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Weekend Weekend Weekend



FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2005 \$1.00 (GST included) 44 PAGES "Using Communication to Build Better Communities"

## Centre estimated to save \$20 million

By MELANIE HENNESSEY

The Champion

Local taxpayers could see millions of dollars in savings if the Region, its police service and both local school boards decide to bring their offices together into a proposed joint campus.

The potential facility, detailed at Halton's administration and planning committee meeting Wednesday, would be approximately 540,000 square feet located at the Region's current site on Bronte Road in Oakville.

It's estimated that it would cost about \$127 million, but would also result in an overall savings of more than \$20 million for taxpayers, versus how much it would cost if each of the four pursued individual buildings.

The campus would include four distinct areas of office space for the Region, Halton Regional Police, Halton Catholic District School Board and the Halton District School Board, housing about 1,900 staff.

"It's basically an extension of our existing Halton Regional campus," said Halton Commissioner of Corporate Services and Regional Treasurer Jane MacCaskill.

The site would also include an outdoor community square and a multi-services facility linked to the office space that would house amenities to be shared by the four, such as a joint board/council chambers, cafeteria, daycare service, support services or maybe even a Tim Hortons.

"There's been lots of suggestion Tim

Hortons might be welcome," said Ms MacCaskill.

She went over the findings of a business case analysis undertaken on the proposal for the committee. She said it found that all four partners involved in the project will require additional space within the next few years.

"It has been determined that the Halton Regional Campus proposal best meets objectives related to increased public accessibility to government services, improved service integration and delivery and financial cost efficiencies," she said.

"The Halton Regional Campus would provide a one-stop shop for the services delivered by the four organizations."

The study also identified opportunities to partner with the provincial and federal governments on various initiatives, such as creating a centralized Halton courthouse on the campus.

Ms MacCaskill noted the design of the campus would include a number of measures to communicate the individual identity of each organization, such as through

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## Lone horse

A horse grazes in the pasture at Look Ahead Stables in west Milton with the Niagara Escarpment ablaze in a cavalcade of colour.

Photo by GRAHAM PAINE



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