

Halton Region to question local election candidates

By Christina Commisso
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Some of the first questions posed to Halton's provincial candidates will come from the Region itself.

This week, Halton Regional Chair Gary Carr will send a questionnaire to MPP hopefuls in Milton, Oakville, Halton Hills and Burlington for their take on Halton's most pressing election issues.

Asked what's at the top of the list, Carr said the \$8.6 billion in future infrastructure needs comes to mind. "We want to ensure water and waste water facilities, regional roads, provincial schools and hospitals will be there for our population."

Halton's population is expected to double to 780,000 by 2031.

In the last month, Milton's, Burlington's and Halton Hills' hospital expansions have been given the go-ahead from the Province, but Carr said he'd like promises that all the hospital projects will come to fruition. "The government could change. It could be a minority (government). We're asking all candidates about the hospitals. We don't want the plans to change as a result of the election."

Carr said expanding Hwy. 401 through Halton and ensuring schools keep up with the burgeoning young population are also priorities.

The document, 'A strong Halton for a strong Ontario,' was released earlier this sum-

mer and serves as an advocacy platform that sets out the Region's position on key issues impacting residents.

Some of the requests of Ontario's next government in the report include a complete review of the Development Charges Act and fast-tracking Metrolinx projects with 100 per cent provincial funding for GO Transit.

The report also places a strong emphasis on preserving Halton's natural landscape and outlines Halton's opposition to the proposed GTA West and Niagara to GTA corridors, further quarry expansion on the escarpment and asks for a provincial commitment to the Randle Reef clean up.

Similar questionnaires were sent to candidates in the last provincial election and during May's federal election.

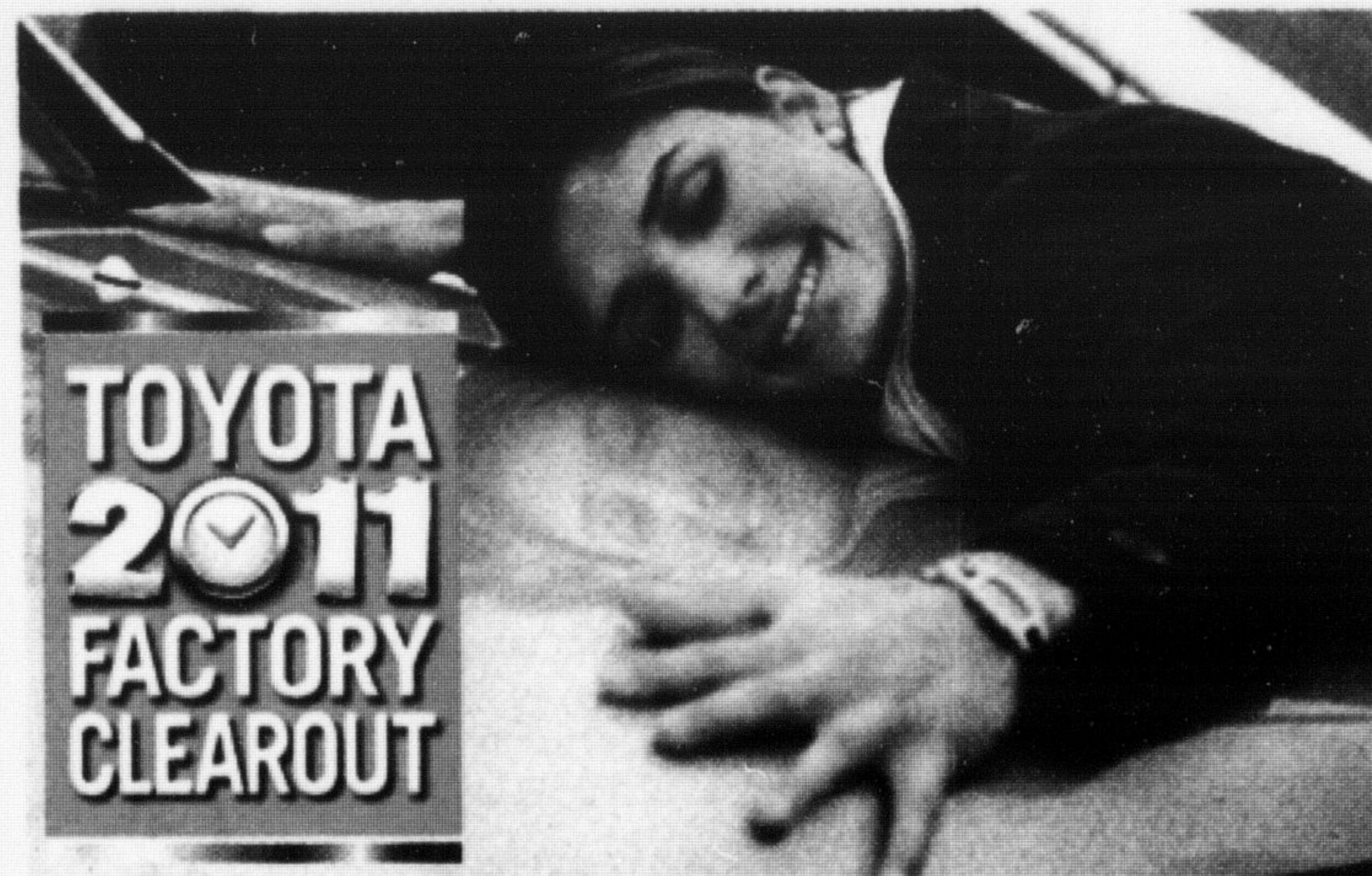
Carr said during those campaigns, close to every candidate took the time to fill out the questionnaires. "It helps create a dialogue. They (candidates) know what's important to us, they will know what our issues are and that's important as people look for a good candidate."

Carr added that the questionnaire serves as a mechanism to ensure candidates stick to their word if elected.

Completed questionnaires will be posted at www.halton.ca/ontarioelection2011 throughout September.

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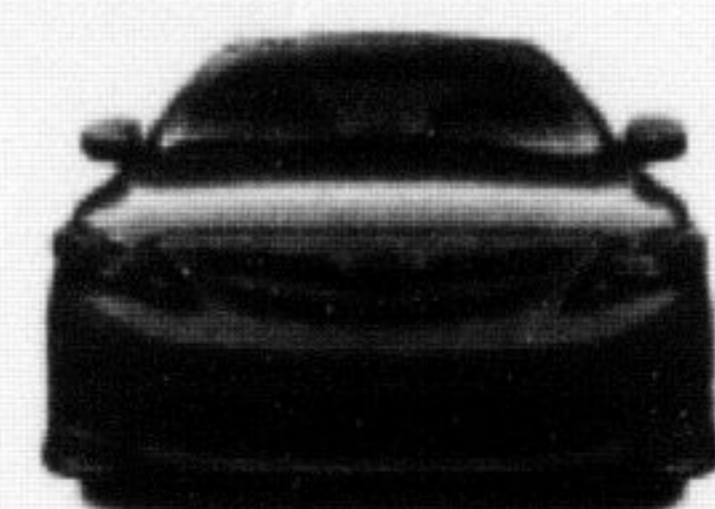
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