outcome Sought:

That Highway 413 does not proceed and that the funding allocated for the proposed Highway 413 is redirected to fund more rapid transit projects throughout the GTA such as the 407 Transitway and improved GO service.

Vision to Focus Alignment:

(check those that apply)

- Increase economic prosperity and community responsive city growth
- Improve integrated city mobility
- Support sustainable infrastructure and a resilient environment
- Building more citizen engagement, community health and culture
- Deliver customer centric services with a focus on efficiency and technology transformation

Motion Seconded by: Councillor Angelo Bentivegna, Ward 6
Share with Senior Staff

Approved as per form by the City Clerk,

Reviewed by the City Manager - In accordance with the Code of Good Governance, Council-Staff Relations Policy and an assessment of the internal capacity within the City to complete the work based on a specific target date (quarter/year).

Comments:

City Clerk: none

City Manager: none