

Gas tax helps pave the roads here

By Lisa Tallyn
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Thanks to contributions from the federal Gas Tax Fund, there are two smoother and safer roads in town.

Mayor Rick Bonnette, some Town councillors and staff, and Wellington-Halton Hills MP Michael Chong were at the Gellert Community Centre Tuesday to celebrate the completion of resurfacing work on Fourth Line and 17 Sideroad.

In total 5.5 km of roadway was resurfaced and 25,000 tonnes of asphalt put down on the two roads.

Fourth Line's surface was replaced with a new, more permanent, pavement material to accommodate a significant increase in traffic volume while 17 Sideroad was resurfaced with a wider shoulder to incorporate future bike lanes to make cycling safer for riders.

The federal government contributed \$1.35 million through the Gas Tax Fund transfer to the project, and the Town kicked in \$205,000.

To date the Town has received more than \$12.4 million from the federal Gas Tax Fund.

"The federal government is providing municipalities with infrastructure funding to rehabilitate local roads and streets," said

Chong. "These road improvements, made possible through the federal Gas Tax Fund, are an example of how the federal government is delivering for local communities, while at the same time creating jobs and economic growth. The federal government, working with the Town of Halton Hills, will continue to fund these infrastructure improvements through the federal Gas Tax Fund."

Chong said gas tax funding to Halton Hills and Halton Region has increased significantly over the past 10 years.

He said 10 years ago the federal government provided \$3.7 million annually to Halton Region in gas tax funding, today it's a \$14.5 million transfer. A decade ago the Town received \$500,000 in gas tax funds, and today it receives \$1.7 million annually.

"Investments in municipal infrastructure are critically important to maintain a high quality of life and strong local economy," said Mayor Rick Bonnette.

"However, local governments can't afford to go it alone. These types of projects could not be completed without money from the Federal Gas Tax Fund. Traffic congestion is a growing issue in our community, so continued investments in our roadways is a must. We appreciate the support and look forward to continuing this partnership with the federal government."

Chong's bill continues on its way

Conservative backbencher MP Michael Chong's bill designed to restore a measure of power to MPs in Parliament has passed another critical hurdle.

A Commons committee has finished its study of Michael Chong's Reform Act 2014, meaning it will now go back to the House for two more hours of debate and a third-reading vote in the new year.

Conservatives on the committee passed a series of amendments to the private member's bill that were consistent with changes that Chong himself had proposed as a way to get all-party backing.

If passed, the bill would explicitly give MPs the power over such decisions such as suspending and reinstating colleagues, electing a caucus chair, initiating a leadership review and even ousting the leader.

Each party's group of MPs would have



MP MICHAEL CHONG

to vote to adopt such new rules after each election, vote to create their own version of the rules, or else elect to stick with the status quo.

Chong has been a proponent of strengthening the role of parliamentarians, in the face of increasingly powerful and controlling leader's offices.

On Sept. 24, the Reform Act, 2014 passed its first vote in the House of Commons with the support of MPs from all parties, adopting it at

Second Reading, 253-17.

"While the bill has come a long way since it was introduced just over a year ago, we are only part way through the legislative process," Chong said. "We are up against the hard deadline of the 2015 federal election. It's important that the bill be passed into law before the House rises next June."

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