



Simply Halton

Your Halton
Connection
February '07

Building a vision for Halton's economy



by Regional Chair Gary Carr

In 2006, Halton Region undertook a **Comprehensive Economic Development Study**. This study examined fundamental competitiveness issues and looked at how we can create policies and strategies to sustain a prosperous and balanced economy. It also examined a wide range of tools to achieve the economic development objectives needed to support a competitive business environment here in Halton. The objective of the study was to develop a strategy that would lead Halton Region's economic development activities and service priorities for the next decade and beyond. The outcome of the study, the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, was endorsed by Halton Regional Council in October 2006.

The Strategy is built on a vision for economic development in Halton: **Halton will be a Region with an innovative and diverse economy built on the basis of its choice competitive location, vibrant skilled workforce, high quality infrastructure and positive business environment where skilled workers live and work.** The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy will provide the framework to help us meet this vision for the future.

Consulting with the Community

Public consultation was crucial to the development of the Strategy. Thanks to extensive consultation with stakeholders in Halton including residents, the business community, the development industry, senior levels of government, industry sector associations, and education and non-profit organizations, the Region has developed a strategy to sustain Halton's vision for a strong and vibrant future. Public information and economic roundtable sessions were held to discuss the Comprehensive Economic Development Study and to update the community on the progress of the study.

The Strategy is organized into five themes:

- Halton – A Location of Choice for Business
- Competitive Business Environment
- Supporting Entrepreneurialism and Skills Development
- Strategic Partnerships to Support Business
- Planning for Economic Growth and Prosperity

Each theme identifies specific goals, and those goals are supported by actions to help the Region reach those goals.

Throughout 2007, Halton Region will undertake the actions arising out of the Strategy. Implementation of some of the actions has already begun, and the remainder of the work will be directed by a working group made up of Regional staff.

Learn more about the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy on Halton's website at www.halton.ca, or request a copy by contacting Halton's Business Development Division at 905-825-6000 (1-800-4HALTON).

Supporting Entrepreneurialism and Skills Development

Economic growth in small and medium-sized businesses is driven by knowledge, skills, innovation and entrepreneurship. To help foster this growth, one of the key themes of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is Supporting Entrepreneurialism and Skills Development. This theme focuses on new approaches to producing, preparing, retaining and attracting a labour force with the right skills to succeed in the knowledge economy. This theme also looks at new entrepreneurs and start-up companies, which form a core element of the services provided by the Business Development Division.

The two goals driving this theme are to:

- Encourage new entrepreneurs, start-up and growing businesses in Halton; and
- Provide support to business in skills development.

Actions that will help us meet these goals include enhancing services offered by Halton's Business Development Centre; promoting and supporting youth entrepreneurship programs; and supporting the development and delivery of industry-based training initiatives like co-op and apprenticeship programs in Halton. A knowledge economy needs higher skill levels to stay competitive, so these actions will help cultivate a well-trained workforce to support existing businesses and new investments.

At Your Service

The Halton Region Business Development Centre is the pre-eminent walk-in resource centre for small businesses across the Region. Entrepreneurs can register their business name and access a variety of research and resource materials, as well as computer workstations. Business Consultants provide advice and information on business and marketing plans, Halton's business environment, exporting and employment and training programs.

What can the Halton Region Business Development Centre do for you?

- Initial start-up consultations with a qualified business consultant
- Review of business plans
- Consultations through our Access to Professionals referral service
- Access to current resource materials, including publications, directories, trade indexes and reference materials, all of which can be loaned out
- Workshops and seminars
- Import and export information
- Information on patents, copyright and trademarks
- Mentoring and networking opportunities
- Internet and computer access for business research and planning

There are more than 35,000 enterprises in Halton. Enterprises* with ten or fewer employees account for 87.6% of all enterprises.

Introducing BizPaL

An innovative online tool that allows business owners to identify the permits and licenses they need to start or expand a business is now available in Halton. Because it's on the web, BizPaL allows business owners to access the service whenever and wherever it's convenient for them. Visit www.halton.ca to access BizPaL today!

*Enterprises are companies that had a minimum of \$30,000 in annual sales revenue, or are incorporated under a federal or provincial act and have filed a federal corporate income tax form within the past three years. All data as of December 2005.

February Meetings at Halton Region Headquarters

- February 6, 9:30 a.m.** Health & Social Services Committee
- February 7, 9:30 a.m.** Planning & Public Works Committee
- February 7, 1:30 p.m.** Administration & Finance Committee
- February 7, 7:00 p.m.** Planning & Public Works Public Meeting
Re: OPA – Creebank Developments
- February 14, 9:30 a.m.** Regional Council Meeting
- February 27, 9:30 a.m.** Health & Social Services Committee
- February 28, 9:30 a.m.** Planning & Public Works Committee
- February 28, 1:30 p.m.** Administration & Finance Committee

We welcome your feedback. Contact Access Halton at accesshalton@halton.ca
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