

# Differences surface over 'big picture' finance idea

By IRENE GENTLE  
The Champion

Burlington regional Councillor John Taylor is calling for a financial vision for Halton, but Oakville colleague Stephen Sparling isn't convinced that the vision won't turn into a nightmare.

Soaring growth costs, combined with downloading expenses, need to be looked at in one big package, said Mr. Taylor at a recent planning and public works budget committee meeting.

"We need a new financial plan, a new financial vision to deal with growth needs," he said.

Mr. Taylor said he will be calling for a new financial blueprint to be brought to the table at the 2000 budget meetings.

There's no need to draw up a whole new financial map, countered Mr. Sparling.

"I've yet to be convinced on supporting that," he said. "I've got a lot of confidence in our financial staff. I don't want to approve something that sends the message that everything is in jeopardy."

The debate continued at a recent joint meeting with all three regional committees.

That meeting also contained

information on the Halton Urban Structure Plan (HUSP).

HUSP was created to plan for growth in the region, with an emphasis on Milton and north Oakville.

A staff report issued at the meeting concluded that Halton should come out ahead in costs as long as development charges continue to be used to finance new growth.

Talk of costs associated with HUSP as well as downloading, now known as local services realignment (LSR), prompted Mr. Taylor to renew his call for a big picture financial plan at that meeting.

He called upon the Region's administration and finance committee, of which he is chair, to take a stand on the issue.

## Clarification

A recent robbery story that included information about police executing a search warrant at 425 Ontario St. may have caused some confusion.

Two addresses of 425 Ontario St. exist on the roadway — 425 Ontario St. North and 425 Ontario St. South.

The residence where the search warrant was conducted was on Ontario Street South.

The Canadian Champion apologizes for any inconvenience or embarrassment.

mittee, of which he is chair, to take a stand on the issue.

"What we need is a new financial plan for HUSP, non-HUSP and LSR. We need it all in one financial package. I hope the (administrative and finance) committee will take a leadership role in this."

Looking at that big a picture could be too overwhelming for councillors, cautioned Mr. Sparling.

"Councillor Taylor was not here during the last council term," he said. "We decided at the time that the council was not comfortable approving a package in the \$500 million range."

Then, council voted to take issues one step at a time, instead of wading through one mega-approval, said Mr. Sparling.

"We spent three years grappling with the entire package and then we rejected it," he said. "I think it's important to talk about where we have come from. That was the history."

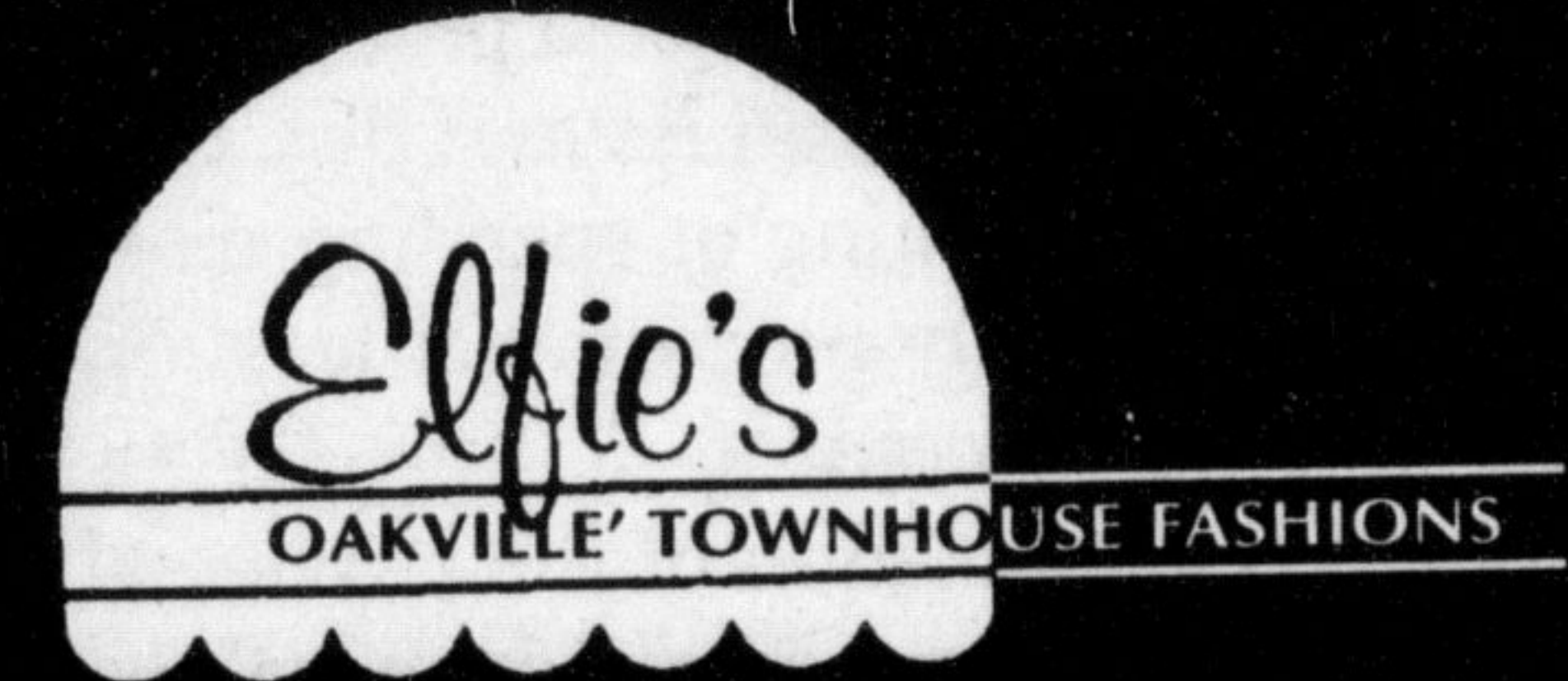
The Region is going to have to find some way to deal with the dollar figures associated with growth, said Oakville Mayor Ann Mulvale.

"We are a region that is being pressured to grow. Somehow, we've got to deal with those numbers. It's still sobering when you look at those numbers but there are real opportunities out there."

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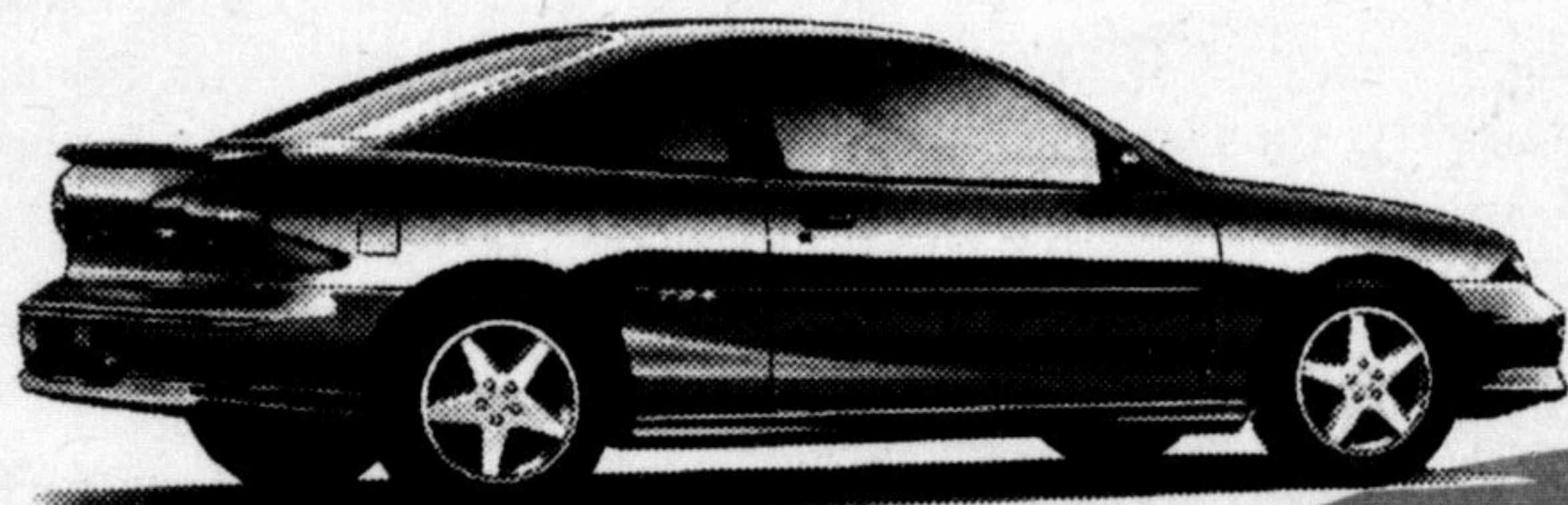
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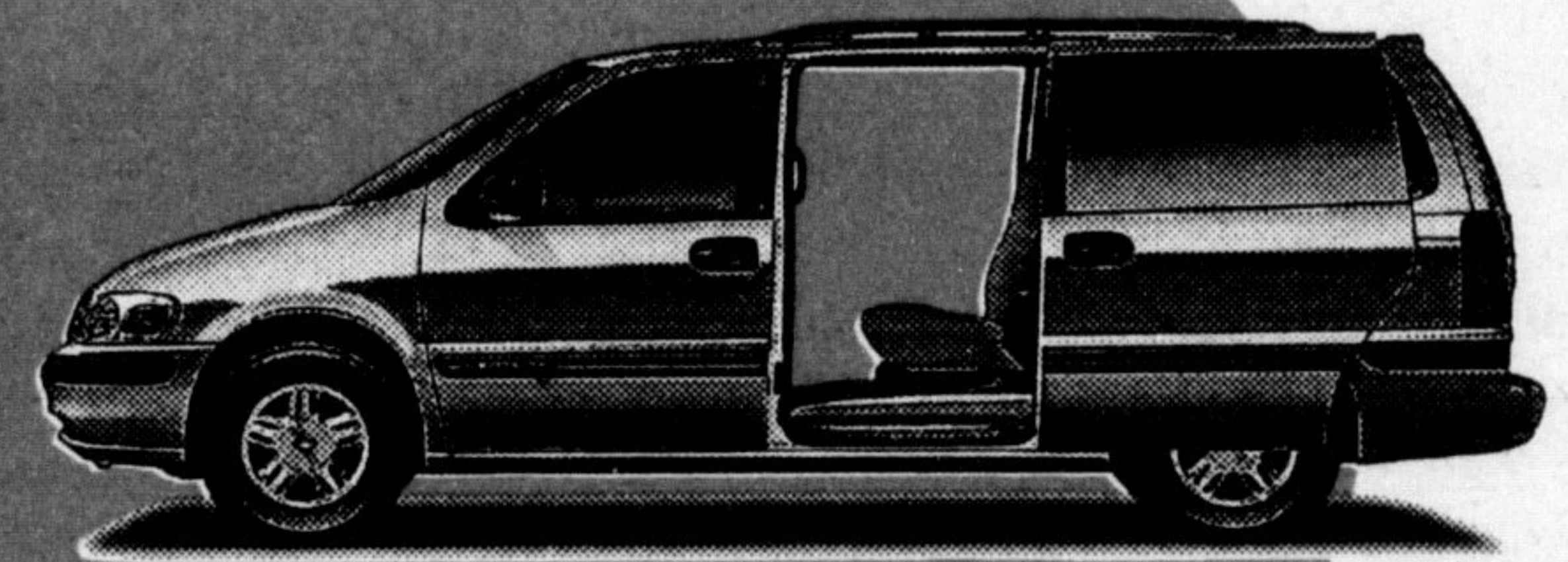
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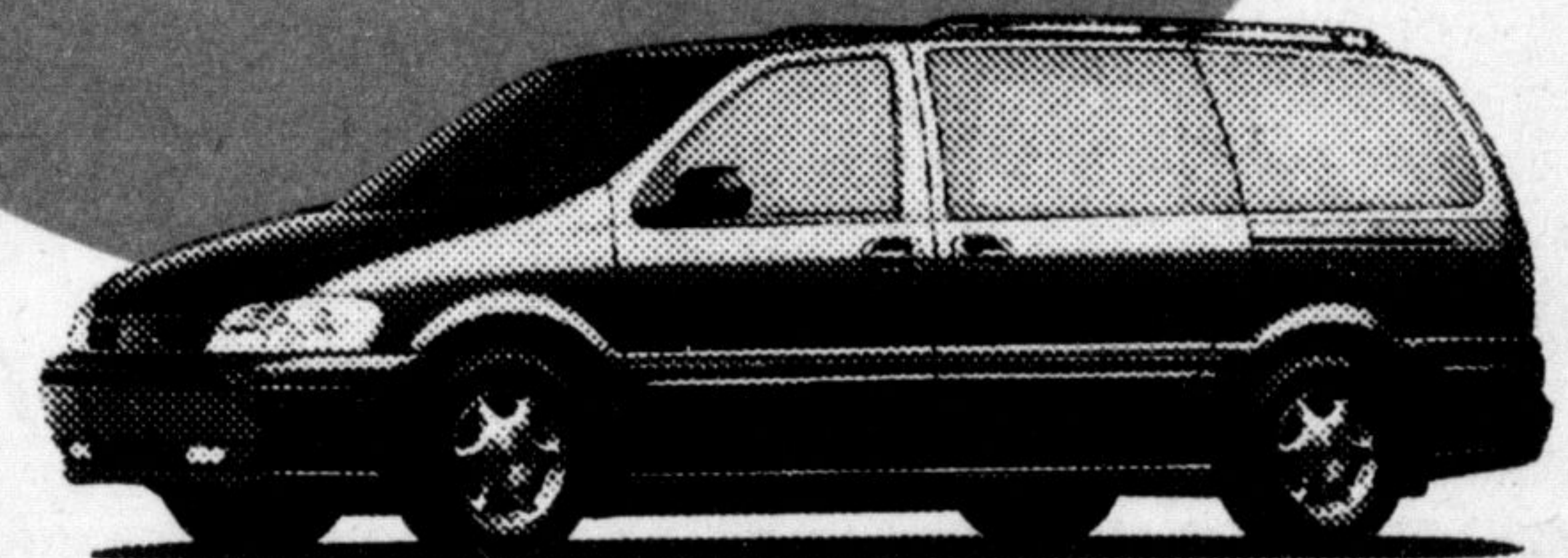


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