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Development charges to rise, transportation plan passes

By MELANIE HENNESSEY
The Champion

By the end of August, Halton will be home to some of the highest development charges in the province.

Regional council passed its updated roads and general services development charge bylaw Wednesday that will come into effect August 31, along with a discount policy for developments that are not residential or retail.

The new fee, in addition to the water, wastewater and GO Transit charges already in effect, takes the current residential development charge from \$7,860 to \$10,649 and from \$15,191 to \$17,714 in Halton Urban Structure Plan (HUSP) areas in Milton and north Oakville.

For non-residential, the fees will go from \$5.74 per square foot to \$8.06 per square foot and from \$5.98 to \$9.41 in the Milton HUSP and \$8.66 in the north Oakville HUSP.

The discount, targeted at industrial companies, means they will get 60 per cent off the roads portion

of the development charge, being phased to 40 per cent by 2008, and a 25 per cent discount on the general portion of the fee, which will be phased to zero by 2008.

Regional and Oakville Councillor Allan Elgar told council he wasn't in favour of the discount clause. "I feel everybody has to pay their fair share. I do not support discounts at all."

It's forecasted that development charges will pay for 82 per cent of growth-related capital costs from now until 2008. The remaining 18 per cent has been deemed for regional financing, which means each household will have to pay \$53.60, based on an average \$250,000 property assessment, to help cover the shortfall.

Transportation plan okayed

The development charges were created in conjunction with the Halton Transportation Master Plan (HTMP), which was also approved by council Wednesday.

The plan outlines what has to be done to meet travel demand on

local roads over the next two decades, while keeping the impact on the environment minimal.

It identifies which roads need to be upgraded and paid for by development charges, which is estimated to cost \$804 million from now until 2021. Of that, \$644 million needs to be recovered from development charges for growth, with the balance being paid for by taxes and other sources, such as reserves.

Other key points in the HTMP include promoting carpooling and public transit, creating outside lanes for bicyclists on new or rebuilt urban arterial roads, increasing traffic signal co-ordination and providing transit signal priorities and queue jump lanes on regional roads. "What's important to note is that the plan is not static. As technology evolves and new ideas and opportunities arise, the plan will be enhanced through continued five-year reviews," said Regional Chair Joyce Savoline.

Melanie Hennessey can be reached at mhennessy@milton-canadianchampion.com.

Prime minister in Milton today

Prime Minister Paul Martin will make a stop in Milton on his campaign trail today. Mr. Martin will be at Halton Liberal candidate Gary

Carr's office at 2:30 p.m.

The local campaign headquarters are located at 357 Main St. E.

HOW WE'RE MAKING THINGS RIGHT AFTER OUR RECENT PROCESSING DISRUPTION.

We're glad to say that normal business has resumed at RBC. Here are answers to the questions you're asking.

ARE MOST CHARGES REVERSED AUTOMATICALLY?

Yes. On June 8, we began to automatically reverse, wherever possible, banking service charges, fees and overdraft interest that our RBC clients may have been charged as a result of our recent processing disruption. The vast majority of necessary adjustments will likely be completed by June 30. After June 30, if you see a charge due to the processing disruption that has not been corrected, please bring it to our attention. Contact your branch, business centre or call **1-800-ROYAL 1-1 (1-800-769-2511)**. Other financial institutions are following similar procedures for their clients. If you think you've been affected, please contact your financial institution.

I INCURRED OTHER COSTS. WILL I BE REIMBURSED?

We will provide reimbursement for substantiated costs and losses directly resulting from the processing disruption.

Here's the process: starting June 21, 2004, clients of RBC and clients of other financial institutions can obtain a Claim Form from any RBC Royal Bank branch, business centre or by calling **1-800-ROYAL 1-1 (1-800-769-2511)**. A Claim Form can also be downloaded in PDF format from www.rbc.com/clientnews

Claim Forms for up to \$100 with supporting documentation delivered by RBC clients to their branch will be processed by the branch. Our employees will provide you with any assistance you require in submitting your claim.

All other completed Claim Forms and supporting documentation can be returned to any RBC Royal Bank branch or business centre for forwarding or can be mailed directly to:

RBC Processing Service Disruption: Redress and Claims Process
Claims Administrator
P. O. Box 517
Waterloo, Ontario
N2J 4A9

To ensure that you have adequate time to assemble the required information, **the deadline for submitting claims is September 30, 2004.**

Again, we at RBC Financial Group express our appreciation for your patience and understanding throughout the disruption. And we acknowledge the efforts of our employees and the staff of other financial institutions who continue to work so hard to make things right.

