

# Crime rate down, but police not complacent

*'We are the best. We are the safest,' Police Chief Tanner. No change in police levels promised*

The current level of policing in Acton and Georgetown will not change, even if a Halton Police Service study determines it is feasible to consolidate the Georgetown and Milton stations into one facility as a possible cost-saving measure.

Halton police brass – the Command team for One District (Acton, Georgetown and Milton) – made the promise to Halton Hills councillors on Monday night during a policing update.

The possible consolidation of the two stations is a “deep concern” of residents according to Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette who suggested choosing one community over another for the station would be like being forced to “pick your favourite kid,” and any decision would leave left-out residents, in which ever community very upset and feeling “abandoned.”

Chief Stephen Tanner said, “I would not say that’s (consolidation) is the direction we are moving, but we’ve got to explore all of the options,” he said, adding they will see if there are any savings through economies of scale.

The Chief said whatever decision is made, there would always be a police presence in both One District communities, and Superintendent Chris Perkins said, “We don’t police from a building... and the level of staffing for this area in Georgetown and Halton Hills, will not change.” Mayor Bonnette noted that sometimes decisions must be made looking at the economy, economics and political realities, not just the bottom line.

Chief Tanner said a 28 per cent drop in the crime rate over the past two years, as detailed in the crime severity index, is “fantastic.” “We are the best. We are the safest,” Tanner said, adding that although they’ve made significant impacts on crime in Halton, they can’t become complacent and think that a 28

per cent drop in crime over two years is good enough, “because we still have thousands of victims every year,” calls for service are increasing, including traffic calls, often dealing with life-threatening behaviour.

Chief Tanner said with a police budget approaching \$139-million budget, he is “very confident we will be under (a) three per cent (budget increase)” when they present the budget to the police Board at the end of the month, and then to Regional Council.

He said over 90 per cent

of the police budget is for salaries, benefits and pensions. The proposed budget includes 10 new staff and with the growth projected in Halton over the next few years, Chief Tanner said the pressure point is to have a large percentage of any additional staff work in the north of Halton.

He credited the crime rate decrease to an aging (and more law-abiding) citizenship, with fewer youths aged 15 to 23 in the crime-prone years, to pro-active policing and a well-funded police service. “For every dollar



Chief Stephen Tanner

Criminal/MVC - Halton Hills							
Type	2010	2011	2012	2011 - 2012	2012 1 <sup>st</sup> half	2013 1 <sup>st</sup> half	2012 1 <sup>st</sup> half to 2013 1 <sup>st</sup> half
(All 900-Code Calls)	9787	9502	9424	-78 ↓	4778	4459	-319 ↓
(Assault)	93	107	88	-13 ↓	52	33	-19 ↓
(Offensive Weapons)	15	7	12	+5 ↑	7	0	-7 ↓
(Robbery)	9	3	6	+3 ↑	3	2	-1 ↓
(B&E shop)	17	18	26	+8 ↑	12	5	-7 ↓
(B&E House)	60	61	67	+6 ↑	26	21	-5 ↓
(B&E School)	7	2	2	-	1	0	-1 ↓
(B&E Other)	51	41	32	-9 ↓	16	13	-3 ↓
(Theft of Vehicle)	35	26	19	-7 ↓	9	12	+3 ↑
(Theft from Auto)	358	343	254	-89 ↓	114	86	-28 ↓
(Shoplifting)	77	97	140	+43 ↑	96	62	-34 ↓
(Theft Over)	14	32	21	+9 ↑	8	4	-4 ↓
(Theft Under)	137	122	110	-12 ↓	54	45	-9 ↓
(Property Damage Under)	270	221	209	-18 ↓	117	66	-51 ↓
(Fed Stat - Drugs)	108	117	128	+11 ↑	62	82	+20 ↑
(Impaired Driving)	37	59	33	-26 ↓	16	21	+5 ↑
(License Suspension)	82	89	98	+9 ↑	37	42	+5 ↑
(MVC - Property Damage)	739	842	695	-147 ↓	361	384	+23 ↑
(MVC - Personal Injury)	137	154	128	-26 ↓	56	50	-6 ↓
(Missing Person)	54	37	33	-4 ↓	20	16	-4 ↓

you invest in crime prevention and community involvement, you’ll save \$7 down the road in policing costs, judicial costs (and) jail costs,” Chief Tanner said.

In a brief operational

review, Superintendent Chris Perkins explained there are two divisions – 11 and 12 – in Halton Hills with 139 police officers and 14 civilians, operating under a project-based policing system

where they spend time dealing with problems and projects as they arise. Like other areas of Halton Region, Superintendent Perkins said traffic concerns are the number one issue.

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