



Niagara to GTA Corridor Environmental Assessment Commences

COPE was formed in opposition to the Mid-Peninsula Highway (MPH) project. In response to public outcry, the provincial government re-evaluated their plans and the MPH was re-worked into the 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 Ministry of Transportation's Environmental Assessment Term's of Reference can be viewed at: www.niagara-gta.com.

Hot Points:

- On June 9th, 2006, the Minister of the Environment approved the environmental assessment (EA) terms of reference (TOR) for the Niagara to GTA Corridor.
- In September 2006, COPE Co-Chairs, Sue McMaster and Dave Bailey, met with representatives of the Ministry of Transportation (MTO). Here are the highlights:
 - In this process, other transportation advisors are being included from commencement (i.e. CN Rail) and all modes of transportation are being considered from the start.
 - A protocol is being developed to assess the impact on air quality, climate and environmental change. This will include other government departments such as Environment Canada. The size of the “footprint” is still to be determined.
 - A new model is being developed. It includes more transit (GO), integrated modes of transportation and calculations than the MPH model. Congestion will be forecasted for 30 years. Estimated completion date is June 2007.
 - COPE will be included as a member of the Citizen Advisory Group.
 - The MTO restated their commitment to completing a full EA.
 - The recently formed Southern Ontario Gateway Council has reported improvement to the Niagara to GTA Corridor as a key issue.
- On December 27, 2006, URS Canada Inc. announced that Phase 1 of the Planning and Environmental Assessment Study for the Niagara to GTA corridor has started. The purpose “is to examine a full range of options to provide additional transportation capacity within the corridor. Alternative solutions that will be studied include improvements to existing road and rail infrastructure, extension of GO Transit services, other transit, a new freeway and/or a transit way, and other options that may be identified during the course of the Study. The phase will take approximately 2 years to complete.
- COPE has become a member of the Coalition of the Niagara Escarpment (CONE). CONE has an Ontario-wide audience, allowing us to give the corridor issue more exposure. Also, CONE has resources, such as EA experts and legal advise, that could be of benefit during the new corridor process.

- 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

COPE's Future Actions:

- Call for emphasis on building more public transit.
- Given the severe impact of Global Warming, call for the provincial government to remove a highway option from the Niagara to GTA corridor process.
- Call for sustainable transportation and a moratorium on building new highways.
- Monitor the Niagara to GTA process and ensure commitments are kept.
- Review models used for the Niagara to GTA corridor to ensure data used adequately measures the impact of the corridor and the environment is given the priority consideration it deserves.

Please Help Us Be Heard:

COPE's mandate is to protect the Niagara Escarpment from the building of new highways. With the increased evidence and awareness of Global Warming, not only are we working to ensure a FULL environmental assessment is completed for the Niagara to GTA Corridor - we are calling for our government invest in public transit and sustainable transportation. We are calling for No New Highways.

Please take the time and let the Premier and the Minister of Transportation know that we expect them to address global warming and support sustainable transportation.

Comments can be sent to:

**Honourable Premier Dalton
McGuinty**
Queen's Park
Room 281, Main Legislative Building
Toronto, ON
M7A 1A4
dmcguinty.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org

**Honourable 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

Membership Information:

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. Thank you to those who have renewed their membership already. Your help is greatly appreciated.