

## **Ontario to fully fund Bradford Bypass: Ford**

The premier did not provide a full costing for the four-lane, 16-km stretch

Antonella Artuso - Nov 08, 2021



Ontario Premier Doug Ford applauds during a ground breaking ceremony marking the start of a \$41.3 million expansion project at Nestle Canada's ice cream factory in London, Ont., Friday, Nov. 5, 2021. Photo by Nicole Osborne /THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ontario will pay the full cost of the Bradford Bypass, which will connect Highways 400 and 404 across the top of the GTA, Premier Doug Ford announced Monday.

The premier did not provide a full costing for the four-lane, 16-kilometre stretch but said it would generate economic growth and jobs while saving commuters and local businesses significant travel time.

Transportation Minister Caroline Mulroney said shovels will go into the ground once an update to an existing environmental assessment is completed.

“I can tell you that congestion on Hwy. 400 and our local roads has been the No. 1 issue that I have been hearing from constituents since being elected,” Mulroney said Monday. “For decades, drivers in this region have demanded a connecting link between Highways 400 and 404.”

As the Toronto Sun revealed, Finance Minister Peter Bethlenfalvy’s Fall Economic Statement confirmed the government would proceed with the Bradford Bypass and Hwy. 413.

“Gridlock is already costing the Greater Toronto Area \$11 billion per year in lost productivity,” Bethlenfalvy said. “We have a plan to get Ontarian drivers out of gridlock and improve our economic productivity ... Our plan advocates \$2.6 billion (this budget year) to expand and repair more than 580 provincial highways and bridges right across Ontario.”

The Bradford Bypass has drawn criticism from environmentalists who argue building this highway will encourage sprawl and greenhouse gas emissions at the cost of valuable and sensitive Holland Marsh farmland.

Ford said the project is a key part of the government’s “build Ontario” plan, and is in response to strong local support.

“Communities in this area have been asking governments for years and decades for a solution to the worsening traffic congestion but their voices fell on deaf ears of previous governments who turned their backs on commuters,” Ford said. “Past governments, our opponents, they side with ideological activists who oppose any and all highways over hardworking families.”

Bradford West Gwillimbury Mayor Rob Keffer said the community long pushed for this bypass with the support of area farmers, businesses and residents.

“The link is better for our environment than gridlock, it is good for economic development and it is good for growing a sustainable way with a clear urban boundary, not sprawl,” Keffer said. “Let me just say to those who oppose this highway: You should speak to the locals — they know we need it.”