

# Community participation critical

On December 6, Halton's new regional council was sworn into office to begin our four-year term as your municipal leaders.

As I mentioned during my inaugural address, community participation is something I will be focusing on, as it is one of my top priorities.

I feel it is extremely important to listen to what you have to say regarding the issues we face together. There will be times when we disagree about which direction Halton should go, but it is important to listen to each other and respect our diverse opinions. We need to hear from you on the issues we face.

Good community participation can bring out concerns and issues that are not always apparent to us public officials. Community participation also gives representation to our unique interests. In order for us to truly feel "ownership" over something that affects us, we must speak our opinions and participate in its creation.

A very important method of community participation here at Halton is our Citizen Advisory Committees. We have committees that cover all different areas of interest, whether it be seniors' (Elder Services Advisory Committee), accessibility (Halton Region

Gary Carr



Accessibility Advisory Committee), information (211 Halton Citizen Advisory Committee), or our landfill (Halton Waste Management Site Advisory Committee).

We are currently looking for members of the community who wish to participate in the future direction we take in Halton Region through our Citizen Advisory Committees. These committees will provide you with the opportunity to contribute your skills and perspective to enhance the quality of life in our community.

For a full listing of the committees, please call Halton Region at 905-825-6000, toll free 1-866-4HALTON (1-866-442-5866), or visit our website at [www.halton.ca](http://www.halton.ca).

—Gary Carr is the chairman of Halton Region

# Town supports move to freeze MPAC payment

The Town of Halton Hills has sent a resolution of support to the County of Prince Edward, which has frozen its contribution to the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) at the 2006 rate.

Earlier this year, the Ontario government, after a scathing ombudsman's report on MPAC, announced that property assessments would be frozen for the next two years until recommended changes to MPAC are made.

Councillor Mike O'Leary wondered whether Halton Hills council—a longtime critic of MPAC—could do the same.

But, according to Town Finance Director Ed DeSousa, Halton Region pays the MPAC levy of about \$5.1 million on behalf of the Region and its four municipalities.

"So we're not talking about small dollars here for services that are highly criticized by the ombudsman," said Mayor Rick Bonnette.

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