



StandOurGround.ca NEWSLETTER

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Save Russell Township from Mega Sprawl!

A New Threat to Ontario Farmland Announced by Federal Government!

Seemingly out of the blue (although it turns out the secret plan has been in the works since 2022) a new Crown Corporation, led by Martin Imbleau of SNC Lavalin fame, has announced a plan to expropriate thousands of acres of farmland in Eastern Ontario.

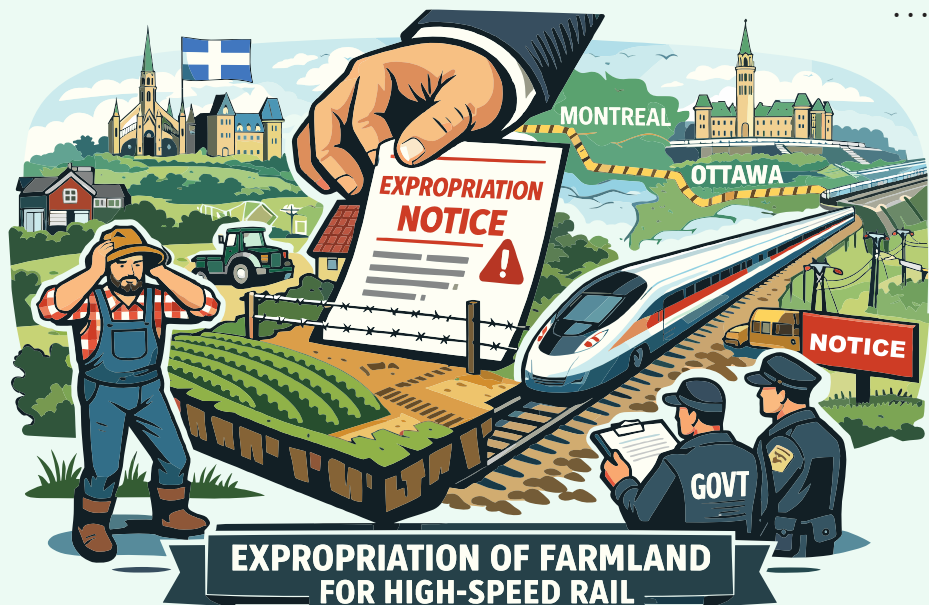
To make matters so much worse, the House of Commons just passed Bill C-15, which grants extraordinary powers of expropriation to the corporation.

What?!

The company, called Alto, has suckered federal politicians into thinking a high speed train from Quebec City is needed. PM Carney's "nation building projects" spiel provided the perfect excuse to push a project through as easily as possible.

How a barrier running an 8- to 12-ft. high double wall with razor wire on top across 1,000 kilometres of southern Quebec, Eastern Ontario and southern

.../2



EXPROPRIATION OF FARMLAND FOR HIGH-SPEED RAIL

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Ontario, expropriating thousands of farms and properties, cutting communities into pieces, ruining fields and forests and marshes, killing wildlife, taking farmland out of production (when the unstable world is relying on Canada's food), fueling anger and division, costing **ALL** Canadian taxpayers thousands of dollars per person, in perpetuity, all for a train with only a handful of stops that will save a privileged few a couple of hours, has not been explained. Instead a picture of a shiny train in Europe is shown.

Alto says the first leg will run from Montreal to Ottawa (ironically, two of the Canadian cities which already have the most travel options). That means expropriation will start **HERE**. The proposed corridor map includes the northeast corner of Russell Township, parts of Limoges, much of Casselman, Vars, Carlsbad Springs, etc. But we're not talking about using the existing tracks. No, high speed requires brand new special tracks, few curves (hence the 10 km wide expropriation corridor), very few crossings (only over major highways, not over secondary or rural roads), a walled security barrier, and no stops except at the stations outside the cities on its list: Quebec City, Trois Rivieres, Montreal/Laval, Ottawa, Peterborough, Toronto, Windsor.

This is definitely not a commuter train to help with traffic congestion. It's a planned land grab which will allow the federal government to borrow against the land value. Most insulting to Western Quebec farmers, the route goes through Mirabel. That community, which was ruined by Trudeau Sr.'s vanity project, was not even informed. Its mayor found out on Facebook. As for us, the only open house in Eastern Ontario (which will bear the negative impacts but zero benefits) was held in Vankleek Hill weeks ago. Environmental and human rights have not been considered, and consultations have been marketing exercises only.

Yet the corporation claims to act with transparency and consultation.

Farm organizations are starting to speak out but very few MPs have. The only ones who have stated they were opposed are Scott Reid (Lanark Frontenac Kingston), Eric Duncan (SDG), Ryan Mallette (Bay of Quinte), Daryl Kramp-Neuman (Hastings Lennox Addington Tyendinaga), Michael Barrett (Leeds Grenville Thousands Island Rideau Lakes), and Elizabeth May (Gulf Islands) spoke out against Bill C-15.

The estimated project cost is \$90 billion but considering how P3 partnerships usually go it will balloon to hundreds of billions of dollars.

All this and...WHY?

Who is being enriched by this? (See altotrain.ca for their names and dubious connections.)

For more information on how to fight back against Alto and its promoters there are numerous Facebook pages where worried residents have done thousands of hours of research. The local one is [**ALT-NO— Residents Opposing the ALTO High Speed Rail | Facebook**](#).

Some municipalities have already voted to reject the boondoggle going through their areas. Ask councillors and mayors in UCPR to do the same.

Scott Reid has a [**petition**](#) going which any Canadian can sign. Concerned residents might want to speak to their MPs to make sure they know the real costs to Canadians—all Canadians.

More clarity on Bill C-15

C-15, a Budget Implementation Act (BIA), is a 600+ page omnibus bill that creates or amends several dozen other acts in one single vote.

This bill exemplifies a broader trend of using Omnibus legislation to pass complex, politically sensitive measures under tight timelines, often bypassing detailed scrutiny.

Omnibus Bill C-15 in this way deals with changes to a variety of issues from the tax code to the future of crypto... But it is Part 5 in this bill that concerns us:

Division 1 of Part 5 of Bill C-15 enacts the High-Speed Rail Network Act, which expands the expropriation powers of the state to immutable and immovable powers for any land they deem necessary for the train.

Division 4 of Part 5 amends the Canada Infrastructure Bank Act to increase the amount of money they can give themselves for this project to 45 billion dollars.

And last, but not least, Division 5 of Part 5 grants unprecedented ministerial power to exempt companies from most federal laws for up to three years. Critics, including the Bloc Québécois and Green Party, label it an “abomination” that bypasses parliamentary scrutiny and undermines democracy.

Bill C-15 also includes hidden changes to environmental protections and scrapped funding for regional media.

Key Changes to the Expropriation Act

- ▶ **Elimination of Public Hearings:** The BIA removes the requirement for public hearings when landowners object to expropriation. Under the previous system, Section 10(1) of the Expropriation Act mandated a hearing upon objection. Now, the minister makes the final decision based on a written response, reducing procedural delays.
- ▶ **Right of First Refusal:** The federal government can place a “*right of first refusal*” on land it may need, giving it the option to purchase the property at the price offered by a third party. This can hinder property sales and impact market value.
- ▶ **Prohibition on Work:** The government can issue a “prohibition on work” order on land it intends to acquire, preventing landowners from making improvements for up to four years. This is intended to prevent land speculation but may affect property value and development plans.
- ▶ **Streamlined Land Acquisition:** The changes allow the federal agency Alto (a subsidiary of Via Rail) to bypass the Canada Transportation Agency (CTA) review for the high-speed rail line, significantly speeding up project approval.

Call for candidates

We're now officially in an election year! Time to think about your Township's future. If you are considering running for a council position we would like to know your opinions on preservation of farmland. Candidates who align with our goals may be supported in their campaign by **StandOurGround**.

StandOurGround.ca welcomes your feedback, counterarguments, photographs, and written submissions for our Newsletter. Kindly inform us if you would like your Letter to the Editor to remain anonymous.

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STOP THE RUSHED ALTO HIGH-SPEED RAIL! PROTECT OUR FARMS, LAND & COMMUNITY

ALTNO^x

THIS IS HAPPENING RIGHT NOW!

ALTO (formed from VIA Rail), is a federal Crown corporation proposing a high-speed rail corridor that will divide farmland, homes and rural communities — with no stations, no local service, and **no benefit to us**.

WHY THIS IS A SERIOUS THREAT

- Productive rural & farmland are at risk
- Homes & family properties could be affected
- The rail line would permanently divide communities
- Property values & livelihoods could be harmed
- Wildlife habitats destroyed
- Re-route EMS & Fire services

Once land is taken for rail infrastructure, it is gone forever.

WHAT WE ARE ASKING

- Stop new HSR line construction on land between Ottawa & Montreal
- Use existing rail lines instead of taking farms and homes
- Don't start here. Montreal to Ottawa is already connected by rail, air and car and time savings are minimal
- Reject the extraordinary powers granted by Bill C-15

**TIME IS CRITICAL.
PLANNING IS ALREADY
UNDERWAY.
IF WE DON'T ACT NOW,
DECISIONS WILL BE MADE
WITHOUT US.**

WHAT IS BILL C-15?

The federal budget bill that enables fast-tracking Alto high-speed rail.

What does it mean for you?

Your land could be expropriated

- no negotiation required

Your objections can be ignored

- no public hearings

You could be blocked from using your property

- no renos or new construction for years

Any sale must be offered to the government first

- lowering property value

WHO CAN YOU CONTACT

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