

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

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10 Author's real-life story inspires big-selling debut

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STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEN

Big-time following

Patrick Riddell plows a field along the York-Durham Line in east-end Stouffville Tuesday afternoon, attracting a lot of avian attention.

Housing costs hurt business: survey

BY ROY GREEN
Staff Writer

The good news for employers in York Region is homes cost less than they do in downtown Toronto, there is a good road system and public transit has improved significantly in recent years.

The bad news is those homes are still too costly for many, traffic congestion is reaching epic proportions and transit service still lags far behind demand.

In a survey of 75 companies in the region, employers said they are having difficulty keeping workers because of a lack of rental housing, affordable homes and near-gridlocked traffic on the region's roads.

There is rising concern by employers about transportation, transit and housing costs affecting attracting/retention of employees, the study states. Many lower-paid workers, new Canadians and younger workers are unable to find appropriate and affordable housing in York Region.

CRUCIAL FOR UNSKILLED WORKERS

The study reveals York Region has the lowest percentage in the GTA of people living in the municipality where they work, at 53.8 per cent. And the problem is most crucial for unskilled workers.

"Not all our jobs are high-end and employers need to be able to attract people to those positions," York Region chairper-

son Bill Fisch said.

The 2001 census revealed about 70 per cent of jobs in manufacturing and trade sectors were filled by people living outside the region.

Darlene Klemchuck of Adecco Employment Services in Markham said it's tough for low-income workers to get to York Region.

"The biggest obstacle is that there are two transit fares for workers from Toronto," she said. "Even though the region's transit system is a major improvement, it's \$5 each way for some of them. If you're working at a minimum wage job at \$7.15 an hour, you can't afford to do that."

See TRANSIT, page 8.

GREEN SPACE PROTECTION STOPS DEVELOPMENT

Airport brings 'few benefits to town'

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
Staff Writer

The new Pickering Airport won't bring any real economic benefit to Whitchurch-Stouffville, Mayor Sue Sherban says.

And it might lead to the municipality eventually having to build more roads.

Plans for Pickering Airport to become a reliever airport by 2012 were officially announced yesterday. At that time, Buttonville Airport in Markham and the Oshawa Airport will be decommissioned. Pickering Airport is to be developed into a full-fledged airport by 2030.

AIR CORRIDORS NEAR STOUFFVILLE

None of the airport lands fall within the municipality, but some air corridors will pass over the southeast section of the town just east of Stouffville.

The airport will cause more traffic, the need for more roads and highways, but won't benefit Whitchurch-Stouffville financially because most land in the area can't be developed under the new Green Lands Protection Act.

More green spaces mean there will be fewer opportunities to increase the commercial and industrial tax base of the municipality, she said.

"We can't even have a bed and breakfast in the southeast area (of the municipality)," Mayor Sue Sherban said. "To build an airport where you can't build a warehouse around it makes absolutely no business sense."

The number of people travelling

See AIRPORT, page 5.

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