

It's been an award-winning year for Halton Hills, says Mayor

By Lisa Tallyn
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Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette highlighted the Town's achievements throughout the year and outlined some goals for 2015 at the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce Mayor's Luncheon Thursday.

"The Town enjoyed a good year in 2014 as we continued to deliver on the priorities Council identified in its 2010-2014 Strategic Action Plan," said Bonnette to a full house at Eagle Ridge Golf Course.

He said the Town was recognized over the past year "with no less than six awards or designation."

That recognition included Halton Hills being ranked by *Money Sense* magazine as one of the better communities in Canada to live, a national award from the Economic Development Association of Canada for the Town's "Small Town Living at Its Best" brand, the Play Works Youth Friendly Community designation and the Canadian Save designation from Parachute Canada, a Community Conservation Award from the Ontario Power Authority, and an Environmental Excellence Award from the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce.

"Getting recognized in our own

community, to me, that matters most," said Bonnette.

He also said the Georgetown Branch of the Halton Hills Public Library and Cultural Centre received Silver LEED certification.

One of the biggest highlights of the year he said was signing a community covenant for veterans and their families on June 6.

Bonnette noted that Regional Councillor Clark Somerville was elected second-vice-president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and praised Councillor Jane Fogal for her leadership on the successful Halton Hills Community Cycling Campaign that saw area residents log 300,000 km on their bicycles raising \$66,000 for Georgetown Hospital.

Council has been busy advocating and lobbying the province to ensure the community's best interests are served, said Bonnette.

He said he met with Transportation Minister Steven Del Duca and urged the Ministry to refine the GTA West Study area corridor.

"I am glad that a couple of weeks ago the Ministry said the corridor has been narrowed and will be further refined in the future," said Bonnette.

He said the Town is also talking with MP Michael Chong and the

Mayor
Rick
Bonnette



'We saw a lot of local companies make significant investments in their operations...'

Greater Toronto Airport Authority to review flight patterns affecting south Georgetown residents.

No review would be complete without mentioning last December's ice storm and the fact Halton Hills was the hardest hit community, said the Mayor.

"This year we focused primarily on the massive cleanup, and I mean massive. In 2015 we will begin to gradually replant some of the trees we lost as a result of the storm, but the renewal will take years."

Despite the huge undertaking of cleaning up from the storm, Bonnette said it didn't deter the Town from moving ahead with twin-

ning Acton Arena and Community Centre, completing the addition of two new ice pads at Mold-Masters SportsPlex and renovating the Acton campus of Hillsview Active Living Centre. The Town is also making significant improvements to the adjacent Three Musketeers Skatepark, he said.

The Town has carefully managed growth in a "slow and steady" manner adding more than 2 million sq. ft. of new industrial space and approximately 2,000 jobs since 2005, said Bonnette.

"We also saw a lot of local companies make significant investments into their operations, specifically Georgetown Toyota, Georgetown VW, Minus 40 and Unilock."

He said Toronto Premium Outlets also marked its first anniversary and is continuing to register record sales.

Bonnette said expanding growth in the Halton Hills Premier Gateway (401/407 business corridor) has been a priority, with the biggest success being the 110,000 sq. ft. expansion of an existing building. The launch of Vision Georgetown (planning for the 1,000 acres to be added to the urban Georgetown) is another highlight, he said.

Looking to the year ahead Bon-

nette said a key project will be applying the 900 new units of water allocation Halton Hills has received from Halton Region.

"Our town can benefit from some controlled growth to expand our tax base."

"We know we need to address the need for additional seniors' housing accommodations in our community," he said.

Bonnette said Council has approved development concepts for both the Memorial Arena and Civic Centre lands.

"We hope to be out to market on the properties in early 2015 from the Memorial Arena site and later in the year for the Civic Centre lands."

He said there is an issue with traffic congestion in town.

"To that end I am announcing today that Transportation will be part of the Community Affairs (Committee) agenda. The Transportation Master Plan will be reviewed."

He said Council will continue to advocate for all-day GO service and the Town will continue to focus on "maximizing the potential of Halton Hills Premier Gateway."

"Town Council and Town staff are committed and focused on doing what is best for our community," said Bonnette.

Police nab 15 drivers for passing stopped school bus during Project Protect

During the month of November Halton Regional Police conducted Project Protect in Milton and Halton Hills. The project was initiated in response to several complaints from bus drivers, parents and concerned citizens regarding drivers failing to stop for a school bus when children were being picked up or dropped off.

Officers from the 1 District Response Unit targeted motorists who failed to stop as required for school buses when the overhead flashing red lights were activated.

Officers dedicated several hours during November patrolling bus routes and bus stops. It was noted that the vast majority of motorists in this

community do stop when approaching a stopped school bus.

While most do obey this requirement, officers did lay charges against several drivers: 15 drivers were charged with failing to stop for a school bus. Drivers who violate this are subject to a fine of \$490 plus 6 Demerit points. Subsequent violations are

subject to fines ranging from \$1,000 to \$4,000 and possible imprisonment.

Additional charges were laid, including speeding, disobeying a sign and using a hand held communication device.

Three drivers were arrested for offences including possession of a controlled substance, driving while under

suspension and an impaired driving related charge for refuse to provide a breath sample.

Officers will continue to monitor school bus routes and bus stops. Halton police urge all motorists to stop for school buses when they display overhead flashing red lights— our children's lives depend on it.

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