

# NEC unveils escarpment plan

The Niagara Escarpment Commission has unveiled its Proposed Niagara Escarpment from Queenston on the Niagara River to Tobermory on the Bruce Peninsula.

The 84-page plan and accompanying maps contain environmentally-oriented land-use policies and designations for a 1,923 square-kilometre (742 square-mile) area that extends through 46 municipalities.

Commission Chairman Ivor McMullin said the plan is the result of concerted efforts by the Commission to draft a "plain English" document that meets the objectives of The Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act.

"In addition," Mr. McMullin said, "The Commission is strongly recommending development of an extensive system of Escarpment parks, emphasis on compatible development of the recreation and tourism potential of the Escarpment and provision for municipal administration of parts of the plan."

Highlights of the plan include the Commission's recommendations and proposals for:

- designating three major land use designations—Escarpment Natural Areas, Escarpment Protection Areas, and Escarpment Rural Areas—with accompanying policies to apply to 92 per cent of the area of the Proposed Plan; and four supplementary designations applying to the remaining eight per cent of the area;

- creation of Niagara Escarpment Parks System, comprising 116 parks, of which 70 per cent of the land is currently in public ownership;

- purchase by the province of 11,558 hectares (28,670 acres) from willing landowners for completion of the proposed Niagara Escarpment Parks System;

- adoption of development control as the "preferred method" of implementing the plan's environmentally-oriented land-use policies;

- stabilization of the Bruce Trail by the government negotiating with willing landowners to purchase strips of land "such as on the borders of properties" or by trail easements;

- and provisions for government purchase of existing vacant lots upon the request of owners who might be denied permission to develop lots which otherwise would meet municipal and health standards.

The Commission further recommended a series of amendments to The Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act which would:

- add cities within regional municipalities to the list of bodies—regions, counties, cities and the Commission—which may be delegated to issue development permits in the Escarpment area;
- appoint the Ontario Municipal Board to deal with appeals on development permits;
- and allow appeals by anyone requesting notification of a development decision.

In its recommendation for creation of a parks system, the Commission urges the provincial government to launch a five-year acquisition program to purchase 11,558 hectares (28,670 acres). When added to parklands currently owned by the public, the Niagara Escarpment Parks proposals would complete a system of 116 parks totalling 28,778 hectares (71,444 acres).

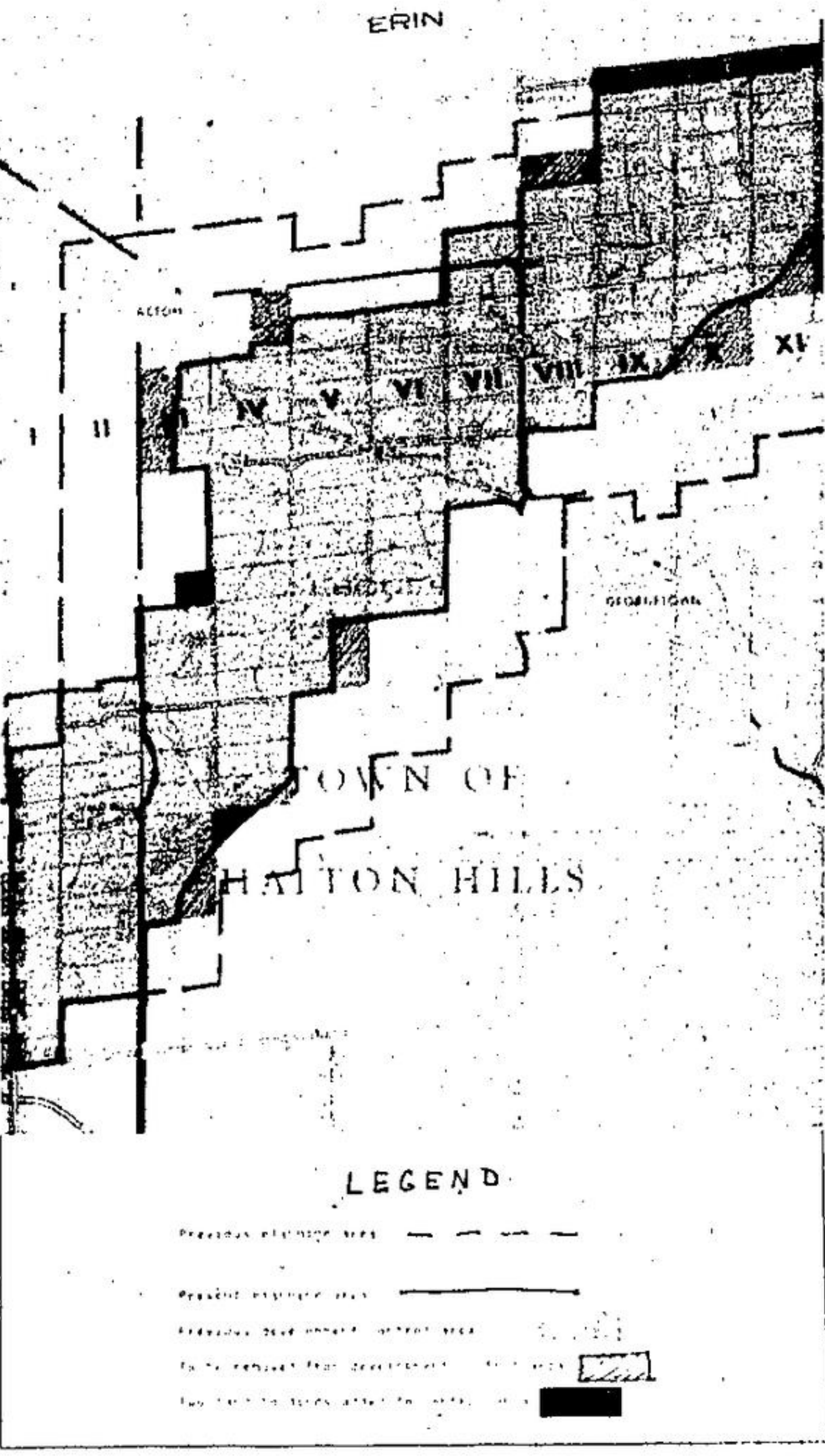
The environmentally-oriented land use designations in the plan are: Escarpment Natural Areas, Escarpment Protection Areas, Escarpment Rural Areas, Minor Urban Centres, Urban Centres, Escarpment Recreation Areas and Mineral Resources Areas.

The plan covers 37 per cent of the 5,200 square-kilometre (2,000 square-mile) area originally assigned to the Commission by the Ontario Government in 1974.

The most sensitive and least disturbed areas of the Escarpment are included under the Escarpment Natural Areas designation which covers 29 per cent of the area of the Proposed Plan.

In the Natural Areas, permitted uses include agriculture, trail-type recreation, forest and wildlife management, archaeology, and compatible single family dwellings on existing vacant lots which are not to be purchased for public use.

The Escarpment Protection Areas, designating 35 per cent of the total plan area, includes Escarpment slopes and associated lands which are more developed than in the Natural Area, but in which the Commission's policy is to maintain the remaining natural features and open rural landscape.



ever been severed, the Commission is recommending that two new lots may be created per 40 hectares (100 acres) or original township lot for permitted uses.

The plan also designates 33 villages and hamlets as "Minor Urban Centres" and 12 towns and cities as "Urban Centres."

The Commission lists "growth objectives" for the urban centres designed to direct growth away from Escarpment Natural and Protection areas and lessen any potential urban growth impact on the Escarpment.

When the Niagara Escarpment Plan is adopted by the Cabinet, the approved growth objectives will be incorporated into local official plans and by-laws.

The Escarpment Recreation Areas designation identifies primary recreational areas along the Escarpment and includes downhill ski areas, lakeshore cottage areas and marinas.



Mary Jane Page was the recipient of this week's Acton Merchants' \$25 gift voucher. Larry Grieves of Stedman's made the presentation.

## NEC offices open evenings

The offices of the Niagara Escarpment Commission in Georgetown will be open evenings so people may have an opportunity to secure copies of the proposed plan of the Niagara Escarpment and have their questions, if any, answered.

The proposed master plan of the Escarpment was unveiled in Collingwood last Thursday. Copies of it are available to the public in the Georgetown offices.

Regular office hours of the NEC at their Guelph St. location are from 8:30 to 4:30 but the commission will remain open from 4:30 to 8 p.m. in the evenings for public input.

The public is invited to pick up copies of the master plan and to pose questions to staff available.

## Teachers, board gear up for talks

Negotiation teams for Halton's Board of Education and 1,165 high school teachers are gearing up for two days of intense contract talks.

Both sides will meet in the board's offices at Burlington starting December 6 for what the board's superintendent of instruction John Boich characterized as being "pretty critical" talks.

Some minor agreements have been settled, revealed Boich in a telephone interview yesterday. However, he went on to say: "The substantive issues have not yet been dealt with."

A mediator has not been requested, and so far none has been appointed, said Boich. Last year a mediator was appointed by the Education Relations Commission to help with the talks.

This is the second year in which high school teachers have started a school year without a contract.

## \$500 staff - party

Halton Hills general committee agreed it was worth up to \$500 to hold a Christmas party for all town staff and members of council.

Mayor Pete Pomeroy said he wanted council to agree with him before he went any further. He said since the various departments are spread all over town, councillors and staff seldom had a chance to get together.

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In the Protection Areas, one new lot may be severed for permitted uses—residential, agriculture, forestry and recreation, per 40 hectares (100 acres) or per original township lot.

The recreational uses recommended in the Protection Areas include "golf courses, picnic sites and day-use sites and trail uses oriented towards land rather than requiring the building of major structures."

The Escarpment Rural Areas, which cover 27 per cent of the area of the Proposed Plan, contain minor Escarpment landforms and associated lands which provide a buffer for the Natural and Protection Areas.

Compatible agriculture, forestry and low-density rural land uses are to be permitted. Recreational uses include serviced campgrounds, golf courses and trailer parks.

Permitted uses would also include the creation of new licensed mineral extraction sites producing less than 20,000 tonnes (22,000 tons) annually.

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