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## 'State of the Town' address

Mayor Rick Bonnette made his annual "state of the town" address to the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce recently at the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club. Here are excerpts of his speech:

The new Town Council 2010-2014 has been in office for a year and in, my opinion, has made significant progress on the work they intend to do during this four-year term. Council had many initiatives over the last year; there were three particular major initiatives that I wish to mention as I begin the year in review.

First it was council's bold, and some may say courageous, initiative in adding a special dedicated levy to the Town tax bill in 2011; additional tax toward the expansion of the Georgetown Hospital to enable an increase of the size and layout of the Emergency Department and for the housing of the CT Scanner.

The second Council initiative was to fight the GTA West Corridor Transportation Strategy that included 4-3 highway... I along with Council took a strong stand against that alternative as far as "slicing across the entire agricultural and rural fabric of Halton Hills" indicated that it should not be put in place. The Minister (of Transportation) said he will seriously re-consider the options. This is huge for us.

The third major initiative was the decision to decommission the Memorial Arena and seek redevelopment of the Memorial site as part of a land disposition strategy. While it is always a difficult decision to get rid of a significant part of the Town's history, Council made this courageous decision knowing that the refurbishment of the Memorial Area is just

too expensive for the Town to undertake and that the site itself was needed to help with the funding of new facilities like the new arenas.

Council reviewed its nine strategic directions and developed a list of "Top Ten" strategic actions, including:

1. Excellent Municipal Service Delivery
2. Communications Resource and Strategy
3. 401 Corridor Employment Area Development
4. Acton Quarry After Use
5. Sustainability
6. Georgetown Future Residential Area Planning (Secondary Plan)
7. Growth Financing
8. Economic Development Strategy
9. Community Improvement Plan Implementation
10. Specialized Transit

Each of those ten Strategic Actions that this Council will concentrate on during this term has many components. Time will only permit us to address a certain number of those components.

The continuing challenge for Halton Hills Council however, is to provide an effective service delivery in the face of increased growth despite the need to be economical and despite continuing unfunded service mandates from the Province.

You can see the work list and it is important that expectations are kept real.

*Wishing you, on behalf of Council, a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.*

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