

# Tree clearing on Bradford Bypass stretch now underway

[Michael Owen](#) – December 17, 2024

*'Ontario is growing at a historic rate,' says provincial minister. 'If we don't build the transportation infrastructure we need the gridlock plaguing our roadways will only get worse'*

Timber! Crews are working to remove trees to help make way for the Bradford Bypass.

Ontario Minister of Transportation Prabmeet Sarkaria Prabmeet was joined by Bradford town staff and council, as well as Nadia Todorova, executive director of the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO), to announce the province has awarded a contract for tree clearing along the western portion of the bypass to Kodiak Tree Services, at the town's community and social services hub at 177 Church St. on Dec. 17.

"We're excited to see the progress we're making on the Bradford Bypass," Sarkaria said. "Ontario is growing at a historic rate. If we don't build the transportation infrastructure we need, the gridlock plaguing our roadways will only get worse."

The bypass is planned to be a four-lane controlled access highway spanning 16.3 kilometres to link highways 400 and 404, with the potential to be expanded to eight lanes in future.

The minister said he couldn't reveal the value of the contract at this time, but explained Kodiak already began removing trees and grading earth to clear a path along the planned route of the 6.5-km west section of the bypass from Highway 400 to County Road 4 (Yonge Street).

Those efforts are expected to be complete in the new year.

"This work will prepare for the construction of the 10th Sideroad detour and help to streamline utility relocations along the path of the future route," Sarkaria said.

More than four hectares are being cleared and work to replant trees is planned for after the west section is built.

The mayor said he was "excited" to see the "vital construction project," making progress as he expects it will be "essential for commuters."

“This bypass will significantly improve our local transportation system,” he said, adding he’s “anticipating the positive effects” it will have on the town and surrounding communities.

As far as the mayor understands, the work won’t create any congestion or closures on Sideroad 10, which only recently saw a surge of traffic as a detour for CR 4, which reopened a week early on Dec. 6.

“I understand residents being tired of the congestion on Sideroad 10, but I’m pretty sure that we can work around that,” Leduc said.

The mayor said the town is planning to put out their own release to warn residents about construction noise in the area, and didn’t anticipate the tree clearing would have any negative impacts on town projects, such as the environmental assessment (EA) for Line 8 and Sideroad 10 or the Holland Street reconstruction.

Deputy CAO Mahesh Ramdeo previously confirmed that the EA for Line 8, which began in 2016 but was suspended in 2020, is still expected to restart soon with public consultations, and is anticipated to be complete by the end of 2025.

The mayor explained the town is hoping to begin work on utility relocation along Holland Street as early as this spring, but more details are expected to come in a report to council. That report was previously expected by the end of this year, but is now anticipated sometime in January or February.

“There are some significant projects ongoing and we look forward to completing them as soon as possible,” the mayor said.

In addition to the contract announced Tuesday, the minister said he also wasn’t at liberty to reveal the value of the construction management contract for the same section awarded to The Miller Group’s Brennan Paving and Construction on Oct. 28.

As there are still other contracts to be awarded for other work on the bypass, the minister explained the province must “ensure that we don’t compromise the process” and “get the best price possible” by following a typical procurement process, but added that “once those have been tendered, they will be made public.”

Sarkaria also said it was too soon to provide an estimated timeline for the overall completion of the bypass, but reiterated the province has allocated about \$28 billion over the next 10 years for “critical” highway projects. And both he and Todorova emphasized a [recent report](#) from the Canadian Centre for Economic Analysis claiming congestion cost Ontario about \$56.4 billion in 2024.

“The cost of not building is far greater, so we need to make sure we get shovels in the ground,” Sarkaria said. “We’ll have more to say on the completion date as we work through the project.”

The minister also reiterated the contested claim that the bypass will save drivers in York Region and Simcoe County 35 minutes each way on their commutes.

“That is an hour back each day to spend with family and friends doing what you love,” he said. “As someone who spends more than two hours stuck in traffic every day, I know what a difference that time can make.”

Tuesday’s announcement is the fourth in Bradford this year related to the bypass.

In addition to the construction management contract revealed on Oct. 28, Sarkaria announced the \$91-million contract to Dufferin Construction for the replacement of the bridge and interchange at Highway 400 and County Road 88 on July 17, and before that the minister announced a \$16-million contract to AECOM for the detailed design of the western section on May 9.

To expedite the process, in October 2021 the province passed a regulation which exempted the bypass project from certain requirements of the Environmental Assessment Act, which has resulted in backlash from local residents and environmental groups, leading to court challenges and admonishments from political leaders.

Issues of property expropriation and the design of the interchange proposed for Sideroad 10 have also concerned local residents, and led Sarjeant Co. to seek relocation of their concrete batching plant.