

Committees approve indicators necessary for region's strategic plan

Yard sticks to measure the region's progress on its goals laid out in the strategic plan were endorsed by its standing committees last week and will come before council today (Wednesday).

The health and social services, planning and public works and administration and finance committees approved performance indicators for the strategic plan— a document that outlines regional council's vision for Halton and priorities for this term of office.

"Indicators will assist regional council in determining the most appropriate future course of action to make progress on the themes and goals (of the strategic plan)," a report from Halton Director of Strategic Planning and Policy Karen Maxwell said.

The plan was broken down into four themes: managed growth, economic prosperity, services to people and effective Halton Region.

Under managed growth, the yard sticks include the percentage of new development in settlement areas, vehicle density and percentage of agricultural lands preserved from urban development.

The economic prosperity indicators are the total employed labour force, number of new business starts and percentage of residents who live and work in the region.

Through services to people, some of the indicators are the percentage of child care need satisfied, the total number of long-term care beds as a percentage of the population aged 75 and older and the percentage of eligible applicants housed in social housing in a 12-month period.

Effective Halton Region performance indicators range from the percentage of citizens satisfied with regional services to maintaining an AAA credit rating.

"It is important to note that there may be a number of variables and circumstances beyond the complete control of the Region that will impact on the performance indicators," Maxwell's report read. "Nevertheless, they are important measurements to help us track the quality of life in Halton."

Regional staff also created a chart to track progress on each committee's operational plan, which were created in conjunction with the strategic plan and contain specific actions on how council will achieve its goals.

The chart will contain details like target dates for action completion and outcomes. The committees will receive reports early next year on progress using the chart system.

—By Melanie Hennessey, special

Halton child care programs receive \$1.5M funding boost from province

Child care programs in Halton received a funding boost of \$1.575 million recently from the provincial government.

The money will be directed to regulated child care programs for children under six. Some of the new funding is also intended to help low-income families with the cost of child care.

"Our community is experiencing significant growth at the present time," said Halton Director of Children's Services Mary Beth Jonz.

"This funding will help us to provide low-income parents with the financial support they need for their children to attend child care programs in the community."

Parents who are working, being retrained or looking for a job, and need help with child care costs, are encouraged to contact the Region's child care subsidy program, which is available for children from 0 to 12 years old.

For more information on the program and eligibility, call 1-866-4HALTON (1-866-442-5866) or visit www.region.halton.on.ca.



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