

# EXAMINING BOTH SIDES OF HWY. 413 PROPOSAL

**EFFORTS CONTINUE TO ENSURE HALTON HILLS IS HEARD, WRITES TED ARNOTT**



**TED ARNOTT**  
Column

The Ministry of Transportation's proposed Highway 413 project continues to generate a great deal of discussion at Queen's Park.

On the one hand, the ministry maintains a new 400 series highway is needed in the western GTA to address current congestion, strengthen our economic competitiveness, plan for future population growth and create jobs and economic activity.

On the other hand, critics of the 413 proposal question the cost, the environmental impact, the loss of farmland, the traffic studies that have been done and even the provincial government's motivation for proceeding with planning for a new highway that actually started under a previous government.

Locally, Halton Hills town council has consistently opposed construction of the 413, while the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce has expressed support.

As your MPP, I continue to carefully monitor the issue.

Future traffic projections are less certain be-

cause of the pandemic, but I agree that we need to plan realistically for future growth.

As part of the GTA, we need to be forward looking, while ensuring the environmental impact of new infrastructure projects is minimized, quality farmland is protected and tax dollars are spent effectively and carefully.

Last month, I sought a meeting with senior staff of the Ministry of Transportation to discuss the latest developments on the 413 proposal.

We met virtually on November 25. Once again, I urged ministry staff to consider the views of the people of our riding, consult with Halton Hills town council and listen to us before final decisions are made.

I was assured that discussions with the town will continue. I will ensure that they do. The ministry is holding a public information centre virtual meeting for Halton residents on Dec. 14. You can register here: [www.highway413.ca/consultation-2](http://www.highway413.ca/consultation-2).

It will include a discussion of the Government of Canada's impact assessment process.

This review may conclude that a federal impact assessment is required before moving forward, which might take up to five years.

As always, your comments are very helpful as I continue to ensure your voice is heard at Queen's Park.

*Ted Arnott is the MPP for Wellington-Halton Hills. He can be reached at [ted.arnott@pc.ola.org](mailto:ted.arnott@pc.ola.org).*

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## SNAPSHOT



Heather LeBlanc photo

A nuthatch visits a backyard on Fifth Line in Georgetown. Do you have a great local photo you'd like to share? Send it to [sleblanc@metroland.com](mailto:sleblanc@metroland.com), along with a brief description.

## FINANCIAL STABILITY ON PINS AND NEEDLES

**NEW COVID-19 VARIANT HAS INCREASED FINANCIAL WORRIES, WRITES PETER WATSON**



**PETER WATSON**  
Column

Recently the Bank of Canada warned that interest rate increases were likely for in the first part of next year in order to put the brakes on inflation.

One particular concern we have seen is the rising prices of homes and dangerously high amount of household debt — both of which serve as significant risks to individuals and the

country.

Then news spread about a new COVID-19 variant. Could this be the start of the next wave that would throw much of the world economy into another slowdown?

The result of the news was instant panic. Stock markets around the world plummeted. On Nov. 26, the S&P 500 lost 2.27 per cent which was the largest single day loss since February.

A similar loss happened in Canada. The S&P/TSX Composite index was down 2.25 per cent.

Gasoline prices, that had been a strong contributor to high inflation, suddenly dropped 11 cents per litre.

If another wave of COVID-19 fears spread, governments, including our own, will likely continue programs of economic relief. This would add to the staggering levels of government debt that have already resulted from the pandemic.

We will recover from the pandemic, but we don't know when. Until then, the financial stability for many is on pins and needles.

*Peter Watson is registered with Aligned Capital Partners Inc. (ACPI) to provide investment advice. Investment products are provided by ACPI. ACPI is a member of the Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada. The opinions expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of ACPI. Watson provides wealth management services through Watson Investments. He can be reached at [www.watsoninvestments.com](http://www.watsoninvestments.com).*

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