

Ministry of  
Transportation

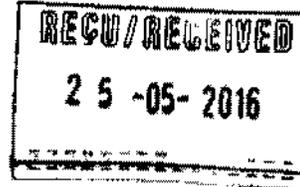
Office of the Minister

Ferguson Block, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
77 Wellesley St. West  
Toronto, Ontario  
M7A 1Z8  
416-327-9200  
www.ontario.ca/transportation

Ministère des  
Transports

Bureau du ministre

Édifice Ferguson, 3<sup>e</sup> étage  
77, rue Wellesley ouest  
Toronto (Ontario)  
M7A 1Z8  
416-327-9200  
www.ontario.ca/transports



**MAY 19 2016**

M2015-5591

Mr. Wayne Emmerson  
Chairman and CEO  
The Regional Municipality of York  
17250 Yonge Street  
Newmarket ON L3Y 6Z1

Dear Mr. Emmerson:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Ministry of Transportation's Highway 404 Class Environmental Assessment (EA) Study from Highway 407 ETR to Green Lane. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

The Ministry of Transportation recognizes the important role that Highway 404 plays in the efficient movement of goods and people throughout the Greater Toronto Area. The ministry's Class EA and preliminary design study on the corridor will further improve the highway and extend the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes from Highway 407 ETR to Green Lane. Our study has demonstrated that the new HOV lanes will operate well for the 2031 horizon year, and that HOV users and transit vehicles will see significant travel time savings.

While municipal initiatives such as new interchanges, ramp extensions and bus bypass lanes are not part of the ministry's current Class EA study, the study does not preclude future improvements through the Highway 404 corridor by the ministry or local municipality. As all widening for the proposed HOV lanes can be accommodated in the median, this does not impact the additional crossings or interchanges York has identified. In addition, as the proposed median shoulder will be four metres for the majority of the corridor, any modification required for bus bypass shoulders can be accommodated should this corridor be identified in the future.

The ministry will continue to work with our municipal partners to identify and support initiatives for increased growth. I am pleased to hear that staff from the region and ministry are working together to explore opportunities to advance York Region initiatives through the highway corridor with alternatives such as an addendum to the ministry's Class EA study.

.../2

The ministry also remains committed to encouraging and expanding cycling in the province and improving cycling safety. Cycling lanes on 16th Avenue identified by the region have been incorporated into structure replacement options for the Highway 404 overpasses. The remaining interchanges within the study are not impacted by the addition of the HOV lanes, and the HOV lanes do not impact the ability to include active transportation elements. The ministry will continue to work with the region to determine whether additional cycling facilities can be accommodated.

Upon completion of the Class EA study, the ministry will proceed with detail design for the extension of the HOV lanes on Highway 404 from the current terminus at Highway 407 ETR to Stouffville Road. Continuing the HOV lanes to Green Lane is identified as a need that is not yet part of our future plans. Each year, the ministry carefully plans and reviews its highway programs and project priorities. Further consideration including this section will form part of that annual review.

The region's comments and participation in the ministry study have been greatly appreciated.

Thank you again for sharing your comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steven Del Duca', written in a cursive style.

Steven Del Duca  
Minister