

# TOWN RECEIVES SAFE RESTART FUNDING

## HALTON HILLS RECEIVES \$1.4 MILLION THROUGH FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

BRYAN MYERS  
bmyers@metroland.com

The province has allocated money from the federal Safe Restart Program to the Town of Halton Hills in two separate streams — municipal operations and transit — to offset losses in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The town received \$1,334,000 for municipal operations and \$71,987 for transit through the Safe Restart Program, a partnership with the federal government which is providing funds to all the provinces to help restart their economies.

"I am very pleased that the province recognizes the financial strain on municipalities to manage the impacts of the pandemic," said Mayor Rick Bonnette.

A report brought forth by the town's treasurer showed net losses of nearly \$1.3 million in 2020 due to lost revenue and increased costs. Revenue loss was largely due to program cancellations and facility closures, reduced development application revenues, and fee waivers for ActiVan Accessible Transit, third party loans and library fines. The town also incurred additional expenses for increased cleaning and sanitation, extra personnel protective equipment, technology, and staff overtime due to COVID-19.

Despite the increased costs and revenue loss, the town saw some savings due to the pandemic through part-time wage reductions, as operations were suspended and programs were cancelled, reduced travel and discretionary expenses, the cancellation of non-essential staff training, and the cancellation of community events among others cost savings.

Compared to the 2020 budget, council spending came in 24.5 per cent under budget, while corporate expenses rose 81.7 per cent over budget. Overall, the Town of Halton Hills, with the Safe Restart funding, had a surplus of 1.5 per cent, or \$782,730, with the majority of the surplus proposed for the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve.

# TOWN STAFF RETIREMENTS RISE DRAMATICALLY IN 2020

BRYAN MYERS  
bmyers@metroland.com

The Town of Halton Hills saw a record number of retirements in 2020.

Over the course of the year, 16 full-time employees retired, up from an average of about three retirements per year in the five years prior.

According to a year-in-review report by the Town, exit interviews revealed many retiring staff were eligible for retirement and took the opportunity to do so during the pandemic.

In 2020, the Town reported recruiting for 44 full-time positions, up from 33 positions in 2019.

Employees who did not retire took less vacation — by the end of 2020, the Town reported a 35 per cent increase in vacation hours carried over into 2021. The Town's personnel handbook asks employees to use vacation time within the year it is earned. A deferral of vacation leave of up to five days into the next year must be approved by a department head, a deferral



Metroland file photo

In 2020, the Town reported recruiting for 44 full-time positions, up from 33 positions in 2019.

beyond five days must be approved by the Town's chief administrative officer. An item listed on the in camera session agenda for the May 3 Town of Halton Hills council meeting noted a discussion about the recruitment of a new CEO and president of the Halton Hills Community Energy Corporation. Art Skidmore, outgoing president and CEO, confirmed his retirement to the Independent Free Press via email.

The Town's deputy treasurer, Wendy O'Donnell, also retired during the May 3 meeting. Joseph Vandermeer was appointed to the position at the meeting.



SCAN THIS CODE FOR MORE LOCAL NEWS.

# cancer

## The more you know, the better your odds

Each year, the Canadian Cancer Society (CCS) fundraises for cancer related initiatives — including research and programs for those living with cancer. Cancer is the leading cause of death in our country, and each year more than 200,000 Canadians are diagnosed with the disease. It's estimated that one in two Canadians will develop cancer in their lifetime and one in four will die from it. The CCS is committed to battling against the disease, but they need support in the form of donations and volunteers to keep the fight alive.

### Programs and services for those living with cancer

The CCS offers a number of helpful resources for those with cancer and their friends and family members.

- **Information service.** A national service for cancer patients and their loved ones that connects them with information about cancer treatments, support services, complementary therapies and many other aspects of coping with cancer. The service is available toll free at 1-888-939-3333 (TTY 1-886-786-3934), in both English and French.

- **Transportation.** Cancer patients who need assistance getting to and from medical appointments for physical, emotional or financial reasons may be offered assistance through the Wheels of Hope program. Volunteer drivers offer return trips to patients who are registered in the program. For more information call 1-800-263-6750.

- **Wigs.** Hair loss can be a difficult side effect to contend with for women undergoing cancer treatments. The CCS has paired with Proctor & Gamble Canada to provide wigs for these women. Find out more through an information specialist at 1-888-939-3333.

Other initiatives include a peer support program that pairs cancer survivors with individuals currently undergoing treatments, an online support group (CancerConnection.ca), accommodation for those receiving treatment out of town, and coaching for those who wish to quit smoking (smokershelpline.ca).

If you have any questions about cancer, visit the Canadian Cancer Society at [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)

**CARPET ONE**  
FLOOR & HOME

**CARPET BARN CARPET ONE**  
Floor and Home  
The One Store For Your Perfect Floor  
26 Guelph St.,  
Downtown Georgetown  
[www.carpetone.ca](http://www.carpetone.ca)  
<http://carpetonegeorgetown.goldbook.ca>  
**905-877-9896**  
THREE EASY WAYS TO SHOP.

**LOCKYER + HEIN LLP**  
BARRISTERS + SOLICITORS

A Full Service Firm, Including Civil Litigation, Family Law, Employment, Real Estate, Corporate Law, and Wills & Estates.

OFFICE LOCATIONS [www.lhlaw.ca](http://www.lhlaw.ca)

**GEORGETOWN,**  
8 Guelph Street  
**905.452.7400**

**Brampton Office (Main)**  
350 Rutherford Road S., Suite 320  
**905.452.7400**

**CALEDON EAST**  
15955 Airport Road, Suite 201  
**905.584.4545**

Proud member of **B2C**  
Business & Community  
Halton Hills  
City of Halton

ESA #7003060

**DEKER** eLeCTRIC Ltd.  
**905-702-0515**  
[info@dekerelectric.ca](mailto:info@dekerelectric.ca)  
[www.dekerelectric.ca](http://www.dekerelectric.ca)

**ORDER AHEAD,**  
PICK UP AT CURBSIDE.

JUST USE THE **M APP**

App download, registration and activation required. Curbside service available at participating McDonald's restaurants in Canada, curbside hours vary.

185 Guelph Street, Georgetown  
374 Queen Street East, Acton

**MARKETPLACE DENTAL CENTRE**  
Georgetown Marketplace Mall

**Family & Cosmetic Dentistry**  
New Patients & Emergencies Welcome!  
Asleep Dentistry Available, Teeth Whitening  
Proudly Serving Georgetown Since 1994.

Located inside Georgetown Marketplace Mall  
**905-877-CARE (2273)**  
[georgetowndental.com](http://georgetowndental.com)