

# Public meeting on highway options set for June 16

Continued from pg. 1

Best said he doesn't support this option. "One, it takes up a lot of industrial land that we need," he said. "And two, it goes through a lot of farmland that is very productive through the Milton and Halton Hills corridor."

"As long as it's on the Brampton side (of the border with Halton Hills-Winston Churchill Boulevard)," Best clarified.

Much of Halton Hills north of Hwy. 401 has been designated for future employment areas and the Region is concerned about losing them to a Provincial road.

Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette, who sits on the task force with Best, declined to comment on any specific route, stating in an email it was premature to do so since the Province is still evaluating alternatives.

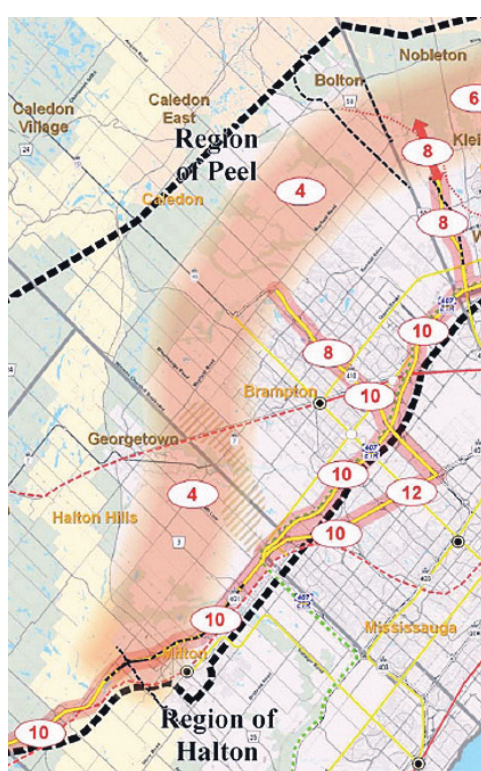
However, he noted his town's council has endorsed a Halton-Peel study which proposed a freeway from Mayfield Road in Brampton to the Highway 401/407 interchange along with a number of other infrastructure improvements including a Norval Bypass as part of a system to manage future traffic along the regional boundary.

The Province's Ministry of Transportation, which began the GTA West study in 2007, is considering three other possible routes for the new transportation corridor.

One would see a short corridor connecting Hwy. 410 to Hwy. 400, alleviating pressure on Hwy. 401 to the south. The second would run from Guelph to Hwy. 400 via north Halton and Peel Region. The last is a similar route but beginning south of Guelph at Puslinch on Hwy. 6.

Despite the latter two having to cross the Niagara Escarpment and the Provincial Greenbelt, Best said he favours one of those options. Such a route would take some commuters from west of Milton off Hwy. 401, he said. It would also provide an alternative to Hwy. 7, allowing a bypass around Acton and Georgetown.

The various routes will be measured for their impacts on the community, economy, environment and transportation. The



Above is a portion of a map outlining the area close to Halton Hills for a proposed new highway running from Milton to Vaughan. The numbers indicate the anticipated number of lanes.— www.gta-west.com

transportation corridor could be a highway, transitway, or dedicated truckway, or a combination of the three, according to the Provincial report.

Whatever its ultimate configuration, the new corridor would only be a complement to transit initiatives and widening of existing 400 series highways, including Highway 401 from Milton/Halton Hills to Mississauga, the report notes.

Indeed, it is possible the new corridor might never be built. The alternative is for the Province to widen existing arterial roads between Guelph and York Region, including Highways 24 and 7 and Trafalgar and Mayfield Roads.

The Ministry will release its decision on whether it wants to go ahead with the new corridor at a series of open houses later this month. The only one in Halton region will take place in Georgetown Wednesday, June 16 at the Mold-Master Sportsplex, Ice Pad A, located at 221 Guelph Street. The drop-in sessions runs from 4 to 8 p.m. with brief overview presentations at 5 and 7 p.m.

The information that will be presented at the open houses will be available online June 14 at www.gta-west.com.

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