

## Transit

# Expert supports one system for all of region

By JOAN RANSBERRY  
Staff Reporter

A transit system in Stouffville might work if it piggy-backed with Markham, a transportation expert has suggested.

Douglas Thwaite, a consultant with Transport 2000, was the guest speaker at the general meeting of Whitchurch-Stouffville Recycling Group on Tuesday.



THWAITE

Thwaite pointed out that the objectives of Transport 2000 are to "protect the environment, save energy, transport people in safety, improve accessibility for all travellers, help governments design transit plans."

Transport 2000 calls for expansion and improvement of public transit in urban areas, and a limit on the construction of urban expressways and parking, Thwaite said.

A town with a population of about 20,000 is too small to accommodate its own community transit service, Thwaite told *The Tribune*.

"Stouffville would be better served combined with Markham where it would become one branch of a larger system," he said.

Even though the trend in the past decade has been away from rail travel and towards freeways, Thwaite favorite mode of transport continues to

be the train.

One of the main objectives of Transport 2000 is the retention and improvement of national rail passenger service in all regions of Canada.

An average-sized passenger train can carry as many people as one lane of a freeway in an hour, he said.

Developing a community revolves around a freeway or a railway, said Thwaite.

"Railway put the focus on the centre, while the freeway puts the focus on the perimeter."

Even if the provincial government goes along with task force and gets rid of five regions including York, a region-wide transportation system could still be set up between area municipalities, said Thwaite.

Although a proposed plan to introduce a (York) region-wide transit system hasn't been given much attention of late, the idea impresses Thwaite.

In fact, the size of York Region would make a perfect transit system, he said.

The Golden Report has suggested getting rid of five regions including York.

This would not hamper an area-wide transit scheme.

"There may not be a York, but we'd have the municipalities. Stouffville could link up with Markham," said Thwaite.

The recent cutbacks in GO service to Stouffville did not surprise Thwaite.

"Stouffville was one of the poorest utilized in the whole service area," said Thwaite.

GO service was poorly patronized because it faced stiff competition from the automobile, he added.



## Victorian tea

The Heart and Stroke Foundation benefitted from a Victorian Tea at the United Church last weekend. From left, are: Maris Anderson, campaign chair and tea organizer; Marian Hodgson, president of the Heart and Stroke Foundation in Whitchurch-Stouffville; and Marsha Vautier, secretary of the foundation's local chapter.

Photo/STEVE SOMERVILLE

# Liquor stores fight Tory plan

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still an intoxicant with many health, safety and social costs including motor vehicle crashes, murder, suicide and chronic illness. The sale of alcohol requires careful regulation and handling only by trained people."

Alcohol abuse carries a hefty price. Social costs of consumption including health and corrections is \$1.7 billion, said Slaughter.

The local chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Drivers is being asked to join the fight. One in 10 drinkers runs a risk of alcohol dependence.

Slaughter plans to visit doctors offices and schools in Stouffville seeking support in the fight against privatization.

"We're also approaching the local churches, the Addiction Research Foundation and we'll be circulating a petition," he said.

Privatizing will mean greater availability of alcohol, said Slaughter.

"Study after study has shown that on as per capita consumption increases, the proportion of problem drinkers goes up even further," he said.

As a result of increased and easier availability of alcohol, crime and other alcohol-related problems will increase, straining already overworked enforcement agencies,

Slaughter said.

More than 50 per cent of private liquor outlets in the United States sell to minors, said Slaughter. "The LCBO's track record is different. Last year, our staff challenged about 300,000 people and refused to serve about 50,000," he said.

Local LCBO workers are required to refuse to sell to underage and intoxicated customers, stressed Gibson.

The staff at Stouffville's liquor store takes an interest in the well-being of the community, including its young people, said Gibson.

"When there's a dance at the high school in Stouffville, we're notified by the school. If this was a mom and pop operation, because they're in it for profit, they'd be tempted to look the other way when dealing with minors," said Gibson.

Alberta is the only province in Canada with private liquor outlets. After privatization, Alberta drinkers saw the price of alcohol rise by about 14 per cent. In Alberta, brand selection has decreased by 75 per cent, Slaughter said.

People in Alberta now have to travel from store to store to find their brand. But, we've got 1,800 brands," said Gibson.

Liquor offenses (in Alberta) went up by 61 per cent; robberies increased four-fold,

alcohol consumption increased by 13 per cent and 1,600 people lost their liquor store jobs, Slaughter said. In Ontario, 5,000 jobs are at risk, he added.

Four people work at Stouffville's LCBO. Gibson has been with the LCBO for 21 years. Talk of privatizing the outlet is "demoralizing" for the staff, Gibson admitted. "Our customers tell us they think we're doing a great job," he said. "They want us to stay as is."

Gibson said the government can make changes to further improve the present system.

"We've improved our efficiency. We had an excellent Christmas and handed over \$6 million more to the government than last year. We could get an even bigger selection. We could extend our hours of opening. Also, I think we'll be looking at Sunday openings," said Gibson.

No one knows what the present government has in mind, said Slaughter. "Clear options haven't yet been presented to the public. Evidently it means sale by profit making, privately-owned business and possibly sale in all corner stores and supermarkets," he said.

Slaughter wants Stouffville residents to ask York Durham MPP Julia Munro to not support privatizing liquor sales.

## Vaughan mayor critical of report

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pay for education.

"It's just sucking us dry and putting it into Metro," said Vaughan Mayor Lorna Jackson.

Many at the meeting said one problem is the misunderstanding in the community about the complicated and cumbersome Golden Report. As a result, Region Chair Eldred King said he will arrange local meetings to educate residents, particularly about the possible property tax increases.

"We have to get the message out to the people," said Cousins.

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