

\$250,000 road repair could have been avoided: Scarpitti

BY CHRISSIE O'BRIEN
Special

A \$250,000 repair job which has closed 16th Avenue between McCowan and Kennedy roads could have been averted with good planning, says Markham's deputy mayor.

"When the road was widened in 1989 the town planners knew the peat bog was there, but they thought it

was better to pave over it," said Frank Scarpitti, who's also a regional councillor.

"They believed it was best to leave it alone and not disturb it, but now the region has had to excavate."

In 1998 control of the road was transferred to the region, according to regional maintenance manager Gary Cosgrove.

Sixteenth Avenue has

been closed all week while crews dug a two-lane-wide, four-metre deep hole to remove the bog, which has caused the road to settle.

Residents of nearby subdivisions and businesses — including Unionville Alliance Church, which is adjacent to the repair site — have been detouring through residential roads. Work is expected to be done Sunday.

"To understand the reasoning for the decision to leave the peat bog in we would have to go back in time to investigate," said Mr. Scarpitti.

"Right now I want to reassure people action is being taken to get 16th Avenue up and running again."

Crews have been working

7 a.m. until midnight to shorten the repair time. To minimize, construction vehicles have dismantled their emergency lights and sounds.

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