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Sent: Saturday, March 06, 2021 1:18 PM
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Cc: Sherry Draisey [REDACTED] Tony Malfara [REDACTED] >
Subject: [External] Stop the 413 - GTA West Corridor

I would like to express my appreciation to Vaughan Councillors who voted to WITHDRAW their support for the GTA West – Highway 413 because they chose to practise real democracy by LISTENING to their constituents. Or perhaps, these councillors are just better at calculating the real costs of this highway (which will easily exceed the anticipated budget of \$6-billion, as government projects usually do.)

Will building yet another toll highway just north of the 407-toll route really relieve congestion? NO, it will just convert already SCARCE farmland and natural areas to more pavement and future infilling, guaranteeing that traffic will always exceed the capacity of any new highway, while depleting important ‘greenspace’. You know ... those areas where trees release oxygen, while forests and wetlands filter water and provide natural flood control, simultaneously providing recreational opportunities and natural habitat? Left to their own devices, those ecosystems provide these essential services for free, and all life is dependent upon them.

As Tom Maziarz, Chief Planner at the Connecticut Department of Transportation once stated: "The question is how do you relieve congestion and then prevent future overwhelming of that additional facility? You can't build your way out of congestion, so we're trying to combine it with a multimodal strategy that improves rail service, as well."

Perhaps Canada's Minister of Environment and Climate Change agrees with Tony Maziarz because he recently approved the CN Logistics Hub in Milton, acknowledging the project's negative environmental impacts while also noting:

"By 2030, freight emissions are expected to surpass passenger emissions in Canada. Since trucks generate four times more greenhouse gas emissions than trains, rail represents an environmentally responsible way to move goods. It's been well-documented that a single intermodal train removes up to 300 long-haul trucks from our clogged highways. Since it would serve four trains daily, CN's Milton facility would in effect remove more than 400,000 trucks annually from our roadways, significantly reducing greenhouse gas and other emissions. (As a

result of CN's existing network, more than two million trucks are removed each year from Canadian highways.)"

The fundamental law of road congestion applies to any highway, summarized thus — you cannot build your way out of traffic jams. Building more highway capacity leads to more traffic, as people who might otherwise avoid the road are instead attracted by the added capacity. Community roads are widened to connect to new highways, so opportunities to cycle or walk diminish because it becomes increasingly unsafe to do so.

Economists call it “induced demand”, which refers to the various inter-connected (unanticipated or ignored) effects that cause new roads to quickly fill up with traffic. In rapidly growing areas where roads are seldom designed for the growing population, there may be a great deal of **latent (or hidden) demand** for new road capacity, causing more new drivers to take the new route, once opened, quickly clogging those lanes.

The province, the regions, and the municipalities continue to ignore the deleterious effects of induced demand in their long-term planning. Yet, the public and their elected representatives ought to be able to see the **“writing on the rapidly-multiplying sound barrier walls”** being erected between widened highways and nearby communities. That’s noise protection, but there is no protection from the pollution and sub micron-sized particles released by wear and tear on asbestos-lined brake pads, tires, and pavement abrasion caused by all that traffic. Those particles are breathed deeply into lungs, creating rising health costs.

Induced demand can be affected by tolls. We know that Highway 407 is under-utilized due to the very high tolls, and the highway operator holds a confidential 99-year lease agreement (expiring in 2098) which sets a contractual minimum standard of capacity. We don’t know how low the minimum is, but it is low enough that the operators don’t care about all the trucks (and cars) that avoid Highway 407 due to the high costs. The 407 got a sweet deal, almost a licence to print its own money. Time to renegotiate those tolls, especially since the Investment Board of the Canada Pension Plan became the majority shareholder of the 407 recently.

There are better ways than highways.

Regards,

Vicki Hotte, [REDACTED] 7th Concession, King [REDACTED]