

Decision time for schools: Gardiner

By DENNIS SMITH
Special to The Champion

Halton's public school chair agrees with a provincial report urging the board to resolve its school accommodation situation.

"As long as there is excess student space, there will be no funding for new schools," said Ethel Gardiner. "Growth in specific areas of Halton has been extensive and we need to make tough decisions on accommodation issues."



Ethel Gardiner

An Education Improvement Commission review has urged the Halton District School Board to move quickly to address the student accommodation issue.

The board's schools have about 5,000 excess student spaces, which must be eliminated before receiving funding for new facilities. After months of meetings and debate, motions to close three elementary schools were defeated last April on a tie vote.

"The Halton board faces a major challenge in terms of student accommodation," said Ann Vanstone, chair of the EIC review team. "We feel this issue is almost paralysing the board and its community and is preventing the board from moving forward in many areas of its operations."

Ms Gardiner said accommodation has been an ongoing issue for the board, which has considered closing schools twice during the last few years.

The board's policy for considering school accommodation issues has been frozen until next June.

However, an interim policy was to be proposed for the October 6 board meeting. Burlington trustee David Abbott made the recommendation in an effort to close Fairfield Public School in Aldershot by next June.

He said maintaining good programming is difficult at the school, because it has 68 students spread over Grades 1 to 5, with two grades sharing each classroom.

Fairfield supporters have maintained the closure threats have hurt the school, and its enrolment will increase when new housing developments in the area comes on stream.

Although it urged the board to get moving on its accommodation situation, the review commission praised it for making good progress in restructuring its organization.

"The students we met with were proud of their board and they felt little impact in the classroom from the restructuring process," said Ms Vanstone.

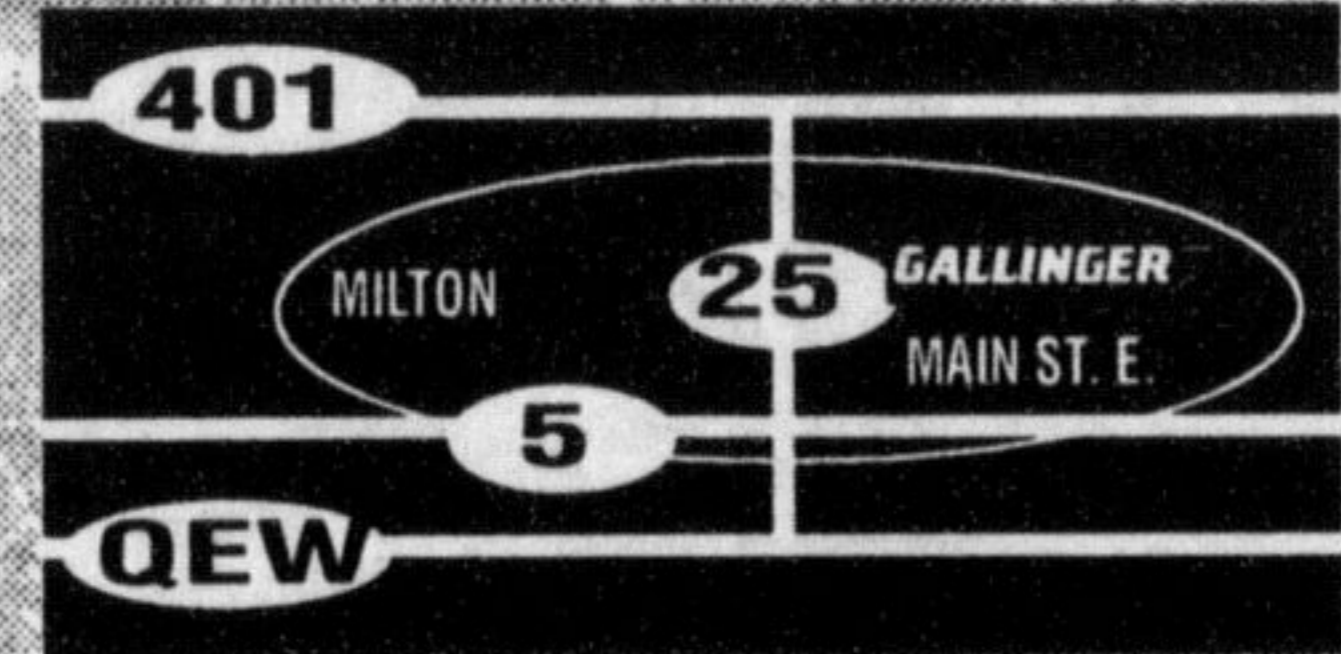
Other EIC recommendations for the board include:

- Trustees should move toward a new role emphasizing policy governance.
- Explore cost savings for new facilities.
- Consider having an integrated transportation department with the Halton Catholic District School Board.
- Involve all groups in board planning and decision-making processes.

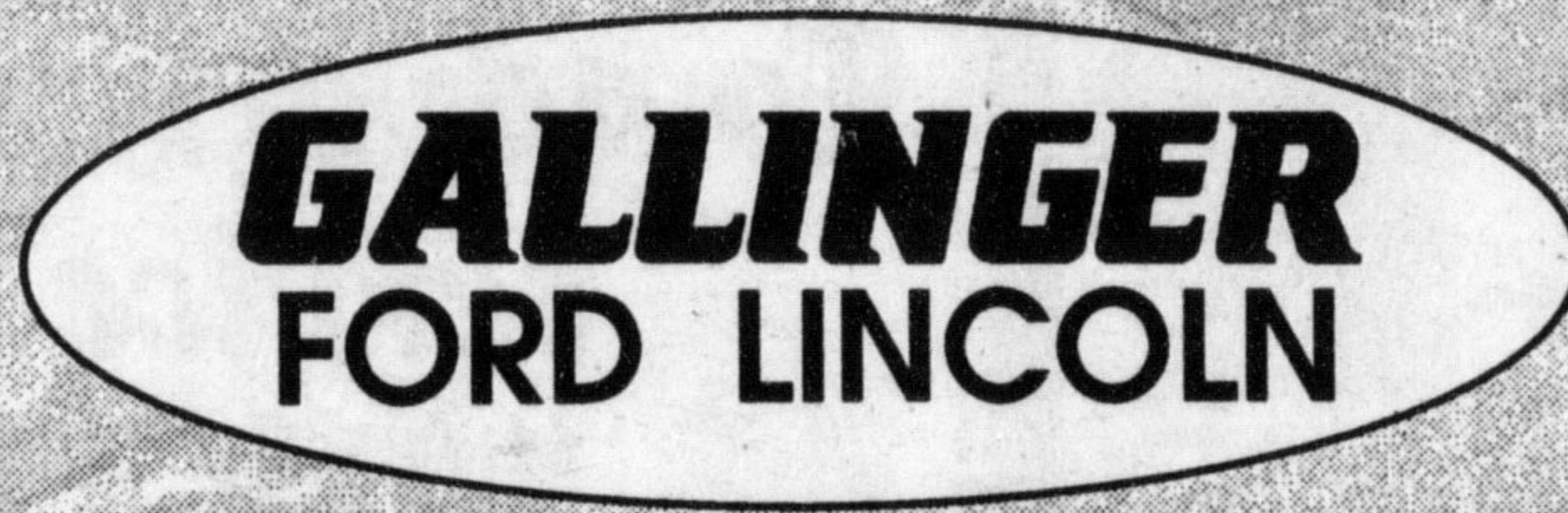
• see RAPID on page 18

A TRADITION OF VALUE AND TRUST!

Get up and go to...



655 MAIN ST. E. MILTON



A Tradition of Value & Trust since 1967

(905) 875-FORD



Ford Motor Company of Canada Limited

expect more

the new ford focus se sedan



European Car Of The Year 1999



the standards have just been raised

\$229*

per month

36 month lease

\$2,195 down payment plus \$700 freight and \$275 security deposit

we have the right lease payment for you
based on 6.9% over 36 months

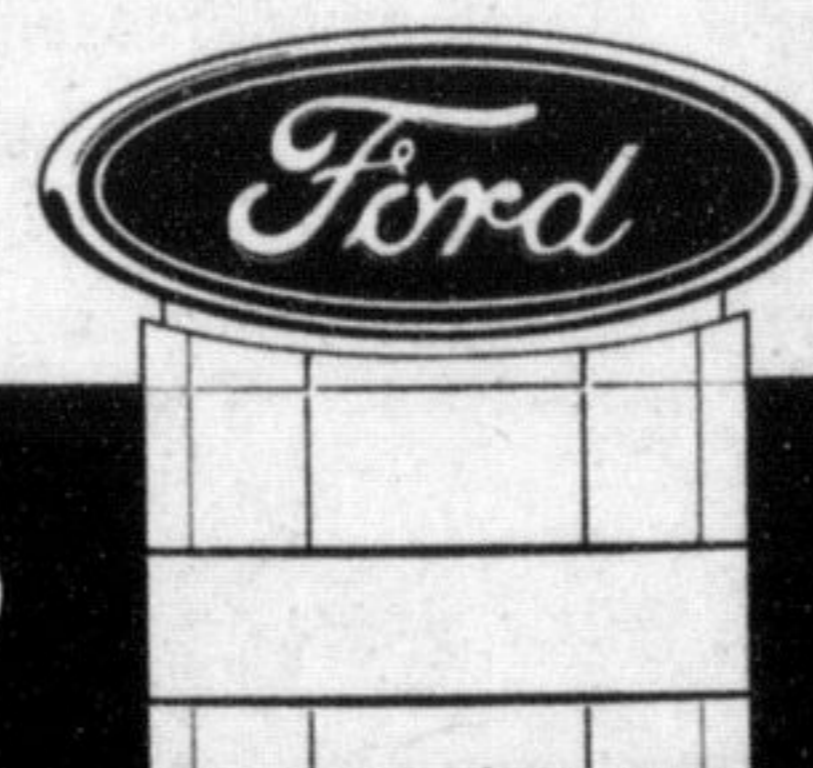
2000 focus se monthly payment	down payment or equivalent trade	security deposit	freight	total due on signing
\$229	\$2,195	\$275	\$700	\$3,399
\$266	\$995	\$325	\$700	\$2,286
\$297	\$0	\$350	\$700	\$1,347

first month's payment required - \$0.08/km over 60,000 km
\$10,101.78 optional buyback - applicable taxes, licence, insurance, pdi and administration fees extra.

see for yourself

Features	Focus se sedan	Honda Civic Sedan SE
Engine	2.0L SPI SOHC I-4	1.6L SOHC I-4
Horsepower	110	106
Torque (lb. ft.)	125	103
Automatic Transmission	Included	Included
Air Conditioning	Standard	Standard
Remote Keyless Entry	Standard	Standard
Power Door Locks	Standard	Standard
60/40 Split Folding Rear Seats	Standard	Standard
Dash Mounted Trunk Release	Standard	Not Available
Driver's Seat Height Adjust	Standard	Not Available
Anti-Theft Engine Immobilizer	Standard	Not Available
Stainless Steel Exhaust	Standard	Not Available
Adjustable Steering Column	Optional	Standard
Cargo Volume (L)†	365	338
Legroom (front/rear - mm)	1095/955	1085/865

This chart is only a sample of the features available for each vehicle. Please see respective manufacturer's brochure for a complete list of features.



YOUR ONTARIO

FORD DEALERS.

www.ford.ca/offers

WISER BUYERS READ THE LEGAL COPY: *Lease a new 2000 Focus SE Sedan, with automatic from Ford Credit to qualified retail lessees, on approved credit. Total lease obligation is \$10,439/\$10,571/\$10,692. Dealer may lease for less. Some conditions apply. Offers may change without notice. Limited time offers. See dealer for details. The seven organizing publications of the European "Car of the Year 1999" award are: vi bilägare, am, autocar, l'automobile magazine, autopista, stern, autovisie. †Rear seat up; to lower window. Comparison based on 2000 Honda Civic SE (MSRP \$17,900, including automatic transmission) using manufacturer published information (brochure).