



Niagara to GTA Corridor Waiting Game

In direct response to the concerns of COPE, other citizens and municipal governments, the current provincial government re-evaluated the plans for the proposed Mid Peninsula Highway (MPH). The MPH has been reborn as the proposed Niagara to GTA corridor. COPE's comments on the Niagara to GTA corridor draft Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference can be found on our website at www.stophighway.com. The MTO's draft EA TOR can be viewed at: www.niagara-gta.com.

Hot Points:

The comment period on the Ontario Ministry of Transportation's draft Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference (EA TOR) for the Niagara to GTA Corridor ended on December 2, 2005. The Minister of the Environment has not yet approved or commented on the EA TOR.

The Provincial government's New Ontario 2005-2010 document includes the Niagara-GTA corridor. Page 10 of the document states that "planning is underway for new corridors including the Niagara-GTA corridor..."

Premier Dalton McGuinty announced a new Minister of Transportation in May 2006. The Honourable Donna Cansfield will take over the portfolio. COPE has sent the new Minister a communication outlining our position on the Niagara to GTA Corridor.

Political pressure in the Niagara region continues to push for construction of the MPH in its new form as the Niagara to GTA corridor. We urge our members in the Niagara area to respond to newspaper articles and to write your municipal and provincial representatives to remind them that not all citizens believe building more roads is the answer.

The price of gas and oil reserves: As reported by Citizens at City Hall (CATCH), Hamilton City Council hired the highly regarded consultant, Dr. Richard Gilbert, to complete a study on the issues surrounding the future availability and price of oil (**known as "Peak Oil"**). He presented his report to council in May 2006. Gilbert asserts that planning based on current use of fossil fuel and an oil-based economy must become a thing of the past. He asserted that an oil cost crunch is inevitable within the next four years and expects that gasoline prices will exceed \$4 per litre by 2018. He commented that the viability of airfreight, the cornerstone of Hamilton's aerropolis plans, is vulnerable and won't have much of a future. The Hamilton airport expansion has been cited as one of the main reasons for building the Niagara to GTA corridor. Gilbert's report also substantiates COPE's concerns that planning a highway to meet transportation demands for the next 30 years is a gross error. Source: www.hamiltoncatch.org

Burlington Mayor Robert MacIsaac announced his intention not to run for re-election as Mayor in November 2006. Burlington Council has strongly supported responsible transportation planning. We will miss Robert MacIsaac in the role of Mayor and look forward to working closely with his successor.

Please Help Us Be Heard:

Collectively, COPE's participation in the public consultation process has made a difference in encouraging the MTO and the Provincial government to rethink building highways on the Niagara Escarpment.

COPE has maintained that the MPH, and now the Niagara to GTA Corridor must be held to a FULL environmental assessment. We understand a full environmental assessment has to determine a legitimate need for a corridor or highway. If a need is determined, ALL available options such as marine, rail, and a range of public transportation options must be considered.

Please take the time and let the Premier and the new Minister of Transportation know that we are expecting them to keep their promise for a FULL EA.

Comments can be sent to:

Premier Dalton McGuinty
Queen's Park
Room 281, Main Legislative Building
Toronto, ON
M7A 1A4

dalton_mcguinty-mpp@ontla.ola.org

Donna Cansfield, Minister of
Transportation
Ministry of Transportation
77 Wellesley St W, 3rd Flr, Ferguson
Block
Toronto ON M7A 1Z8

dcansfield.mpp@liberal.ola.org

COPE's Future Role:

- To review and comment on the Environmental Assessment (EA) Terms of Reference for the Niagara to GTA Corridor once they are released.
- Ensure a FULL EA is completed including determining a need for the corridor.
- Ensure all options are considered including a "do nothing" option.
- Continue to fight for recognition of the negative health impact roads have on humans and the natural environment.

Membership Information:

COPE is looking for new members to join our Steering Committee. If you can devote some time to an important cause, please e-mail us at mail@cope-nomph.org

The effort to stop the highway may be long term. Your commitment and energy are still needed. You can join COPE through the website or by writing to:

COPE, PO Box 40548, Upper Brant Postal Outlet, Burlington, Ont., L7P 4W1.

If you haven't renewed your membership (\$10 annually), please do so now. A special thank you to those who have renewed their membership already. Your help is greatly appreciated.

COPE: Web: www.stophighway.com

Email: mail@cope-nomph.org