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**March 6, 2021**

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**Sent:** March 6, 2021 11:08 PM

**To:** ZZG-COUNCIL <[zzg-council@peelregion.ca](mailto:zzg-council@peelregion.ca)>; Iannicca, Nando <[nando.iannicca@peelregion.ca](mailto:nando.iannicca@peelregion.ca)>

**Cc:** ZZG-RegionalClerk <[zzg-regionalclerk@peelregion.ca](mailto:zzg-regionalclerk@peelregion.ca)>

**Subject:** GTA West 413 Highway

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[REDACTED]

Brampton, ON, [REDACTED]

March 6, 2021

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Good afternoon Chair Iannicca, Peel Mayors, and Peel Region Councillors,

It is important, for many reasons, to give serious thought to the issue of the GTA West Highway 413. It is my hope that you will consider the implications of continuing to follow Twentieth Century practices in the Twenty-First Century and beyond.

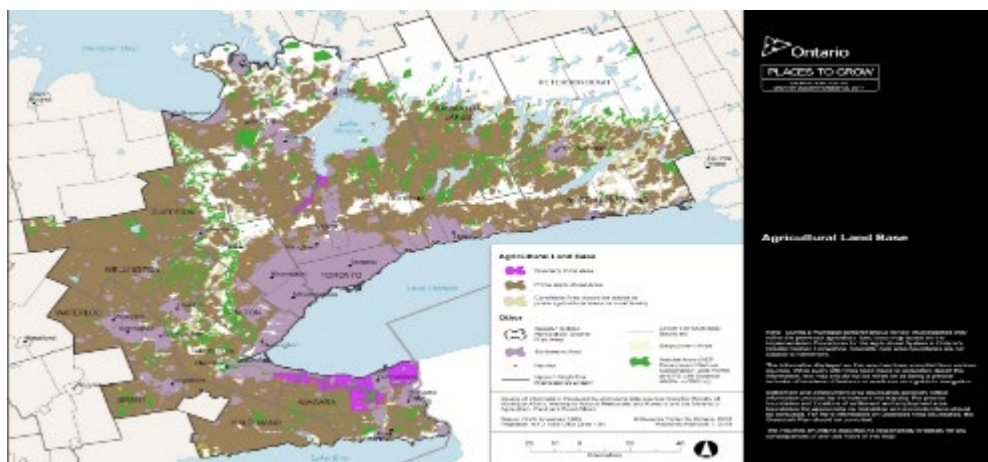
CLIMATE CHANGE: First and foremost, climate change is the issue of the millennium to consider. We are still, after decades of discussion and study, on track to severely and irrevocably alter our global climate, and reduce our own species to a mere shadow of its former self, not to mention millions of other innocent species. Is it okay to ruin the only habitable planet in the solar system, and beyond? Anything that prolongs the use of fossil fuels is dangerous and wrong. Building a \$6... 8? billion highway is definitely included. If we are keen to spend that money, perhaps we should be spending it on ways to avoid future use of ICE cars and trucks, for example we should be investing in trains, LRTs, cycle paths and bike lanes. Perhaps, also, we



should better use what has already been built. The 407 Highway is generally underused. Some of the money could be used to subsidize trucking on that toll road. (It's unfortunate that it was sold, instead of being kept for the people of Ontario.)

**AIR POLLUTION:** There have been multiple studies done on the effects of highways, internal combustion engines, both gas and diesel, and air pollution on people, as well as on traffic congestion. Health Canada has estimated that 14,500 premature deaths occur yearly in Canada, due to air pollution. Much of that is from traffic emissions, with the residents living closest to the highways suffering more than others.

**FARMLAND PAVED OVER:**



The white areas are human designations, “Places to Grow”, but they are still part of the prime farmland which continues to be paved over, in spite of an effort to maintain green space and natural areas in the Greenbelt area, which is not included in this map.

In my first year of my Agriculture degree at University of Guelph, in 1974, my Soil Science professor lamented, with great sadness, the loss of prime southern Ontario farmland to development. Since then, the development has only accelerated.

**GREENBELT REDUCTION:** The Greenbelt is supposed to be preserving farmland, natural areas, and wildlife corridors for the future, but the provincial



government is determined to strip away the Greenbelt designation from the swath of land set aside for the 413 Highway. Once this is done, areas all around the highway will be under great pressure to be further developed. There has been little indication, from my point of view, that developers have begun to embrace sustainability, conservation or minimalism, in the interest of saving our planet from climate change, and our province from food scarcity.

**GREENBELT "EXPANSION":** The recent announcement of expansion of the Greenbelt by the provincial government leads me, among others, to wonder what the real agenda is. Of course, expansion of the Greenbelt is necessary, but if "expansion" just means adding to the Greenbelt in one area, while you reduce it in another, what is the gain? Also, if it is protected for a decade only, what is the point of calling it protected?

“Only a white man would believe you could cut a foot off the top of a blanket, sew it to the bottom, and have a longer blanket.” -Unknown

This quotation is in reference to Daylight Saving Time, but it is applicable here too.

**FLOODING:** Forests and other ground cover, and ice age gravel deposits, known as moraines, all help to capture and filter rainwater, to recharge the valuable groundwater tables. Pavement doesn't. Pavement allows rainwater to rush downhill into storm sewers and rivers, carrying all sorts of pollutants and detritus into our surface water systems. The more highways and sprawling subdivisions we build, the faster the rainwater will rush into the rivers.

The difficult part of this is that our climate is changing, giving us greater rainfall events, which are causing increases in floods. Paving over more land is not going to help.

**INCREASED SPRAWL:** The building of the 413 Highway will encourage more sprawl. It has come to the realization of many that intensification is the way to go, and not spreading over our precious natural areas and farmland. There are many areas in the communities around the GTA that could undergo



intensification, with the intention of making walkable, bike-able, mixed neighbourhoods, with commercial areas and public transit. The mold of late 20<sup>th</sup> Century subdivisions must be broken, while we still have some land and natural resources left in this area of Ontario.

HERITAGE HEIGHTS: This newest community in Brampton has many of the aforementioned forward-thinking features designed into it. This is a very good thing. The proposed 413 Highway would cut a swath right through it, cutting it in two. This would be unhealthy and undesirable for the future residents, and diametrically opposed to the design of the community.

WILDLIFE HABITAT/CORRIDORS: Studies of wildlife show that cutting a habitat in half, with, say, a highway, reduces the carrying capacity to much less than half of the animals in each area. Each cut separates populations and reduces their chances of survival. It is serious. We need to remember that we are part of nature, and as dependent as the other species are, on the web of life. Every new construction project, from now on, must be studied carefully before committing to it. That is the purpose of Environmental Assessments. They must not be considered as rubber stamps, or useless red tape.

It is actually and critically necessary for all of us to be willing to find sustainable ways to live our lives. We are in a deep hole, and the first thing we must all do is to stop digging.

For these reasons, I am asking the Councillors, Mayors and Chair of the Region of Peel to oppose the construction of the GTA West Highway 413, and to request a full federal Environmental Assessment.

Thank you for your attention.

Regards,



Pauline Thornham

[REDACTED]

Brampton, ON, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Health Impacts of Air Pollution in Canada

Estimates of morbidity and premature mortality outcomes 2019 Report

[http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2019/sc-hc/H144-51-2019-eng.pdf](http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2019/sc-hc/H144-51-2019-eng.pdf)

Greenbelt Overview Map

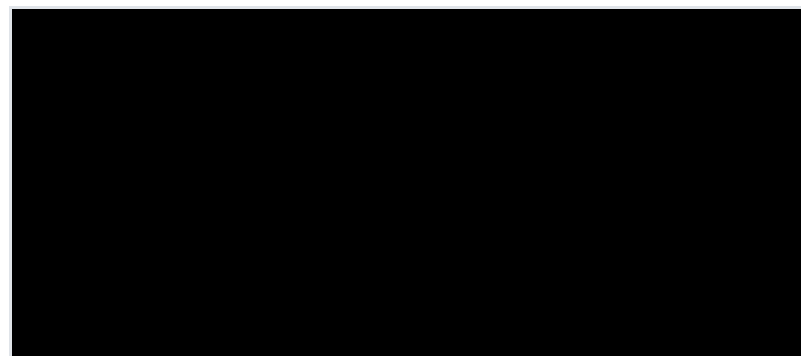
<https://files.ontario.ca/on-2019/mmah-greenbeltmaps-en-1-schedule-1-greenbelt-area.pdf>

The National Wildlife Federation

Habitat Loss

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<https://www.nwf.org/Educational-Resources/Wildlife-Guide/Threats-to-Wildlife/Habitat-Loss>



#### **Habitat Loss | National Wildlife Federation**

Habitat loss—due to destruction, fragmentation, or degradation of habitat—is the primary threat to the survival ...