

Town has 'serious concerns' with future highway plans which could fragment the agricultural area

An eight-lane highway cutting a swath through rural Halton Hills is not the vision Town Council has for the community, a position the mayor will take in a strongly worded letter to the Minister of Transportation.

The province is currently evaluating alternatives for a Greater Toronto Area (GTA) West Corridor and a Niagara to GTA Corridor to handle additional traffic by the year 2031. The options for the GTA Corridor have been narrowed to two, including one "slightly preferred" by Ministry consultants that gives local councillors "serious concerns."

It would run from Highway 400, across north Brampton/south Caledon, and then into Halton Hills near the proposed North/South Transportation corridor that runs through Halton Hills south of 10 Side Road to connect to the 401 in Milton. Staff said it would result in two new major transportation corridors south of 10 Side Road, fragmenting the agricultural area in southwestern Halton Hills, undermining the rural character.

The option favoured by Town councillors mirrors the first option, but connects to the Highway 401/407 interchange.

It would provide both a north-south and an east-west connection and build on the final report of the

form the Ministry of its "serious concerns" with the preferred option that Mayor Bonnette said has

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- Bonnette

Halton-Peel Boundary Area Transportation Study, recently endorsed by Council.

Councillors will in-

the potential to be "devastating" to Halton Hills.

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always to have a buffer of some sort between Georgetown and Milton ...I don't think anyone envisioned a multi-lane highway as being a buffer," Bonnette said, adding it would lead to the pressures of urbanization.

While the final draft

from the Ministry will not be ready until later this summer, councillors decided to make its concerns and comments known now. Council will also ask the Ministry of Transportation to make a presentation to the town after the draft plan is released.



Farm acreage declines in Halton and GTA

The prime importance of agriculture was underscored by a report received by a Halton committee last week that showed agribusiness is the second largest element in the Canadian economy, and was a \$2-billion industry in the GTA in 2006.

Consultant Margaret Walton of Planscape told the Planning and Public Works committee that while the farmland is disappearing in the GTA, the trend is to larger farms.

Walton said the rental rate of farms is highest in Halton and Peel because of high land prices.

"A tremendous amount of land in the GTA is held

for speculation and it's put into farming to qualify the agricultural tax rate," Walton said. While that is a "good thing" she said, it also has drawbacks as the rental of farmland is usually short-term, so farmers don't plant crops that take a number of years to become established, or invest in buildings, like greenhouses.

Walton said one area where there is the potential for growth is agribusiness - processing the food that is grown locally here and not exporting it.

On the positive side, Walton points to a great transportation system - the 401 and 407 - and

"extremely Good Class one farmland" and soils and a climate that lead to high productivity.

Walton said challenges facing farming include an aging population of farmers - there are few under 35 and the average age of Halton farmers is 56 years old, the second highest in the GTA - the industry's low profile, low commodity prices, foreign-owned farmland and the lack of local processing.

Asked what is being done federally and provincially to help agriculture and agribusiness, Walton said they need policies to manage productive farmland.

Halton REGION The Regional Municipality of Halton
www.halton.ca

Halton Hills Civic Holiday Household Waste Collection Notice

Please Note Collection Day Changes

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Aug 2 Civic Holiday	3	4	5	6	7
		Collection Moves		Collection Moves	

Due to the Civic Holiday, household waste collection services the week of August 2 will take place the day after your regular collection day.

Please place your waste at the curb by 7 a.m. on your scheduled holiday collection day.

Please check your 2010 Waste Management Guide and Collection Calendar for your collection area details, or visit www.halton.ca/waste to use our "Search by Address" tool.

Halton Waste Management Site will be closed Monday, August 2, 2010.

Regular Operating Hours

Open Monday to Saturday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
5400 Regional Road 25, Milton

For a full list of HWMS fees, visit www.halton.ca/waste or contact Halton Region.

Yard Waste: No Plastic



Plastic bags are **not** accepted in yard waste collection. Plastic does not decompose and reduces the quality of the final compost product.

Only use paper yard waste bags or open, reusable, rigid containers labelled "yard waste." Yard waste labels are available at no charge. To order a yard waste label, visit www.halton.ca/waste, or contact Halton Region.



Acceptable yard waste materials include yard and garden trimmings, pumpkins, fallen fruit from trees, and tree trimmings. Please "grasscycle" by leaving grass clippings on your lawn.

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