

Region considers 'Big Pipe' a possibility for Halton Hills

By **LISA TALLYN**
Staff Writer

Halton Region is eyeing a "Big Pipe" to bring lake water to Georgetown as the town's population is expected to swell to more than 68,000 by 2031.

At a recent Public Information Centre (PIC) on the Sustainable Halton Water & Wastewater Master Plan a pipe carrying Lake Ontario water up Trafalgar Rd. to town was identified as part of the preliminary preferred alternative by Halton Region to service growth in Georgetown through 2031. The pipe wouldn't be in service until approximately 2021.

Along with that lake-based water, the option also calls for increasing the capacity at both Cedarvale and Lindsay Court wells, and once lake water arrives, transferring all of Georgetown South and Stewarttown onto the lake-based supply.

David Simpson, Manager of Water Planning for Halton Region, explained an option to increase water capacity in Georgetown before 2016 is taking approximately 29 per cent more water beyond the current permit from Cedarvale Well that would help meet growth to approximately 2021, and the Region is also looking at increasing the amount of water taken from the Lindsay Court Well field by approximately 15 per cent.

Also, as part of the preliminary preferred alternative, Simpson said Halton is currently involved in discussions with Peel

Region about tapping into the Peel water supply system and piping it to Georgetown temporarily sometime between 2016 and 2021 if the extra needed water isn't available from the Cedarvale and Lindsay Court well fields.

He said that interim servicing with Peel would be closed off when Halton's pipe came into service, but could serve as a link to Peel water if its ever needed in an emergency. He added, it could also provide emergency back-up water for Peel if required. That pipe would likely come along 10 Sideroad.

Simpson said the Georgetown South and Stewarttown residents may be switched to lake-based water sometime between 2016 and 2021.

Simpson said the cost for the Big Pipe hasn't been finalized and "will be determined through the upcoming Development Charge Bylaw and Allocation program process following completion of the Master Plan."

Halton Hills Regional Councillor Clark Somerville said the "timing of the release of water with the Big Pipe will be controlled by the Town and Region working with the developers."

"We are all still a long way away from having it here, but on such a complicated feat of engineering it requires long-range planning," said Somerville.



LESLIE ADAMS

Regional Councillor Jane Fogal said Halton Hills Council has just voted to spend \$35 million on recreation facilities and it's "imperative we find the means of supporting these and other facilities that our residents are demanding."

"The Region has had only modest success in finding additional ground-based water after years of searching," said Fogal. "This indicates that there will not be ground-based

water to build out the developments that were approved over 20 years ago, let alone the growth that has been approved post 2021. At this time I can see no alternative to piped water from Lake Ontario to meet our needs but I certainly support the continued search for an alternate solution," said Fogal.

Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette doesn't like the term Big Pipe, and referred to it to instead as "a pipe to service the 1,000 acres as well as secure water for the town of Georgetown from such things as fire or contamination in water that has happened in other communities."

"The Region has exhausted looking at other water supplies for the additional 1,000 acres and has said many times that it will have to look at piped in water at some point to service," said Bonnette, who added he needs to look at the draft document before commenting on what it will

mean in the long or short term.

POWER is opposed to lake water being piped to town.

"We don't support the pipe coming into Halton Hills," said Leslie Adams president of POWER. "We believe the Town of Halton Hills should be living within the capacity of the groundwater system and we would like to see Halton Hills, with the support of the Region, strive to be the most water-efficient municipality in Ontario, if not North America."

Also presented at the PIC was the Region's preliminary preferred alternatives for providing additional water in Acton to 2031—increasing capacity at both the Prospect Park and Fourth Line well fields and constructing a new well field. By then Acton's population is projected to be 14,709.

Also, the preliminary preferred choice for dealing with additional wastewater in Acton is expansion of the Acton Wastewater Treatment plant, while for Georgetown it is to improve the Georgetown Wastewater Treatment Plant and build a new trunk sewer along Ninth Line sending flows to the South Halton Wastewater System.

Costs for the specific projects haven't been determined yet.

Region staff will review feedback and comments from the public and agencies to work toward finalizing the recommended servicing strategy. The Master Plan Water and Wastewater Servicing Strategy will be presented to Regional council early this summer.

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