

## High technology monitors 401

TORONTO - Motorists driving into Toronto should be on the lookout for something new on Highway 401.

COMPASS, a new high-tech tool for managing traffic on urban highways, is making its debut with the testing of 13 changeable message signs from Martin Grove Road to Yonge Street.

Over the next two weeks, when weather permits, the three-metre tall electronic signs will display the words "test message."

The first of its kind in Canada, this fibre-optic based communications system will help fight that dreaded urban dilemma - the traffic jam.

"The objective of these signs is to inform drivers of the traffic picture up ahead, so that they can adjust their speed to the traffic flow or change routes," Transportation Minister Ed Philip said. "Once fully operational, they will become the basis for a system that will not only span the entire length of the 401 in Metro but most of the Toronto-area freeway network as well."

Designed by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation,

COMPASS monitors traffic flow through the use of vehicle sensors in the road and television cameras mounted high above Metro's Highway 401 corridor.

Operators in MTO's Traffic Control Centre can activate messages on the signs, and can dispatch ministry emergency patrol vehicles or contact police, ambulance or towing services.

"Nearly 70 per cent of highway congestion can be directly linked to the after-effects of accidents or breakdowns," Philip said. "By reducing the risks of collisions caused by sudden and unforeseen slowdowns, these signs will help improve both safety and traffic movement on Highway 401."

On average, Highway 401 carries up to 320,000 vehicles a day through Metro. The traffic count through the busiest section (between Highway 400 and Weston Road) swells to about 32,000 per hour during the morning and evening commuter rush.

"COMPASS won't solve all of our traffic congestion problems, but it does represent a vital part of this ministry's plan to manage our existing road systems," Philip said.

## Public asked for suggestions

Halton Regional Review sub-committee is now accepting public input regarding suggestions for changes to the Regional election process, representation within the Region and the relationship between local and Regional government, according to a Regional press release.

The review sub-committee is comprised of two Regional Councillors from each are municipality and Regional Chairman Peter Pomeroy. Councillor Rick Bonnette and Pam Johnston represent Halton Hills on the committee.

Those who want to make written submissions to the committee should do so by March 1, 1990, states the press release.

Any changes adopted by Regional council won't take effect until the 1994 municipal elections.

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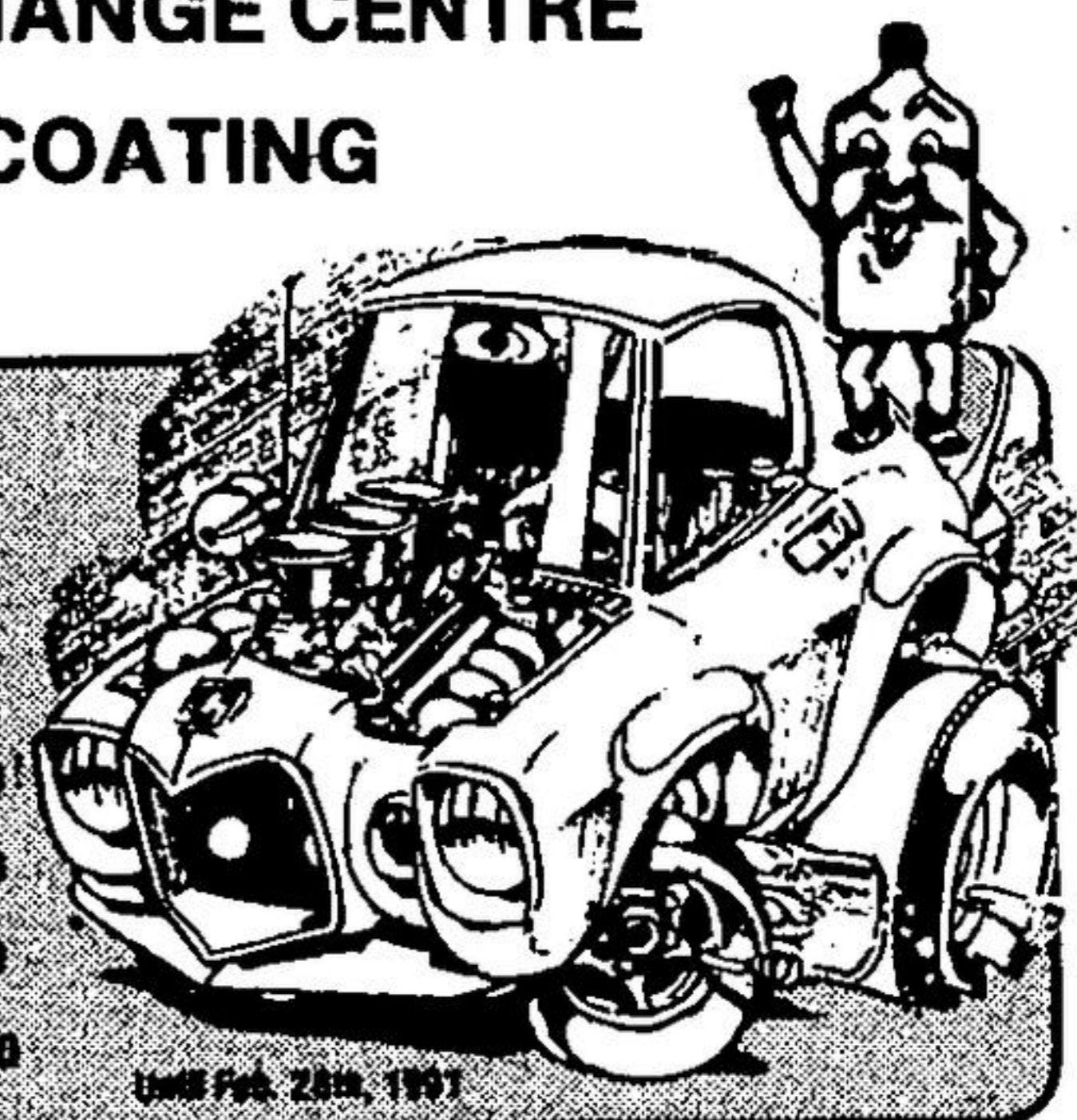
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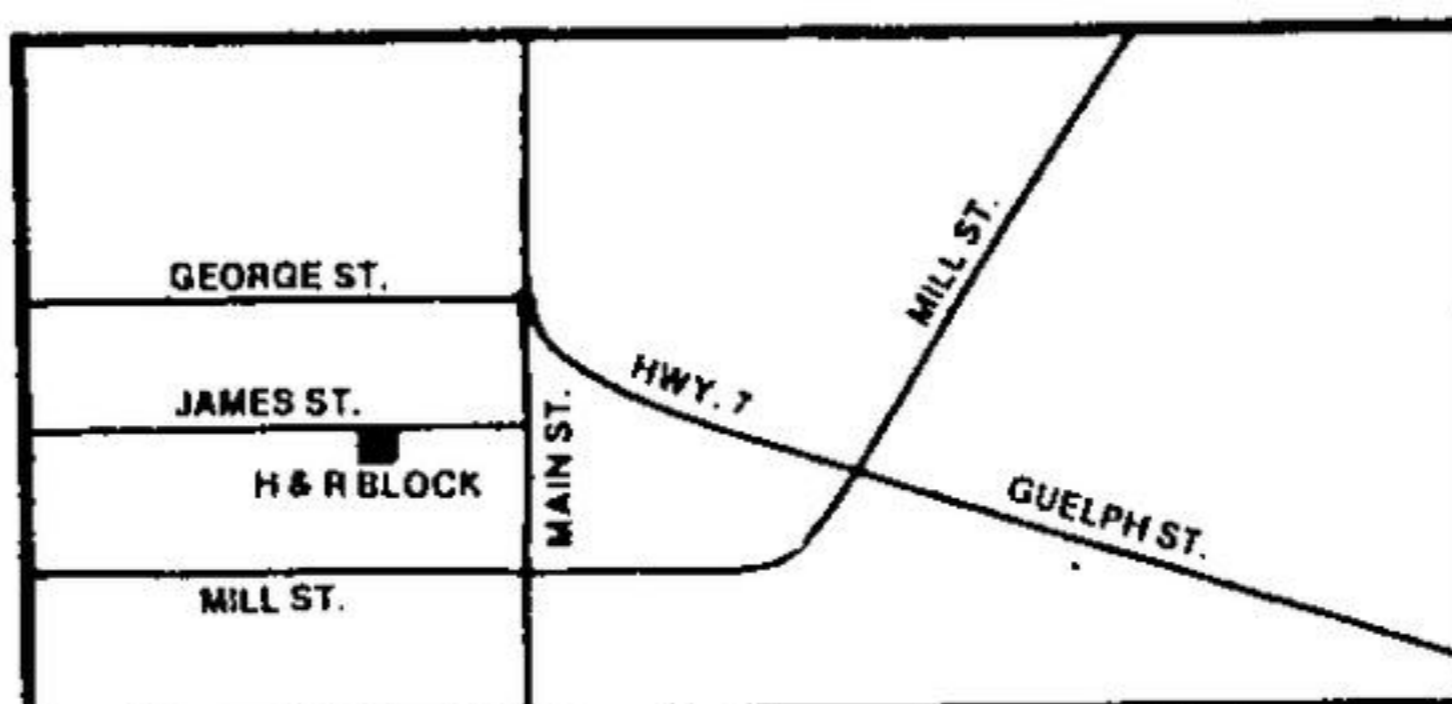
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