

November 7, 2025

Hon. Stephen Lecce
Minister of Energy and Mines
77 Grenville Street, 10th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2C1

Dear Minister Lecce:

**Re: ERO Number 025-1133
Refining a Protected Corridor of Land for Future Electricity Transmission
Infrastructure in the Northwest Greater Toronto Area
Impact on 2594 Bovaird Drive**

We are writing to express concern with a sudden change in the proposed Narrowed Area of Interest for the Northwest GTA Transmission Corridor, which was released on October 10, 2025, and its impact on 2594 Bovaird Drive. The registered owner of the property is currently The Trustees of the Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, Southern Ontario. However, ownership is in the process of being transferred to JW Facilities. We act for the Trustees and JW Facilities, a not-for-profit corporation and religious charity used by the religious denomination commonly known as "Jehovah's Witnesses" (JW), to hold title to places of worship such as the property located at 2594 Bovaird Drive in Brampton (JW property). That property is a large Assembly Hall which accommodates meetings, assemblies and conventions of JW from across southern Ontario and beyond. The proposed new hydro corridor location is a matter of great concern to them as it runs directly through their site. This submission is accompanied by a planning opinion from Korsiak Planning.

The JW property is an Assembly Hall which is currently undergoing a significant renovation project to meet growing needs for the future - a project that is costing many millions of dollars and involving tens of thousands of volunteer hours. Such a major investment is very challenging for a religious organization. It would clearly not have been initiated if there was any expectation that, in the near future, the lands would be identified as part of a hydro transmission corridor.

For the first time, in a process that has been underway for years, the proposed hydro corridor does not co-locate with the route of the proposed Highway 413. It is now proposed to run as a separate piece of liner infrastructure for a distance of approximately four kilometres in the City of Brampton, from south of the JW site on Bovaird Drive, directly through the site, and northwards to Wanless Drive in the north.

This proposal comes as an unwelcome surprise to JW Facilities. For more than six years of previous study, this land was not included as part of the potential hydro corridor for study and consultation purposes.

The proposed new route is a departure from what has been published as the first “Guiding Principle” of the study process - that linear infrastructure should be co-located.

The proposed new route contradicts years of statements and presentations from the Ministry of Energy and the Independent Electricity System Operator that have indicated that the hydro corridor would be co-located with the Highway 413, and located adjacent to that Highway.

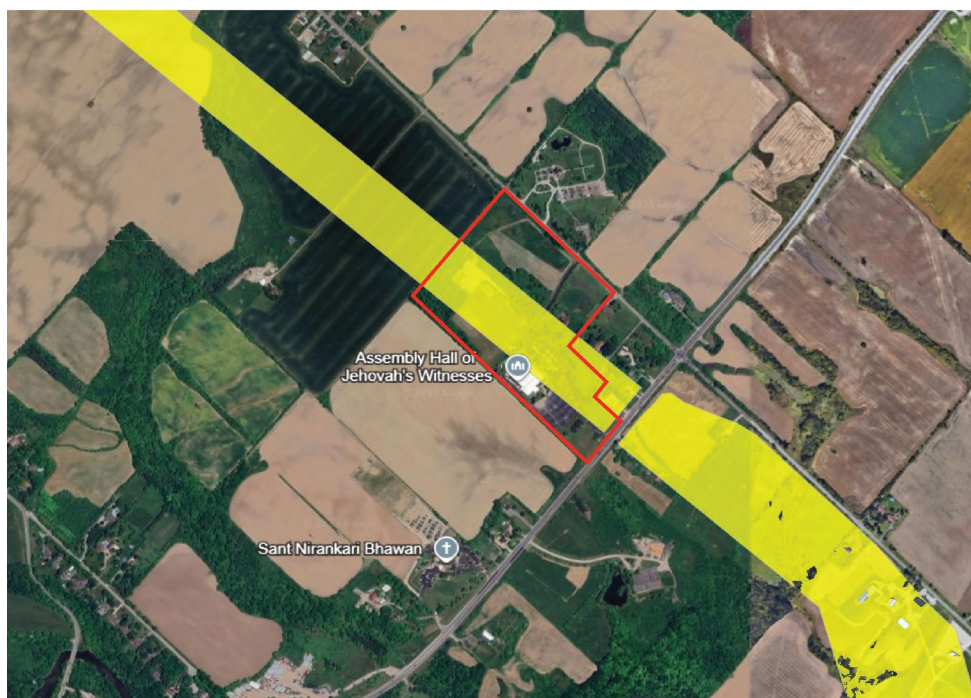
The proposed new route is not consistent with Provincial Policy, which requires the co-location of linear infrastructure. It is also not consistent with Provincial Policy which requires planning to avoid, or minimize and mitigate negative impacts from planned corridors.

As stated above, JW Facilities is a not-for-profit corporation and registered charity, not a land developer. It is a long time user of the site, which plays a fundamental and central role in the day-to-day religious lives of thousands of JW from across southern Ontario. The disruption and harm that the proposed new hydro corridor will cause to the JW community will indeed be profound, negative and severe.

The Province and the IESO should return to an approach where the hydro corridor is co-located with the Highway, as has always been the proposal previously.

Impact of New Proposed Corridor on Existing and Approved JW Uses is Devastating

The new proposed hydro corridor travels directly through the middle of the JW property at 2594 Bovaird. The aerial image below shows the JW site. The new proposed hydro corridor is shown in yellow.



The proposed hydro corridor travels through the site, and will leave narrowed remnant parcels on either side. The corridor will require the demolition of the Assembly Hall.

If the corridor acquisition is limited to only the lands needed for the hydro corridor, (as opposed to the entire site being acquired) the remnant parcels will be so narrow, and poorly shaped, that they will have limited practical utility. Clearly, they will not be an adequate or appropriate location for a new Assembly Hall to serve the purposes that the organization intends for this site.

The JW Property is an Existing Use, Serving Thousands, and Planned to Do So for the Long Term

The 2594 Bovaird site is the location of a JW Assembly Hall. Such facilities play a unifying and significant role for JW. JW from across Southern Ontario use this facility almost weekly - as do occasionally JW from beyond - and come to this Assembly Hall for meetings, assemblies and conventions. In addition, the facility hosts a classroom used to provide specialized training to full-time religious ministers from across Canada. These student development qualities and skills that benefit congregations of JW and the community in general, throughout Canada.

Individual congregations of JW meet regularly at their local place of worship, known as a Kingdom Hall. But throughout the year, almost every weekend, larger meetings and gatherings serving many congregations take place at the Assembly Hall. Such meetings feature talks and/or videos that teach Scriptural lessons. Interviews and reenactments show how to apply Bible principles. No collection is ever taken.

These religious services are open to the community regardless of ethnic or cultural background. Topics discussed include guidance to build strong families, coping with anxiety, overcoming negative habits, etc. When an emergency need arises in a community, JW use Assembly Halls as a centre to co-ordinate local relief efforts, including evacuation support, distribution of food and essential supplies, spiritual comfort, and residential remediation and reconstruction.

As such, the Assembly Hall plays a significant role as place of worship for JW and non-JW in the community. It has a positive impact on, and role in, the lives of thousands across Ontario.

Given this central function, it was a major decision and project when a renovation of the Assembly Hall was commenced at an anticipated cost in the many millions of dollars. For a religious organization like this, such a significant investment is only made with great care, after years of consensus-building, planning, and the careful husbanding of limited donated financial resources. Development of this needed project was delayed for several years until the Narrowed Focused Analysis Area and Narrowed Area of Interest provided assurance that the building would not be adversely affected by the Highway 413 or hydro corridor. It would never have been undertaken had there been any belief that a hydro corridor through the site was a possibility.

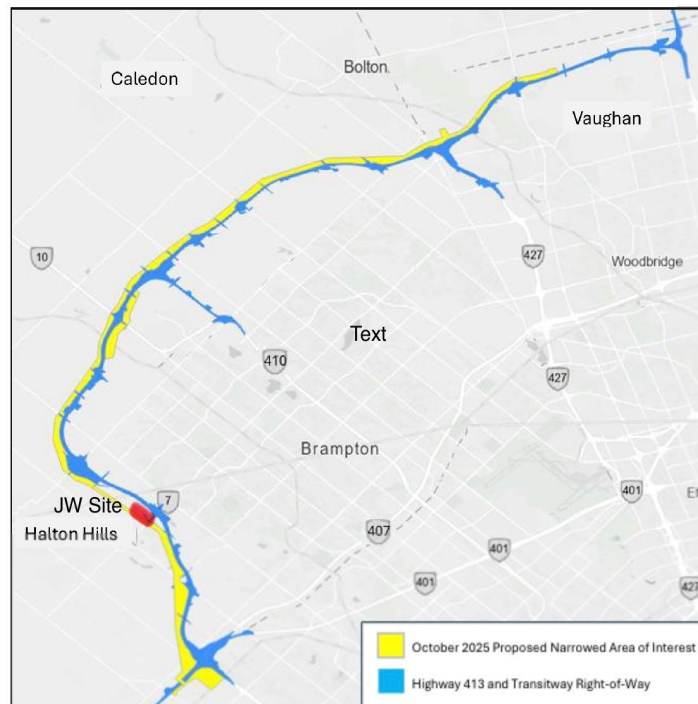
The harm to these plans from the surprise announcement of the proposed relocation of the hydro corridor to these lands goes well beyond financial impact and inconvenience. The harm it causes reverberates throughout the organization, having adverse social impacts well beyond the local community.

In addition, it should be noted that the owner of this property had already obtained site plan approval for a locally serving place of worship - a Kingdom Hall - on the northern portion of the 2594 Bovaird property. These plans will also be disrupted by the proposed new hydro corridor location, which would cause significant inconvenience and damages to thousands of JW who expect to use this new place of worship.

The Proposed Narrowed Area of Interest for the Hydro Corridor Diverts Away from the Highway 413 ONLY in this Part of Brampton - No Explanation for This Has Been Provided

After years of a process in which the hydro corridor was always proposed, and shown, to be co-located with the Highway 413 corridor, the October 10, 2025 announcement suggests a new route, on previously unstudied lands, which include directly crossing the JW property. The plan below shows a very approximate location of the corridor as it crosses the 2594 Bovaird property.

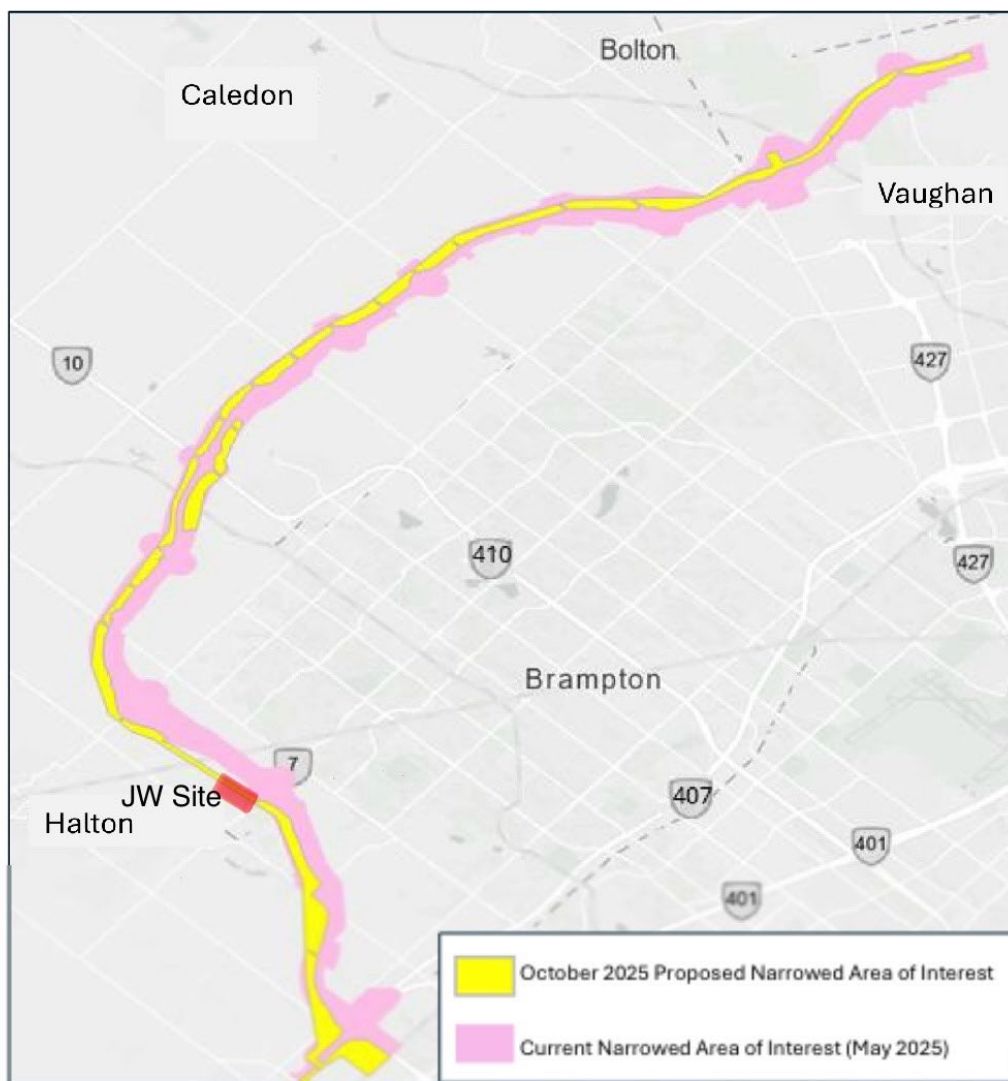
October 2025 Proposed Narrowed Area of Interest (NAI) for the Northwest Greater Toronto Area Transmission Corridor Study Compared to the Highway 413 Project



The above image demonstrates how the hydro corridor is no longer co-located with the Highway 413 in this part of Brampton.

The image below shows how the new Narrowed Area of Interest is entirely outside of the previously published Narrowed Area of interest – and demonstrates that the 2594 Bovaird property was not previously studied for the purpose of the hydro corridor, and has not been the subject of any consultation.

October 2025 Proposed Narrowed Area of Interest (NAI) for the Northwest Greater Toronto Area Transmission Corridor Study



The Separation of Hydro Corridor from the Highway 413 is Not Consistent With Provincial Policy Requirements

The sudden move to separate the hydro corridor and the Highway 413 corridor into two separate elements of linear infrastructure is contrary to Provincial Policy requirements.

Provincial Planning Statement policy 3.3.5 indicates that *"The co-location of linear infrastructure should be promoted, where appropriate."* The divergence of the hydro corridor from the highway corridor in this part of Brampton is not consistent with this policy requirement.

The reason for this policy requirement is that linear infrastructure, like highways and hydro corridors, are immensely disruptive to the physical, cultural and social cohesion of communities. Provincial policy encourages the creation of complete communities.

The Provincial Planning Statement, while issued pursuant to section 3 of the *Planning Act*, has a much wider scope. Under the caption "Role of the Provincial Planning Statement", the document includes the following:

"As a key part of Ontario's policy-led planning system, the Provincial Planning Statement sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land province-wide, helping achieve the provincial goal of meeting the needs of a fast-growing province while enhancing the quality of life for all Ontarians."

As such, it is important that the policy requirements articulated in the Provincial Planning Statement are followed in the planning of the Northwest GTA Transmission Corridor.

The Move From a Single Co-located Infrastructure Corridor to Two Separated Infrastructure Corridors in Brampton is Contrary to Provincial Policy to Avoid, Minimize or Mitigate the Negative Impact of Corridors on Adjacent Lands

Provincial policy requiring that planned corridors avoid, minimize or avoid negative impacts on adjacent lands. Instead, the proposed new Narrowed Area of Interest for the hydro corridor actually doubles the planned corridor negative impacts on adjacent lands in this part of Brampton.

Policy 3.3.3 in the Provincial Planning Statement is as follows:

3.3.3 Planning authorities shall not permit development in planned corridors that could preclude or negatively affect the use of the corridor for the purpose(s) for which it was identified.

New development proposals proposed on adjacent lands to existing or planned corridors and transportation facilities should be compatible with, and supportive of, the long-term purpose of the corridor and should be designed to avoid, or where avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate negative impacts on and adverse effects from the corridor and transportation facilities.

While this policy assumes that adjacent land uses are decided AFTER the planned corridor is established, from the perspective of JW Facilities, their use is already planned and in place. However, it is clear that the same principle - avoid, minimize and mitigate negative impacts and adverse effects from the planned corridors - applies under the Provincial policy. And it is clear that the proposed new hydro corridor location does not minimize or mitigate impacts and adverse effects on this place of worship. On the contrary, the negative impact could not conceivably be worse - the corridor will entirely eliminate the place of worship.

The changed route will increase negative impacts and adverse effects on adjacent lands, as well as significantly increasing the amount of negatively affected adjacent lands.

The Move Away from Co-Location of the Hydro Corridor With The Highway 413 Corridor is Contrary to the Guiding Principles of the Corridor Location Study Process

In an Environmental Registry proposal posted March 23, 2020 titled “Proposal to Identify and Protect a Corridor of Land for Future Electricity Infrastructure in the Greater Toronto Area”, the Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines sets out the “Guiding Principles for Corridor Identification.

The very first guiding principle is identified as follows:

1. **Co-locate with other Linear Infrastructure**
 - Corridor routing should maximize the use of existing linear infrastructure corridors wherever feasible (e.g. GTA (Greater Toronto Area) West Transportation Corridor, 400 series highways, other infrastructure corridors).

This guiding principle has been followed throughout the study process continually until October 10, 2025. Only with the recent announcement has there been a departure from the primary principle of co-location. This departure from co-location as a principle only takes place in Brampton, and does so going directly through the JW Assembly Hall.

The Government posting requires co-location “wherever feasible”. There has never previously been any suggestion that co-location in this area is not feasible. There continues to be no basis on which to conclude that co-location is not feasible.

The departure from the very first publicly declared guiding principle for corridor identification has not been in any way justified. Such a departure from a foundational guiding principle, which was the basis for public consultation, represents a serious flaw in the process.

The Process is Now Severely Flawed. For Over Six Years, There Has Been No Suggestion, Study or Consultation Regarding Locating the Hydro Corridor on the JW Property, West of Heritage Road,

The process is now deeply flawed. For more than six years, there has been no suggestion that the JW property west of Heritage Road were a possible hydro corridor route location. On the contrary, the hydro corridor location has consistently been a substantial distance to the east, co-located with the proposed Highway 413.

For years, all communications and announcements from the Government and the Independent Electricity System Operation have emphasized that the intention is to co-locate the hydro corridor with the Highway 413 corridor. The following is a sample of such public comments from the Government and IESO:

April 28, 2015 - IESO Northwest Greater Toronto Area Integrated Regional Resource Plan

“It is recommended that work continue to establish a corridor for a future transmission near the planned West GTA transportation corridor. Coordinated planning for linear infrastructure corridors is consistent with the direction provided in the PPS.”

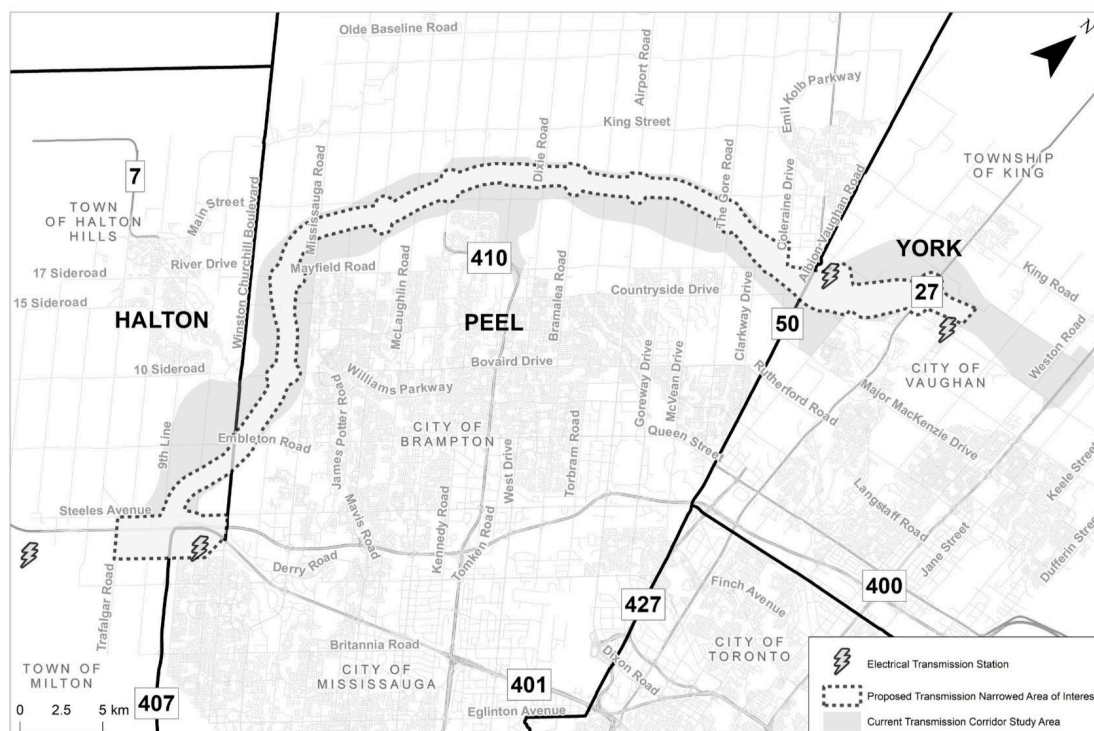
February 15, 2018 - IESO News Release Northwest - Greater Toronto Area Joint Corridor Identification Study Announced

“The IESO and the Ministry of Transportation have announced a joint corridor identification study on a proposed land corridor in the Northwest Greater Toronto Area (NW GTA). The purpose of the study is to identify land to be protected for multi-purpose linear infrastructure (such as transmission lines and transportation infrastructure) to ensure it can be accommodated if and when the need arises.

June 2019 - Notice of Northwest GTA Transportation Corridor Identification Study Notice

“At this time, ENDM and the IESO are proposing a narrowed area of interest. A map of the study area and the proposed narrow area of interest are shown below. The narrowed area largely corresponds to MTO’s narrowed 2019 FAA for the GTA West Highway Environmental Assessment with some differences.”

Map: Current Transmission Corridor Study Area and Proposed Transmission Narrowed Area of Interest



Ontario 

March 23, 2020 - Environmental Registry Posting - Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines - Proposal to Identify and Protect a Corridor of Land for Future Electricity Infrastructure in the Greater Toronto Area

“Provincial policy supports the co-location of linear infrastructure which has the potential to mitigate the impact on surrounding agricultural land and environmentally sensitive areas.”

“Planning underway by the Ministry of Transportation related to the Greater Toronto Area West Transportation Corridor offers an opportunity to consider co-location. That’s why the starting point for the study, announced in June 2019, was the Ministry of Transportation’s 2015 Focused Analysis Area (“2015 FAA”).”

“At this time, we are proposing a narrowed area of interest. The narrowed area largely corresponds to MTO’s (Ministry of Transportation’s) narrowed 2019 Focused Area Analysis (“2019 FAA”) for the GTA (Greater Toronto Area West Highway Environmental Assessment with some differences.”

“Guiding Principles for Corridor Identification”

“1. Co-locate with other linear infrastructure

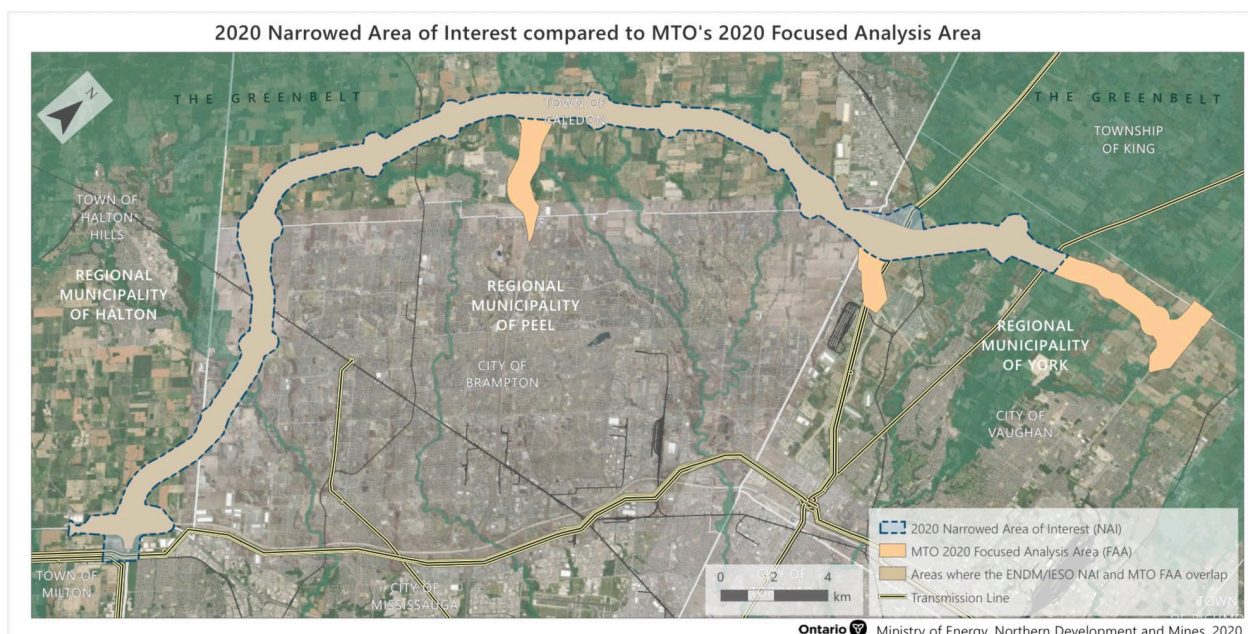
- Corridor routing should maximize the use of existing linear infrastructure corridors wherever feasible (e.g. GTA (Greater Toronto Area) West Transportation Corridor, 200 series highways, other infrastructure corridors).”

November 18, 2020 - Environmental Registry of Ontario Posting Notice of Decision - Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines - Proposal to Identify and Protect a Corridor of Land for Future Electricity Infrastructure in the Greater Toronto Area

“The study team heard consistently from stakeholders about the need to closely coordinate the transmission study with the transportation study in order to reduce impacts on property owners.”

“Many commenters expressed support for ... co-location of future transmission infrastructure with the proposed GTA (Greater Toronto Area) West Transportation Corridor in order to reduce overall impacts top natural heritage, farmland, and existing and planned communities and employment lands.”

“We have released a revised study area related to the Northwest GTA (Greater Toronto Area) Transmission Corridor Identification Study.”



July 2021 - IESO Greater Toronto Area West (Peel/Halton) Integrated Regional Resource Plan

“Provincial policy encourages colocation of linear infrastructure to reduce land use impacts and the IESO and Ministry of Energy are conducting a joint study to ultimately identify a suitable corridor that can be preserved for future transmission infrastructure should the need arise. The expectation is that the preferred route for this future transmission corridor will largely align with MTO’s highway study area.”

October 29, 2024 - IESO GTA West Regional Electricity Planning Engagement Webinar Deck

“The IESO and the Ministry of Energy and Electrification are conducting a joint study to identify land to be protected for a future transmission corridor (adjacent to Highway 413) to support anticipated long-term growth in demand for electricity in the GTA West region.”

“Provincial policy encourages colocation of linear infrastructure to reduce land use impacts. The IESO and Ministry of Energy and Electrification are conducting a joint study alongside the highway EA to protect land for a potential future transportation corridor.”

November 20, 2024 - IESO Quarterly Bulk Planning Update South & Central Bulk Study presentation deck

“Continue to work with the Ministry of Energy and Electrification to identify and preserve land required for transmission infrastructure to support long-term growth in the GTA.”

“Northwest GTA Transmission Corridor: Study already underway to identify suitable land adjacent to the 413 highway for a future transmission corridor.”

December 9, 2024 - Environmental Registry Posting - Ministry of Transportation - Highway 413 Focused Analysis Area and Northwest GTA Transmission Corridor Narrowed Area of Interest Refinements

“The FAA (Focused Analysis Area) and the NAI (Narrowed Area of Interest) are almost identical. The land being protected by the Ministry of Energy and Electrification is the same land being protected by the Ministry of Transportation, except where each is protecting additional lands specific to its particular use.”

May 2, 2025 - Environmental Registry Posting Decision Notice - Highway 413 Focused Analysis Area and Northwest GTA Transmission Corridor Narrowed Area of Interest Refinements

“... seeking to identify and preserve a corridor of land suitable for future transmission infrastructure adjacent to the proposed Highway 413.”

“The Narrowed Area of Interstate (NAI (Narrowed Area of Interest)) for the Study, originally identified in 2020, has been updated to include targeted refinements. These adjustments represent areas that MEM (Ministry of Energy and Mines) is able to release based on recent preliminary design work on Highway 413 that have allowed for a better understanding of infrastructure alignment and co-location.”

Noting the Adverse Impact on the JW Place of Worship Use, the City of Brampton is Opposed to the Proposed New Hydro Corridor

The City of Brampton has specifically identified impacts on the JW place of worship as one of their reasons for opposing the new hydro corridor, at page 7, of a staff report dated October 16, 2025 respecting the new proposed hydro corridor Narrowed Area of Interest (NAI):

“The proposed NAI also impacts the Metrolinx layover facility, an existing cemetery, and a place of worship.”

The Brampton planning report also makes note of the effect that the corridor will have on lands, such as the 2594 Bovaird site and many others along the proposed new hydro corridor, resulting in *“inefficient land use patterns”* - a reflection of the JW concern respecting the impractical size and geometry of their remaining lands outside the corridor.

Other concerns raised by the City include:

- Impact on Natural Heritage System features.
- Impact on Provincially Significant Wetlands.
- Impact on Significant Woodlands.
- Disruption of the planning of the Heritage Heights Secondary Plan.
- Impact on in-progress technical studies.
- Delays to the delivery of thousands of units of housing.

New Proposed Hydro Corridor Would Create Uncertainty and Hardship for Current Use and Users - Increased Costs for Province

The modification of the route for the proposed hydro transmission corridor away from the Highway 413 proposed corridor, creates a number of negative consequences from a land acquisition/expropriation perspective both for our client and for the Province.

Obviously, the lands for the transmission corridor would need to be acquired. If a consensual purchase was not concluded in a timely way, the lands would be expropriated pursuant to the *Expropriations Act*. The Environmental Registry posting states that the lands proposed for the transmission corridor would not be finally determined nor needed for at least 5 to 7 years and likely much longer, following further work by the Ministry and the Independent Electric System Operator (IESO) to determine need and design and Environmental Assessments.

The posting states that the corridor is frozen from a land use perspective indefinitely, pursuant to section 3.3 of the Provincial Planning Statement. Assuming, (but not agreeing), that the Section 3.3 policy can create a land use freeze, there are numerous expropriation issues, for both the JW and the Province, of a fairness, practical and technical nature.

It is settled law that the objective of the *Expropriations Act* is to make the owner, or previous owner “whole” as if no expropriation had occurred.

It is also settled law that an expropriation can occur long before the formal process under the *Expropriations Act* is initiated, called the ‘shadow period’. In the present case, the shadow period for any expropriation of the JW property began to run on October 11, 2025 - that being the day after the Environmental Registry posting of which JW learned.

As described earlier in this submission, the revised corridor cuts through the middle of the JW property, and appears to hit their Assembly Hall. As noted, it is currently undergoing a multi million-dollar renovation which is about halfway complete, and began in the spring of 2025. No additional planning approvals or further permits are required for this work.

Given the role that this Assembly Hall plays for JW congregations from across southern Ontario, finding a new site would be very time consuming difficult, and costly.

The JW property is part of the recently approved and in place Heritage Heights Secondary Plan, permitting a variety of higher order urban residential uses, in place prior to the October 10, 2025 Environmental Registry posting.

The revised transmission corridor location on the JW property creates significant hardship and economic loss for JW Facilities, given the implications and uncertainty for their Assembly Hall and other facilities on site, the ability to convey their lands at a fair market value and purchase lands for a replacement place of worship.

Assuming (without agreeing) that the ERO posting in conjunction with section 3.3 of the PPS effects an indefinite land use freeze of the JW property, there may be an actionable de facto expropriation given recent Supreme Court of Canada jurisprudence.

If an expropriation occurs many years or decades from now, given the new proposed route and necessary land acquisitions, all four heads of damage under section 13 of the *Expropriations Act*, being: Market Value, Disturbance Damages, Injurious Affection and Special Difficulties in Relocation are engaged.

As regards to Market Value of the lands acquired, the compensation will be determined on the basis of their highest and best use as if no land use freeze had occurred in October 2025 and they were developed in a timely way to their maximum economic value, reflecting uses approved in the Heritage Heights Secondary Plan.

Given that the new transmission corridor route would severely diminish or prevent the development of the remaining lands, Injurious Affection damages would be fully compensated based on the remaining lands' highest and best use in the absence of the land use freeze and transmission corridor.

Other costs, including those lost through the renovation of the Assembly Hall would be compensated as Disturbance Damages.

Additional compensation would be awarded for the special difficulties in finding another site for an Assembly Hall that would adequately serve the needs of the JW congregations across southern Ontario.

Absent an action for de facto expropriation, the JW will experience gross hardship and unfairness in having to wait many years or decades for their proper compensation while enduring an indefinite period of uncertainty and loss.

The Province, with the revised route through the JW property, will be required to provide an extremely high level of compensation, especially given the injurious affection claim caused by splitting the JW developable lands into practically useless parcels.

The revised transmission corridor route will lead to litigation, uncertainty and losses for the religious organization, and vastly increased cost for the Province, compared with the originally proposed co-located route as anticipated until October 10, 2025.

The Proposed New Narrowed Area of Interest Should Be Abandoned - and the Hydro Corridor Should Be Returned to a Single Co-Located Linear Corridor With the Highway 413

For reasons of fairness and the integrity of the facility siting process, the abrupt departure from a co-located corridor in the Heritage Heights area of Brampton should be reversed. The plan for co-location of the hydro corridor and the Highway 413 - understood to be the approach for a decade or more - should be resumed.

The impact of the proposed new hydro corridor route would be devastating to the existing JW place of worship use, and JW community generally.

The proposed separation of the hydro corridor from the highway corridor runs directly contrary to the primary guiding principle of the corridor identification process as set out by the Government - that of co-location of the hydro and highway corridors wherever feasible.

The new proposed hydro corridor is now intended to be on JW Facilities property that has not been studied for that purpose. They have never been consulted on this possibility.

The negative impacts of switching to two separate corridors, both from a community building and land use perspective, are substantial.

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The effects of the separation of the corridors demonstrate that this move is contrary to provincial policy, both in substance and in terms of impacts. It is contrary to the requirements of the Provincial Planning Statement encouraging co-location of linear infrastructure.

This part of Brampton is the only area where such co-location is no longer proposed.

It is also contrary to the Provincial Planning Statement policy to avoid, minimize or mitigate negative impacts and adverse effects, such as on the JW Facilities property. The proposed change does exactly the opposite of what Provincial policy intends.

The hardship that will be caused to JW Facilities as landowners and users is enormous - and enormously unfair at this late stage, after years of good faith reliance upon the Province's long-stated and repeated commitment to co-location of the corridors.

The proposal to separate the hydro corridor from the highway corridor should be abandoned. The original plan to co-locate the corridors, as intended for years, should be adopted.

Yours truly,

AIRD & BERLIS LLP



Hon. Peter Van Loan, P.C., K.C.
Partner

Encl.

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