

# Widen 404 as soon as possible: town

MIKE ADLER  
Staff Reporter

Local politicians have just heard Hwy. 404 will get longer. What they want to know now is when it will get wider.  
The province has studied adding two extra lanes on the road from

Hwy. 401 to Hwy. 407, according to a Town of Markham report. But no construction schedule for the widening has been set and the province says the necessary funding is not available, Markham councillors were told.  
The town believes the widening is needed now, because heavy traffic on the 404 is causing regular

congestion as far north as Stouffville Road, encouraging drivers to rely on Woodbine Avenue or Warden Avenue instead.

More commuters using these roads has resulted in operational problems at key intersections in town, said the report.

The town's transportation committee is asking the province to hurry the widening up.

Within five years, the province also wants to add lanes, usable only by high-occupancy vehicles, to both sides of the same section of highway to help relieve pressure.

This later stage of the work would include improvements to the interchange of Hwys. 404 and 401, according to the transportation ministry.

## TRANSPORTATION

That ministry has also begun to study widening the 404 up to Major Mackenzie Drive.

That's exactly what Markham commuters want, said Ward 5 Councillor Jack Heath, arguing the 404 extension announced this week is little help if it means "dumping" more traffic into the busy Don Valley Parkway.

Ward 1 Councillor Bill O'Donnell, however, said the 401 to 407 stretch is the biggest problem right now.

"That's what causes all the congestion,"

# Drywallers back to work but five trades on strike

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Staff Reporter

Drywallers have gone back to finishing homes after ending a seven-week strike.

Local home builders, however, say with its strike-caused backlog, it will take a longer period for the industry to catch up.

And though the 2,000 drywallers are working again, five other construction trades are still on strike, said Stephen Dupuis, spokesperson for the Greater Toronto Homebuilder Association.

"One down, five to go. We are far

from out of the woods," he said yesterday.

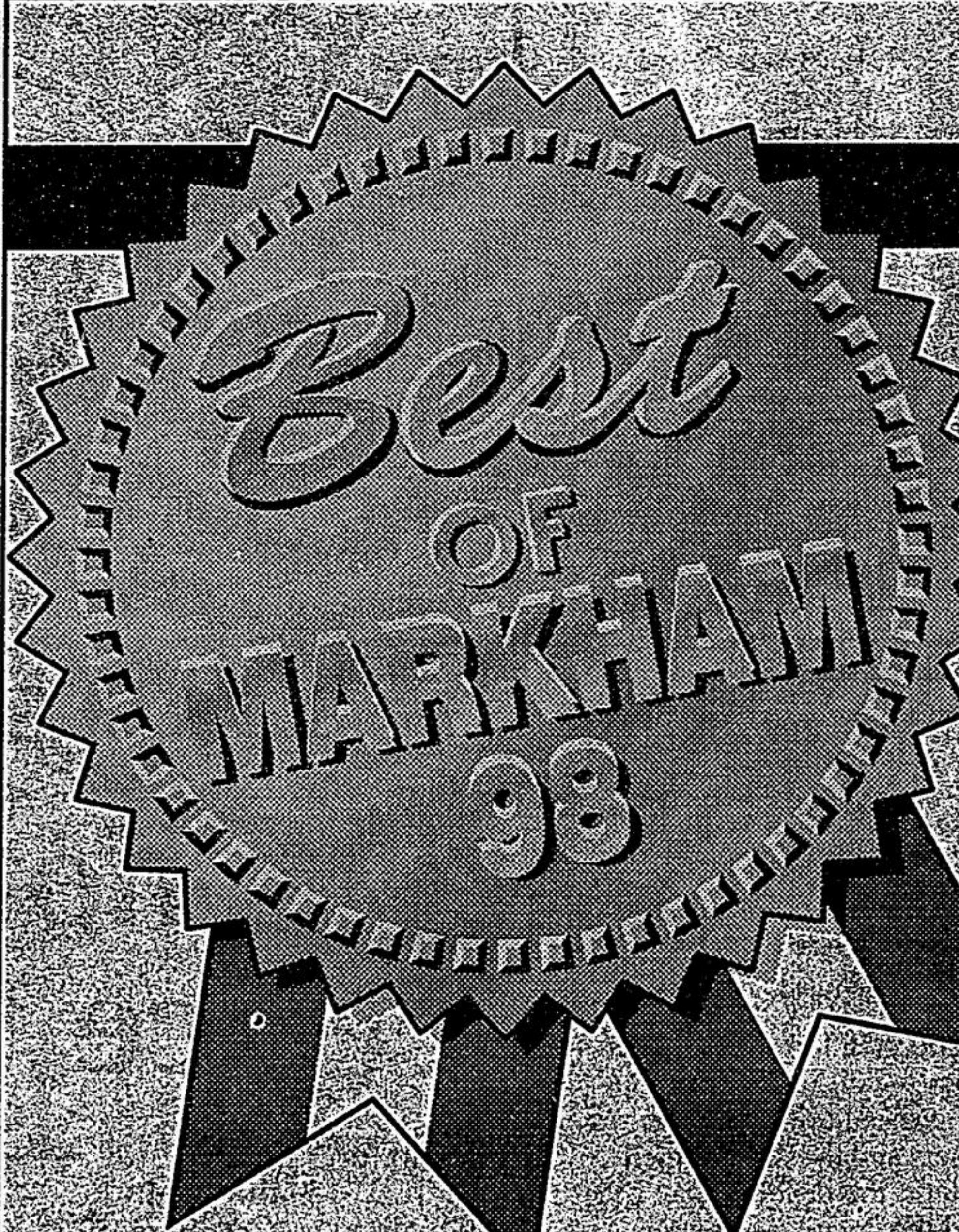
"We won't be satisfied until we've got a fully mobilized work force going flat out."

The worst the drywallers can get now is a 19.5 per cent raise over three years, Dupuis said.

Their local voted to accept binding arbitration this week.

He added that could add \$200 to \$300 to the cost of a typical home, money that builders may or may not be able to get consumers to pay.

"Competition is fearsome, supply is plentiful and the buyers are in the driver's seat," Dupuis said.



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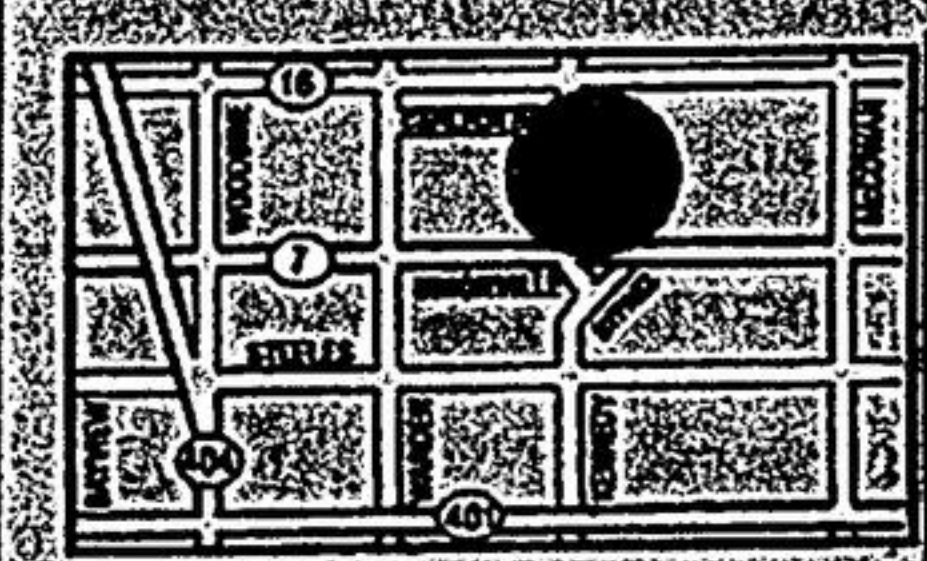
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