

Big issues ahead as Halton council back in session

GreenCart, Sustainable Halton among priority initiatives scheduled

By Melanie Hennessey
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Regional council and its committees are getting back to business after a summer break and will be diving into some major issues over the coming months.

Among the items expected to be on the agenda shortly is a 2008 waste management contract that, if approved, will implement the much-discussed GreenCart program.

The initiative will see GreenCarts — like Blue Boxes but for kitchen scraps — collected weekly for composting, thus diverting the waste from the landfill.

Regional Chair Gary Carr said the Sustainable Halton process will also be forging ahead.

The Region is developing the Sustainable Halton plan to help guide the extensive population growth called for in the Province's Places to Grow plan while preserving and protecting things like greenspace.

Carr said staff will soon report to

committee and council on the outcome of the public consultation that's been held on the topic.

"It will be interesting to see what the public has to say," he noted. "Then we'll start to look at some of the decisions that need to be made for Sustainable Halton."

The 2008 budget process will also continue later this fall and culminating in December.

Council directed staff this summer to prepare the budget with a tax increase that doesn't exceed 2.9 per cent, or \$24.54 based on a \$300,000 assessment. Regional council also deals with the police budget, which could tack an extra \$25.16 onto the tax bill for a potential overall Halton tax increase of \$49.70.

The Region's health and social services committee will meet today, followed by the planning and public works committee and administration and finance committee tomorrow. Regional council's first meeting of the season will take place Wednesday, Sept. 19.

To obtain copies of upcoming meeting agendas visit www.halton.ca.

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GRAHAM PAINE / CANADIAN CHAMPION

AFTERMATH: Milton public works employees cut up and remove a 30-foot tree that came crashing down onto Syer Drive — partially blocking the street — when its trunk was split by high winds Friday afternoon. Public works and hydro workers were kept busy throughout the afternoon, responding to reports of downed trees and power lines.

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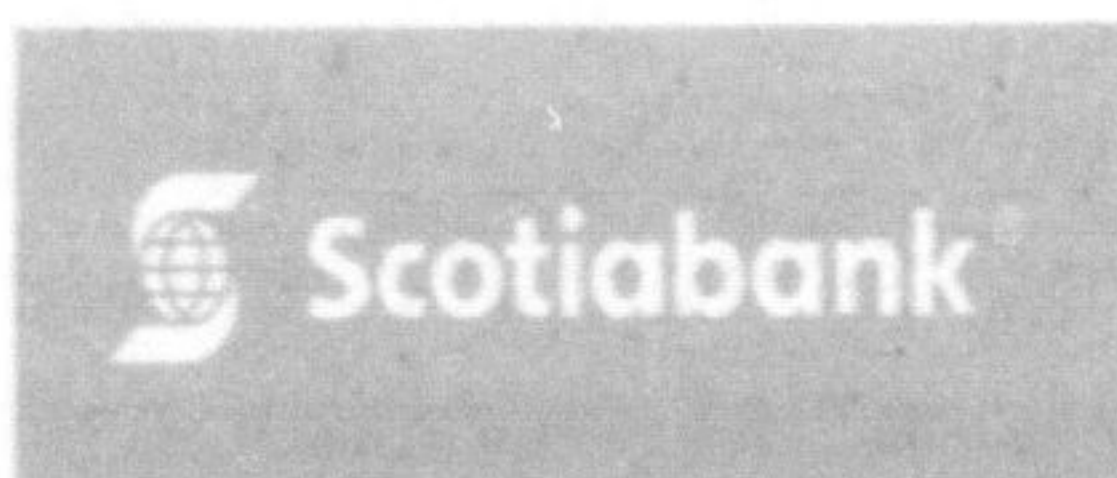
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