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2000 crime stats alarm board member

BY LISA QUEEN
Staff Writer

At least one member of York's police services board is alarmed by ballooning criminal offence rates, although Deputy Chief Armand LeBarge insists the region isn't weathering a crime wave.

"My question is, what's happening out there?" Bob Callow said as crime figures for the first six months of 2000 were unveiled at Wednesday afternoon's board meeting.

"I'm just astounded by some of these numbers."

Callow pointed out sexual assaults jumped 40 per cent compared to the first six months of 1999.

Because of York's rapid growth, the force is now also calculating statistics based on crimes per 100,000 residents. On that basis, sexual assaults have climbed 33 per cent.

Meanwhile, violations causing death — such as murders, manslaughters and criminal negligence causing death — increased 40 per cent. That works out to be a 33-per-cent increase in those types of offences per 100,000 residents.

Robberies swelled 25 per cent the

first half of this year, or 19 per cent based on population.

But LeBarge said the increased numbers don't necessarily represent a skyrocketing crime wave.

For example, he said, victims of sexual assaults have traditionally been reluctant to report their crimes.

But LeBarge said the force has been taking steps with women's shelters, other groups and the general public encouraging victims to come forward.

Meanwhile, because the actual number of cases for other crimes has been so small, any increase amounts to a large percentage jump.

There were seven violations causing death for the first half of 2000 compared to five the previous year. That represents a 40-per-cent increase or a 33-per-cent increase based on incidents per 100,000 residents.

While robberies are up, LeBarge said there has been a significant increase in street thefts — such as youths stealing clothing or articles from other teens — as opposed to armed robberies of convenience stores.

Chief Bob Middaugh cautioned board members not to look at six-

month statistics in isolation.

For example, robberies based on population are down over 1996 figures. There were 30.41 robberies for every 100,000 residents during the first six months in 1996, compared to 23.70 for the first half of 2000.

Other highlights of the report include:

- There were five attempted murders and conspiracies to commit murders from January to June this year, up one over the same period last year.

- Police received 1,799 reports of assault this year, compared to 1,657 last year.

- There were 11,215 crimes against property for the first six months of 2000, up from 10,756 last year. While that represents a 4.3-per-cent increase, based on population, those types of crimes actually decreased by 1.3 per cent.

- During the first six months of 2000, there was a 14.5-per-cent increase in the number of motor vehicle collisions. Twelve people were killed in car accidents compared to 16 during the same period last year. However, there was a 9.4-per-cent increase in people suffering injuries in collisions.

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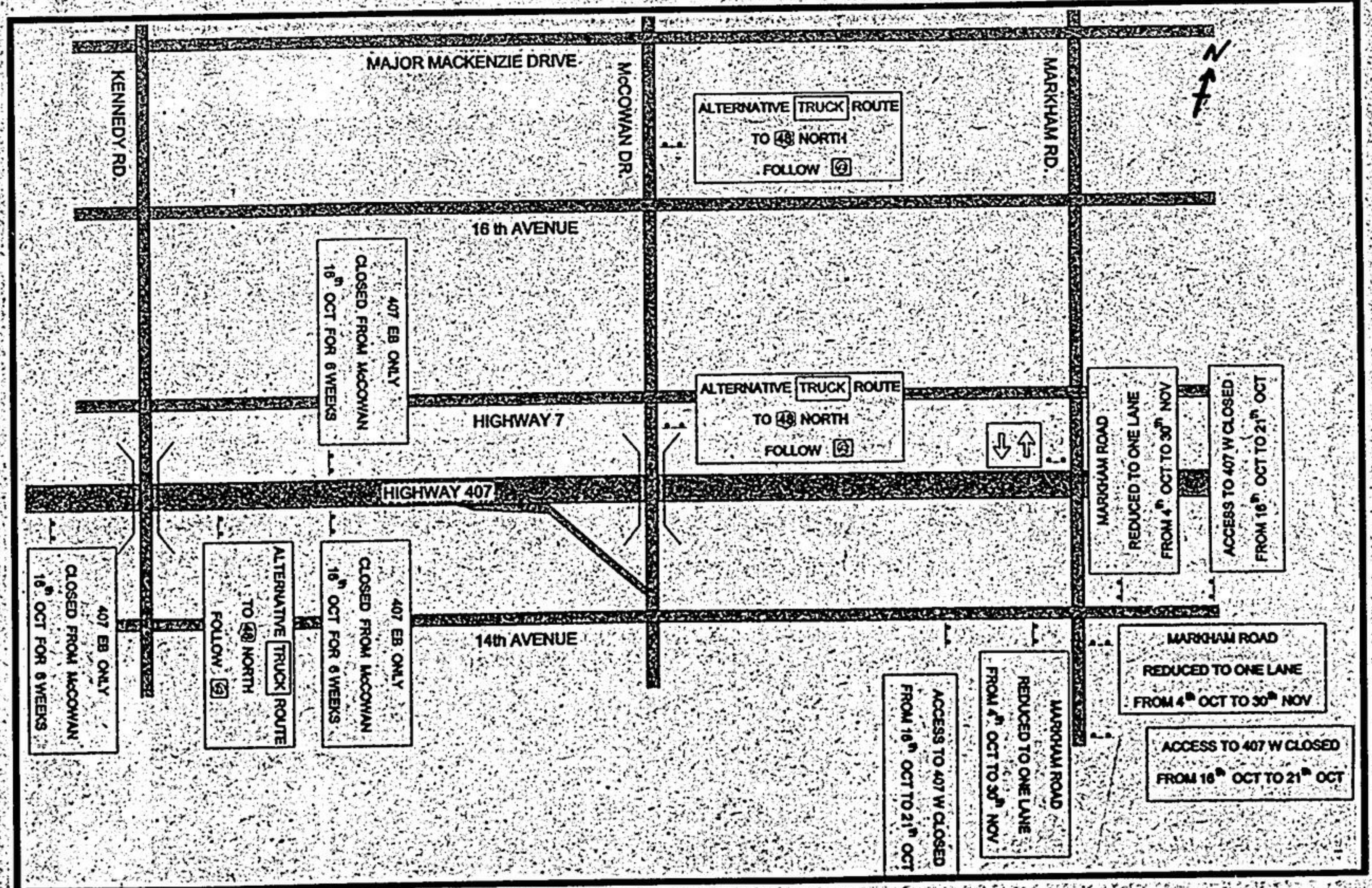
ECONOMIST & SUN (905) 294-8244 Stouffville Tribune



Notice of Hwy 48 (Markham Road) & Hwy. 407ETR Closures and Lane Reduction

407ETR and the SLF JOINT VENTURE provide notice of the Closures and Lane Reductions of Hwy 48 & Hwy 407ETR. The schedule for these closures, subject to weather conditions, is as follows:

- **Wednesday, October 4th 2000**
Reduction of Markham Road from 4 to 2 lanes
- **Monday, October 16th 2000 10:00 am**
Closing Hwy 407ETR East Bound
Closing access from Markham Rd North to 407 ETR West Bound
Open detour for Markham Road North to 407 ETR West Bound
- **Monday, October 23rd 2000**
Open traffic South Bound Markham Road to Hwy 407ETR West Bound
- **Thursday, November 30th 2000**
Open Markham Road to 4 Lanes
- **Mid-December**
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