

Brampton presented with 'alternative plan' to GTA West Corridor

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The provincial government has unveiled the GTA West Corridor preferred route that is planned to cut through areas such Brampton, Vaughan, Milton and here in Caledon.

The highway is a part of the 'Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe' that began in 2006 and is aimed to make commuting easier in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

It is stated that the new highway will provide better connection to urban areas, improve people and goods movement and bolster economic vitality. The new 400-series highway is planned to be an extension of the 400 and will tap into the east of the 401 and 407 interchangeable area.

The City of Brampton is planning on shifting the flow of traffic through the Heritage Heights, which will include a boulevard as an alternative route, as well as creating residential homes for 124,000 new residents.

The concept vision falls under the Brampton 2040 Vision which is being endorsed by Brampton City Council.

The plan includes proposals for improved housing and transit in the community, including a GO station, trails and park areas, along with a dedicated truck-only lane, which has been planned in place of the GTA West Corridor.

The Heritage Heights Concept Plan was created to provide a new community in the underdeveloped area, which includes around 4,000 acres of land.

'The GTA West Corridor dissects the Heritage Heights land almost directly down the middle,' said Andrew McNeill, Strategic Leader at City of Brampton at Regional Council on Oct 22.

The plan promotes a variety of commuting options, such as cycling, walking, transit alongside driving, of course.

The differences outlined between the proposed boulevard and proposed 400-series highway include flexible, multi-modal, multiple routing and more short trips for boulevard, as opposed to bigger and faster roads, congested, barrier and car-oriented highways, as presented by Ian Lockwood, Principal of Toole Design Group.

Toole Design Group is a renowned 'highway removal' company, who designs plans to lean against highways and for communities to live and enjoy efficient and sustainable way of living.

Caledon Mayor Allan Thompson shared his concerns regarding the accessibility that the GTA West Corridor provides to Highway 410, and 407.

'One of the sensibilities that we are trying to apply to this plan, is to have a community that is much more self-reliant,' said Lockwood. 'The idea of continuously, rewarding, long distance high-speed highway traffic, is not sustainable and is not desirable. I think the future is in shorter trips, rewarding proximity.'

He added, 'We will provide access, what we're trying to avoid is this idea where you live, work, play in places that are really far apart from one another.'

?The alignment that we have chosen is the same alignment proposed to the GTA West Corridor, so we would envision connectivity,? added McNeill.

The Town of Caledon council approved the highway two years ago. Some members have long stated the highway should be seen as a top priority for the community, Mayor Thompson included.

?One thing we do embrace, is greener innovation and we've got to think of different ways of doing things,? said Thompson. ?This is something that is going to be interesting going forward, and let's see where this concept goes.?

For further information, please visit Brampton.ca or peelregion.ca.