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# Weekend Champion



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## Clearer picture not a pretty one

By **IRENE GENTLE**  
*Special to the Champion*

The shifting sands of provincial downloading just firmed up a little, but so far the price of stability is \$2 million more than Halton Region expected.

New figures released Tuesday at regional council hike the downloading burden to \$21.6 million for Halton, about \$1.9 million higher than previously estimated.

Oddly enough a revised social assistance plan and newly assessed pooling costs had actually lowered the regional tab by \$2.3 million.

What should have been a boon for Halton turns to a bust when significantly lowered community re-investment transitional funds are calculated in.

Those grants are down \$6 million from December, 1997 figures.

For the taxpayers that works out to a half per cent tax increase, contributing to a total tax hit of 4.8 per cent more over last year. For the owner of a \$185,000 home that means an extra \$124 in property taxes for 1998.

What's more, the guessing game continues with final figures still to be released.

Meanwhile the draft legislation that should grow up to be the Greater Toronto Services Board (GTSB) came under the microscope of regional council Tuesday.

In its proposed form the 28-member GTSB would coordinate services in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and have financial control over GO Transit.

The present draft legislation held several areas of concern for Halton including:

- Representation — by the proposed formula Halton would have two seats on the board while Toronto would nab a whopping 14. Council suggested parity, rather than popular, representation instead. Halton's plan would give each municipality five seats.

- The landfill site on Highway 25 — despite repeated verbal assurances that the dump will not be touched, the issue is skipped entirely in the latest draft. Halton wants dump protection written into the GTSB.

There was also concern about the powers of the GTSB. While at present the board is merely a coordinating body, councillors generally fear it has the potential to evolve into another level of government.

"The concern is that the GTSB may



"I haven't heard anything I could take to the bank. I don't put much faith in verbal assurances."  
 .....  
**GORD KRANTZ**

have too much power to justify its existence," said Oakville Councillor Keith  
 • see **NEW** on page 28



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

## Beautifying the Beer Store

Daffodils arrived Wednesday at The Beer Store, to be kept cool until this weekend when they'll be sold around town in support of Cancer Month. Here Beer Store employee Jason Cannons shows off some of the spring flowers.

### NEWSLINES

#### Shots fired

Police are looking for two youths in an older model black or dark blue Camaro after four gunshots were fired from a passing car.

A pedestrian witnessed the incident as he was walking eastbound on Laurier Avenue March 26, said Det. Sgt. Jackie Gordon of Halton Regional Police.

No one was hurt. Police believe the weapon was a pellet gun, Det. Sgt. Gordon said.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Milton detectives at 878-5511, ext. 2415.

#### MOUNTAINVIEW VETERINARY SERVICES

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