

Build it and they'll come, says regional chair

It doesn't matter how Highway 407 is built, just that it is built quickly, according to Halton council.

"It is critical to us that construction start yesterday," said Halton Chair Joyce Savoline recently. She called a provincial announcement that Ontario is reviewing privatization schemes for Highway 407 "good news" but suggested

timing of the project be included as part of the tender process.

Ms Savoline told members of the planning and public works committee that the Queen Elizabeth Way is "intolerable" and that volumes on Highway 5 and Highway 25 are far past acceptable. She said the solution to these problems lies in the quick construction of Highway 407.

The highway will eventually connect Highway 401 near the Milton-Mississauga border with Highway 403 near Ford Drive in Oakville and provide a link from there to the Highway 403-Queen Elizabeth Way interchange in Burlington.

Ms Savoline said much of the traffic flow on Highway 5 and other north Halton routes is overflow from the Queen

Elizabeth Way.

Some comes from the expansion of the Burlington and Oakville urban areas, which have reached north to Highway 5 in several locations.

The QEW channels 10 lanes of traffic coming from both Mississauga and Hamilton through Halton Region on only six lanes of highway.

Toxic comments

Ms Savoline was outraged by comments attributed to Minister of the Environment Norm Sterling, who said there is nothing wrong with dumping hazardous waste down the sewer.

Mr. Sterling said oil and other toxic substances are best poured into sanitary sewers, where at least they will reach a municipal water treatment plant. Toxins which are simply dumped do not reach any treatment facilities.

Ms Savoline said she was shocked by the apparent lack of understanding from the minister. She said local treatment facilities do not treat wastewater for oil or many other toxins.

"I am appalled, especially when you consider the treatment standards we are required to meet are so high, and yet the minister can make these comments," Ms Savoline said.

Halton Region operates a Household Hazardous Waste collection depot at the Milton landfill site on Highway 25 near Britannia Road.

Plaza problems

Halton staff will look into problems with large trucks stopping on Highway 25 just south of Highway 5 so drivers can top up their caffeine.

The plaza on the southwest corner has its only entrance in the location. Pleas to the provincial government to provide an entrance from Highway 5 fell on deaf ears when the plaza was built, councillors said. Now Halton Region has been given responsibility for the former provincial Highways 5 and 25.

Brent Marshall, commissioner of public works, said the problem was largely an enforcement issue.

Ms Savoline said the trucks can pose a hazard for drivers who must negotiate a slightly crooked intersection if they are southbound on Highway 25. In addition the road is two lanes wide in the plaza area, but that

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is reduced to one lane a little further south.

Milton Councillor Barry Lee concurred with the hazards of the situation. He said he had encountered a problem on his way to the Halton administration building for the public works meeting.

Nosal likes program

Healthy Babies, Health Children is perhaps the most important program delivered by Halton's public health department, according to Medical Officer of Health Dr. Bob Nosal.

The program, funded by the province, screens all births in Halton, to determine which families might be "overburdened or at risk." Information and services are provided to those families identified.

"The 4,500 live births in Halton each year all get a universal screening," said Dr. Nosal. "Kids in need will be referred to appropriate services."

In depth assessments are conducted by a public health nurse with the consent of families involved. The health department has had all Halton hospitals sign on to an initial screening program and is trying to enlist local physicians, prenatal instructors and midwives.

According to Dr. Nosal's report the goal of the program is to supply services early to at-risk children or families in order to save on potential social costs later in life.

"If there is a weak point it is the funding for more intensive home visits is not available. There is only enough money for 15 home visits (for those most in need) and there should be 150 home visits," said Dr. Nosal.

Another health project

Regional council gave its stamp of approval to Choices 4

• see REPORT on page 26

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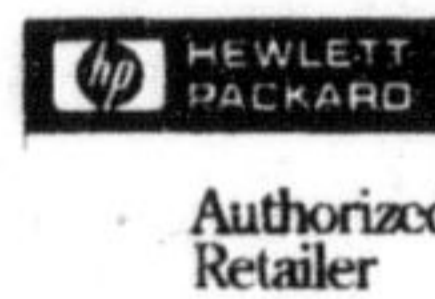
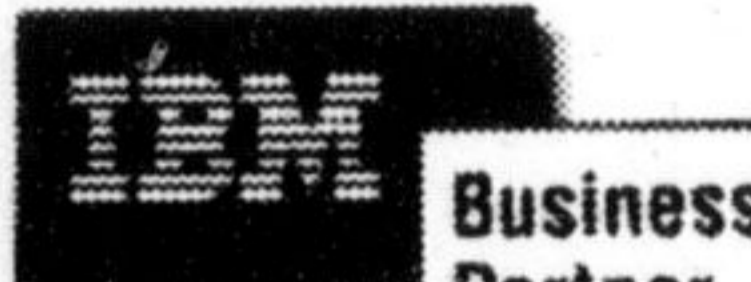
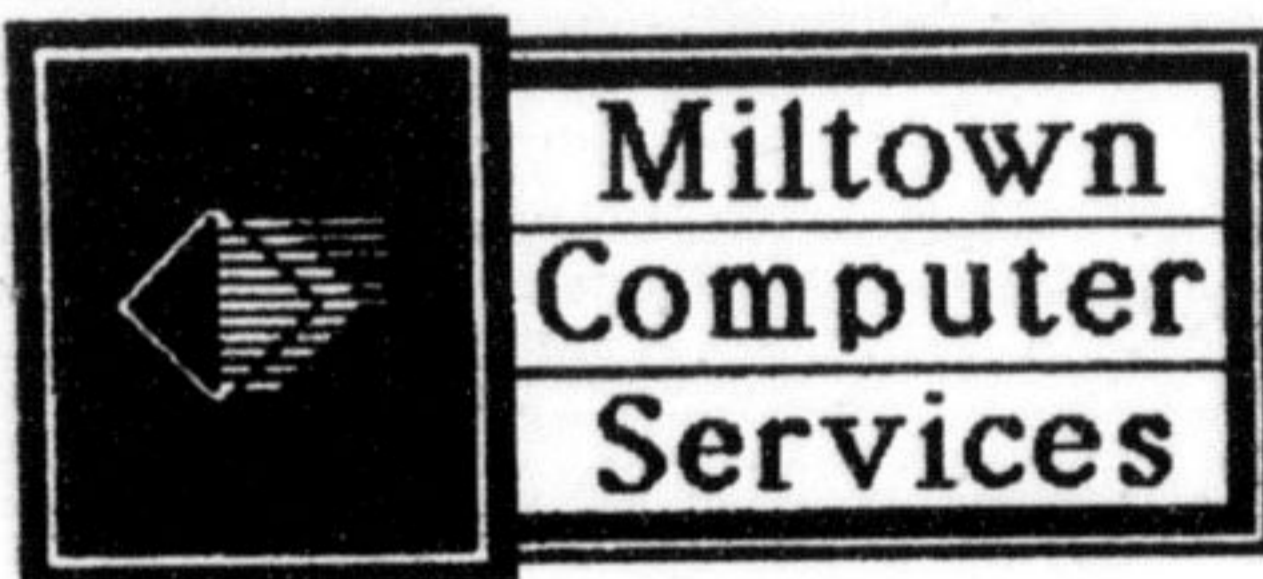
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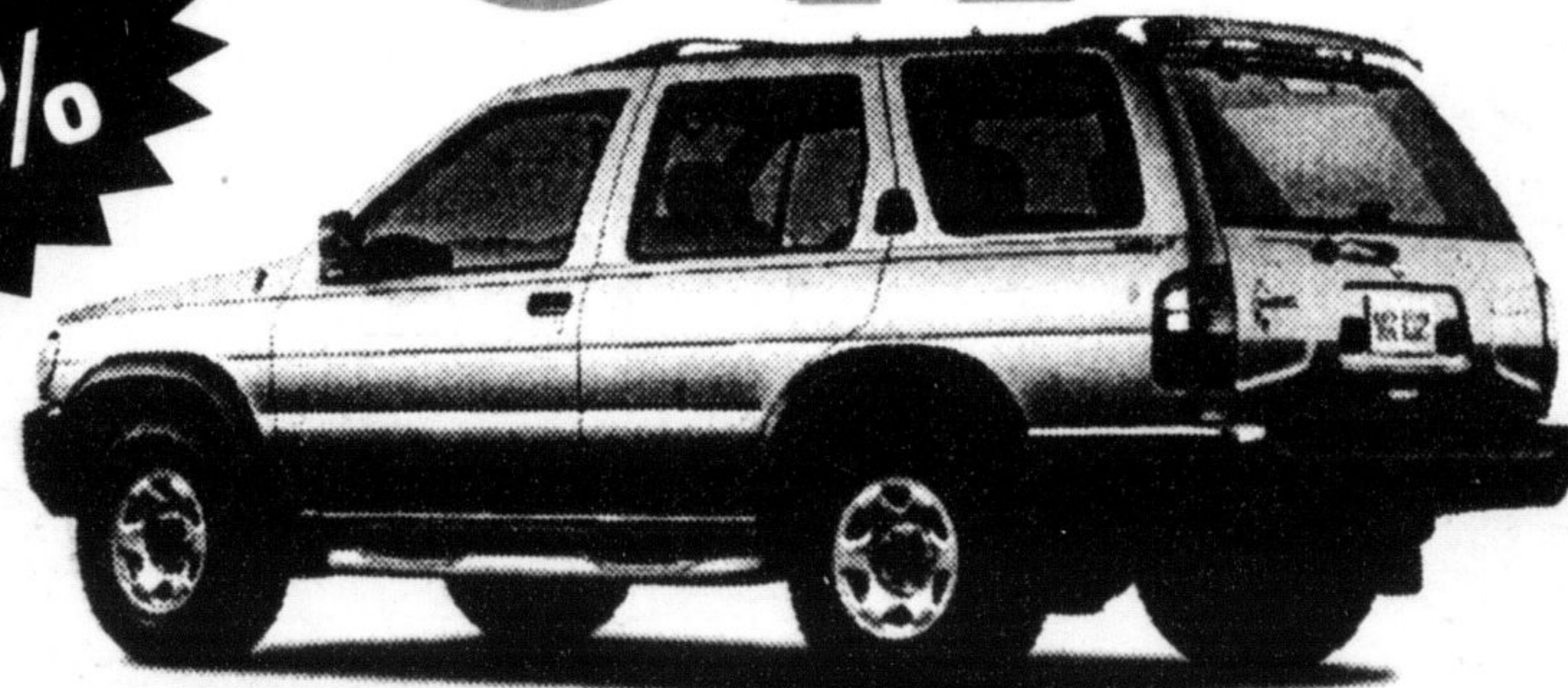
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