

## Planning for Georgetown's main highway

# Study would stabilize growth

By CHRIS AAGAARD  
Herald Staff Writer

Though unenthusiastically received last Tuesday by public and councillors alike, Georgetown's Highway 7 corridor report is probably one of the most important documents concerning the town's future soon to be blended into the revised official plan.

Within 125 pages, A.J. Diamond Planners Ltd. of Toronto, have managed to capulize ever-present planning headaches along the bustling four-kilometre Guelph Street "strip" from Maple Avenue to just beyond Hall Road.

And the report offers some dramatic solutions aimed at avoiding "Bramalization" of Georgetown, yet increasing the business and industrial appeal of Guelph Street.

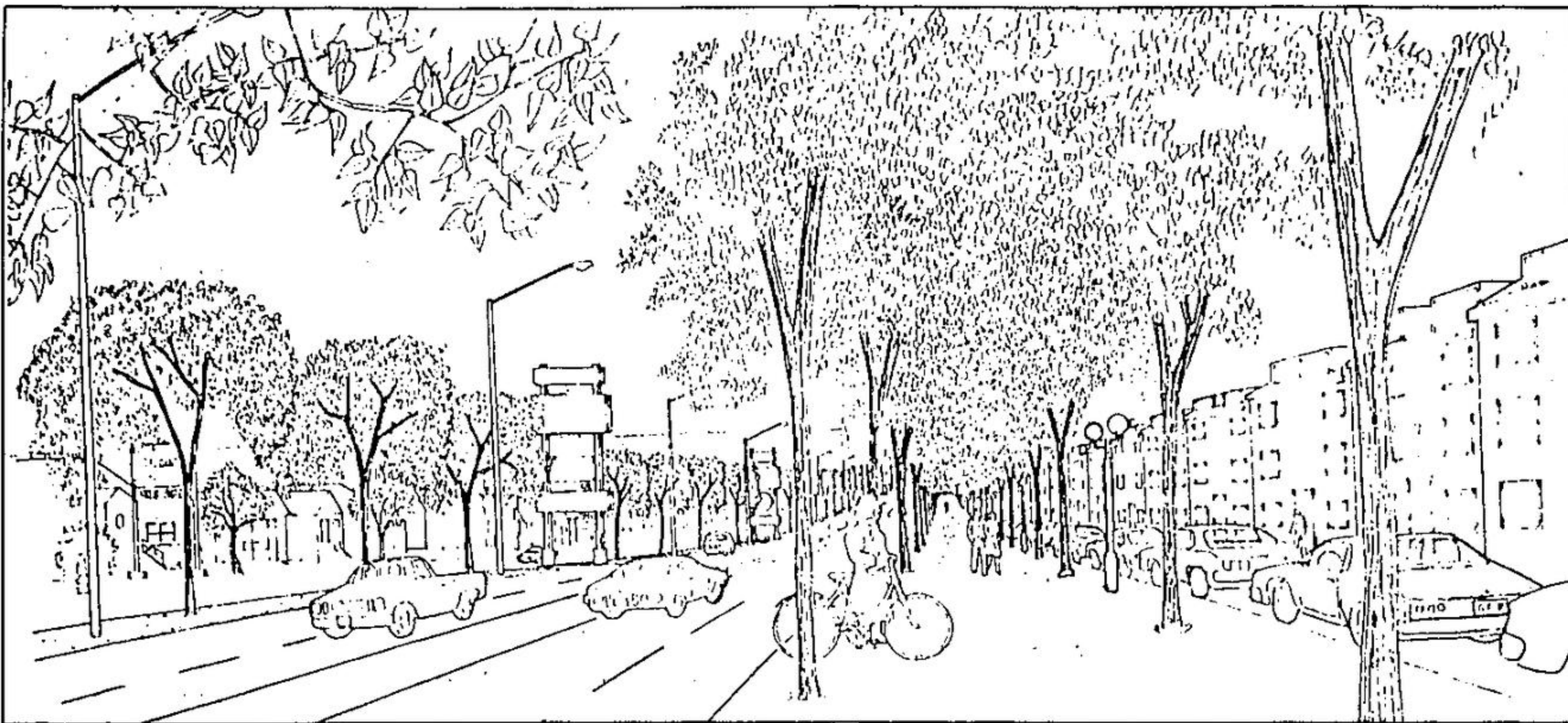
According to the study's balanced "development diet", Guelph Street would be divided into three segments for residential, commercial and industrial land use, with the easternmost section expected to bolster Halton Hills' scarcity of available industrial property.

**DOWNTOWN FEARS**  
Appreciating the fears of Georgetown Business Improvement Area merchants that efforts to enliven Main Street shopping may be wasted because of a booming commercial strip along Guelph Street, Diamond planners have advised the town not to proceed with anymore large retail (department stores, shopping malls) until it is sure other business areas won't suffer serious a loss in sales.

As the report notes, "retail space in the community is close to, and may exceed, the maximum the population can support". In addition the study points to the slow rental of space in the Halton Hills plaza and the high turn-over rate of small businesses between Maple Avenue and Mountainview Road as indicators of a glutted Guelph Street commercial market.

The marketing analysis would have to consider not only the effect on traffic flow through the corridor if another large commercial development is built, but also whether it could offer new shopping opportunities to stem the flow of shoppers to other communities.

**MORE LENIENT**  
But the study's criteria for highway-commercial (motels, car lots, burger stands) growth at the eastern end of the study are near Hall Road are more lenient. While it can be argued that such businesses are often the greatest contributors to roadside "sign pollution", the report reminds readers that Guelph Street is a major highway and the travelling public demands these services. Even though highway commercial lands occupy only a small portion of the study area, they form an important part of the study's balanced development scheme.



It's hard to imagine Guelph Street looking like this in the near future but it is a possibility. Georgetown's Highway 7 Corridor report presented this artist's conception of how the highway might appear west of Rexway Drive if council follows through with a balanced residential, commercial and industrial development scheme for the area. The study was presented during a Jan. 13 public planning board meeting and was completed by A.J. Diamond Planners Ltd. of Toronto at a cost of \$14,000.

At the other end of the corridor, however, between Maple Avenue and Mountainview Road, Diamond planners have realized a potential for residential development — more homes, instead of additional gas stations — although they propose that the residential use of this area should allow store owners to keep apartments above their shops.

The only other opportunity for major residential development would be provided by the Dominion Seed House lands, approximately 40 acres of arable property. The study's recommendations for the property (should the owners ever sell) form probably the least popular part of the study and have already been questioned by one local councillor.

**BACK GARDEN**  
Whether envisioned for homes, factories, warehouses, shopping centres or schools, many long-time residents will find it difficult to imagine the DSH property as anything but everyone's favorite backyard garden. Even if the owners never sell, the study points out that the town could appropriate the land to build a new civic centre.

It's still only a fledgling idea, but as Diamond planner Marilyn McKelvey told members of the town's planning board last week, a civic centre housing the town's administrative offices and other public facilities would pack an enormous amount of business muscle. It's location, she stressed, must be thoroughly studied because any area of the community would benefit economically

from the people flow to and from the building. As important as commercial growth is to the long-term business viability of the area, the study's discussion of industrial lands urges planners to act quickly and set immediate goals for industrial property and protect it from being overwhelmed by commercial

growth. **NOT RELATED**  
Retail stores, services and offices not directly related to the functioning of the industries should be prohibited, as industries cannot compete for the land values created by commercial development expectations," the study notes. And while it realizes that

Georgetown's commitment to industrial growth anywhere in the community will only be decided once its sewage treatment capacity is established, Diamond planners suggest that the town should increase the amount of land along Guelph Street available for industry. In addition, the town should work closely with the

region's business development department and the local Chamber of Commerce to promote industrial growth. Meanwhile, the town has already started working on the study's traffic recommendations, the element that binds plans for industrial, commercial and residential growth in the area.

Traffic flow along the corridor would be greatly improved if there were fewer access points the study says. Intersection traffic lights — even with proposed lane additions — should be carefully synchronized and feature more advance turn signals to prevent the frustrating waits motorists now experience during the day's rush hours.

**WINDOW DRESS**  
And the study has proposals for window dressing the corridor, much of which will probably be enforced through a planned development control bylaw. Landscaping would become extremely important along Guelph Street in the future and with additional sidewalks, Diamond planners visualize the corridor becoming more attractive to the walking shopper.

Planning director Mario Venditti told The Herald Monday that he and his staff are pleased with the report. They must wade through its recommendations, adding their own, before returning it to council for approval. Expected to start implementing parts of the study later this year, council will begin by passing some of the bylaws Diamond planners say are needed to insure responsible development on the corridor. The study will be added to the town's official plan, currently awaiting revision by a special task force.

After that, Mr. Venditti said, council can begin planning some of the improvements outlined in the study.

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In addition, the board is anticipating a \$15,000 grant from the provincial government for a "core area study", establishing what goals downtown business people should set for themselves to keep the BIA a viable business centre. Town staff have already narrowed a list of eleven consultants who offered to conduct the study down to four, and will make a

final decision soon. Meanwhile, bylaws are being prepared which will enable the downtown area to become eligible for improvement grants from the province once the core study is completed for both Acton and Georgetown. In the future, the BIA hopes to erect overhead banners on Main and Mill Streets promoting the downtown area and plans to bury overhead wires and add stylish street lighting along Mill Street.

Merchants in the BIA pay a special charge over their regular business levy assessed each year. The board works with an annual budget of about \$25,000 and presented a sample Monday night budget showing councillors how the money might be spent.

interest among some of its member merchants has hindered attempts to promote shopping opportunities in the Main Street area. The report notes that not all merchants are willing to open on Mondays, stretching the shopping week to six days, nor has it been successful in encouraging uniform restoration of store-fronts to enhance Main Street's appearance.

"In 1980, we still offered a confused image as a shopping area," the report states, "satisfying neither the pedestrian or the driving customer."

Nevertheless, working with Toronto architect Paul Martel, the BIA's board of management has managed to erect two identity signs, establish free parking zones

## Must take interest in '81 if BIA to show results - report

The Georgetown Business Improvement Area (BIA) has called upon councillors, town staff and Main Street merchants to overcome "misunderstanding, apathy, and frustration" to make "1981 a pivotal year for downtown Georgetown."

In presenting a 14-page, year-end review to council, BIA president Lynn Barnard said last week she was pleased with the team effort involved in drafting the report.

"I'm proud of the fact that, as a very diverse group, we have been able to pull together as well as we have," she said. "We hope that we can work with you. Please keep in touch as we intend to keep in touch with you."

Established in 1977, the BIA has admitted that lack of

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Dogsled races like this one last weekend at Clalreville Conservation Area — in which several Halton Hills teams competed — will be among the activities at the Georgetown Jaycee's Winterfest '81, scheduled for Feb. 7 in Fairgrounds Park. (Photo by Ace Bailey)

## Make fun of winter at Feb. 7 celebration

Continued from Page 1

animal dogsled race will go ahead, Mr. Evers said. A two or four-mile course is being planned for the open event, starting and finishing in the park, but running outside the Fairground's boundaries. Jeff Pantling (519-856-9172) in Rockwood is organizing the race or you can call Mr. Evers at 547-1797.

Other service clubs have been adding to Winterfest plans recently. The Kiwanis Club of Georgetown is handling preparations for the snow sculpture contest, open to groups and individuals. The Optimists have announced they will run the log-sawing contest again this year.

**DONUT RETURN**  
Two popular kids' contests are returning to the Winterfest roster: the Jaycees plan to

have another donut-eating event and a snowball throw for the younger crowd. Meanwhile, one of the two rinks ready at Fairgrounds Park will be open for family skating.

Indoors, the Army will house a number of commercial exhibits organized by various businesses in town. Milton's Racer's Edge and Georgetown's Hazen Auto Service plan to hold snowmobile demonstrations at the park as well. Businessmen wanting to find out more about the space available at the Army should call Bill Pahyk (877-8702) or Jeff Pantling.

The Jaycees are planning to staff an information booth at the Fairgrounds gate to help spectators and participants find their way to all the activities. Both the Jaycees and the GDHS Outers Club have said they would operate

food concessions to feed hungry crowds. The Winterfest dance is scheduled to kick-off at 9 p.m. Available from Diane Penrice (877-8768) or any Jaycee member, tickets will cost \$6. MacMillan and Wife disc jockey service are providing musical entertainment.

The Winterfest Beaver is still looking for a name. Entry forms were featured in last week's Winterfest advertisement in The Herald and may be dropped off at Beaver Lumber on Guelph Street or Akers and Clark Real Estate and Golden Fish and Chips on Main Street, Georgetown, before Jan. 31. Look for promotional appearances by the beaver in the near future.

Further information on Winterfest events is available from Doug Penrice (877-8768) and Bill Pahyk (877-8702).

## About the Hills

### Capital budget Feb. 4

Halton region's 1981 capital budget—outlining major purchases and construction cost forecasts—will be presented to council Feb. 4, acting regional treasurer Jim Stewart told the region's finance and administration committee last Wednesday. The budget, including a five-year expense plan, will be sent to the committee following its presentation to council and then forwarded to other committees for review. Regional staff hope to have the budget approved by the end of April.

### Still no business chief

Halton region has had little success in finding a replacement for William Marshall, former business development director. Halton's finance and administration committee last Wednesday decided to hire an independent agency to locate candidates for the job, after only 48 applications were received following Canada-wide advertisements and an announcement through the Ontario Industrial Development Council. Five prospective candidates await interviews with the committee. Mr. Marshall left in October to assume a similar position with the regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton.

### St. Simon's concert

The Gentlemen and Boys of St. Simon's Church Choir of Toronto will perform at St. Christopher's Church in Burlington this Sunday at 3 p.m. First formed in 1883, the choir now consists of 16 boys and 18 men and has given concerts at prestigious institutions in both Canada and England. St. Christopher's is located on the Guelph Line in Burlington. Ticket information is available by phoning 634-4778 or 634-4684 between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. Tuesday through Friday.

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Weekly  
Boys & Girls Clubs, Youth Activities, Ladies Coffee Hour, Recreation & Prayer Meeting  
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Visitors Always Welcome  
25 Years and Growing

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11:00 A.M. — MORNING WORSHIP  
7:00 P.M. — IN-DOOR CAMP MEETING  
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**SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER ALL DAY —**  
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## WATCH OUT FOR ANDY!

Finlay Arnold presented a Ronald McDonald watch to Andrew Schreiber, winner of the McDonald's coloring contest this month in The Herald. (Herald photo)

## Any 'Friends-in-Deed'?

Friends-In-Deed an organization dedicated to helping Halton Hills' physically handicapped, is hoping that area residents with time on their hands will get caught in the spirit of the International Year of the Disabled. The group meets the last Tuesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. in Acton's M.Z. Bennett Public School. Volunteer help is needed and the group emphasizes that sharing a few hours can make many people happy. The group also needs volunteers for its Sunday morning swim program for the handicapped. Running from 9 a.m. to noon at McKenzie-Smith Middle School pool, the program is open to anyone needing water therapy.

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