

Dear mayor and Council Members,

I write to request that Council support the resolution provided by The Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition, at the Council of the Whole meeting on December 6th.

The Ontario government has significantly weakened the provincial environmental assessment process for the Bradford Bypass via an exemption to the Environmental Assessment Act on October 7, 2021. As a result, the Bradford Bypass project would be allowed to proceed with construction through the Holland Marsh based on an outdated 24-year-old Environmental Assessment (EA). The original EA approval was conditional on performing additional studies on archaeological resources, stormwater management, hydrogeological systems (including the development of a groundwater protection plan), noise, and compliance monitoring. The Province has now exempted itself from all of these conditions. Without a federal EA, this proposal seeks to remove or weaken studies that were required for protection of public health and Indigenous rights.

The bypass would also increase vehicle traffic at a time when the federal government has pledged to cut carbon emissions from transportation. The current assessment process includes no consideration of the climate change impacts of the more than one hundred thousand vehicle journeys per day that these highways would add to Ontario's roads. Further, since the Bradford Bypass relies on a 24 year old study, there have not been any considerations to transit and infrastructure improvements that have been made since. The traffic modelling released by AECOM clearly shows the Bypass will only increase congestion on north-south routes especially provincially significant goods movement corridors like the 400 and 404. Simply, there is not any evidence of need for this highway from a transportation perspective.

This 400-series highway will cause irreversible environmental damage within federal jurisdiction, including harm to fish habitat, multiple federal species at risk, and dozens of significant wetlands, forests, and important ecosystems. The Bradford Bypass will infringe upon one of Ontario's rarest agricultural lands, the Holland Marsh and has significant impacts to Lake Simcoe. Without a proper environmental assessment from the federal government, we

may
never fully know the extent of these impacts until it's too late.

Any positive outcome of building this new bypass, as it relates to saving a few minutes of commuter time, would be overshadowed by the negative impacts on the valuable farmland and natural spaces that would be sacrificed.

Please vote for protection of our farmland, our green spaces and for Lake Simcoe.

Thank you,

Michelle Davies