

EARTH DAY EFFORT:

Jacquelyn Schlatman does her bit at Lions Valley Park Saturday during Earth Day clean-up activities. For those who missed it, you have another chance to clean up 15 areas of town on Sat. April 29th. That effort runs from 9 a.m.-noon. For more details, call The Oakville Community Centre For Peace, Ecology and Human Rights, 849-5501, visit their offices at 148 Kerr St. or check out the web site at www.web.net/~act/occephr/earthday.htm

Photo by Peter C. McCusker



GTSB wants Province & Ottawa to fund highway renewal

By Cynthia Gamble
SPECIAL TO THE BEAVER

The Greater Toronto Services Board (GTSB) has released a blueprint for road and transit improvements for the next 20 years and is now calling on the provincial and federal governments to help pay the billion dollar costs.

"We're talking literally billions of dollars," said Chris Burke, GTSB representative, who arrived 45 minutes late (due to traffic) at a public meeting, attended by less than a dozen people, at the Halton Hills Civic Centre, Thursday night. "There is no way municipalities can do this on their own. This is an issue of provincial and national proportions that we absolutely have to get those governments involved in helping to fund the investments we need to make on transportation in the GTA (Greater Toronto Area)."

The GTA, which is home to almost half of Ontario's population, generates one-fifth of the Gross National Product and 50% of the Gross Provincial Product. Traffic congestion is estimated to be already costing businesses \$2 billion a year mainly due to delays in truck deliveries. And even though GO Transit carries 38 million passengers a year, it still cannot meet the current demand for service—expected to double in 20 years.

In fact, it's expected more than two million people—and 1.7 million jobs—will be added to the GTA over the next 20 years.

The result on the roads: gridlock.

And yet, the federal and provincial governments spend little on road improvements in the GTA, he said. The GTA, Burke points out, is the only major city/region in the industrial world which does not get provincial or federal funding for transit costs—it's funded entirely from the property tax base.

"That's nuts," he said.

According to Ho Wong, Halton Region's director of Long Range Planning & Transportation Services, the provincial and federal governments earn about \$2 billion a year from GTA vehicle-related fees and taxes—\$911 million/year for provincial gas tax; \$830 million/year for federal

gas tax and \$206 million/year for vehicle and driver fees.

The federal government, he said, does not re-invest any of this gas tax money on GTA roads while the province invests less than 20% of the money it collects—at the same time they're downloading financial responsibility of roads (like Hwy. 5 and 25) to the municipalities. Wong pointed out these two roads are in dire need of repairs over the next 10 years—costing Halton Region about \$111 million.

Wong said the provincial and federal governments need to re-invest at least 80% of these revenues to help solve the GTA problem.

According to Wong, the GTA must double its current funding to \$1.3 billion/year—just to meet the future needs and Halton Region must spend more than \$700 million on its road infrastructure over the next 20 years. While Wong said most of the money will come from development charges, the rest may have to come from the property tax base—unless the other two governments chip in.

The draft report, Removing Roadblocks, will show the federal and provincial governments there is a specific long-term strategic transportation plan for the GTA-Hamilton-Wentworth area.

"It tells them here's what they need to spend the money on and

why it's in their best interests to do so," Burke said. The approach, he explained, is an attempt to turn it from "do something for us (the municipalities), to "do something for your constituents too."

The plan puts a greater emphasis on improving bus and train services. The plan also calls for the co-ordination of all transit among the 17 operators (fares, transfers and routes).

"The ultimate goal of co-ordinated transit is to create a system that is as easy and convenient as automobile travel," the plan stated.

Other plan components include such things as priority lanes, better road information, new interchanges, road tolling, ridesharing programs and protection now in Official Plan future transit or road corridors.

The municipalities, however, are not going alone on their lobby efforts. Along with these public information meetings throughout the GTA, they are enlisting the support of the chambers of commerce and large corporations to lobby their MPs and MPPs.

The transportation plan will be presented to the GTSB for approval in June. The public can submit written comments on the draft plan until May 15TH. For a copy of the report, it can be downloaded from the GTSB Web site at www.gtsb.on.ca or call Lynn Johns at Halton Region, 878-8113 or 853-0501, ext. 7933.

OTMH maternity wing holding May 7th open house

The Maternal Child Program at the Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital (OTMH) site of Halton Healthcare Services is welcoming one and all to their Annual Spring Open House on Sun., May 7th, from 1 to 4 p.m.

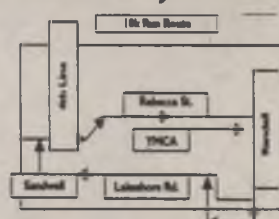
Anyone interested in learning more about paediatrics and obstetrics is encouraged to take this opportunity to enjoy an insider's peak at our program.

There will be guided tours of the Prenatal Clinic, the Birthing Suite, the Maternal Child Unit, the Special Care Nursery, the Breastfeeding Clinic and the Registration/Admitting Area. Nurses, physicians, midwives, doulas (labour support persons), and community representatives will be available to answer questions and address any curiosities you may have. Tours will occur throughout the day, so there's no need to register.

Moms, dads, children, grandparents... everyone is invited to this special event. Light refreshments will be served. Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital is located at 327 Reynolds Street, free parking available in the maternity parking lot off MacDonald Street and in the main parking lot off Reynolds.

Celebrate MILLENNIUM 2000 YMCA 10K RUN

The Invidiata Team / RE/MAX aboutoane REALTY CORP. REALTOR present
The Millennium 2000 10K RUN
SATURDAY MAY 6, 2000



10K Run 9:00am start time
5K Family Walk 9:00am start time
1K Challenge for under 12's and Special Olympians 10:20am start time

Registration forms are available at the YMCA of Oakville, The Running Company (118 Thomas St., Oakville) and the Invidiata Team office (83 Reynolds St., Oakville).

Runners and walkers can obtain pledges. Pledge information is contained in the Run Brochure. Great prizes for those who obtain the most pledges. Refreshments, entertainment and prizes. Lunch available at minimal cost.

FREE Child Care provided by YMCA Child Care staff for children of participants.

Celebrate the Millennium by participating in one of the first runs of the year 2000!

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OTHER FEATURES Home is in a year-round community but 5-minute walk to beautiful public beach, Lennox high-efficiency furnace, new kitchen with pull-out drawers/cupboards, garage door opener. All rooms have 7 large Andersen windows. Sunroom (Lindal cedar) has heat-mirror glass for highest efficiency.