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## Highway 400 - Highway 404 Extension Link (Bradford Bypass)

Project information about this environmental assessment.

### Current status

We are proposing to exempt the Bradford Bypass from requirements of the *Environmental Assessment Act* subject to conditions, as appropriate.

[Get details on the proposed exemption regulation \(https://www.ontario.ca/page/highway-400-highway-404-extension-link-bradford-bypass#section-3\)](https://www.ontario.ca/page/highway-400-highway-404-extension-link-bradford-bypass#section-3).

### Project summary

The purpose of the undertaking is to design and construct a new 16.2 km rural 4-lane controlled access freeway that will connect Highway 400 in the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury to the proposed northerly extension of Highway 404 Extension in the Town of East Gwillimbury.

#### Proponent

Ministry of Transportation

#### Location

County of Simcoe and the Regional Municipality of York

#### Type

Transportation

#### Reference number

97155

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### Project history

Proposed exemption regulation (2020)

Proposal date: July 8, 2020

Environmental assessment: approved

Decision date: August 28, 2002

### Exemption regulation (2020)

Ontario is updating its almost 50-year-old [environmental assessment program \(https://www.ontario.ca/page/environmental-assessments\)](https://www.ontario.ca/page/environmental-assessments) to support building safer and stronger communities. In our [Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan \(https://www.ontario.ca/page/made-in-ontario-environment-plan\)](https://www.ontario.ca/page/made-in-ontario-environment-plan), we committed to supporting environmental planning by addressing duplication, streamlining processes, improving service standards to reduce delays, and better recognizing other planning processes.

We are committed to building a strong environmental assessment program that considers the input of local communities and focuses on projects that have the highest impact to the environment.

#### Proposed exemption regulations: Bradford Bypass and Ministry of Transportation Provincial Transportation Facilities Class EA projects

The Ministry of Transportation reviewed critical transportation infrastructure and identified priority projects that previously went through an environmental assessment process but were not implemented. These projects include the Bradford Bypass, an individual environmental assessment project, and several Ministry of

Transportation Provincial Transportation Facilities class environmental assessments (Class EA) projects. As part of our environmental assessment modernization efforts, we are proposing to exempt these projects from the *Environmental Assessment Act*.

These projects are currently subject to other requirements that ensure environmental protection. For example, the Bradford Bypass is subject to conditions of the [Environmental Assessment Notice of Approval \(https://www.ontario.ca/page/approval-highway-400-highway-404-extension-link-bradford-bypass-environmental-assessment\)](https://www.ontario.ca/page/approval-highway-400-highway-404-extension-link-bradford-bypass-environmental-assessment), and the [Ministry of Transportation Class EA for Provincial Transportation Facilities \(https://www.ontario.ca/page/class-ea-provincial-transportation-facilities\)](https://www.ontario.ca/page/class-ea-provincial-transportation-facilities) is subject to the addendum process and other Ministry of Transportation Class EA requirements.

By reducing duplication in environmental assessment processes, and better recognizing other planning processes, we are bringing important public services and infrastructure to communities faster.

## Status of the Bradford Bypass

On August 28, 2002, we approved the individual environment assessment for a new freeway to connect Highway 400 in Bradford West Gwillimbury to a northerly extension of Highway 404 in East Gwillimbury.

As a condition of this approval (Condition 4 of the Notice of Approval), the design and construction of the highway became subject to the Ministry of Transportation Class EA. Currently, the Ministry of Transportation is required to prepare a [Transportation Environmental Study Report \(TESR\) \(http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/documents/english/engineering/Class\\_EA\\_2000.pdf\)](http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/documents/english/engineering/Class_EA_2000.pdf) for the preliminary design and a [Design and Construction Report\(s\) \(DCR\) \(http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/documents/english/engineering/Class\\_EA\\_2000.pdf\)](http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/documents/english/engineering/Class_EA_2000.pdf) for the detailed design of the Bradford Bypass.

### What the proposed exemption regulation would do

The proposed regulation would exempt the Bradford Bypass from requirements of the *Environmental Assessment Act* subject to conditions, as appropriate. The Ministry of Transportation would no longer be required to fulfill Condition 4 of the EA Notice of Approval and complete a TESR or DCR(s) that would typically be required in accordance with the Ministry of Transportation's Class EA. As a result, the Ministry of Transportation would not be required to distribute a Notice of Completion for the TESR or DCR(s) which would normally initiate a 30-day public consultation period.

If the proposed regulation is approved, then the Ministry of Transportation would:

- implement the Bradford Bypass project as approved in the environmental assessment process;
- be required to fulfill all other conditions of the 2002 EA Notice of Approval, as well as other technical design commitments made in the environmental assessment;
- be required to notify the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, other interested stakeholders, and Indigenous communities if there were any changes to the Bradford Bypass project;
- submit an Indigenous Consultation Plan to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and continue to consult with Indigenous communities;
- report annual progress on meeting conditions of the proposed regulation until all conditions have been fulfilled; and
- be able to apply for and obtain permits and approvals required for construction, subject to consultation or other requirements.

To maintain strong protection of our environment, the Ministry of Transportation would continue to document environmental investigations, impact assessments, proposed mitigation strategies, consultation plans and findings, and obtained permits and approvals in technical reports. The Ministry of Transportation would follow all other legislation as well as ministry standards and practices.

## Status of Ministry of Transportation Class EA projects

The Ministry of Transportation has several proposed projects that have completed the Ministry of Transportation Class EA process for Group A and B projects. These projects have completed a [Transportation Environmental Study Report \(TESR\) \(http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/documents/english/engineering/Class\\_EA\\_2000.pdf\)](http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/documents/english/engineering/Class_EA_2000.pdf) but have not been implemented.

If a project has not been implemented within five years of completing a TESR, the Ministry of Transportation is required to do an addendum in accordance with the Ministry of Transportation Class EA. The purpose of an addendum is to consider any significant changes which have taken place since the submission of the original Class EA project. The changes may include new conditions in the study area, new government policies, new engineering standards, or new technologies for mitigating measures.

### What the proposed exemption regulation would do

The proposed regulation would exempt from the *Environmental Assessment Act*, these Ministry of Transportation Class EA projects that have not been implemented despite completing the Class EA process, and that are now subject to the five-year addendum process.

With this proposed change, the Ministry of Transportation would no longer be required to complete the addendum process.

The proposed regulation includes conditions that would require the Ministry of Transportation to:

- issue a public notice to proceed with the implementation and construction of the project(s) in accordance with the completed Class EA;
- begin the construction of these projects within 10 years of the regulation;
- continue consultation with Indigenous communities;
- fulfill conditions of a Minister's decision on Part II Order requests that have already been submitted for these projects, as applicable;
- proceed with the detail design for these projects as well as obtaining project-specific permits and approvals; and
- continue to follow all other legislation, standards and practices.

[Learn more about these proposed exemption regulations on the Environmental Registry of Ontario \(https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-1883\)](https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-1883).

## Working smarter to protect our environment and serve our communities

The proposed regulation for the Bradford Bypass and Ministry of Transportation Class EA projects would support the maintenance and implementation of critical roadway infrastructure in Ontario and facilitate the seamless movement of people across the province.

The proposed regulation would also allow the province to focus resources on more significant, complex infrastructure projects with the greatest potential for impacting the environment, rather than projects that have already completed a previous environmental assessment process, environmental impacts are already well understood.

Ontario is currently consulting on these sensible and practical proposed changes to ensure strong environmental oversight while reducing delays and focusing resources on projects that matter most to Ontario communities.

[Learn more about our vision for a modern environmental assessment program and the changes we're proposing to achieve this vision \(https://www.ontario.ca/page/environmental-assessments\)](https://www.ontario.ca/page/environmental-assessments).

## Environmental assessment

The Minister of the Environment with Cabinet's concurrence approved the Ministry of Transportation's (MTO) Highway 400—Highway 404 Extension Link (Bradford Bypass) Environmental Assessment (EA). This EA approval will allow MTO to proceed to the design and construction stage for a new 16.2 km rural 4-lane controlled access freeway. The proposed freeway will connect Highway 400 in the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury to the proposed northerly extension of Highway 404 Extension in the Town of East Gwillimbury. The design and construction of the highway will be subject to the MTO's [Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Transportation Facilities \(https://www.ontario.ca/page/class-ea-provincial-transportation-facilities\)](https://www.ontario.ca/page/class-ea-provincial-transportation-facilities). This process provides for public consultation on the design and construction of the highway. It is anticipated that the highway will be constructed in stages over a number of years, to reflect financial constraints and traffic demands.

[Read the notice of approval \(https://www.ontario.ca/page/approval-highway-400-highway-404-extension-link-bradford-bypass-environmental-assessment\)](https://www.ontario.ca/page/approval-highway-400-highway-404-extension-link-bradford-bypass-environmental-assessment).

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### Related

Project documentation:

- [Notice of approval—EA \(https://www.ontario.ca/page/approval-highway-400-highway-404-extension-link-bradford-bypass-environmental-assessment\)](https://www.ontario.ca/page/approval-highway-400-highway-404-extension-link-bradford-bypass-environmental-assessment)