

Highways to hell?

Traffic gridlock has been a problem in the GTA (from York Region to Guelph) for decades and only promises to get worse with the anticipation of three million new residents in the coming decades.

That is why the Province is taking steps now to implement a future transportation strategy. Among the options being considered are two four-lane highways through rural Halton Hills—a north-south link that terminates at Hwy. 401 and Hwy. 407, and an east-west link that ends at Hwy. 401 west of Milton at Tremaine Rd.

The exact alignment of the 175-metre wide (12-lane) corridor will be determined through the next stage of the Environmental Assessment process but the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) has tentatively mapped out a preliminary route through rural Halton Hills between 5 and 10 Sideroads, stretching from its west border to its east. Another segment for the north-south link stretches from Steeles Ave. to 10 Sideroad (from Eighth Line to the eastern border).

Neil Ahmed, MTO's consultant project manager recently told Halton Hills council the environmental and cultural features within Halton Hills are "largely isolated... and they can be avoided or mitigated through the next process of route planning."

That, rightfully, didn't sit well with council members who felt they were being given a 'sales pitch' on a deal that "sounded like a done deal".

Jim Wang, MTO project co-ordinator for the GTA West Corridor Study, disagreed that was the case, but admitted the highways, which will take 10-15 years to build, "will have an impact on Halton Hills."

That sounds ominous and council is right to be concerned.

Like a runaway freight train, the Province is hard to stop when it sets its sights on something.

We understand our town will be impacted in any bid to improve the current highway situation.

We only hope the Province listens to local concerns and moves cautiously and wisely.

WEB POLL RESULTS

(Go to www.independentfreepress.com)

Should Town council vote (May 24) in favour of contributing \$4.5M to the hospital renovation project?

Yes (81%)

No (19%)

The Independent & Free Press

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HARPER CABINET SHUFFLE...



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Letters to the editor

Region thanked for docs' dinner

Dear editor,

I would like to thank Halton Region for recognizing physicians by hosting their eighth annual Halton Physician Appreciation dinner on May 5.

Every day, Ontario's doctors treat more than 400,000 patients, which provides us with a unique understanding of what is working for patients and the health-care system. Ontario's doctors have made tremendous progress in a number of areas. Wait times for key surgeries and procedures are down; over 5 million patients now have electronic medical records and in just six short years over 1.2 million patients now have access to a family doctor.

Equally important, Ontario's doctors will continue to actively promote healthier lifestyles, protect our children and help make our communities safer.

Recently, Ontario's doctors released a policy platform in advance of the next provincial election which includes recommendations designed to improve patient care

and strengthen Ontario's health-care system. To learn more, please visit www.oma.org

I want to congratulate all of my colleagues in Halton Region for their hard work and commitment to caring for their patients in the community.

Dr. Stewart Kennedy, MD
president,

Ontario Medical Association

Thanks for support

Dear editor,

Thank you to the people of Georgetown and Acton and environs for supporting the recent book and toy sale of the Canadian Federation of University Women-Georgetown.

We also thank our sponsors, which include: Hey Ray Realty, Emerald Isle Decor, Georgetown Terminal Warehouse, LCBO, Curves in Georgetown, Herbal Magic in Acton, Shoppers Drug Mart in Georgetown South, Wastewise, the Halton District Catholic Board of Education, Christ the King School and *The Independent & Free Press*.

The funds will be given to 10 graduates who are continuing on to post secondary education this year from the three local high schools.

Scholarship applications are still being accepted at www.cfuw-georgetown.ca until July 15.

Ruth Taylor,
CFUW book sale co-ordinator

Great service

Dear editor,

Having the recent misfortune of being involved in a car accident, my truck was taken to Arnie's collision in Norval.

I would like to thank Arnie and his wife Darlene. The service and care provided was above and beyond.

These situations can be very stressful. Arnie could not do enough to ensure that I was informed and in the loop every step of the way. This is one small business that still maintains that personal touch and makes one feel that they count, I don't know about you but this is very important to me.

I couldn't be happier with my truck—it looks like new.

Now if we could just work on those individuals who can't seem to slow down and pay attention!!!

Leslie Lonsdale,
Georgetown