

Region seeks more control in social housing programs

By RICHARD VIVIAN
The Champion

Halton Region is looking for more discretion on how it operates its social housing programs.

A series of Regional staff-recommended changes to the Social Housing Reform Act (2000) received a nod from the Halton health and social services committee last Tuesday.

The recommendations came on the heels of a request from the Province for suggestions on policy reform.

"There's a number of areas where we think there's flaws in the regulations, where there needs to be a fix to make it easier to manage the program," Halton's Director of Housing Rob Cressman told the committee.

The key issue in the suggested policy reform deals with providing municipal services managers — in this case the Region — more discretionary power.

If ultimately adopted by the Province, the recommendation would see service managers given more flexibility over rent-geared-to-income (RGI) applications and some wiggle room in meeting local occupancy standards for rental units.

Further discretion would also allow service managers to provide RGI subsidies in emergency situations without an individual going to the bottom of the waiting list.

"These regulations (existing policy) are very specific in nature and leave little room for interpretation by service managers or social housing providers," states the Regional staff report to the committee.

"The overarching theme of the proposed amendments to the regulations is to actualize the principle of local desecration to ensure the social housing program is administered in a fair, cost effective and efficient manner."

Suggested policy revisions would further see the need for minors to sign RGI leases eliminated and allow for the selection of a single set of program requirements where there is now two.

Because of Halton's amalgamation of local housing corporations and municipal non-profit housing, there are currently two sets of program requirements in place for the provision of subsidies.

If approved by regional council tomorrow, the recommended changes to the act will be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for consideration.

Study to wrap up in early 2003

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area and there isn't any transportation to the GO Station," a resident commented. "Sometimes I have to wait 50 minutes at the station for a five-minute cab ride."

John Bedell, executive director of Community Living North Halton, said people with disabilities rely on public transportation to get around town.

"For persons with a disability, be it intellectual or physical, they have to have access to what we take for

granted. With the Dial-A-Bus service, you have to call on the day you want to go somewhere. You can't plan in advance what you want to do. Life doesn't stop in the evenings and weekends."

Residents also voiced complaints regarding the lack of transportation to the high schools and Milton District Hospital.

The study is expected to wrap up in January followed by a phasing-in strategy for services as population increases.



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<p>2001 CADILLAC SEVILLE SLS</p>  <p>V8, pw, pl, tilt, cruise, chrome, htd leather seats, rear park aid service buy back St#2119</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em;">\$47,862.</p>	<p>1999 GMC SUBURBAN</p>  <p>V8, pw, pl, tilt, crse, leather, heated seats, loaded. 1 owner. St#128099A</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em;">\$29,826.</p>	<p>1996 DODGE RAM P/U REG CAB</p>  <p>1 tonne dually diesel, pw, pl, loaded. St#113010A</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em;">\$25,982.</p>

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<p>1999 Pontiac Grand Prix GT</p> <p>4dr, auto, air, v6, pw, pl, tilt, cruise, leather, htd, cd, pseat loaded #2043</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em;">\$19,984.</p>	<p>2001 Chev Malibu</p> <p>4dr, auto, air, pw, pl, tilt, cruise, loaded #P1971</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em;">\$16,942.</p>	<p>2000 Pontiac Grand Prix GT</p> <p>4dr, auto, v6, air, pw, pl, tilt, cruise, moonroof, loaded cloth #P2098A</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em;">\$20,986.</p>	<p>2000 Buick LeSabre Custom</p> <p>4dr, v6, auto, air, pw, pl, tilt, cruise, loaded #P2051</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em;">\$19,976.</p>
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<p>1999 Pontiac Grand Prix GTP</p> <p>4dr, auto, air, pw, pl, tilt, cruise, leather, htd roof, cass #P2041</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em;">\$19,984.</p>	<p>2000 Lincoln Continental</p> <p>4dr, auto, pw, pl, tilt, leather, loaded. #320885A</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em;">\$28,872.</p>	<p>1999 Buick Park Ave</p> <p>4dr, auto, air, pw, pl, tilt, cruise, leather, loaded. #P2056</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em;">\$22,985.</p>	<p>1999 Olds Intrigue GL</p> <p>4dr, v6, auto, pw, pl, tilt, leather, moonroof #246618A</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em;">\$16,987.</p>
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