

Report delves into municipal debt in four-county region

The municipalities in the four-county Central Ontario Economic Region had, in 1964, a total net debenture debt of well over a billion dollars.

The exact figure is \$1,130,989,552, according to 1964 municipal figures, published in 1965 by the Ontario Department of Municipal Affairs, the latest available at the time of the study. The tax and debt study was performed by the newly organized Central Ontario Regional Development Council.

The figure was the equivalent of 5 per cent of the gross Provincial product.

Of the amount, Metro Toronto was responsible for more than half, or \$613,470,855. Metro Toronto and the municipalities within its area were responsible for over two thirds of the figure, \$972,047,796, the study indicated.

The region consists of Halton, Peel, York and Ontario Counties and Metro Toronto. The total debt for all municipalities and counties of the region was 21.13 per cent of the total taxable assessment of the total region. Excluding county government debt, the debt was 20.82 per cent of the region's taxable assessment. The Provincial total of municipal net debt for purposes of comparison was 16.73 per cent of Ontario's total municipal taxable assets.

The highest per capita debt among all 69 municipalities of the Central Ontario Economic Region was to be found in Oakville. The figure for the community was \$394.06 per resident. Metropolitan Toronto was second with a per capita debenture debt of \$357.11. In third and fourth places were Toronto Township and Vaughan Township with \$352 and \$322.07 of municipal debt per resident respectively. However averaging the debenture debt per capita, taking all of the Metropolitan Toronto municipalities together, produced a figure of \$565.84.

Although Oakville had the highest per capita debenture debt in the entire economic region, a comparison of its total debenture debt to its total taxable assessment base indicated that debt constitutes only 15.86 per cent of the assessments. This is regarded by the Ontario Municipal Board as a relatively healthy figure.

Only the Metro Toronto geographical area, Oakville, Metropolitan Toronto, Toronto Township and Vaughan Township

were over \$300 per capita debt in the region.

The lowest per capita debt, outside the figures compiled for the counties, was Caledon East. This Village of 663 inhabitants had the lowest debt figure in the four county region, at \$16.96 per resident. Mimico was in second place for the entire region with \$30.75 of municipal debt for each of its 18,584 residents. Swansea was in third place with \$51.33 per capita debt following in fourth lowest place for the region by Forest Hill at \$58.86.

Of the 69 municipalities in the area of responsibility of the Central Ontario Regional Development Council, only 14 were under \$100 in per capita debenture debt. None of these is in Halton County. Seven of them are in Ontario County, two in Peel, four are in Metro and only one in York, outside Metro — that is East Gwillimbury Township with a per capita debenture debt of \$88.21.

In examining taxation the figure used was the total levy divided by population. The highest per capita taxation figure for the four county region was found in Leaside. Here each resident had an average annual tax bill of \$234.10. Toronto was in second place with a tax bill of \$221.76 for every resident. New Toronto was next at \$221.72. Forest Hill followed at \$198.45 in theoretical tax billing for each resident within this municipality.

Highest township tax levies, according to the analysis were in Etobicoke Twp. (\$172.65), North York (\$160.72), Toronto Township (\$153.55), and Scugog Township (\$150.32).

Lowest per capita taxation was found in Caledon East. Caledon East, it will be noted, also had the region's lowest debt figure. Caledon East residents, on the average, pay only \$58.32 each, in municipal taxation. East Gwillimbury was next lowest in per capita taxation for the region at \$70.02. Esquesing Township was in third place at \$70.29 followed by Cannington at \$70.48 in fourth place. The lowest per capita taxation in York County in the Metro Toronto area, was in Mimico at \$112.42. Long Branch, at \$119.89 and East York at \$122.02 followed.

According to the Ontario Municipal Board safe municipal borrowing limits are exceeded

when total municipal debenture debt goes beyond 25 per cent of total municipal assessment. Closest in the four county region, according to the CORDC study, to this 25 per cent level was Stouffville, whose debt was 24.53 per cent of total assessment, according to the figures examined.

Toronto Township had debenture debt rated at 23.01 per cent of its total taxable assessment and had the second highest figure for the region. The village of Bolton with a population of 2,075 was the fourth highest figure for the region at 21.20 per cent. It lost third place to Vaughan Township where debenture debt was 21.88 per cent of a total assessment base. However, the Metro Toronto area, a non-administrative unit, considered solely for the purposes of comparison, had a total debt as compared to its total assessment, of 22.40 per cent.

The highest percentage among Halton County municipalities can be found in Burlington at 17.34 per cent with Acton at 16.30 per cent. In Ontario County, Usbridge (18.35 per cent), Ajax (18.10 per cent) and Whitby (16.12 per cent) had the highest ratios of debenture debt to total taxable municipal assessment. In the County of Peel the predominant municipalities were Toronto Township (23.01 per cent), Bolton (21.20 per cent), and Brampton (18.61 per cent).

In York County, excluding Metro, Stouffville (at 24.53 per cent), Vaughan (at 21.88 per cent) and Aurora (at 17.29 per cent) had the highest debenture percentages.

Only two Metro Toronto municipalities had a total debenture debt of over 10 per cent of their taxable assessment. However, the metropolitan Toronto area for purposes of comparison, had a debt total 22.40 per cent of its assessment.

Metro Toronto was highest at 14.14 per cent, Scarborough second at 11.99 per cent, and Etobicoke Township third at 8.55 per cent.

Least in debt of all regional municipalities, relative to their tax base were the municipalities in Metro Toronto. Mimico led the region at a mere 1.61 per cent followed by Forest Hill (1.80 per cent) and Caledon East (2.72 per cent).

The communities with the lowest relative debt in their re-

spective counties were Nassagaweya Township at 6.97 per cent, Scugog Township at 3.21 per cent, Mimico and Forest Hill at 1.61 per cent and 1.80 per cent respectively — outside the region and York outside Metro, Georgina at 5.09 per cent and North Gwillimbury at 5.22 per cent.

Highest total figures on a county basis (Metro, Toronto, and York taken together) were reported for York County, where the average per capita taxation was \$173.62 and average per capita debenture debt was \$544.54.

Halton County, at \$133.91 per capita taxation, and \$354.24 of individual debenture debt respectively, was the second of the four counties, followed by the County of Peel at \$128.24 per capita taxation and \$325.25 per capita debenture debt. Ontario was the lowest in the economic region, where per capita taxation averaged out at \$122.51, and where per capita debenture debt was found to be \$221.33.

The regional total population was 2,281,376. The average regional per capita taxation was \$165.02 and the regional average debenture debt was \$497.93.

The corresponding Provincial figures for all municipalities in Ontario, with a Provincial population of 6,342,396, were: per capita taxation \$127.69 and per capita debenture debt \$313.

Departing from traditional municipal fiscal reporting, the Central Ontario Regional Development Council averaged the taxation and debt figures on an administrative county basis. Separated municipalities were excluded and the counties' own debenture debt figures, as reported, were used. County ex-

penditures are generally less extensive and this is reflected in the averages.

Halton County Government has the lowest per capita taxation figures at \$11.10. York County is next highest at \$13.06, then Peel County Council \$13.45, and Ontario with the highest figure at \$16.52.

Peel County Government led in the size of its per capita debenture debt at \$49.06, followed by Halton at \$34.19, York at \$31.97, and Ontario at \$17.11.

Material used in the development of the Report can be found in the Ontario Department of Municipal Affairs' 1964 Annual Report of Municipal Statistics. This is the latest complete compilation of these figures available.

Copies of the complete from the Municipal Offices of any member municipality in the four county economic region, or the offices of the CORDC Newsletter, P.O. Box 506, Station O, Toronto 7, Ontario.

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When a school bus is stopped and its red lights are flashing, a motorist approaching the school bus from the front or overtaking it from the rear, must stop and must remain stopped until the red signal lights on the bus are no longer flashing. EFFECTIVE NOW.

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The windshield and the windows on either side of the front seat must afford a clear view of the roadway and vehicles ahead and to the sides. The rear window must afford a clear view of the roadway and vehicles behind, unless there is an outside rear-view mirror which does afford this clear view. EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 1966.

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A person who drives a motor vehicle and causes it to make an unnecessary noise commits an offence. EFFECTIVE NOW.

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Any non-resident of Ontario, who is the holder of an International Driving Permit, may operate a vehicle in Ontario. EFFECTIVE NOW.

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The gross weight of a trailer, other than a semi or pole trailer shall not exceed 32,000 pounds; and the weight on one axle shall not exceed 18,000 pounds; and if the axles are less than 8 feet apart, the weight shall not exceed 14,000 pounds. EFFECTIVE NOW.

All loads on trucks must be secured, covered or loaded in such a manner that no part of the load may become dislodged. EFFECTIVE NOW.

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A pedestrian walking along a highway must walk facing the traffic and as close to the left hand edge of the road as possible. EFFECTIVE NOW.



ONTARIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT
Hon. Irwin Haskett, Minister

Add new courses

Lay plans for night classes

At an open meeting of the Milton and District Night School committee Tuesday evening of last week, officers were elected for the 1966-67 season.

Mrs. D. Downs was given the honorary title of Past Chairman because of her service last year. The new chairman, Mrs. G. Roberts, served as vice-chairman last year. The new vice-chairman is Frank Sisson. Re-elected secretary-treasurer is Mrs. R. G. King. The six new directors are W. Woods, Mrs. L. Chisholm, Mrs. E. M. Goodall, Mrs. O.

Hadley, Mrs. V. Wendover and Mrs. V. Hamilton.

Plans were laid for the coming season. A suggestion made and strongly supported by Frank Sisson and Mrs. Hadley resulted in the birth of a new art class, to be known as "General Art, all media". This new instruction would deal with all types of painting, including pastels, charcoal, and water-colors.

Other new classes for the 1966-67 season include Furniture Finishing, needlepoint, crocheting, tatting.

Classes repeated from last

year will be Conversational French, Beginners Art, Intermediate Art, Beginners Sewing, Beginners Typing, Intermediate Typing, Advanced Sewing, Tailoring, Millinery, Rug Making, Floriculture, Smocking, Copper Enamelling.

All Classes will be of 14 weeks duration, instead of the eight or 16 weeks system used last year. The classes will begin October 19 and run till February 14.

Further information will be given in the September 21 and September 28 editions of The Champion.



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