



Impact Assessment
Agency of Canada

Ontario Region
600-55 York Street
Toronto ON M5J 1R7

Agence d'évaluation
d'impact du Canada

Région de l'Ontario
600-55 rue York
Toronto (Ontario) M5J 1R7

February 8, 2021

Sent by email

Laura Bowman
Ecojustice
1910-777 Bay Street, PO Box 106
Toronto ON M5G 2C8
lbowman@ecojustice.ca

Dear Laura Bowman:

SUBJECT: Acknowledgement of Your Request to Designate the GTA West Project under the *Impact Assessment Act*

Thank you for your letter dated February 3, 2021, concerning the GTA West Project proposed by Ontario Ministry of Transportation. You have requested, on behalf of your client Environmental Defence, that the Minister of Environment and Climate Change (the Minister) designate the Project under the *Impact Assessment Act* (IAA).

Under subsection 9(1) of IAA the Minister may, by order, designate a physical activity that is not prescribed in the *Physical Activities Regulations*. The Minister may do this, if, in the Minister's opinion, the physical activity may cause adverse effects within federal jurisdiction or adverse direct or incidental effects (resulting from federal decisions), or public concerns related to those effects warrant the designation. In accordance with subsection 9(4) of IAA, the Minister is expected to respond to your request with reasons for their decision by May 4, 2021.

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada will review information about the Project; any concerns expressed from the public (that the Agency is aware of) and Indigenous groups; and expert advice from federal authorities, input from provincial ministries, and municipalities in order to inform the Minister on whether the Project should be designated. If designated, to proceed with the Project, Ontario Ministry of Transportation would be required to submit an Initial Project Description, thereby commencing the planning phase of IAA. In that case, the planning phase would include the Agency determining whether a federal impact assessment is required.

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Additional information regarding the process for designation requests can be found at the following link: <https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/services/policy-guidance/designating-project-impact-assessment-act.html>.

In the coming days, a Registry page for the Project will be available on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry Internet site at <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations>. Please use the *submit a comment* feature on the Project's Registry page if you wish to provide further information to the Agency regarding this file. Letters can be uploaded using this feature. If you have difficulties using this feature, please immediately contact Owais Khurshid at 647-262-8046 or Owais.Khurshid@canada.ca.

Important Note: All records produced, collected or received in relation to the designation request process – unless prohibited under the *Access to Information Act* or *Privacy Act* – are considered public and may be released. The Agency's Submission Policy¹ determines which submitted information can be shared publicly, and what should remain private. For further information on how we protect your privacy, please refer to the Privacy Notice².

If you have provided any comments or documents that contain confidential or sensitive information that you believe should be protected from release to the public, please contact the Agency as soon as possible. The Agency does not accept information marked as confidential without prior contact.

Further questions regarding the Project and this analysis can be directed to Owais Khurshid by email or telephone.

Sincerely,

<Original signed by>

Anjala Puvananathan
Director, Ontario Region

¹ <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/participation/conditions>

² <https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/protection>