

# CUMULATIVE EFFECTS ASSESSMENT FACTSHEET

# HIGHWAY 413

Planning with Vision | Planning for People

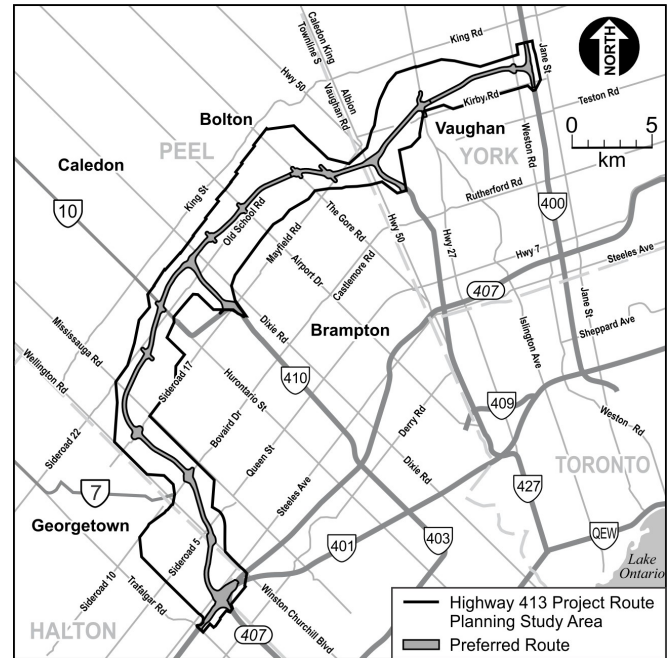
## Measuring the Cumulative Effects of Highway 413

Ontario’s Ministry of Transportation (MTO) is currently working on Stage 2 of the Highway 413 Transportation Corridor Route Planning, Preliminary Design and Environmental Assessment (EA) Project.

MTO has developed a proposed framework to assess potential cumulative effects of the project.

**Cumulative Effects** are the potential impacts that the Highway 413 project, in combination with other relevant activities, may have on the environment, social and community features.

**A Cumulative Effects Assessment or CEA** looks at how the specific, local effects of the project may impact the broader community and region, considering the impact of other relevant activities or actions.



The CEA recognizes that projects do not happen in a vacuum. It depends on the broader context of other activities or events that are also happening or have already happened. The CEA captures how the potential effects of a project may not be significant on their own, but in combination with other relevant activities causing their own effects, may result in meaningful impacts for a region.

- Cumulative effects assessment considers how the environmental effects of the project may impact the broader region, beyond the location of the project.
- Cumulative effects assessment looks at the interaction between the project’s potential environmental effects, and the effects from other relevant projects or activities that have happened either in the past or are expected to happen in the reasonably foreseeable future.
- Cumulative effects assessment analyzes the potential environmental effects of the project, combined with the effects from other actions or projects, to valued environmental features:
  - ▶ These environmental features, called **Valued Components (VCs)**, are defined on a project-specific basis to reflect the values and priorities of the participants.
  - ▶ VCs are identified, during earlier project stages and during the CEA itself.
  - ▶ VCs may have scientific, social, cultural, economic, historical, archaeological, or aesthetic importance.

To make sure potential cumulative impacts are identified and assessed in a methodical and complete way, MTO is proposing to follow a process outlined in the Highway 413 Cumulative Effects Assessment Framework and summarized in this Factsheet.

The Framework will set out the definitions, criteria, and step-by-step decision-making process that MTO will follow to identify any cumulative effects due to the Highway 413 project. MTO will be engaging with key stakeholders and Indigenous communities to formalize the framework prior to the start of the CEA.

## A 5-Step Approach to Understanding Cumulative Effects of the Highway 413 Project

MTO's proposed Cumulative Effects Assessment Framework is based on federal and provincial guidelines for measuring cumulative effects. These guidelines and definitions have been used in impact assessments for similar large projects across Canada. MTO's approach includes these principles and concepts:

- Stakeholders and Indigenous communities will provide feedback on the CEA process. This will help the Project Team gather information on surrounding ongoing projects, hear community and Indigenous Traditional Knowledge about the project site and past activities, and collect and incorporate stakeholder and Indigenous communities' feedback.
- Residual effects are environmental effects that can't be resolved, minimized, or avoided, and which will continue going forward.
- Cumulative Effects are assessed once the EA has identified a potential residual environmental effect. There can't be a cumulative effect if there's no residual environmental effect.
- VCs are the values and priorities that matter to the region. VCs are finalized during the CEA, and include input gathered during earlier stages of the EA and from consultation and engagement.
- Past or expected future activities or actions included in the CEA will be human-led actions, such as new roads, housing developments, bridges, etc. CEAs do include activities that are likely to have relevant effects on the region as the project advances. CEAs don't include actions that are naturally occurring, such as storms or floods; these events are included in the environmental baseline assessment.

### Step 1 Scoping

- Select VCs that are relevant to the project's activities based on its possible residual environmental effects.
- Determine how far back in the past, and how far into the future, the assessment of each VC will possibly go to look at other activities, also known as the assessment temporal boundary.
- Find relevant activities in the regional study area to include in the cumulative effects assessment.
- Decide how large an area to include in the assessment of each VC, also known as the assessment spatial boundary.

### Step 2 Analysis

- Analyze the potential impact of project activities and relevant activities on the VCs identified in Step 1.

### Step 3 Mitigation

- Determine mitigation measures to address the residual environmental effects identified in Step 2.
- Complete further analysis to assess if the mitigation will be sufficient, or if there will still be ongoing or residual effects on the surrounding environment even once mitigation has been done.

### Step 4 Significance

- Each potential residual effect is assessed against each VC to decide:
  1. Is the residual effect adverse to the VC? (Beneficial effects aren't assessed through this process)
  2. Is it significant?
  3. Is it likely?

### Step 5 Follow-up

- Various approaches will be used during the CEA and the life of the project to monitor remaining residual effects, find any unexpected effects, and adapt approaches as needed to minimize effects. Typically monitoring includes one or more of the following: compliance, environmental, and/or follow-up monitoring.

## Engagement and Consultation

Input from Indigenous communities, stakeholders and the greater community is important to MTO and an essential part of the Cumulative Effects Assessment (CEA), including the development and finalization of its Framework. Opportunities for people to provide input are summarized in the below table.

### Round #1 Winter 2022 to Spring 2023

As a first step, Indigenous communities and regulatory agencies who were already engaged with the project, including Health Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks, were engaged to provide feedback on the draft Framework.

### Round #2 Fall 2024

MTO will be sharing more information about the CEA and seeking input on the draft Framework from the public and stakeholders through the Project website during a 30-day review period between September 4th and October 4th, 2024. Once this information is available on the website, email notifications will be sent to the Project contact list. The feedback received will be incorporated, as appropriate, to finalize the Framework.

### Round #3 2025

The third round of consultation and engagement will be held to collect feedback from key stakeholders and Indigenous communities on the results of the **draft Cumulative Effects Assessment** and proposed mitigation measures. The Final Cumulative Effects Assessment will be made available on the Highway 413 project website. Meetings with key technical stakeholders and Indigenous communities will be arranged as appropriate.

For more information regarding the Highway 413 CEA framework or if you would like to provide a specific question or comment related to the CEA framework, please contact: [project\\_team@highway413.ca](mailto:project_team@highway413.ca)