

# Regional councillors approve solid waste strategy

Initiatives that'll increase the Halton landfill's life expectancy by several years can finally be put into action now that regional council has endorsed the 2006-10 Solid Waste Management Strategy.

The plan, approved by council Wednesday, has a goal of increasing Halton's waste diversion rate from 42.6 to about 60 per cent, which is expected to translate into an additional six to eight years for the landfill beyond its current capacity date of 2023.

To reach the target, the strategy's 12 key components will have to be put in place. This includes implementing a Region-wide GreenCart compost pickup program, enhancing electronics recycling, expanding what can be put in Blue Boxes and investigating technologies that convert waste into

energy.

Achieving the higher waste diversion rate is anticipated to increase annual diversion program operating costs from the current \$21.7 million to \$28.5 million.

Beyond 2010, the Region plans to consider things like using new waste processing technologies and implementing a 'user pay' waste collection system with bag limits.

A few councillors shared their praise and concerns about the strategy at Wednesday's meeting.

Burlington Councillor Jack Dennison said while it's a good report, he noted he thinks there are "a lot of things we aren't doing that I think we need to be doing," such as bringing the user pay system on board now.

Meanwhile, fellow Burlington Councillor John Taylor

said he would support the strategy on the understanding that the Region-wide GreenCart program won't be put in place until council has all information on its alternatives.

Staff is expected to report back to council with an evaluation between the GreenCart program and alternatives next spring.

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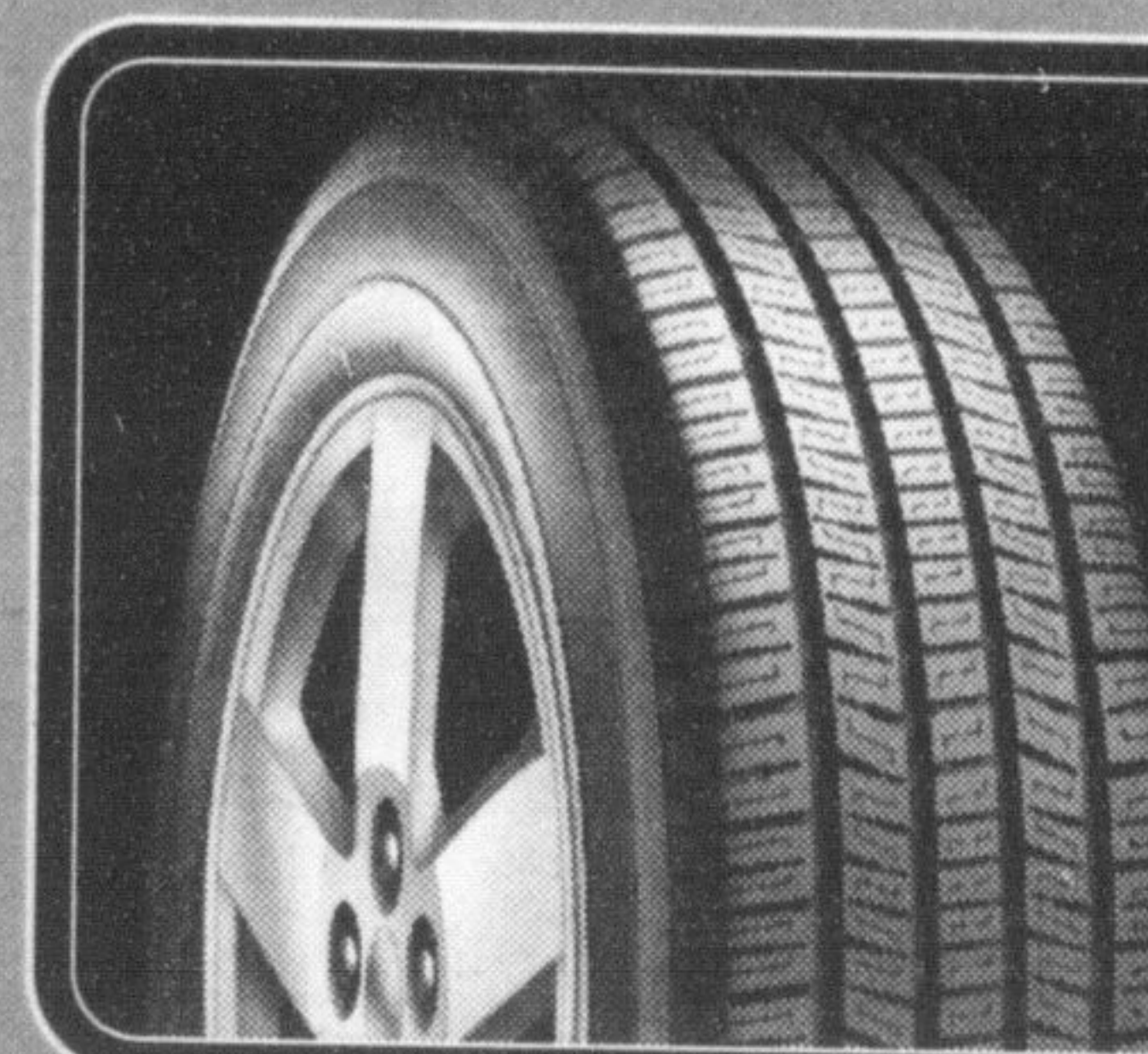
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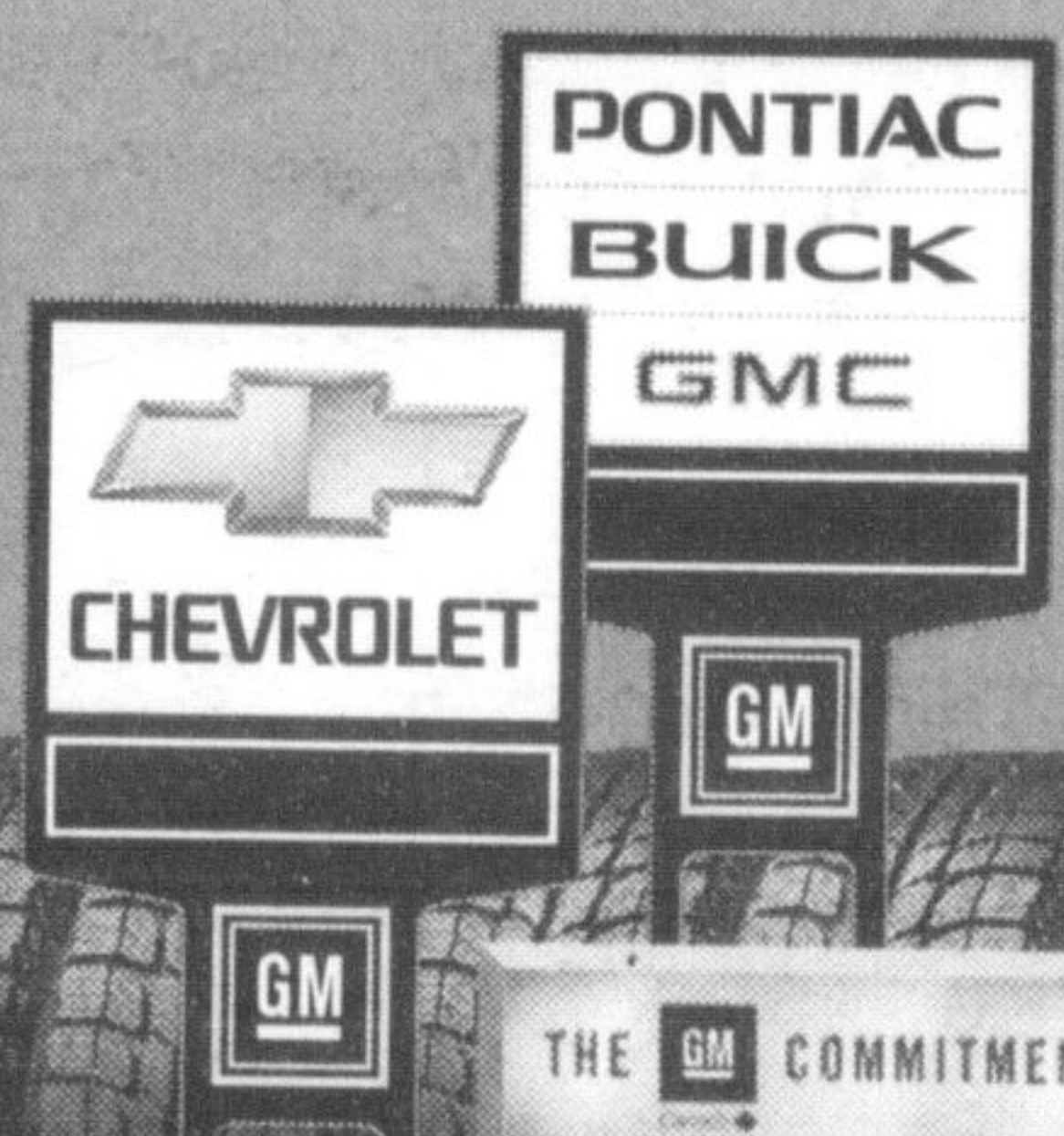
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