

Has pushed developers and government to pick up slack

• from CARR on page A5
coming in from the industries, businesses and residents that have located in Halton over the past few years.

However, the percentage of the budget coming from property taxes and money paid by residents and

businesses on water bills has dropped to 42 per cent from 50 per cent over the same time period.

So who's picking up the slack, if not local taxpayers? The two groups Carr has harangued for money since arriving at Regional headquarters — developers and

upper levels of government.

Ironically, Carr, who was a sometimes less-than-loyal member of the Mike Harris-led Conservative government in the late 1990s, has spent much of his first term pushing for the undoing of two of that government's major initiatives — the Province's Development Charges Act of 1997 and the downloading of some social assistance services to the municipalities.

On the latter point, the current provincial government has partially reversed direction — to which Carr was quick to provide credit — by phasing in the uploading of welfare and disability costs from communities and getting rid of the requirement for 905 municipalities to provide financial assistance to the social services sector in Toronto.

With developers, Carr has also been successful in his view.

Following an often bitter battle the past year, major residential developers in Milton and north Oakville agreed recently to give Halton Region an extra \$8,000 per house, which might be recouped but without interest from future

developers.

The Region managed to wring the money out of the homebuilders by requiring the payment before the municipality would agree to provide water and sewer pipes to their new homes.

To many developers, the charge was unfair because the majority of the money is going to cover development charge exemptions given by the Province and Halton to other sectors such as farms, places of worship and school boards. To Carr, growth is growth and somebody's got to pay for it besides taxpayers.

"We have finally got it to where growth is paying for itself," he said. That attitude isn't shared by all his colleagues however.

Milton Mayor Gord Krantz is among several regional council members who have questioned whether development-related charges in Halton are getting too high to keep new homes affordable or to attract industry, the taxes from which help keep residents' property taxes low.

A homebuilder in Milton now pays close to \$55,000 per house to the municipalities, GO Transit and

the school boards, and industrial development charges in the region are among the highest in the GTA.

Carr, however, has sometimes asserted his primus inter pares — first among equals — status on council and used public e-mail campaigns as a way to gather support for some of the things through council.

During a particularly heated council session this past summer, when Mattamy Homes had bused in hundreds of construction workers from across the GTA to council chambers to protest the extra \$8,000 charge, Carr came prepared for the fight.

He plopped down literally thousands of papers onto the chamber desks, and printed e-mails from constituents backing his position in favour of the charge, he told his council colleagues.

"I'm elected by the people, not by council," he said. "My feeling is as the chair I take the lead. On the things that were important for me, that I ran on, I got support on."

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By David Auburn

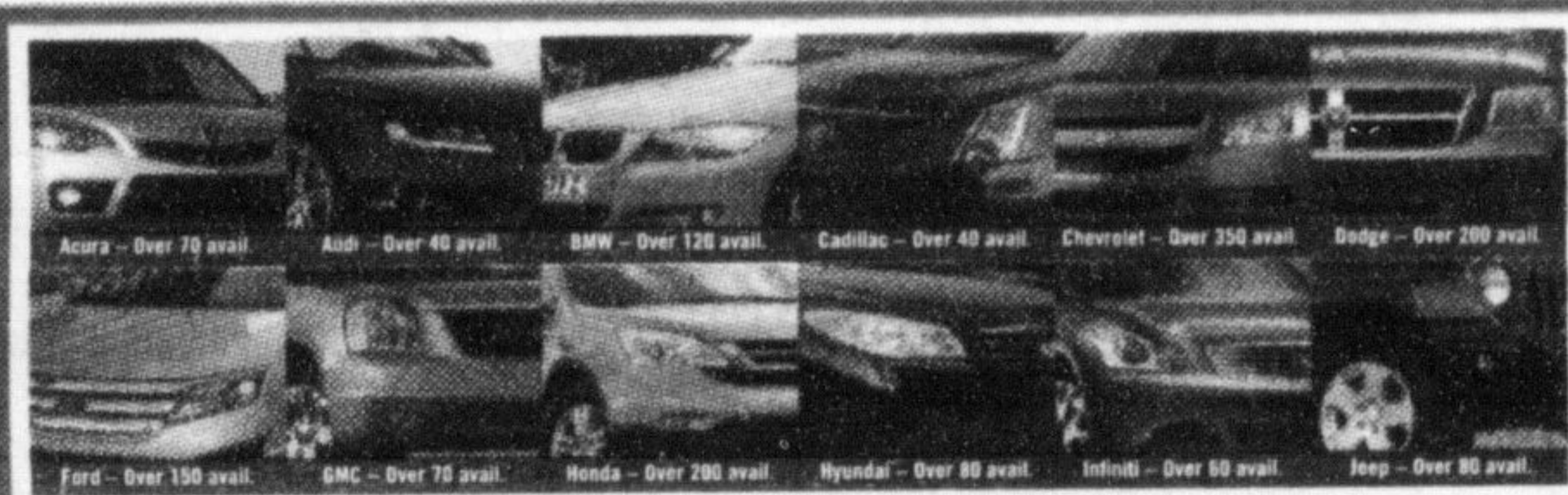
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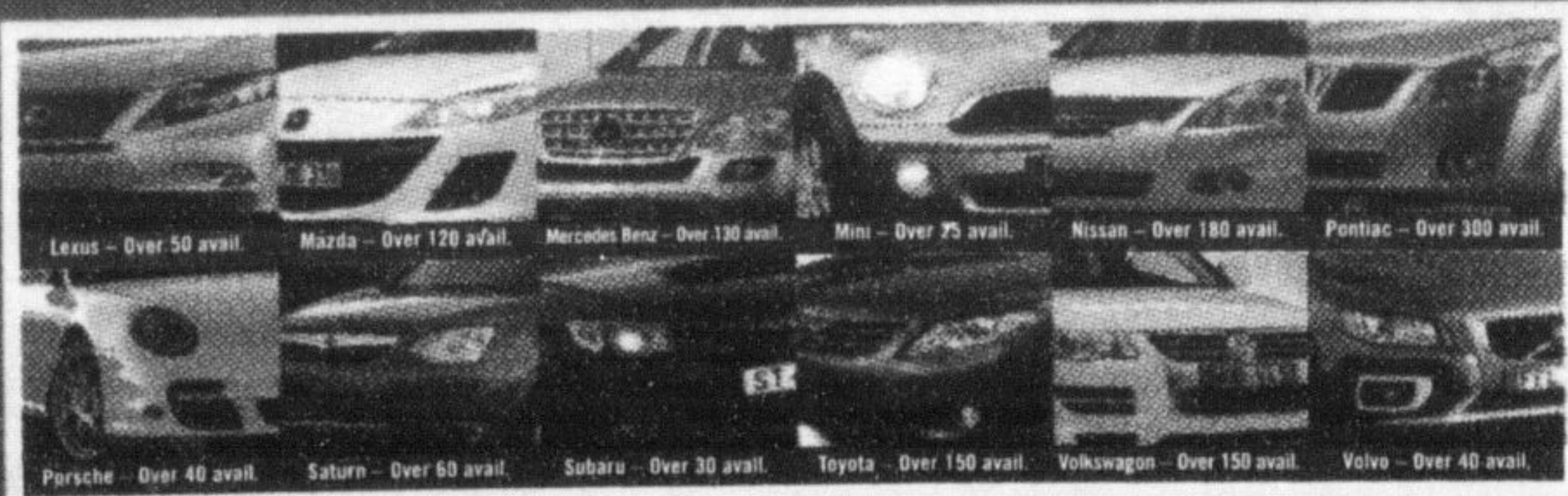
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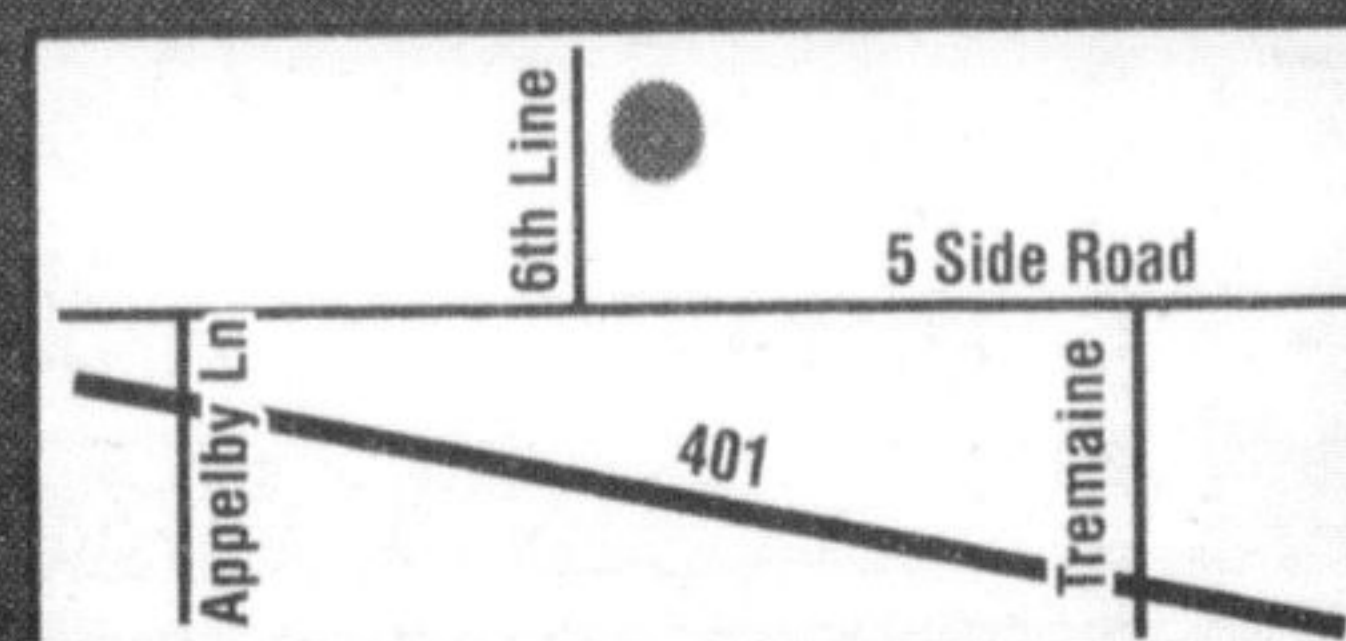
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Best Buy CORRECTION NOTICE

To our valued customers: We apologize for any inconvenience caused by an error in our flyer dated: December 25 - December 27.

Product: Sirius Satellite Radio With Geek Squad Hidden-Wire Installation. Please note that this promotion advertised on page 6 of the Boxing Day sale flyer is available for in-store service ONLY, not in-home, as previously advertised. SKU:10093811, 10069960

FUTURE SHOP CORRECTION NOTICE

Xbox 360 Pro Console 10135490. Please note that this product advertised on page 1 of the Boxing Day Sale flyer is NOT HDMI 1080p capable, as previously advertised. The highest resolution available is 1080i through component video.

We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused our valued customers.

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Toshiba 32" LCD HDTV and Wii Console Package 10094487, 10121906. Due to inventory delays, please note that some stores will not have the Wii console in stock, as advertised with this package on page 1 of the December 20 mid-week flyer. Please see a Product Expert in-store for details on alternative products for this package.

We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused our valued customers.

Best Buy CORRECTION NOTICE

To our valued customers: We apologize for any inconvenience caused by an error in our flyer dated: December 25 - January 03.

Product: Toshiba Satellite Laptop (L500-038) Please note that this laptop advertised on page 2 of the Boxing Day flyer, page 3 of the Boxing Week flyer, and page 1 of the Boxing Week Final 3 Days flyer DOES NOT have a built-in webcam and mic, as previously advertised. SKU:10135530

Best Buy CORRECTION NOTICE

To our valued customers: We apologize for any inconvenience caused by an error in our flyer dated: December 25 - January 3.

Product: Free Shipping Offer. On the following flyers: Boxing Day, Boxing Week and Final 3 Days, this promotion was advertised with incomplete details. Please be advised that the offer also EXCLUDES Special Delivery products.

Best Buy CORRECTION NOTICE

To our valued customers: We apologize for any inconvenience caused by an error in our flyer dated: December 18 - December 24.

Product: Samsung 10.2 Megapixel Digital Camera (ES55) Please note that this camera advertised on page 1 of the December 18 flyer has a 2.5" LCD screen, NOT 2.7", as previously advertised. SKU:10130065/62