

Halton Region fed up with MPAC service

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Halton Region has voiced its displeasure with the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation.

The corporation, which is responsible for providing the housing assessments for Halton, has been late in delivering its final numbers over the last several years, thus making it harder for regional and town staff to verify the budget, and Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette has had enough.

"This is what we pay them to do in the service level agreement," Bonnette said at the regional council meeting on Dec. 13. "You have one job to do and they failed, and they fail every year, and yet they're asking for an increase."

For 2018, MPAC has re-

quested a budget increase of \$9.2 million.

"MPAC is asking for another increase for this non-service," Bonnette said. "This is how we balance our budgets and this is how our staff project what the assessment is going to be, this is how we forecast our budgets, and again they've failed."

During budget discussions earlier this month, Halton Hills Coun. Clark Somerville raised his concerns with MPAC, saying the budget was out of the region's control.

Bonnette suggested the

regional chair, Gary Carr, write to the province regarding the issue. Somerville suggested telling the province this is the last year the region will increase MPAC's budget, which in 2018 is \$9.2 million, and if they don't do "real work" in 2019, they hire someone else for \$9 million. Bonnette responded, saying he didn't want to tie the hands of the new council in 2019, and his initial motion would suffice for now.

When the recorded vote was called, the motion was passed unanimously.



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Halton receives \$1.8 million to improve cycling infrastructure

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Halton Region will receive more than \$1.8 million in funding for new bike lanes, multi-use trails and other cycling infrastructure improvements from the provincial government's Ontario Municipal Commuter Cycling fund.

Halton Region will use this funding to expand the region's cycling infrastructure. These investments will help improve cyclist safety and make cycle commuting a more appealing option for Halton residents. Accessible cycling infrastructure will also help reduce the reliance on motor vehicles and contribute to cleaner air across Ontario.

The City of Burlington, the Town of Halton Hills and the Town of Oakville were also among 120 municipalities that received the funding.

"Through Halton's Active Transportation Master Plan, we have already built approximately 190 kilometres of on-road exclusive bike lanes and paved shoulders along regional roads for residents to safely bike on," said Halton's regional chair, Gary Carr. "With this funding from the OMCC, we will be able to build on our successes and continue to offer cyclists a safe,



IFP file photo

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convenient way to get around Halton Region."

This investment from the province is part of Ontario's Climate Change Action Plan and is funded by the province's cap on pollution and carbon market. The Ontario Municipal Commuter Cycling Program builds on Ontario's Cycling Tourism Plan: Tour by Bike and the Ontario Municipal Cycling Infrastructure Program.

For more information on Halton's Active Transportation Master Plan, visit halton.ca/activetransportation.

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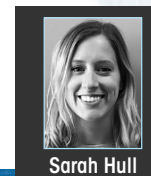
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