

Derry Rd. to reach traffic capacity by 2006: studies

By RICHARD VIVIAN
The Champion

Derry Road is getting a face lift, at least in part, as Halton Region looks to meet growing traffic demands.

At a public meeting held Wednesday at Milton District High School, area residents heard the Region's terms of reference for an environmental assessment (EA) and possible road improvements on Derry Road, between Fifth Line and Ninth Line.

"There's a lot of cars on that road and improvements are going to have to be made," project manager for the Region Nick Zervos said. "We're very early in the stages here and we're looking for your (public) input."

The road was identified as needing improvements in the Halton Functional Road Network and North Halton Transportation Study (1999) and the Road Needs Study update (2000). According to the studies, the road will have reached its capacity by 2006.

Currently, between 8,200 and 10,700 vehicles are estimated to use the road each day — with 80 per cent of traffic heading east in the morning and west in the evening. By 2016, traffic volumes are expected to reach 25,000 vehi-

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cles per day.

"This traffic is directly attributable to the growing urban situation. A lot of commuters use this road to get to and from work in Mississauga," said Rick Hein, senior project manager for Delcan Corporation, the engineering firm retained by the Region.

Several improvement options are currently being considered, including widening the stretch of road to four lanes, upgrading other routes, provision of alternative transportation modes, localized intersection improvements and any combination thereof.

"It's not a safe road for cyclists, pedestrian or even for vehicular

traffic at this point in time. We want to make it safe," continued Mr. Hein, pointing to uneven shoulder widths, cracks in the pavement and poor visibility in some areas.

In deciding the best improvement option, the Region is consulting with nearby property owners and other commenting agencies (Conservation Halton, utility companies, etc.). Public comment is also being sought.

The EA — currently underway and continuing into the spring — will also play a major role in the Region's improvement decision. The affects of each option on wildlife, water courses and vegetation will be evaluated during the EA process.

Because of the EA and design work, any necessary construction wouldn't likely occur until 2005, added Mr. Zervos.

Further public consultation is planned for June, though no date or location has been set.

Improvements to another section of Derry Road — between Bronte Road and Fifth Line — will see the road width doubled to four lanes. Construction is expected to begin in 2004.

Anyone wishing to comment on the proposed road improvements can contact Nick Zervos at (905) 825-6161 ext. 7632.

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