

# Study looking at Halton land development issues

By Melanie Cummings  
SPECIAL TO THE CHAMPION

Hands off. Don't touch. Leave as is. A \$2.5 million study is underway to determine the 'no-go' zones of the region. It's formally called the Durable Halton Plan and right now residents are being asked to list the areas that are forbidden to develop. Over the next 25 years, Halton must make room for twice as many residents, according to the Ontario government. Currently about 438,000 people live across the 232,000 acres that comprise the region. But considering there are 55,000 residents in Milton, only 35 of them showed up for the public input part of the process held last week at Hugh Foster Hall.

Three similar meetings have already been held in Oakville, Halton Hills and Burlington throughout June.

"This plan is critical for the future of Halton," said Jane Clohecy, the Region's director of planning and transportation services. "Public participation is imperative."

To that end, those who did attend suggested the study team solicit input from seniors groups, school boards, church and ethnic groups and rural residents.

But as much as public opinion is currently being sought, that's as far as residents are represented in the study. Currently there are no members of the public on the study team or involved in any decision-making process.

And that doesn't sit well with Michael Grimwood of Campbellville.

"There are a number of people who have

emotional ties to Halton without political or employment pressures to weigh on them," he said.

Right now, there are more questions than answers at this initial stage of the three-year study. The total price tag for the report is expected to reach \$6 million.

Some of the questions being asked are: What is the role for agriculture in the region, how much new development should be allowed, what will downtown Milton, Burlington, Oakville and Halton Hills look like as a result and how will the public expenses that come along with growth be paid?

Already the provincial government has deemed half of the land in Halton untouchable green space.

Specifically this points to the Niagara

Escarpment and the Lake Ontario and Burlington Bay shorelines.

Similarly, streams and valley systems, wetlands and other sensitive areas, water sources, farms, countryside, forested areas and other open spaces are considered community priorities for preservation.

When the study is completed in 2009, councillors will have the final say.

In any scenario, Ward 1 Councillor Brian Penman said he hopes consultants will learn from the past by ensuring infrastructures are already in place ahead of rapid development.

Residents are invited to wade in with their views about the Durable Halton Plan by calling (905) 825-6000, ext. 7214, or by logging on to [www.halton.ca/DurableHalton](http://www.halton.ca/DurableHalton).

## Budget come back to council in July

• from TAXES on page A1

Rural Miltonian Gary Ellis delivered a concise message to councillors — "No more tax increases."

He went on to offer suggestions as to how council could achieve that next year, such as by getting out of the fitness centre business, referring to the Milton Leisure Centre.

He also put forward tips to improve the budget process, which residents said was too quick last year.

"There must be sufficient time in the schedule for councillors and the public to review and discuss the data before budget meetings," he said, noting the minimum time period

should be two weeks, but a month would be preferable.

Local resident Bob Beyette also called for the budget process to be lengthened.

He asked council to consider placing a two-page ad in local newspapers with a summary of the budget two weeks prior to it going to the budget committee.

"I also suggest that a more detailed version be made available to the public by pick-up or on the Web site within the same two week timeframe," he said.

He went on to suggest that once the budget is approved by the committee, the revised budget should follow the same two-week protocol.

"In essence, public review

and comment would probably round out at being five weeks or so," he said. "This appears to be a fair amount of time for public review."

Steeles Avenue resident Mike Grimwood also spoke during the session and suggested now is the time for the Town to do "zero-base budgeting," meaning instead of just adding the cost of inflation onto whatever was spent last year, start the budget at zero and build it back up.

Council made no decisions regarding the budget at Monday's meeting. It'll go back before council on July 17.

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To our valued customers: We apologize for any inconvenience caused by an error in our flyer dated: June 23-28.

Product: HP Pavilion Laptop featuring AMD Sempron processor 3300+ \*On p. 20 of our June 23rd flyer, this laptop is advertised as the V5105 model (10073830/10073939). In fact, it is the DV5110 (10075979/10075980). The processor is not an AMD Sempron Processor 3300+ operating at 2.0GHz, but an AMD Sempron Processor 3000+ operating at 1.8GHz. SKU:10073830/10073939

**FUTURE SHOP CORRECTION NOTICE**

Superman: The Movie M1872312. On pg. 9 of our June 23 flyer, we state that this product contains 2 DVDs. In fact, it is a single DVD.

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