



# STOP THE 413 NOW

Briefing to MPPs  
Summer 2022



# WHO WE ARE



We are a grassroots community organization with members across the GTA working together to put a **stop** to the destructive and costly HWY 413, which cuts through valuable farmland, the "Greenbelt", and the many headwaters of four watersheds. Our focus is to **promote** more timely alternatives and better use of tax dollars.

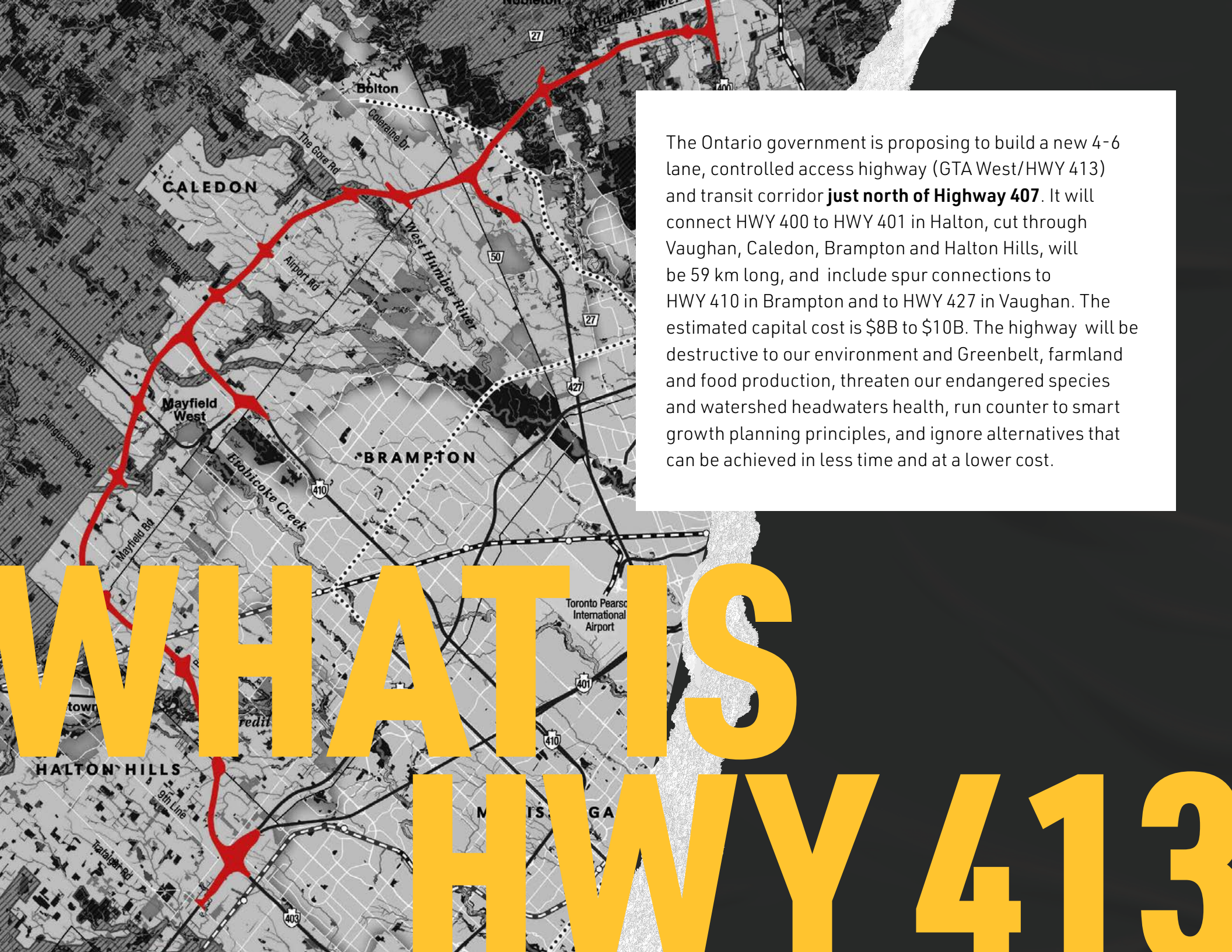
[stopthe413now.ca](http://stopthe413now.ca)

Follow us on social:  
[@STOPthe413NOW](https://twitter.com/STOPthe413NOW)



[info@stopthe413now.ca](mailto:info@stopthe413now.ca)





The Ontario government is proposing to build a new 4-6 lane, controlled access highway (GTA West/HWY 413) and transit corridor **just north of Highway 407**. It will connect HWY 400 to HWY 401 in Halton, cut through Vaughan, Caledon, Brampton and Halton Hills, will be 59 km long, and include spur connections to HWY 410 in Brampton and to HWY 427 in Vaughan. The estimated capital cost is \$8B to \$10B. The highway will be destructive to our environment and Greenbelt, farmland and food production, threaten our endangered species and watershed headwaters health, run counter to smart growth planning principles, and ignore alternatives that can be achieved in less time and at a lower cost.

# WHAT IS HWY 413

# STATUS OF THE PROJECT

Planning for the 413 corridor started in the mid 2000's, however was suspended in 2015 and shelved in 2018 by the Wynne government. The project was resurrected by the Ford government and the route is currently undergoing a Provincial Environmental Assessment (EA) by the Ministry of Transportation Ontario (MTO). It has also been designated by the Federal Government under the Impact Assessment Act (IAA) in May 2021.

**The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada is waiting for the province to submit their Initial Project Description (IPD) for HWY 413.** It is unknown when the province/proponent will provide this. Once the IPD is submitted, the Agency will post the IPD to the registry and invite the public and Indigenous groups to participate in a comment period. Once the period has ended the Agency will create an Impact Assessment Report and submit to the Federal Minister, who will determine if the adverse effects are within federal jurisdiction and if the adverse effects are in the public interest.



# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS



The highway will pave over farms, forests, wetlands, 400 acres of the Greenbelt, negatively impact the headwaters of four watersheds, including the Federally designated Heritage Humber River, destroy the Nashville Conservation Reserve, negatively impact at least **2 endangered and 29 species at-risk**, impact several highly vulnerable aquifers and significant groundwater recharge & wellhead protection areas, extract millions of tonnes of new aggregate from surrounding communities, and create a decade or more of disruption, noise, dust and additional truck traffic during construction.



### **SPECIES AT RISK CRITICAL HABITAT LOSS:**

Highway 413 would be a disaster for Southern Ontario's endangered species. The project would destroy around 1000 hectares (nearly 2,500 acres) of significant natural areas, including Greenbelt land and the Nashville Conservation Reserve. It would cross streams and rivers an estimated 85 times, contaminating those rivers with every crossing.

According to Environmental Defence's analysis, HWY 413 would negatively impact approximately 29 at-risk and endangered species, including 2 endangered species (Redside Dace and the Rapids Clubtail), and over 100 protected species of birds.

[Read More Here](#)

### **VITAL FARMLAND LOSS:**

According to the 2021 Census Data, Ontario is losing 319 acres/day of our food growing farmland because of sprawl, which is a sharp increase from previous census data in 2016. Can we afford to pave over thousands of acres of Class 1 and Class 2 (most productive) farmland for the highway, and spur on even more sprawl, if growing food locally is important to Ontario?

[Read More Here](#)



### **SOURCE WATER THREATENED:**

The proposed alignments transects Highly Vulnerable Aquifers, Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas in the Regional Municipality of Peel and York, and a Wellhead Protection Area for quality and quantity in York Region. The highway will contribute more salt to our aquifers, streams and drinking water.

[Read More Here](#)





### **NASHVILLE CONSERVATION RESERVE AND GREENSPACE LOSS:**

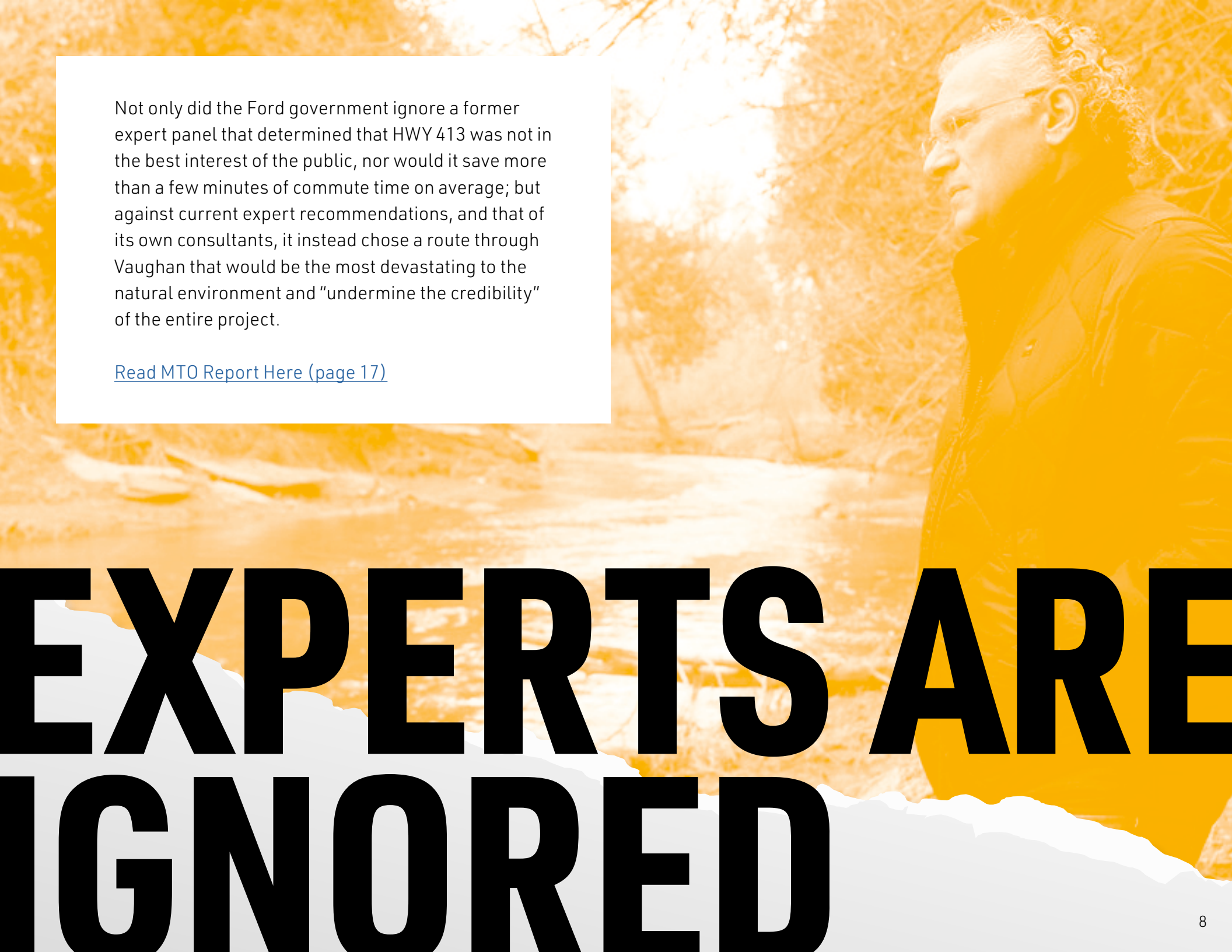
The pandemic has highlighted the importance of our public greenspaces, not just for species at risk, but also for people's mental health. Is it acceptable to lose one of the few remaining public Conservation Areas in the GTA (Nashville Conservation Reserve (NCR)) for the highway? This reserve is a 900 + hectare property that supports a variety of wildlife, provides significant deer wintering yards, is an important migratory corridor, and it's current and future ecological value make NCR an integral part of our region's natural heritage system.

### **INCREASED NOISE, DUST AND LOSS OF QUALITY OF LIFE:**

Research & analysis has shown that building HWY 413 & the Bradford Bypass will require approximately 3 million tonnes of new aggregate, and will increase truck traffic within affected communities by over 130,000 truckloads during construction. Several communities within the 905 region are more at risk of becoming the future source of the highways' aggregate because of their proximity to the proposed routes of the highways, the amount of potential aggregate available, and concentration of existing permits within particular areas.

[Read More Here](#)





Not only did the Ford government ignore a former expert panel that determined that HWY 413 was not in the best interest of the public, nor would it save more than a few minutes of commute time on average; but against current expert recommendations, and that of its own consultants, it instead chose a route through Vaughan that would be the most devastating to the natural environment and “undermine the credibility” of the entire project.

[Read MTO Report Here \(page 17\)](#)

# EXPERTS ARE IGNORED



# MISINFORMATION ABOUTS

The Ford government has been promoting the highway as the solution for GTA traffic congestion. However, **congestion is rarely relieved over time by building new non-toll highways.**

The phenomenon of induced demand, where drivers change their behaviour and drive more often or longer distances, means that the extra highway capacity is quickly used up, leaving congestion levels as bad as before. This is well documented in dozens of studies.

The Ministry of Transportation has been promoting commuter time savings of 30 minutes which is a misrepresentation of the facts. It has used skewed inputs for an analysis that results in unrealistic outcomes for the majority of commuters in the GTA [\(only 8% of drivers will use the entire route, with most only travelling 19 km with savings of 6 min over HWY 401\) \(Page 8\)](#). Highway completion is many years off (likely 10 + years) and will result in many years of construction noise, dust, and disturbance

to those living in the affected areas with little real time savings for the majority of commuters.

**Regional reports have confirmed that the new highway will result in the need for expansion of surrounding regional roads** to deal with the traffic expected to enter and exit this new highway, in addition to what will be needed to accommodate the resulting development around the highway. The regional road expansion expenses will be borne by the property tax base in our communities.

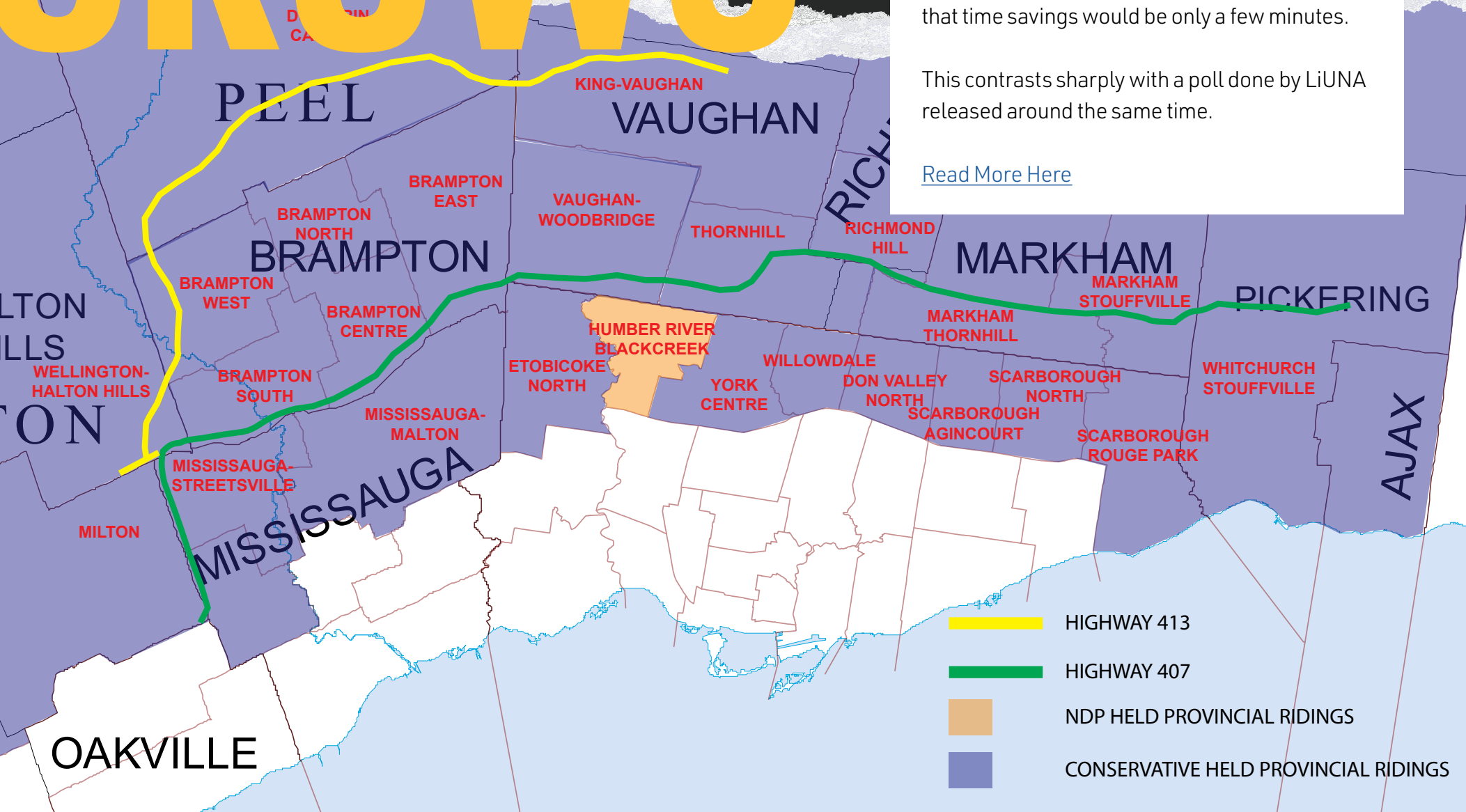
**Better rapid public transit connecting nodes of walkable, diverse communities is the model for smart growth.** It is well recognized that highways are for cars, they create a toxic noise and air quality environment, divide and create more car dependent communities. There is a need for highways, but they are not the best way to support growing our communities.

# OPPOSITION GROWS

Toronto, Vaughan, Mississauga, Halton Hills, Halton and Peel Region have **all voted to oppose the highway**. A poll by EKOS conducted in December 2021 found that almost half of GTA respondents (49%) are opposed to HWY 413, with less than a third of respondents (29%) in support of it and support plummeting when told that time savings would be only a few minutes.

This contrasts sharply with a poll done by LiUNA released around the same time.

[Read More Here](#)





# BETTER TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

**With 2 million people moving to York, Peel and Halton Regions over the next 30 years**, there is a need to add more transportation capacity both for people and for freight.

**Highway 407 is the most expensive, underutilized highway in North America** (currently running well below capacity). It is a public injustice that Highway 407 is now mainly the domain of wealthy individuals, putting undue stress on the 401 and surrounding regional roads. This highway was created with taxpayer money, already having caused many negative impacts to the environment and surrounding communities, to provide an east-west corridor for commuters and trucks. Operations were then outsourced in a 99-year concession agreement. Its original purpose has been subverted due to the outrageous toll rates and usage costs.

For freight movement, instead of wasting approximately \$8-\$10 billion dollars of taxpayer money on a destructive and unnecessary highway that is years away from providing any relief from current challenges, Ontario should commit

to examine the feasibility of a truck lane on Highway 407 with low (or no) tolls, providing immediate relief on existing highways. With trucks using the **407 as a true east-west bypass of Toronto** (unlike HWY 413 that is only a north-west route) space would be freed up, providing immediate relief and improving economic supply chains. Preliminary economic analyses show that a truck subsidy on Highway 407 is substantially more cost-effective than a new expressway. ([Read More Here](#))

**Public transit can move more people more cost-effectively than any expressway.** There are numerous unfunded rapid transit projects that could be constructed with \$8-\$10 B dollars. We could expand the GO Regional Express Rail on the Kitchener and Milton corridors and create a new GO corridor to Bolton, through west Vaughan; increase bus rapid transit in Vaughan and Brampton and resolve fare duplication issues; and continue to model new transportation technologies for adoption as they evolve?


# BETTER TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES



Planning the next 50 years of smart growth. [Click here](#) for the PROPOSED 407 TRANSITWAY CORRIDOR



**SPENDING  
\$10B  
OTHER \$  
FOR**

- 
- **HEALTHCARE**
  - **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**
  - **SENIOR CARE**
  - **EDUCATION**
  - **CHILDCARE**
  - **TRANSIT**

# IN CONCLUSION

Highway 413 has been in study for almost two decades at significant cost to the public, has been shelved by a previous government, and has now been resurrected by the Ford government. The Ford government has proposed the most environmentally devastating route through Vaughan which has been stated by consultants to “undermine the credibility” of the entire project. Analysis has shown HWY 413 is not the best solution to address the needs of the GTA and our growing region.

The project will:

- impact many species at risk habitats, including two endangered species
- eliminate thousands of acres of irreplaceable prime farmland
- impact four watershed headwaters areas, with an estimated 85 river & stream crossings
- transect highly vulnerable aquifers, groundwater recharge areas and wellhead protection areas
- contribute to sprawl development, contrary to smart growth principles and climate targets
- require over 100,000 truckloads of aggregate from surrounding areas
- create over a decade of truck traffic, dust and noise through the construction of this highway

We are asking Members of Provincial Parliament to support a full panel review of the project through the Impact Assessment Act (IAA). We are requesting you to help **“Stop the HWY 413”** project and **support better use of Highway 407** and it’s surrounding corridor, apply smart growth principles to provide much needed affordable housing and address other pressing needs in our communities, like education, healthcare and more transit solutions.

[info@stopthe413now.ca](mailto:info@stopthe413now.ca)