



HALTON COUNTY OFFICIALS were present for the unveiling of a bold new concept of regional government in Toronto Wednesday, when Municipal Affairs minister Darcy McKeough outlined his tentative proposal for merging Halton and Peel in a 900 square mile buffer unit to keep Toronto and Hamilton separated. His plan would create a two-tier regional unit with a large regional

council and six or seven smaller regional units. Reading over his printed report are three county officials, assessor Robert Beach, deputy clerk Clare McKay and clerk Garfield Brown, while Esquering councillor Wilfrid Leslie and Halton Warden George Currie look on over their shoulders. More details on the regional government structure will be found in this issue.—(Staff Photo)

BIG METRO

SEE HALTON, PEEL MERGER

Merger of the entire counties of Halton and Peel into one giant "super-metro" regional government, complete with a series of six or seven lower-tier local councils, was predicted as a possibility for 1971 when the Hon. Darcy McKeough, Minister of Municipal Affairs for Ontario, unveiled his suggested blueprint for the area last week.

McKeough, in a formal presentation to about 200 municipal officials from the two counties in Toronto Wednesday, outlined a "tentative proposal" lumping everything from Burlington on the south to Amaranth Township on the north, from Nassagaweya on the west to Albion on the east, into one giant regional unit. The new region would encompass about 900 sq. miles and swallow up 11 towns, two villages and all or parts of eight townships.

Under the two-tier system outlined, lower-tier councils of up to seven persons would handle local administration in six or seven "area municipalities". Milton officials appeared pleased with the proposed "area municipality" encompassing Milton. It would include the

entire town, all of Nassagaweya south of 25 Sideroad (County Road No. 10), the north Oakville lands lying north of the Lower Base Line (or possibly the proposed Highway 403 route just north of Palermo) and the southern half of Esquering (no definite boundary line was set but it appeared on a rough map to be 15 Sideroad).

Esquering officials did not seem tickled with the fact their township would be split in half—with the lower portion joining the Milton unit and the upper half lumped in with Acton and Georgetown in another regional unit.

The proposal raised hackles in Nassagaweya, where cries of "disfranchisement" and "undemocratic" greeted the minister's announcement. Officials from the township were

aghast at a suggestion lands south of 25 Sideroad could join the Milton-based unit, and the rest of the township could be given to Wellington County.

Mr. McKeough defended his government's decision to proceed with regional government, basing part of his reason on the Report of the Ontario Committee of Taxation which pointed out that "the inadequate size of most municipal units has resulted in a chaotic system of provincial grants to local government that cannot adequately compensate for inherent financial weaknesses."

The Committee said it could not hope to devise a tax and revenue system that is "simple, equitable, efficient, adequate and conducive to sound growth... without changes in the structure of government." "Residents of Ontario," the minister stated, "are no longer prepared to tolerate the lack of co-ordination in the provision of regional services and the lack of direction." He also cited the existence of other fragmentary

and overlapping municipal and special purpose jurisdictions as hurrying the process along.

The Peel-Halton area was picked as a unit since a sense of community exists with elements of diversity. The Minister said he was convinced the Peel-Halton area can be suitably incorporated into a system of large urban-centred regions. Similar patterns of land use and the same pressures of urbanization mark both counties, he claimed.

Regional units would come into effect, the minister hoped by January, 1971. Town, township and county councils in Peel and Halton will be scrapped to make way for the new system of government.

"You're firing all the volunteer help," one woman representative at the meeting charged, "and the paid help is going to take over."

Mr. McKeough said he envisioned six or seven local units of government. The seventh would be the town of Burlington which is now part of a provincially sponsored local

government review of the Hamilton-Wentworth area. It could or could not be part of the new system. The Department favored it, he said.

The proposal embraces a 900 square mile area with a population of over 400,000. It would be more than three times the size of Metro Toronto. The minister also suggested the village of Erin and part of the township of Erin in Wellington county and the town of Orangeville in Dufferin county be included in the regional unit.

Mr. McKeough said the shape of the seven large urban areas followed the drainage pattern set by the watersheds and this would facilitate in planning for

(Continued on Page 7)

Ledwith Food Markets sale nears completion

Negotiations are almost completed for a change in ownership, but not in management at Ledwith's Food Markets Ltd., J. M. Ledwith announced this week.

It is expected negotiations with the yet unnamed buyer will be finalized this week.

Mr. Ledwith will be continuing as general manager of the firm he started 23 years ago. No change in personnel or policy is expected in the transfer, which affects the downtown store only.

Mike Ledwith began his business career in Milton in a store 10 feet wide and 30 feet

long in 1946 on discharge from the navy. The purchase was made with war service gratuities. Since that time three expansions have taken place in the store and the present facilities include 6,000 square feet of store and parking for 60 cars.

The firm was incorporated in 1956 and has expanded based on a philosophy of service and competitive pricing.

"It is with this in mind we make this move, to insure our customers of the benefits of larger scale purchasing", Mr. Ledwith declared.

"Despite many rumors, I'll still be around", he emphasized.

Weather expert here on weekend

How much longer will this winter last?

Ask the Groundhog this weekend and, according to an old legend, he'll be able to give you some indication.

According to beliefs the Groundhog emerges from hibernation in his winter lair on Feb. 2 and looks for his shadow.

If the sun shines and he sees his likeness shadowed on the snow, winter will be here six weeks hence. If it's an overcast day and the creature cannot find his shadow, winter's on the wane and will soon be over.

Officials in Oakville are urging cat and dog owners to get their pets inoculated against rabies.

Some happy, some not

Reaction to merger

Local reaction to Darcy McKeough's proposal for lumping Halton and Peel into one regional government unit has been generally unfavorable. While most municipal officials around Peel and Halton panned either the entire report or single sections affecting their areas, a few found some areas worthy of praise.

It was generally conceded by most of the 200 officials attending the Minister of Municipal Affairs' announcement sessions in Toronto Wednesday that the two-county merger was probably inevitable. But the boundaries the minister drew around the seven proposed sub-regional units—areas one to seven, he diplomatically named them, caused the greatest controversy.

This newspaper polled several civic officials in the area, and here is a sampling of their immediate reactions to the report:

Nassagaweya Reeve William A. Hoey promised "Nassagaweya is going to be vociferous, we are not going to go down without a fight" when he learned the minister's plan would chop the township off at 25 Sideroad, lump the southern section in with Milton, and probably make a gift of the remainder to Wellington County.

"We have to keep the township in one piece," he said. "There is more to this than just representation by population." Mr. Hoey reiterated his earlier stand that area and future potential should be taken into consideration, not just population figures. He also objected to what he called "disfranchisement" of the rural people in both counties by tossing all townships to the mercies of the urban centres.

"Nassagaweya is a unit unto itself, it has had a good local government for many years, it has contributed a great deal to the work of the county council, and we have absolutely no debt. We also have quite a potential. The minister said at a previous meeting we would just be a recreational area, well this is stupid. This is a good residential and farming community."

One bright glimmer of hope, he said, was voiced to him after the meeting. He was assured the northern boundary line of Area Five (Nassagaweya, Milton, southern Esquering and northern Oakville) could be changed to the extension of Highway 7 through Eden Mills—the township's present northernmost boundary.

Nassagaweya Deputy-Reeve Mrs. Anne MacArthur voiced similar criticism and discouragement over the future of the township. "We like our

status quo, and we could understand it if Nassagaweya became a rural section attached to the Burlington (Area Seven) regional borough," she said. "My prime objective is to keep Nassagaweya in one section—as it is now," she added.

"Our roads and our economic system are the best in Halton County, and we have a large area with a good future potential. I will fight to keep Nassagaweya as one unit, and to have our own township representative with a voice at the higher level."

She also complained Mr. McKeough kept referring to "the democratic process" in his speech but she thought his answers showed the opposite of democracy—the removal of a voice from the smaller rural municipalities.

Halton Warden George Currie, the Reeve of Esquering Township, offered a polite

(Continued on Page 7)

All reeves on study group

The seven reeves of Halton County were named a committee Tuesday to consider the tentative proposal for regional government recently unveiled by the Minister of Municipal Affairs. County Council approved the committee and empowered it to meet and present a recommendation for membership on the three-man steering committee requested by the Minister from each of the two counties.

Acton Reeve F. G. Oakes stressed it was imperative each Reeve have some expression of his municipality's feelings which could be conveyed to the committee for discussion. Warden George Currie underlined this fact and the council approved the seven man committee that will have a representative from each of the county's municipalities. Deputy-Reeve Tom Hill questioned the finance committee

(Continued on Page 7)

Apartments, homes proposed for 71-acre parcel in town

Apartments, town houses and single family dwellings for roughly 2,500 people were proposed for development in Milton last week, when a Toronto developer unveiled his plans for a 71-acre parcel at the north-west corner of Derry Road (10 Sideroad) and Highway 25.

L. Kristoff of Risenburg Developments Ltd. revealed the plan for a 100-unit apartment block facing Highway 25, with 229 town houses and a 1.35 commercial store site surrounding it, backed up by a 19.7 acre parkway following the Sixteen Mile Creek, and with 150 single family homes to the west of the creek.

The developer estimated occupancy would run about 35 persons

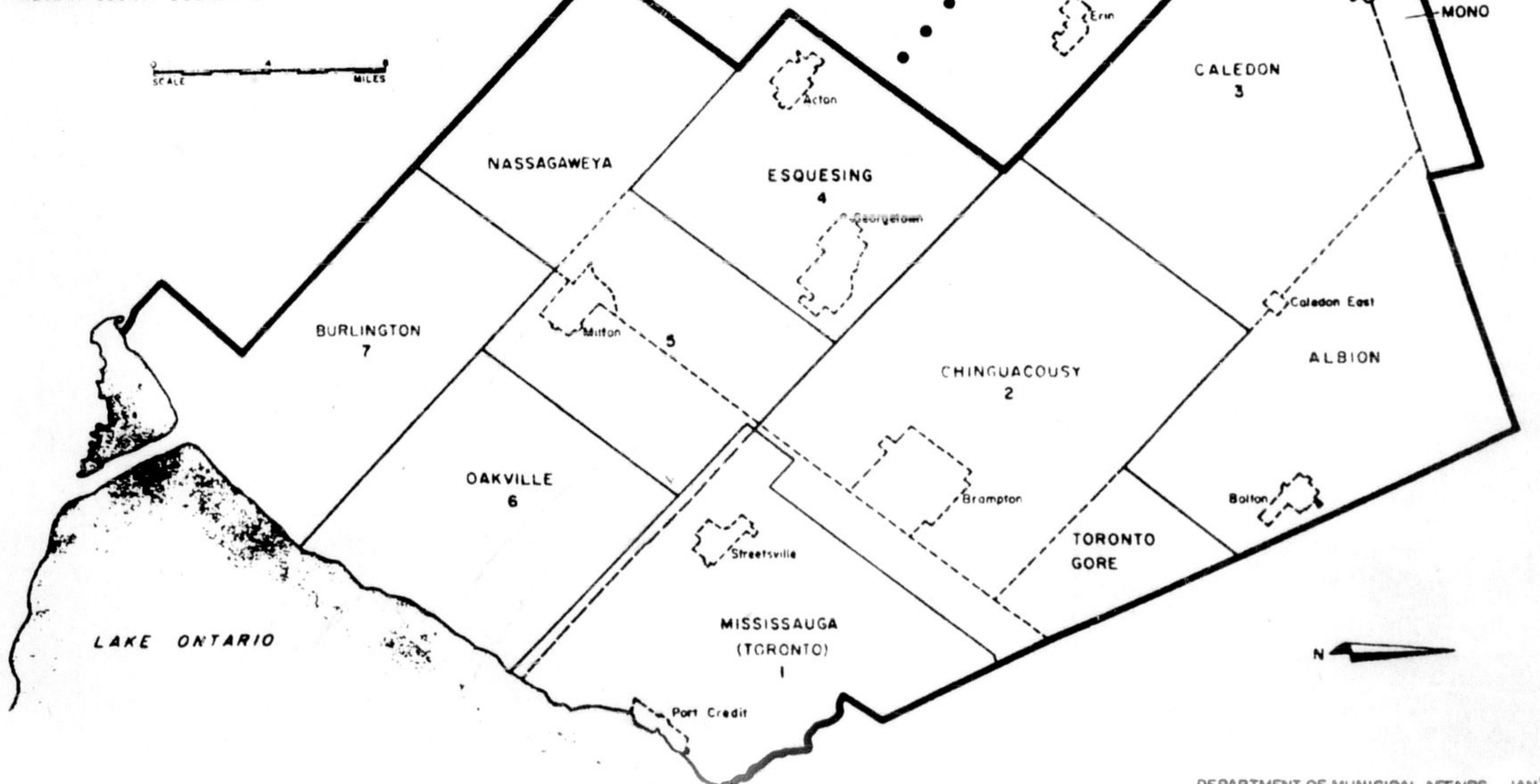
per acre over the entire complex. Possibility of a connecting road to Commercial St. was mentioned.

His proposal was one of four major developments proposed to the planners since the town's annexation of 1,650 additional acres was completed. The current one, along with earlier proposals that would accommodate a total of 4,000 residents, will all be held in abeyance until the town completes studies on its draft plan for future development—the new official plan which is still under wraps.

The property was annexed to Milton on Jan. 1 of this year, from Oakville.

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF PEEL - HALTON

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY BOUNDARY
NEW AREA MUNICIPALITY BOUNDARIES
PRESENT MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES
PRESENT COUNTY BOUNDARIES



DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS JAN '69

The seven area municipalities as defined by Municipal Affairs Minister Darcy McKeough are as follows:
AREA 1—That part of the existing town of Mississauga south of the Derry Road, including the towns of Port Credit and Streetsville; a small section of East Oakville is also included; the 1968 population of this area is estimated at 135,000 and the area would have seven members on the regional council;
AREA 2—The existing municipalities of Chinguacousy, Brampton and Toronto Gore, plus that part of Mississauga north of the Derry Road; the 1968 population of this area is 69,000 and the area would have four seats on the regional council;

AREA 3—The townships of Albion and Caledon and the village of Caledon East; in addition, the town of Orangeville, plus those parts of the three bordering townships that are in the Credit River drainage area; the population would be about 18,000 with one regional representative;
AREA 4—Includes the towns of Georgetown and Acton and part of the township of Esquering; this area would have a population of about 24,000 and would get one representative on the regional council;
AREA 5—Includes the town of Milton and that part of Oakville north of Base Line Road, part of Esquering and that part of the township of Nassagaweya south of County Road 10; this area

has about 12,500 residents and would have one regional representative;

AREA 6—The main part of the present town of Oakville, with a population of about 54,000; this area would have three members of the regional council;

AREA 7—The town of Burlington, if it is included in the Peel-Halton region; the present population is over 79,000 and the area would have four regional representatives.

The new region would have an initial population of close to 400,000. The regional council, including Burlington, would consist of 21 members.