

Regional Road 25 is proposed for widening

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By JASON MISNER
The Champion

Two-lane Regional Road 25 — a vital roadway linking Milton and Oakville — is proposed to be widened and fitted with another signalized intersection in an effort to handle this town's burgeoning population.

Construction, to occur along a 9-km stretch between Derry Road and Hwy. 407, would be done in three phases. The project, expected to cost \$25 million, is anticipated to start in 2008 and be completed by 2010. The road is owned by Halton Region and still requires regional committee and council approval. Votes are expected in the fall.

Most of the road construction falls within Milton and the rest in Oakville.

Early study results indicate Regional Road 25 will eventually require widening to four lanes. Some intersections could see five or six lanes built, including turning lanes.

Traffic signals would be put up where Town-owned Louis St. Laurent Boulevard — which could be built by 2008 — is to meet Regional Road 25.

Traffic flow would be maintained in some capacity during construction.

More than 25 people attended a two-hour information session at the waste management site on Regional Road 25 March 11 to hear about the road improvement proposal and to give their two cents. Maps and information placards greeted residents during a half-hour open house. A presentation followed.

Comments were collected and will be considered when the Region presents a preferred alternative at a second public information session in June.

Residents can submit comments until

next Friday. Call the Region at (905) 825-6000 for more information.

The project, which is currently undergoing a class environmental assessment, is aimed primarily at addressing traffic capacity issues. The main issue is Milton's exploding population and the subsequent impact it will have on Regional Road 25, a portion of which will eventually be surrounded by three major residential developments.

A traffic study done by Phillips Engineering Ltd., hired by the Region to help with the road construction project, shows traffic congestion is growing. More than 13,000 vehicles use the road daily.

If no improvements are made by 2021, most of the intersections — three are signalized and four are non-signalized — won't be able to properly handle the higher flow.

There would be "quite severe congestion occurring at all the intersections," Phillip Engineering's David Sinke told the crowd.

Also, the study found collisions happen more frequently than expected. The most recent statistics show 40 collisions were reported between 1997 and 2001. Weather and speed — the posted limit is 80 km/h but a majority travel 95 km/h — were major factors in the collisions.

Jennifer Smith, 35, who has lived on Lower Base Line all of her life, is encouraged to see road improvements could be coming. Traffic flow along the road just isn't good enough, she said.

"The Town used to be 15,000 (people), now we're at 43,000 so you've got to have something in place to handle the volume," she said.

Ellie MacPhee, a 10-year Regional Road 25 resident, north of Lower Base Line, said

her biggest worry is getting in and out of her driveway safely. She's hoping there will be turning lanes put in place along certain sections of the road.

"There's too much traffic on that road and they go way too fast," Ms MacPhee

said.

Meanwhile, a \$175,000 traffic light will be installed this fall at the intersection of Lower Base Line and Regional Road 25.

Jason Misner can be reached at jmisner@miltoncanadianchampion.com.

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