Barrie's work on Hwy. 400 crossing too slow, businesses say

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Barrie Advance - April 10, 2015

Harvie Road Crossing Coalition campaign co-ordinator Justin Strachan (right) talks with Barrie’s Garden Centre owner Warren Patterson about why a new east-west connection is needed for businesses.

Barrie’s work to get traffic moving in the south end is still too slow for the Harvie Road Crossing Coalition.

Later this month, the city will host a session to present options to join Harvie Road and Big Bay Point Road, across Hwy. 400. An overpass or underpass could link the two east-west arterials, which would be widened to seven lanes between Bayview and Bryne drives.

“We are pleased that after three years of little to no progress on this project, that the city is finally paying attention to the traffic gridlock that has strangled south Barrie for years. However, they are still moving too slow and should be planning to get construction underway in two years instead of five or six as currently planned,” said Harvie Road Crossing Coalition coordinator Keith Strachan.

The coalition, comprised of several major employers in that area, is urging the city to make the project a priority and get construction started by 2016.

But infrastructure, investment and development services committee chairperson Coun. John Brassard said the city must complete mandatory environmental assessment process, which includes this month’s public event, before it can get to construction.
“We’re in the EA process and are dealing with the Ministry of Transportation. There are still differing opinions between us and the MTO on that crossing and there are engineering issues,” said Brassard.

“The challenge is the process. Once that’s complete, I can make assurances on funding for that project.”