

# Cooperation in growth questioned

## Halton planner ponders commitment to GTA strategies

By **ROB KELLY**  
The Champion

Halton Region's planning commissioner Rash Mohammed, says he's not getting the cooperation he wants from his provincial counterparts when it comes to strategies for coping with growth.

Speaking at a regional forum dealing with how to map growth plans for the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) last week in Oakville, Mr. Mohammed questioned whether the civil service in Queen's Park is following the lead of the provincial government when it comes to GTA planning.

Although politicians at Queen's Park have indicated a willingness to confront the massive growth-related issues facing Halton Region and the rest of the GTA, "I have had little success obtaining clear statements" in support of that position from the civil service, Mr. Mohammed said. "That commitment isn't there."

Without having all the participants in the process onside, "to some ex-

tent I wonder if we are building a house of cards," the planning commissioner added.

Mr. Mohammed's afternoon speech came on the heels of a morning address by provincial Environment Minister Ruth Grier, who stressed the need for all the GTA municipalities to work together with the provincial government.

More than 2 million people are expected to move into the GTA over the next 30 years. Friday's session was an opportunity for an update on the latest trends in planning to accommodate that growth in the five GTA jurisdictions — Halton, Peel, York and Durham regions, and Metro Toronto.

Locally, the Halton Urban Structure Review, a \$4 million study to create strategies for coping with the expected population boom, started out as a relatively modest blueprint focussed on Milton. But now it includes north Oakville and Burlington and has long-term implications for Halton Hills.

Halton Hills Mayor Russ Miller said people in Georgetown and Acton feel they have "not a lot in common with the GTA."

"Halton Hills does not want to see this massive growth," Mr. Miller stressed. In moving to Halton Hills, "you do not buy a house, you buy a quality of life." Suburban sprawl, such as in neighbouring Brampton, is "not the kind of development I want to see."

For Oakville Mayor Ann Mulvale, "one of the biggest issues we're dealing with is credibility." In government there is a "credibility issue all the way down the line."

Contradictions and roadblocks in government planning lead to situations such as the delay in building a bridge along Upper Middle Road in Oakville to use as a major traffic artery, Ms Mulvale noted. Hearings for the project took place in 1978, but it is only now under construction, she pointed out.

Burlington Mayor Walter Mulkeewich said large-scale planning schemes must be reconsidered in the light of what is affordable. Rather than designing community expansions and then looking for money to support them, "maybe we should make a list of where we're going to get the money from and plan accordingly."

## Grier here

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government processes. "Often politicians have not been prepared to make the tough decisions."

Many issues could be expedited "if all of us are prepared to sometimes bite the bullet and make those decisions," Ms Grier said.

Milton Mayor Gord Krantz turned the tables on Ms Grier, asking "if you and your ministry are prepared to make some tough decisions" about fast-tracking Halton growth plans.

Ms. Grier replied that, just because the entire GTA population is expanding "it does not mean everybody is reduced to the speed of the slowest participant" in planning growth. Halton has already done a great deal of work on the subject, she noted. "I do not want to hold back regions such as Halton. You're not going to have to wait for somebody else."

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Fri. Dec. 4	12:00 pm - 3:00 pm	4:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Sat. Dec. 5	10:00 am - 1:00 pm	2:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Thurs. Dec. 10	12:00 pm - 3:00 pm	4:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Fri. Dec. 11	12:00 pm - 3:00 pm	4:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Sat. Dec. 12	10:00 am - 1:00 pm	2:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Wed. Dec. 16	12:00 pm - 3:00 pm	4:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Thurs. Dec. 17	12:00 pm - 3:00 pm	4:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Fri. Dec. 18	12:00 pm - 3:00 pm	4:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Sat. Dec. 19	10:00 am - 1:00 pm	2:00 pm - 4:00 pm
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