

Ministry of Transportation
Asset Management Branch

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Ministère des Transports
Direction de la gestion des actifs

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March 3, 2021

Attention: Anjala Puvananathan
Director, Ontario Region
Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

Dear Anjala Puvananathan:

Re: Notification Regarding Potential Designation of the GTA West Project as a Designated Project under the *Impact Assessment Act*

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) has reviewed the Impact Assessment Agency's letter dated February 11, 2021 notifying of the Minister of Environment and Climate Change's receipt of a request to designate the proposed GTA West Project under subsection 9(1) of the *Impact Assessment Act* (IAA) and has prepared a detailed response with the requested information.

MTO is working to provide for the efficient movement of people and goods within the context of the province's *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*. To support the policy directions in the *Growth Plan*, MTO has commenced a planning study and the formal environmental assessment (EA) process for the GTA West Corridor. The purpose of this study is to examine long-term transportation problems and opportunities and consider alternative solutions to provide better linkages between *Urban Growth Centres* within the GTA West Corridor Preliminary Study Area.

This study is being undertaken as an Individual EA in accordance with the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act. It is important to note that the substantive assessment of anticipated impacts and recommended mitigations associated with the proposed project is currently underway. The draft EA report documenting this assessment is anticipated to be released for public and Indigenous community review and comment in 2022 and will then be updated to describe any concerns raised by interested persons and Indigenous communities, as well as MTO's actions and commitments in response to these concerns.

The table below includes a summary response to the requested information, as well as the location of more detailed responses within the enclosed document.

Yours truly,

<Original signed by>

Michelle Pasqua

Director – Asset Management Branch

Enclosure: Response to Requested Information

Cc:

Jennifer Graham Harkness, Assistant Deputy Minister & Chief Engineer, MTO

Ian Freeman, Assistant Deputy Minister, Integrated Policy & Planning, MTO

Tija Dirks, Director, Integrated Policy & Planning, MTO

Brenda Liegler, Manager Major Planning & Innovations, MTO

Owais Khurshid, Project Manager Ontario Region, IAAC

Reference	Information Request	Summary Response and/or Location of Detailed Response																					
Request 1, Q1	Latitude and longitude of appropriate location points for the endpoints of the preferred route alignment	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Point Location</th> <th>Lat (y)</th> <th>Long (x)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Hwy 401/407</td> <td>43.588285</td> <td>-79.810473</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hwy 410</td> <td>43.781843</td> <td>-79.836494</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hwy 410 tie-in</td> <td>43.756731</td> <td>-79.798834</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hwy 427</td> <td>43.84165</td> <td>-79.687153</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hwy 427 tie-in</td> <td>43.82448</td> <td>-79.660898</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hwy 400</td> <td>43.89457</td> <td>-79.559877</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Point Location	Lat (y)	Long (x)	Hwy 401/407	43.588285	-79.810473	Hwy 410	43.781843	-79.836494	Hwy 410 tie-in	43.756731	-79.798834	Hwy 427	43.84165	-79.687153	Hwy 427 tie-in	43.82448	-79.660898	Hwy 400	43.89457	-79.559877
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Request 1, Q2	Any recent, relevant project documents so the Agency can begin its review of the Project	<p>The following project documents that are publicly available were provided to the Agency on February 18, 2021:</p> <p><u>Environmental Assessment (EA) Terms of Reference (Approved 2008)</u></p> <p>The GTA West Study is being undertaken as an Individual EA in accordance with the Ontario EA Act and the GTA West Corridor EA Terms of Reference, which was approved by the Ontario Minister of the Environment on March 4, 2008. The EA Terms of Reference outlined the framework for completing this EA study including a structured planning process involving problems and opportunities; Alternatives to the Undertaking; Alternative Methods to implement the Alternatives to the Undertaking; and recommendations for specific infrastructure including the associated effects and mitigation measures. Documentation provided was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference • Terms of Reference Consultation Record <p><u>Stage 1 (Completed 2012)</u></p> <p>Stage 1 of the EA Study took place between 2008 and 2012 and examined the long-term transportation problems and opportunities and considered alternative solutions to provide better linkages between Urban Growth Centres in the GTA West Corridor Preliminary Study Area. The Transportation Development Strategy (TDS) outlined the findings of this study, which were that optimizing the existing transportation network, transit solutions and improvements to existing roads and highways would provide important enhancement and some capacity relief but would not be fully capable of addressing the study area's future</p>																					

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		<p>transportation needs. The study recommended a new transportation corridor between Highway 400 and the Highway 401/407 ETR interchange together with the widening of existing provincial facilities. Documentation provided included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 1 – Transportation Development Strategy Report (Full Report and Executive Summary) • Stage 1 – Consultation Documentation • Stage 1 – Public Information Centre Summaries • Guideline for Planning and Design of the GTA West Corridor Through the Greenbelt <p><u>Stage 2 (On-going)</u></p> <p>Stage 2 of the GTA West Study was initiated in 2014. Building on the recommendations from Stage 1, Stage 2 of the EA Study will identify the route, determine interchange locations and complete the preliminary design for a new multimodal transportation corridor within the Route Planning Study Area. The new multimodal transportation corridor will include: a 400-series highway, transitway and potential goods movement priority features. The study continues to follow the GTA West Corridor Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference. Documentation provided was:</p> <p>Public Consultation Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Notices • Bulletins • Community Workshop #1 Materials and Summary • Community Workshop #2 Materials and Summary • Public Information Centre #1 Materials and Summary • Public Information Centre #2 Materials and Summary (includes a summary of Community Value Plan Meeting #1 which was part of PIC #2) • Advisory Group Meeting Materials, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community Advisory Group (CAG) ○ Greenbelt Transportation Advisory Group (GTAG) ○ Municipal Advisory Group (MAG) ○ Regulatory Agency Advisory Group (RAAG) ○ Municipal Executive Advisory Group (MEAG) • Community Value Plan Meeting #2 Presentation

Reference	Information Request	Summary Response and/or Location of Detailed Response
		<p>Environmental Documentation and Mapping (available at PIC #2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screening of the Long List of Route Alternatives • Short List of Route Alternatives - Comparative Evaluation of Net Effects and Rankings • Technically Preferred Route Mapping, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Technically Preferred Route Roll Plan – Agricultural Background ○ Technically Preferred Route Roll Plan – Existing Land Use Background ○ Technically Preferred Route Roll Plan – Future Land Use Background ○ Technically Preferred Route Roll Plan – Natural Environment Background • Draft Overview of Environmental Existing Conditions and Constraints Working Paper Update (June 2015) <p>*Note that the route was modified and confirmed on August 7, 2020 as per the Preferred Route Announcement Bulletin after receiving feedback following PIC #2. The Preferred Route Announcement Bulletin provides a high level overview of how the route was modified in response to stakeholder input.</p>
Request 2, Q1	Readily available information pertaining to the project's potential to cause adverse effects to fish and fish habitat, migratory birds, species at risk, federal lands, and lands outside of Canada	<p>During the Route Evaluation process, as documented in the Short List of Route Alternatives - Comparative Evaluation of Net Effects and Rankings tables, numerous environmental factors were considered in the analysis to determine a technically preferred route including potential impacts to fish habitat, fish community, wildlife and wildlife habitat, wetlands, woodlands and vegetation, and designated areas such as the Greenbelt.</p> <p>The Ministry is currently in the early stages of preliminary design of the Preferred Route. Various environmental studies will be undertaken to identify environmental concerns, commitments and recommend mitigation measures. Impact assessment will be completed to document the specific potential for adverse effects to fish and fish habitat, migratory birds, and species at risk. The following is readily available information available at this time:</p> <p>Fish and Fish Habitat – Based on the current level of preliminary design, the project will require crossing approximately 95 watercourses</p> <p>Migratory Birds – the project will require impacts to terrestrial habitats, including within areas that will provide habitat for migratory birds</p> <p>Species at Risk – the project will require impacts to terrestrial and aquatic habitats, including within areas that may provide habitat for species at risk</p>

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		<p>Federal Lands – the Preferred Route could potentially impact lands owned by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) at 7524 Auburn Road, Milton ON. This potential impact was brought to the attention of the project team after confirming the Preferred Route in August 2020. Although the property is not directly impacted by the Preferred Rote, the property falls partially within the Focused Analysis Area, and therefore could potentially be impacted by refinements to the multimodal transportation or ancillary uses identified during the preliminary design stage. The project team is in contact with CBC.</p> <p>Lands outside of Canada – the project will not impact lands outside of Canada as it is located entirely within the province of Ontario and locally within the Regional Municipality of Halton, Regional Municipality of Peel and the Regional Municipality of York, Ontario.</p>
Request 2, Q2	Readily available information pertaining to the project's potential adverse impacts, resulting from any change to the environment, on Indigenous peoples (including impacts to physical and cultural heritage; current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes; structures, sites, or things of historical, archeological, paleontological, or architectural significance)	<p>Consultation and engagement with Indigenous peoples includes open and transparent discussion throughout the project, specifically related to impacts to physical and cultural heritage; current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes; structures, sites or things of historical, archaeological, paleontological or architectural significance, as well as adverse impacts to Aboriginal and treaty rights.</p> <p>The current ongoing Individual Environmental Assessment (EA) study will identify potential impacts and associated mitigation measures to biophysical components of the environment as well as cultural heritage and archaeology.</p> <p>The Crown (which includes provincial ministries such as the MTO) has a legal duty to consult Indigenous communities when it is taking an action or making a decision that has the potential to adversely impact established or credibly asserted Aboriginal and treaty rights, as protected under Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.</p> <p>The GTA West Project Team is engaging and consulting with the following Indigenous Communities and Councils during Stage 2 of the study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation • Alderville First Nation • Curve Lake First Nation • Hiawatha First Nation • Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation • Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation • Chippewas of Rama First Nation • Beausoleil First Nation • Six Nations of the Grand River Territory First Nation (Elected Council and Haudenosaunee Confederacy Chiefs Council) • Huron-Wendat Nation (regarding archaeological resources only)

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kawartha Nishnawbe First Nation • Métis Nation of Ontario <p>A Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment has been completed. Archaeological Assessments will continue in consultation and engagement with Indigenous Communities.</p>
Request 2, Q3	Readily available information pertaining to any potential changes to the health, social, or economic conditions of Indigenous peoples due to the project	The GTA West Project Team is engaging and consulting with Indigenous Communities to listen to and consider any items or concerns raised regarding negative impacts to the health, social or economic conditions of their communities, including adverse impacts to Aboriginal and treaty rights, by the activities of the project during the Individual EA phase, but also throughout the life of the project.
Request 2, Q4	Include any information regarding adverse effects (changes to the environment or to health, social, or economic conditions) that are directly linked or necessarily incidental to a federal authority's exercise of a power, performance of a duty or function, or provision of financial assistance, that would enable the carrying out of the project, in whole or in part.	<p>The Short List of Route Alternatives - Comparative Evaluation of Net Effects and Rankings tables include readily available net effects information that was provided at PIC #2 in September/October 2019.</p> <p>The Project Team undertook a rigorous and comprehensive evaluation of the short-listed route alternatives, which used the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the potential transportation benefits, costs and environmental effects of the alternative; 2. Develop and apply avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures to address the environmental effects; 3. Determine the net effects on the environment (natural, socio-economic, land use, cultural, transportation); 4. Rank the alternatives within each of the 9 sections of the study area; and 5. Review evaluation tables, rankings and net effects to determine and rationalize the Preferred Route in each Section. 6. Complete a secondary arithmetic evaluation of the alternatives as a comparison to the reasoned trade-off approach described above. This approach also tested different factor group weightings that were provided by stakeholder groups as part of the consultation program <p>Lead environmental and transportation specialists completed an assessment of each short-list alternative per the <i>Evaluation Factors and Criteria for Alternative Methods</i> that were included as part of the approved Terms of Reference approved in 2008 and updated in 2019. The evaluation factors included multiple sub-factors under Natural Environment, Land Use/Socio-economic Environment, Cultural Environment, and Transportation.</p> <p>The route was modified and confirmed on August 7, 2020 as per the Preferred Route Announcement Bulletin after receiving feedback following PIC #2.</p>
Request 2, Q5	Include available information on how you intend to manage the potential adverse effects and impacts of the project, including	The GTA West Study is being undertaken as an Individual EA in accordance with the Ontario <i>Environmental Assessment Act</i> (OEAA), <i>RSO 1990</i> and the GTA West Corridor EA Terms of Reference, which was approved by the Ontario Minister of the Environment on March 4, 2008.

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	<p>proposed mitigation and/or follow-up program measures or provide a rationale for why such measures are not required.</p>	<p>The OEAA requires that MTO complete an Individual EA that complies with the requirements of the Act by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accurately describing the undertaking; • considering 'alternatives to the undertaking'; • considering alternative methods for the undertaking; • consulting with the public; • detailing impacts and mitigation; and • documenting all of the above for public review. <p>Relevant documentation from the list provided includes the below files from completed Stages of the EA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EA Terms of Reference • Stage 1 – Transportation Development Strategy Report (Full Report and Executive Summary) • Guideline for Planning and Design of the GTA West Corridor Through the Greenbelt <p>The project is currently at the stage where the Preferred Route is being developed to a preliminary design level of detail. A wide range of environmental discipline studies including field investigations are being carried out as part of this project, as related to natural, socio-economic, cultural, and technical disciplines. All reports will be undertaken in accordance with current legislative requirements, standards and best practices, including the <i>MTO Environmental Guides</i> and the <i>MTO Environmental Reference for Highway Design</i>. These studies will assess impacts associated with each discipline, identify mitigation measures and document future commitments as required.</p> <p>These studies will adhere to all relevant new and existing provincial and federal legislation, including, but not limited to, <i>Endangered Species Act, Greenbelt Plan, Heritage Act, Fisheries Act, Migratory Birds Convention Act, Species at Risk Act</i>, etc.</p> <p>Although completed study documentation is not available at this time, relevant documentation provided at this time includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Information Centre #1 Summary • Public Information Centre #2 Summary • Short List of Route Alternatives - Comparative Evaluation of Net Effects and Rankings

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		<p>*Note that the route was modified and confirmed on August 7, 2020 as per the Preferred Route Announcement Bulletin. The Preferred Route Announcement Bulletin provides a high level overview of how the route was modified in response to stakeholder input.</p> <p>A detailed response to this comment is addressed in the attached response to Request 3, Sections 4.2 and 7.</p>
Request 2, Q6	Describe whether and how you plan to (or have) engage(d) with Indigenous and public groups. And federal, provincial, and municipal reviewers.	<p>Every stage of the GTA West EA has involved extensive consultation through Public Information Centres, Community Workshops, Advisory Group meetings, as well as meetings with municipal and agency staff, members of the public, stakeholders, and Indigenous communities, and will continue throughout the study.</p> <p>The following project documents that are readily and publicly available were provided to the Agency on February 18, 2021.</p> <p><u>EA Initiation and Stage 1 (Completed 2008-2012)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference Consultation Record • Stage 1 – Consultation Documentation • Stage 1 – Public Information Centre #1-5 Summaries <p><u>Stage 2 (On-going)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Notices • Bulletins • Community Workshop #1 Materials • Community Workshop #2 Materials • PIC #1 Materials and Summary • PIC #2 Materials and Summary (includes a summary of Community Value Plan Meeting #1 which was part of PIC #2) • Advisory Group Meeting Materials, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community Advisory Group (CAG) ○ Greenbelt Transportation Advisory Group (GTAG) ○ Municipal Advisory Group (MAG) ○ Regulatory Agency Advisory Group (RAAG) ○ Municipal Executive Advisory Group (MEAG)

Reference	Information Request	Summary Response and/or Location of Detailed Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Value Plan Meeting #2 Presentation <p>The GTA West Project Team is engaging and consulting with the following Indigenous Communities during Stage 2 of the study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation • Alderville First Nation • Curve Lake First Nation • Hiawatha First Nation • Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation • Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation • Chippewas of Rama First Nation • Beausoleil First Nation • Six Nations of the Grand River Territory First Nation (Elected Council and Haudenosaunee Confederacy Chiefs Council) • Huron-Wendat Nation (regarding archaeological resources only) • Kawartha Nishnawbe First Nation • Métis Nation of Ontario <p>Engagement and Consultation with Indigenous Communities will be ongoing throughout the life of the project and is not tied to the EA Studies. Review of consultation lists and contacts is an ongoing process due to incoming assertions and/or land claims being received by the Crown.</p>
Request 2, Q7	Include available information on any cumulative effects that may result from the project, considering potential cumulative effects associated with other highway proposals in the project area, and expansion of municipal settlement and employment area boundaries in the vicinity of the project.	Potential cumulative effects are discussed in Section 4.2.9 of the attached document, and municipal settlement and employment area boundaries are discussed in Section 4.2.10 .
Request 3, Q1	Information about key project activities, maps and layouts of the location of project components, land tenure, zoning, and estimated timelines for planning, construction, operation, maintenance, and if	Section 1 of the attached document provides information on the current design concept for the Project. It should be noted that project design is anticipated to be iteratively refined as the environmental assessment proceeds. Section 1.3 provides detail on the timing of Project phases including planning, construction and operation. Decommissioning and abandonment are not anticipated for the Project at this time.

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	applicable, decommissioning and abandonment.	
Request 3, Q2	Information about potential annual direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions associated with the project. Indicate how the provincial assessment process would manage direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions. Where applicable and available, provide general information such as mitigation and follow-up program measures.	Section 3 of the attached document outlines the consideration of greenhouse gas emissions associated with the project.
Request 3, Q3	A list of all regulatory approvals (federal, provincial, municipal, other) and any federal financial assistance that would be required for the Project and the associated project components or activities.	Table 4-1 in Section 4.1 of the attached document provides a list of the federal, provincial and municipal approvals anticipated to be required for the Project. This list should be considered preliminary, as it will be refined as project planning advances, including through direct consultation with relevant approval authorities to confirm regulatory process requirements. Section 4.2.14 of the attached document discusses federal funding.
Request 3, Q4 a)	For each licence, permit, authorization and approval that would be required for the Project provide the following information: i. Name of the licence, permit, authorization or approval, the associated legislative framework, and the responsible jurisdiction. ii. Whether it would involve an assessment of any of the effects outlined in the paragraphs above, and if so, a general description of the assessment that you intend to undertake. Would conditions be set and if yes, what effects would those conditions address? iii. Whether public and/or Indigenous consultation would be required and, if yes, provide information on the approach you intend to take (if any steps have been taken, provide a	Section 4.1 of the attached document provides preliminary detail on the federal, provincial and municipal approvals anticipated to be required for the Project in Table 4-1, including information related to assessment and public and Indigenous consultation and engagement requirements, as well as potential conditions of approval. Prior to obtaining additional regulatory approvals for Project implementation, the environmental assessment will be completed to evaluate the potential impacts of the project and identify appropriate mitigation and monitoring approaches to address those impacts. Sections 5 and 6 of the attached document describe the public and Indigenous consultation and engagement program for the project and provide specific details on steps already taken to date, as well as MTO's approach to consultation and engagement that will continue as the Project proceeds to implementation.

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	summary, including issues raised as well as your responses). If there is an issues resolution process associated with the consultation, describe it.	
Request 3, Q4 b)	Confirm whether any licence, permit, authorization or approval, including the applicable provincial assessment process, listed above would contemplate and manage effects on the following matters, and discuss, in general, the benchmarks or standards that you intend to meet (or would be expected to meet). Where applicable and available, provide general information such as proposed mitigation and follow-up program measures, or provide a rationale for why such are not required:	The Project is undergoing a rigorous assessment and authorization process, in line with federal, provincial, and municipal processes as applicable. Permits, licences, authorizations or approvals (PLAAs) that may contemplate anticipated adverse direct or incidental effects (including changes to health, social and economic conditions), are identified in Section 4 of the attached document.
Request 3, Q4 b) (i.)	Potential impacts on fish and fish habitat, including watercourses and wetlands in the Humber, Etobicoke, and Credit River Watersheds	Potential impacts on fish and fish habitat are discussed in Section 4.2.1 of the attached document.
Request 3, Q4 b) (ii.)	Potential impacts on terrestrial and aquatic species at risk and their habitat, including changes to woodlands and natural corridors	Potential impacts on terrestrial and aquatic species at risk are discussed in Section 4.2.2 of the attached document.
Request 3, Q4 b) (iii.)	Potential impacts to migratory birds, including potential for direct effects (e.g., mortality due to vehicle collisions, poisoning, habitat loss and fragmentation), and indirect effects (e.g., noise, artificial light, barriers to movement, and edges associated with roads)	Potential impacts to migratory birds are discussed in Section 4.2.3 of the attached document.
Request 3, Q4 b) (iv.)	Potential impacts to human health, particularly from changes in air quality, water quality, and noise and vibration levels, during project construction and operation	Potential impacts to human health are discussed in Section 4.2.5 of the attached document.

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Request 3, Q4 b) (v.)	<p>Potential impacts to Indigenous peoples of Canada, including on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes; ○ physical and cultural heritage; and ○ any structure, site or thing that is of historical, archaeological, paleontological or architectural significance 	<p>Potential impacts on Indigenous Peoples of Canada are discussed in Section 4.2.6 of the attached document.</p>
Request 3, Q4 b) (vi.)	<p>Potential adverse impacts on the rights of the Indigenous peoples of Canada recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the <i>Constitution Act, 1982</i></p>	<p>Potential impacts on Indigenous Peoples of Canada are discussed in Section 4.2.6 of the attached document.</p>
Request 3, Q4 b) (vii.)	<p>Potential impacts to public safety</p>	<p>Potential impacts to public safety are discussed in Section 4.2.7 of the attached document.</p>
Request 3, Q4 b) (viii.)	<p>Potential impacts to aesthetics and local recreation</p>	<p>Potential impacts to aesthetics and local recreation are discussed in Section 4.2.8 of the attached document.</p>
Request 3, Q4 b) (ix.)	<p>The potential greenhouse gas emissions associated with project construction and operations, including both direct and indirect emissions</p>	<p>Potential greenhouse gas emissions are discussed in Section 3 of the attached document.</p>
Request 3, Q4 b) (x.)	<p>Whether any impacts named in points i. to ix. above would be permanent, and if yes, how you intend to manage those impacts, or provide a rationale for why such management would not be required</p>	<p>The approved GTA West Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference (ToR) provided the basis for consideration of environmental and technical factors during the generation and evaluation of alternative methods addressing the natural environment, cultural environment, social/economic environment and technical factors. Further development of impact assessment and mitigation for the factors will be integrated into the process and documented in the draft and final EA documentation. Sections 3, 4.2.1 to 4.2.9 of the attached document outlines the potential impacts and proposed management approaches for the impacts named in points i to ix.</p> <p>The Ministry will for the preliminary design of the Preferred Route undertake environmental assessments to determine the potential permanent and temporary impacts to environmental factors and mitigation measures in accordance with the EA Act, and other relevant legislation. To the extent that Permission to Enter (PTE) is received, the Ministry will undertake archaeology and cultural heritage assessments to determine the potential permanent and temporary impacts of the preliminary design where required through the proposed highway corridor. The avoidance and protection of sites is always the preferred approach to the mitigation of impacts to archaeological sites. Through the engagement process, the Ministry will evaluate the potential impacts</p>

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		<p>and implement mitigation of Indigenous cultural heritage resources (which includes archaeological resources). Further work would also be conducted to complete these studies during the detail design phase which is not currently funded.</p> <p>The Ministry will, through the engagement and consultation processes, assess potential temporary or permanent impacts to Aboriginal and treaty rights, as well as the other interests of Indigenous communities and people via the environmental factor-specific studies undertaken through each stage of the project.</p>
Request 3, Q4 b) (xi.)	Whether the Project would result in cumulative effects, considering potential cumulative effects associated with other highway proposals in the project area, and expansion of municipal settlement and employment area boundaries in the vicinity of the project. If yes, describe how you intend to manage those impacts, or provide a rationale for why such management would not be required	Potential cumulative effects are discussed in Section 4.2.9 of the attached document, and municipal settlement and employment area boundaries are discussed in Section 4.2.10 .
Request 3, Q5	For all federal licences, permits, authorizations, approvals, and/or financial assistance that may be provided for the Project, describe any anticipated adverse direct or incidental effects (including changes to health, social and economic conditions) that may occur as a result. For all effects, indicate whether the provincial assessment process would manage them. Where applicable and available, provide general information such as mitigation and follow-up program measures, or provide a rationale for why such are not required.	Based on the assessment completed to date, a summary of the potential for adverse direct or incidental effects is provided in Section 4.2 of the attached document.
Request 3, Q6 a)	Describe the steps that you have taken to engage the public, and any steps that you will take for engagement during all phases of the Project.	Section 5 of the attached document outlines the ongoing public consultation program for the Project, which includes a regularly updated project website, Twitter, bulletins/fact sheets, written and verbal correspondence between stakeholders and the Project Team, and meetings with individual stakeholders and stakeholder groups. Steps during subsequent phases of the project are also included.
Request 3, Q6 b)	Indicate whether you are aware of public concerns in relation to the Project. If yes,	Section 5 of the attached document outlines the ongoing public consultation program for the Project.

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	provide an overview of the issues, including those raised in the enclosed letter, and indicate in general terms how you intend to address these matters.	
Request 3, Q7 a)	Describe the steps that you have taken and will take to consult with Indigenous groups (please list the groups included). If available, provide a generalized record of engagement as well as planned engagement. Provide general information about your commitments to work with Indigenous groups to mitigate any potential impacts.	Section 6.1 of the attached document outlines the summary of steps undertaken to engage and consult with Indigenous Communities to date as well as planned engagement and consultation for the Project.
Request 3, Q7 b)	Indicate whether you are aware of general concerns from Indigenous groups in relation to the Project. If yes, provide an overview of the key issues and indicate how you plan to address these matters.	Section 6.3 of the attached document summarizes the key interests and concerns highlighted by Indigenous Communities to date and how the Project Team has addressed the issues or will address the issues throughout the Study.
Request 3, Q8	Provide any other comments in relation to environmental effects or impacts to the public or Indigenous peoples, and how you intend to address and manage these effects.	MTO is committed to fully addressing and managing impacts of the project to the public or Indigenous Communities. MTO has sought, and will continue to seek, feedback from the public and Indigenous communities regarding how the GTA West Project could impact communities, as well as feedback on how impacts could be prevented, remedied or mitigated. Sections 5 and 6 of the attached document provide additional information.
Request 3, Q9	Explain your views on whether the Project should be designated under IAA.	MTO is of the view that the GTA West Project does not warrant designation under the Impact Assessment Act as detailed in Section 8 of the attached document.