

## Ontario needs both a new highway and transit

Building Highway 413 is the right decision for the GTA,  
write Nadia Todorova and Todd Letts

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Critics of Highway 413 argue the choice is a new highway or transit, but they are wrong. This new transportation corridor facilitates growth throughout the region with a needed highway and transitway. While critics want you to choose one, the honest answer is that Ontario needs both.

The government's long-term transportation plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe brings a focus to integrated transportation planning. Building the GTA West Transit Corridor, including Highway 413, is crucial for our economy and quality of life, especially in Brampton and the western GTA.

The proposed Highway 413 will be complete with carpool infrastructure, electric vehicle chargers, and technology to enable automated vehicles. The corridor includes plans for a dedicated transitway for bus or LRT public transit for the region. It will shorten commutes and bring greater connectivity for business and leisure.

The GTA is the fastest growing region in North America, expected to increase from 10 million today to 14.9 million people by 2051. With all the opportunity that comes from a growing province, building critical transportation infrastructure to keep people and goods moving is a challenge.

Gridlock already stymieing the GTA costs \$11 billion in lost productivity annually. Businesses cite gridlock and long commutes as negative impacts on bottom lines and their ability to attract and keep the best talent.

"Housing affordability and lifestyle choice has meant that some of our staff have decided to move to homes further from the plant," said Joe Jackman, president of Almag, an aluminum extruder in Brampton. "With current highways at capacity, the proposed Highway 413 would provide more choice for our employees to get to work and help us retain good staff."

Highway 413 adds much needed capacity in York, Halton, and Peel regions, where 58 per cent of the GTA's growth is projected. The Ministry of Transportation's transportation development study outlined many benefits of providing an alternative that would mitigate congestion on Highway 401. Business associations hear the same thing.

"To serve our clients in York and Durham regions, we have to leave at 5:30 a.m., or expect to be delayed by traffic for an hour. The 401 is at capacity," said Nathalie Clarke-Singh, co-owner of Clean Finish, a home renovations business in Brampton with clients throughout the GTA. "The 407 is great, but I'd like another affordable choice."

Modern engineering and evolving regulatory oversight put environmental sustainability and wildlife protection at the core of design and construction. The construction industry specializes in environmental remediation to mitigate potential adverse impacts to the environment or species at risk, with ecological knowledge and technical practices constantly improving.

The GTA West Corridor also creates needed critical infrastructure to allow for greater density, accommodating growth and reducing sprawl. Delaying construction of the GTA West Corridor stalls job creation and the development of a transit-oriented community in Brampton's Heritage Heights.

Building Highway 413 and the transit corridor is the right decision for Brampton and the GTA. It's good for the economy, allows for sustainable growth, and can be completed while protecting our environment. When also including the quality of life improvements for millions of people, it's the responsible thing to do. Let's get building.

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