



Simply Halton

Your Halton Connection
February '09

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Facing economic challenges, Region's tax increase is one of the lowest in the Province



by Regional Chair Gary Carr

Over the past three budget years, Halton Region has consistently had one of the lowest tax increases for Regional programs and services in the province. From 2007-2009, the tax increases have been a combined average of 0.6 per cent.

On Wednesday, December 17, 2008, Regional Council unanimously approved the 2009 Budget and Business Plan raising property taxes by 1.7 per cent for Regional Services (excluding Police Services). This increase is one of the lowest among all regions in Ontario.

The increase for Halton Regional Police Services this year is 3.4 per cent. That makes the combined property tax impact to Halton residents 2.2 per cent, or \$28.61 per typical household having a current value assessment of \$300,000.

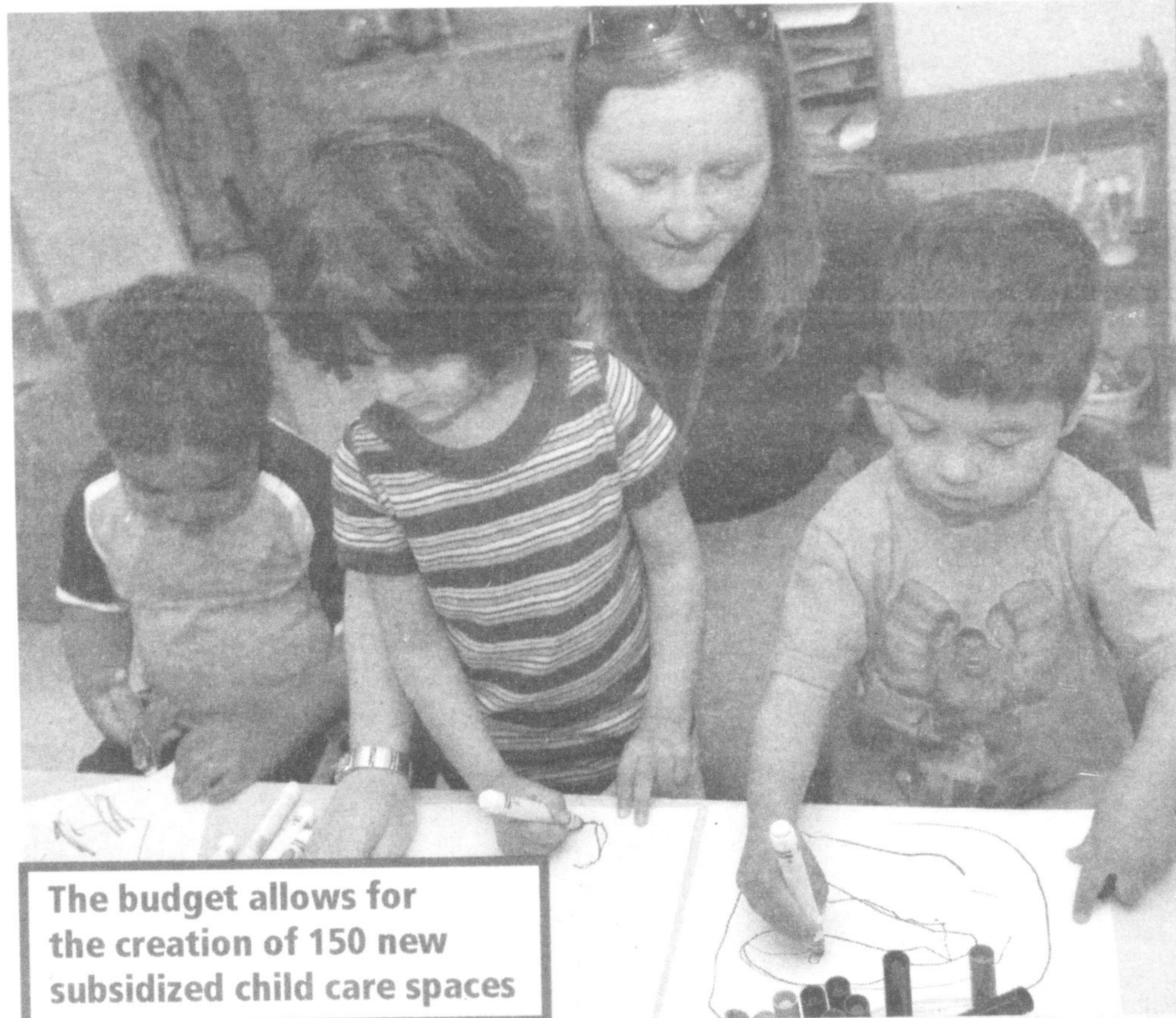
Needless to say, given the current economic climate, the budget preparation process this year was more delicate than usual. Regional Council's deliberations held throughout December were rigorous as Council and staff worked to come up with practical solutions in response to our key budget drivers.

The key drivers for this year's budget included maintaining service levels, responding to the community and investing in capital infrastructure. To meet these goals, the budget allows for some needed new programming, such as the creation of a youth psychiatric service, 150 new subsidized child care spaces and enhanced waste diversion programs. It also takes

into consideration maintaining and replacing existing infrastructure and delivering new infrastructure to support economic development.

Regional Council was pleased with this year's budget review process and feels that the 2009 budget, with a 1.7 per cent increase in Regional property taxes, is a good example of how the Region is making financially prudent decisions and delivering on objectives, while recognizing global economic challenges.

For more details about the budget or any of Halton Region's programs and services, visit www.halton.ca.



The budget allows for the creation of 150 new subsidized child care spaces

Key Provisions in the 2009 Budget:

- \$888,900 in additional funding to reflect the Region's responsibility for potential Ontario Works caseload increases and pressures on employment programs
- \$980,000 increase to Waste Management to address growth and enhanced programming
- \$440,000 to provide Youth Psychiatric Services
- \$1 million to provide an additional 150 subsidized child care spaces
- \$735,000 to expand the Region's Waste Management Program to add an electronic waste call-in service and a multi-residential high rise diversion coordinator in addition to staff support for community events

Water rates and billing

Water rates have increased for 2009, year-over-year, by 6.7 per cent from 2008. A new structure has been introduced that combines both water and wastewater charges into one rate on your bill. This new structure, and the rate increase, will take effect on all charges incurred on and after January 1, 2009.

The revised rates reflect new environmental legislation, community growth requirements, increased pricing of materials (e.g., treatment chemicals) and increased costs for repairing and replacing infrastructure. The rate increase also helps cover the costs of enhanced Regional water efficiency programs such as the Low Flow Toilet Rebate program.

Local distribution companies bill water/wastewater charges on behalf of Halton Region. For customers, the basis for billing is as follows:

- Monthly service charge, based on meter size
- A water charge based on 100 per cent of water consumption

For further information concerning the rate structure and policy, contact Halton Region at 311 or 905-825-6000, 1-866-4HALTON (1-866-442-5866), TTY 905-827-9833 or www.halton.ca.

For information concerning water readings, billings and payments, please contact your local hydro billing office.

February Meetings at Halton Region Headquarters

- Feb. 3, 9:30 a.m.**
Health & Social Services Cte
- Feb. 4, 9:30 a.m.**
Planning & Public Works Cte
- Feb. 4, 1:30 p.m.**
Administration & Finance Cte
- Feb. 11, 9:30 a.m.** Regional Council
- Feb. 16** Offices closed for Family Day
- Feb. 24, 9:30 a.m.**
Health & Social Services Cte
- Feb. 25, 9:30 a.m.**
Planning & Public Works Cte
- Feb. 25, 1:30 p.m.**
Administration & Finance Cte

We welcome your feedback. Contact Access Halton at accesshalton@halton.ca
Dial 311 or 905-825-6000 • Toll free: 1-866-442-5866 • TTY: 905-827-9833 • www.halton.ca
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