

Metro Toronto and area will rebound; study

By BRAD REAUME
The Champion

The Greater Toronto Area is still a vital and promising place, according to a consultants' report forecasting regional changes through 2031.

The report was issued to update previous forecasts by using data from the 1991 census, and concluded that there will be continued growth in the GTA, mostly in the peripheral regions to Metro.

The GTA encompasses Peel, York, Durham and Halton regions as well as Metro Toronto.

The report says the GTA is in a good position to participate in the knowledge-based economy of the 21st century. Growth is expected in telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, business and computer services and finance. This is because the GTA is already a base for education, medicine, telecommunications, software development and commerce.

The forecast is based on the assumption a restructuring of the economy will be completed by 2000, with a slow but increasing growth rate. At the same time, it is expected no changes will occur in immigration policy at a federal level to decrease expected population levels.

Under those conditions population should rise from 4.2 million to 6.7 million by 2021, which represents a 1.5 per cent annual rate of growth. About 40 per cent of an anticipated 1.5 million more jobs will be created in the first 10 years of the 30-year forecast. Currently there are about 2.3 million jobs in the GTA.

Ranges of population growth have been forecasted, based on changes in assumed conditions. Halton is expected to be home to 670,000 people in 2021, up from the present 310,000. The low range number is 550,000 and the high end 820,000.

This anticipated growth offers numerous opportunities to alter community development patterns, the study says. The report identifies the need to begin planning for such changes now.



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Going to bat

Dustin Clement, 9, won an autographed Pat Borders bat in the recent Harvey's Juvenile Diabetes Foundation fundraiser. With Dustin is Harvey's assistant manager Norm Bourassa. The Market Drive restaurant raised roughly \$350 in one day.

New rules for community grants

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There is a difference between a patron's invitation to attend and a summons to attend.

Last week councillor Brad Clements told town council that he didn't want to force leisure and cultural groups to parade before council with their hats in hands before receiving their annual grants.

"If they want to come and give a progress report that's alright, but it's not appropriate to require them to line up to pick up their cheque," he said.

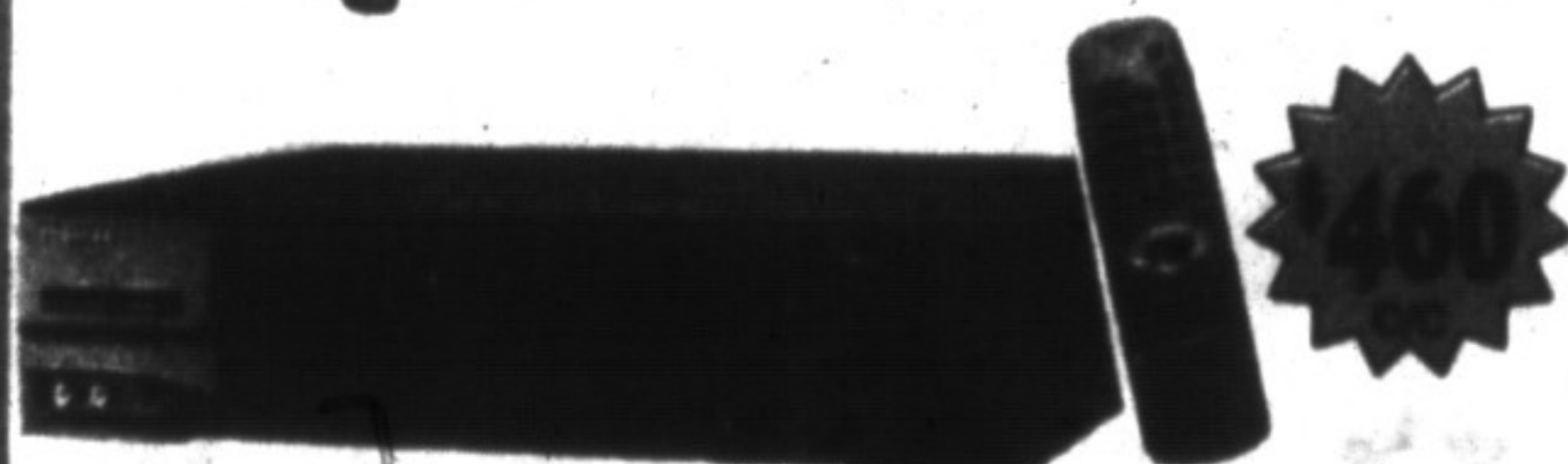
New municipal rules mean the grants to groups segment of the finance department and the leisure services department budgets will be amalgamated to streamline the process.

In addition, guidelines will be in place, including money only going to non-profit organizations, a requirement for evidence of enriching the community, no duplication with existing programs, demonstration of need, and a reporting on the use of funds.

According to Jennifer Reynolds, the director of leisure services, the process should remain uncomplicated, with the grants being approved through the budget process by town council.

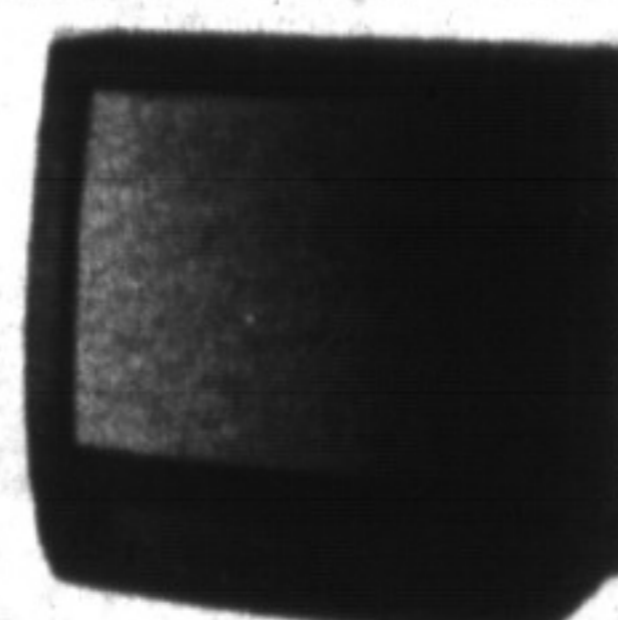
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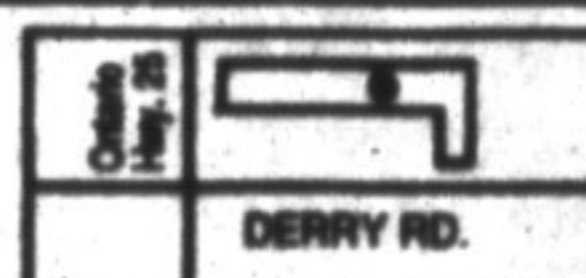


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