

# THE INDEPENDENT

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### Mass transit comes to Acton

Robert Little students (from right) Makayla Dee and Darren Gendron (both of Grade 2) and Spencer Pestell (Grade 5) took part in Walk to School Day, led by Robert Little teacher Marie Burland. Kids from the school took part Wednesday morning, joined by Wellington-Halton Hills MP Michael Chong. The kids walked from Prospect Park, up Main Street to School Lane, to build awareness of the benefits of exercising by walking to school.

Photo by Ted Brown

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### Provincial minister tells Region chair

## Growth plan not to blame for Halton's woes

MELANIE HENNESSEY  
Special to The IFP

A provincial minister is pointing the finger of blame at the Region for the infrastructure woes facing Halton.

The sentiment was expressed by newly-appointed Minister of Energy and Infrastructure George Smitherman in a letter he recently sent to Regional Chair Gary Carr. The correspondence came in response to a letter Carr sent the minister detailing the Region's Fairness for Halton campaign, which says the Region can't accommodate the thousands of residents called for in the Province's Places to

Grow plan without some hefty funding help for infrastructure.

The campaign lets those at Queen's Park know about the local funding shortfalls that need to be fixed— such as a municipal infrastructure deficit of \$300 million— in order to meet the growth targets specified in Places to Grow. The plan says Halton's population is supposed to increase by more than 300,000 to 780,000 by 2031.



GEORGE SMITHERMAN

More than \$2.5 billion will be needed for infrastructure to accommodate growth to 2021, while more than \$8.6 billion will be required to serve the population increase to 2031, Carr informed the minister.

But, Smitherman said the Province and its Places to Grow plan aren't the cause of the problem.

"The servicing costs you indicate in your letter and the infrastructure deficit in Halton relate primarily to servicing areas which were planned for and approved by the Region prior to 2006 and precede the growth plan," he said.

See SMITHERMAN, pg. 5

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