

Subject: FW: Stop Highway 413 - A concerned citizen

From: Iskren Mihaylov [REDACTED]
Sent: February 23, 2021 12:42 PM
To: Crombie, Bonnie <mayor@mississauga.ca>; Carlson, George <george.carlson@mississauga.ca>; ZYG-COUNCIL <zzyg-council@peelregion.ca>; Iannicca, Nando <nando.iannicca@peelregion.ca>; Omar.Alghabra@parl.gc.ca;
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To Mayor Crombie, George Carlson, and others. My name is Iskren Mihaylov and I have been a resident of Ward 11 for 17 years. I'm writing to you all to express my grave concern over the plan to move forward with Highway 413. The construction of this highway will rob us of the last remaining swaths of undeveloped land in the GTA at the cost of an estimated 60 seconds saved per commute. The proposed route will pave over farms, forests, wetlands and a portion of the Greenbelt costing taxpayers an estimated \$6 and \$10 billion dollars. The loss of over 2000 acres of Ontario's most productive farmland will be devastating. Not to mention the damage to local watersheds that flow into Lake Ontario, our largest source of freshwater that millions of us rely on. We need to prioritize our budget to build transit, address infrastructure deficits and protect and restore natural areas and farmland throughout the regions which would be negatively impacted by this highway. I'm devastated that we lack the foresight to provide a better future for Ontarians.

Right now Highway 407 (another toll highway) is significantly underused. Yet the province is proposing to build another east-west toll highway just 15 km away. This is despite a sustained drop in traffic volume during the pandemic, in part due to loss of work and work-from-home. These work and traffic trends are expected to continue well beyond this immediate health crisis. In addition, there are a number of local, regional, provincial and federal policies which discourage if not outright dismiss the idea of building more highways as a solution to current challenges. This includes policies on urban densification, protection of our Greenbelt and prime farmland, building a "Smart City", building modern transit and cycling infrastructure, increasing the modal split for transit and active travel while reducing car dependency and, most crucially, acting on climate change and setting strict emission reductions targets. The urgency of climate change has been further emphasized by governments across Canada declaring a "Climate Emergency" - including our own. Building a new highway gets more polluting cars on the road, and usually does nothing to relieve congestion over time. The concept of "induced demand", seen in highway projects all over the world, confirms this (resource: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2z7o3sRxA5g>). In fact, an expert panel study found the highway would only save drivers 30-60 seconds per trip (resource:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20190618163558/http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/publications/gta-west-report/executive-summary.shtml#conc>). Such infrastructure neither benefits the environment or the economy, while shifting away from urgent priorities such as transit, cycling facilities and infrastructure maintenance and repair. Collectively, there is a strong case against Highway 413, and it's time Mississauga Council come "off the fence" and stand in opposition with residents and experts (resource: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/editorials/article-ontarios-proposed-highway-413-is-a-6-billion-sprawl-accelerator/>) concerned for our environment, our economy and the legacy we are leaving for generations to come. It's time for our actions to match our words - our policies and our declaration of a climate emergency. I am fully opposed to the construction of the GTA West Highway, and urge Council to pass a resolution stating the same. I am also in full support of Councillor Parrish's Motion to reject the GTA West Highway as well as pursue a full Provincial and Federal EA, should the project still proceed. I look forward to Council considering my feedback as well as the resources included in this email. Let's prioritize a sustainable Mississauga while showing leadership and solidarity with our neighbouring cities, towns and regions.

Sincerely, Iskren Mihaylov

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