

Where the Rubber Hits the Road

Halton's dubious distinction

By ANN KORNUA

Despite government funding and billions of dollars in gas taxes collected, it appears that little has been done to improve the roads in Ontario. Halton has roads that are so bottlenecked that they are little better than parking lots during rush hour. Last year, CAA, along with others formed the Municipal Roads Coalition with a "Worst Roads" online campaign that

allowed motorists to vote for the worst municipal roads in the province. In November of this year the results will be announced for the "Worst of the Worst" for 2004.

The Municipal Roads Coalition works to call attention to the serious funding problems by lobbying regions to increase budget spending for road construction and maintenance. By creat-

ing an open online forum where motorist can vote on the worst roads in their region they can call attention to those areas and approach the municipalities with the facts. The Campaign is using clever billboards (Tired of Driving on Poor Roads?) to reach out to drivers and everyday commuters. One of these billboards is located on Steeles Avenue in Milton informing passing motorists that they now have an opportunity to send a message to the politicians.

annually and in spite of this usage growth, the road system itself has been expanding at only 0.3 percent a year.

Last year, Steeles Ave was in the top 20 of the Ontario's Worst Roads campaign. Comments from the website state "Steeles Ave. problems continue east of Toronto through the City of Vaughan and west through Brampton and Milton. The road is a battered parking lot in most sections. It's a major truck and commuter route suffering from narrow or not enough lanes with virtually no shoulders in many stretches. Pavement condition also varies from barely acceptable to deplorable along the entire length."

"THE ROAD IS A BATTERED PARKING LOT IN MOST SECTIONS"

Some of Halton's worst roads, according to the website, are those that run parallel to Highway 401 and are now heavily travelled commuter routes used by motorists to escape a highway that has been described as being amongst the busiest roads in North America. With the influx of new homeowners to the area, along with increased traffic from the 407, many of the rural one lane back roads of Milton and Halton Hills are being choked. One frequently complained about area is Fourth Line between Derry Road, a narrow and an uneven road with many potholes. That area is reported to be a notorious accident zone for many commuters with a dangerous intersection. Derry Road has a single lane design making passing difficult for motorists. Travel along these and other roads in the area has increased by four percent

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation reports that Ottawa collects some \$2 billion in taxes from Ontario motorists, with almost none of that money going to roads in the province. Queen's Park collects another \$3 billion from motorists, spending about one-third of that amount on roads. The woes don't stop there for Ontario motorists who also shell out an average of \$2000 over the lifetime of their vehicles for damage caused by poor road conditions.

So where does the rubber meet the road in a tough issue like this? Anyone can voice their opinions on the status and nature of the roads by writing letters to each municipality, notifying them of the roads that require maintenance. Log onto the OWR website and vote for the roads in your area at www.worstroads.ca or calling 1-877-worstrd (1-877-967-7873) toll-free.

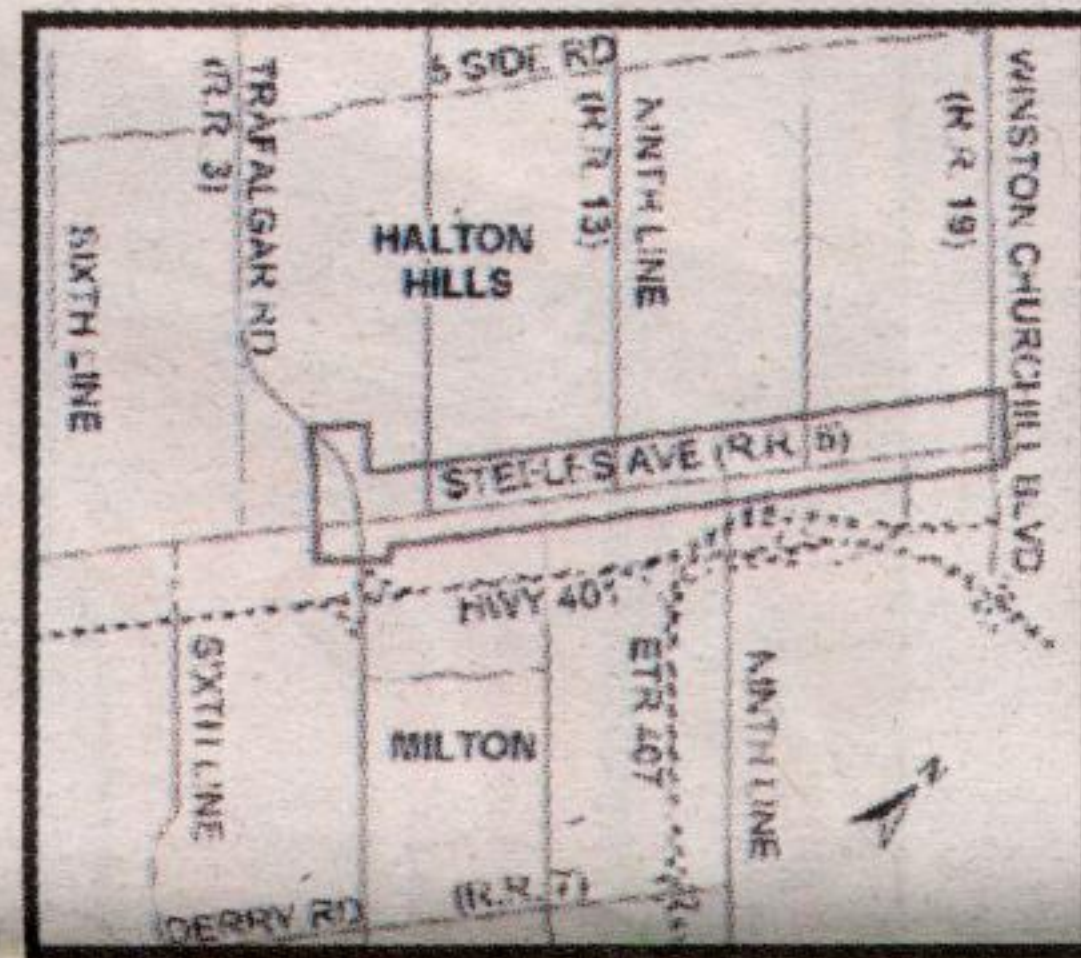
The Regional Municipality of Halton
A Partnership That Works!



NOTICE OF STUDY COMPLETION

Steeles Avenue (Regional Road 8) Improvements Town of Halton Hills Class Environmental Assessment Study

The Regional Municipality of Halton has undertaken a Class Environmental Assessment (EA) to consider a wide range of options to satisfy future travel demands on Steeles Avenue (Regional Road 8), from Trafalgar Road (Regional Road 3) easterly to Winston Churchill Boulevard (Regional Road 19), in the Town of Halton Hills. A number of road improvement alternatives were examined as part of the study including widening the road, new road alignments, and improvements to driveways and intersections, among other alternatives.



The study was completed in compliance with Schedule C of the Municipal Engineers Association Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (June 2000). The Environmental Study Report (ESR) was prepared to document the planning and decision making processes that were followed. As documented therein, the Preliminary Preferred Design includes the widening of Steeles Avenue (Regional Road 8) from two to four lanes, introduction of a centre turn lane and medians along various sections of the roadway.

By this Notice, the ESR is being placed on public record for a 30-day review period in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Class EA. Subject to comments received as a result of this Notice and the receipt of necessary approvals, the Region intends to proceed with the detailed design and construction of Steeles Avenue (Regional Road 8) between Trafalgar Road (Regional Road 3) and Winston Churchill Boulevard (Regional Road 19).

The Environmental Study Report is available for review at the following locations:

**Clerk's Department
Regional Municipality of Halton**
1151 Bronte Road
Oakville, ON, L6M 3L1
Tel: 905-825-6000
Mon-Fri: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

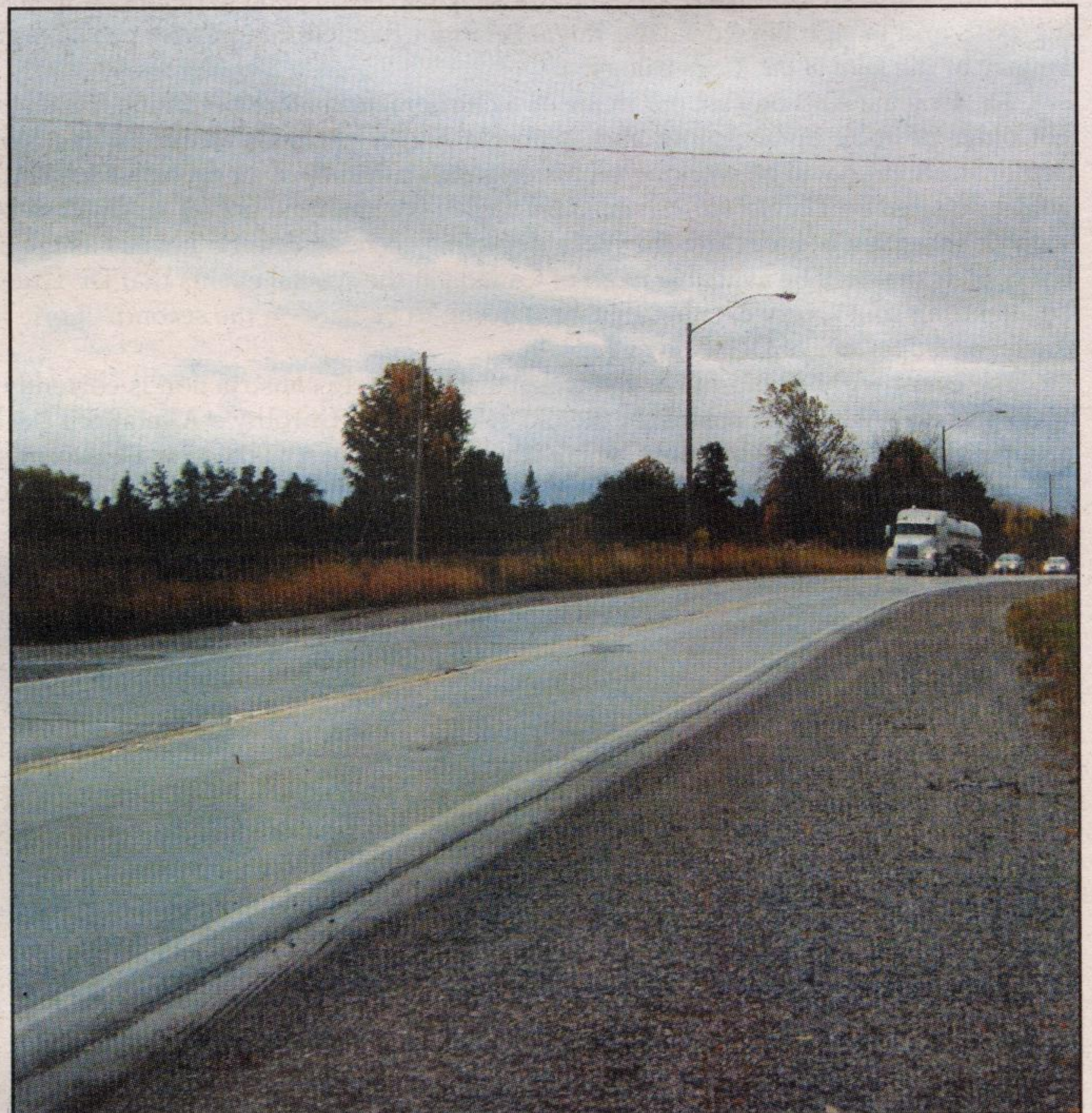
**Clerk's Department
Town of Halton Hills**
1 Halton Hills Drive
Halton Hills, ON, L7G 5G2
905-873-2601
Mon-Fri: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Further information may be obtained from Matt Krusto, Project Manager, Halton Region, 905-825-6000, ext. 7225. Please provide written comment to the Region by November 15th, 2004 (30 calendar days from the date of this notice). If concerns regarding this project cannot be resolved in discussion with the Region, a person or party may request that the Minister of Environment make an order for the project to comply with Part II of the Environmental Assessment Act (referred to as a Part II Order). Requests for a Part II Order must be received by the Minister at the address below by November 15, 2004. A copy of the request must also be sent to the Region's Project Manager at the address listed above. If no request is received by November 15, 2004, the Region intends to proceed with detailed design and construction.

Minister of Environment
135 St. Clair Avenue West, 12th Floor,
Toronto, Ontario
M4V 1P5

This notice issued October 15th, 2004
www.region.halton.on.ca/ppw/planningroads

1151 Bronte Road, Oakville, ON L6M 3L1
905-825-6000 Toll free: 1-866-4HALTON (1-866-442-5866) TTY 905-827-9833
or visit us at: www.region.halton.on.ca



A Truck rolls up the two lane Derry Road which is used by many commuters in the Halton area. The road itself isn't large enough for the volume of traffic that uses it on a daily basis and is now suffering from age and weathering.

PHOTO BY ANN KORNUA