

# Why 401 widening is the best option

Over the summer, Ministry of Transportation (MTO) planners will review public and stakeholder input into its recommendation to expand the 401 through Halton Hills and Milton to 12 co-collector lanes. This, instead of constructing a proposed east-west corridor – the so-called option 4-3 across the bottom of Halton Hills – a proposal vigorously and ultimately successfully fought by area politicians and residents who were worried it would forever change the agricultural/rural character of the area.

Details of the additional analysis that led to the 401 widening being recommended by the MTO as the preferred option, along with a new north-south link to Highway 401/407, were provided at a public information centre last week in Georgetown, and comments from that meeting will be incorporated in the final plan.

At Town Council last Monday, Jin Wang, Ministry of Transportation project co-ordinator, detailed what happens next, including updating the transportation development strategy report this summer, and release of the final report and conclusion of Stage one of the Environmental Assessment this fall.

Wang said the 12 lane expansion of the 401, from six lanes, would provide the “best balance” of benefits and impact” and following additional analysis, is determined to be the preferred option. Technical findings of an impact comparison between a new corridor, widening the 401 to 12 lanes and widening it to 14 lanes, found the 12 lane widening was the most preferred option when nine areas were studied including community, cultural environment, agricultural, natural environment, land use, economic, transportation, road design/constructability and cost.

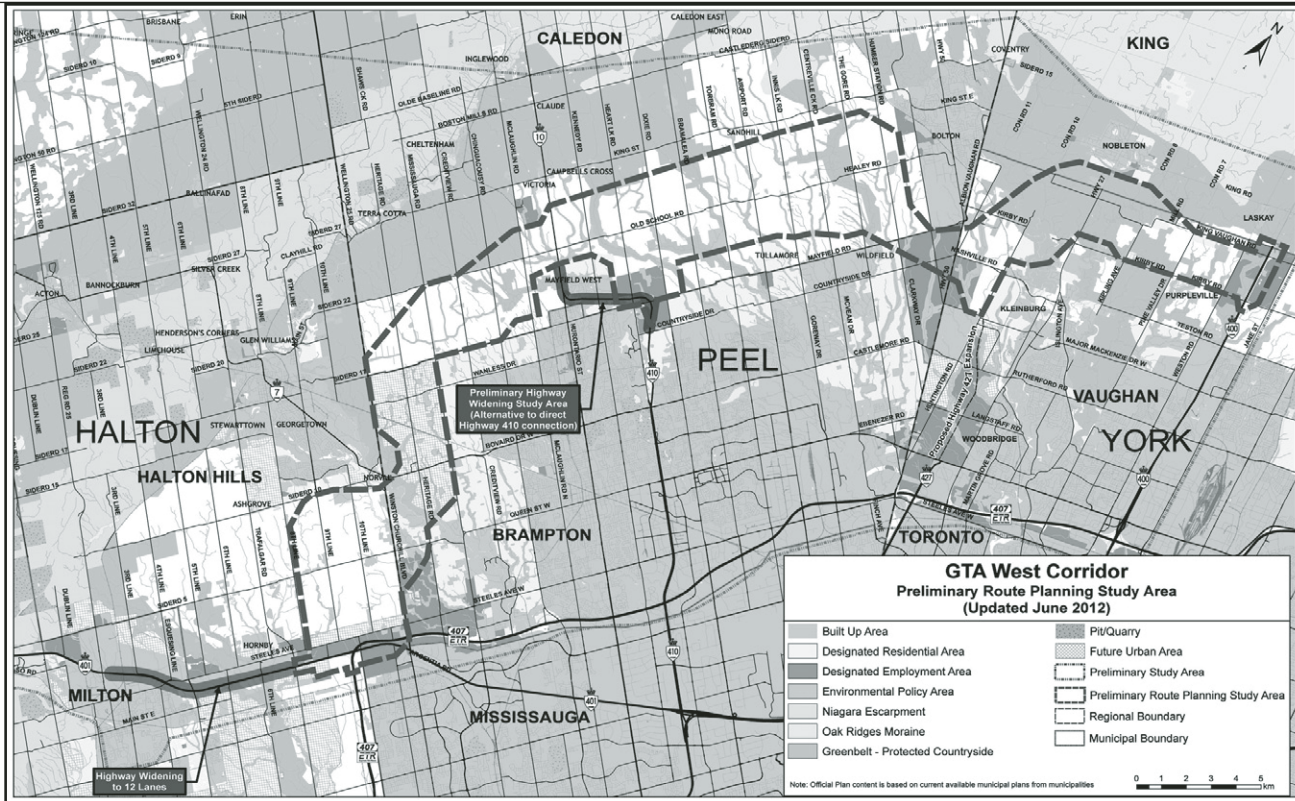
The 12 lane widening was the most preferred option in three categories, the moderately preferred in three and the least preferred in three including economic, transportation

and road design/constructability.

Regional/Ward Two Councillor Jane Fogal said the Town welcomed the presentation and said they “appreciate that under a lot of pressure, we got you to look at some of our issues,” including cultural, natural heritage and agriculture issues. Fogal asked if the MTO was getting similar push back in communities like Caledon, which could be affected by new highway corridors.

Wang said there is “general concern” everywhere, mostly concerning the impact on natural features and agriculture, and how and where it will be connected to Highway 410.

Asked by Regional/Acton Ward Two Councillor Clark Somerville if there is any money already earmarked for the 401 widening and the new intersection of 410/407, Wang said they would make budget requests to the provincial government this fall.



## Town Digest

**Culvert rehab**  
A new culvert bridge on 22 Side Road, east of the Sixth Line, will replace the existing roadway that poses a “significant public safety concern” for traffic. The \$594,277 low bid from Bob Hendrickson

Construction Limited of Port Perry won the tender to replace the culvert. Although the project was approved in the Town’s 2009 capital budget, a staff report said the delay in awarding the contract was due to the extensive amount of environmental

evaluation required to get permits from the Credit Valley Conservation Authority and Niagara Escarpment Commission. The work will include extending the northerly portion of the existing culvert which will be

cast in place, and a steel guide rail beam will be installed on the easterly and westerly approaches so the structure meets current standards. A temporary road closure will be required during construction – local residents, school boards and quarry operations have been notified of the road closure. Construction will begin July 3 and is slated to last 60 days.

*Miranda Timbers & Paul Carraro*  
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