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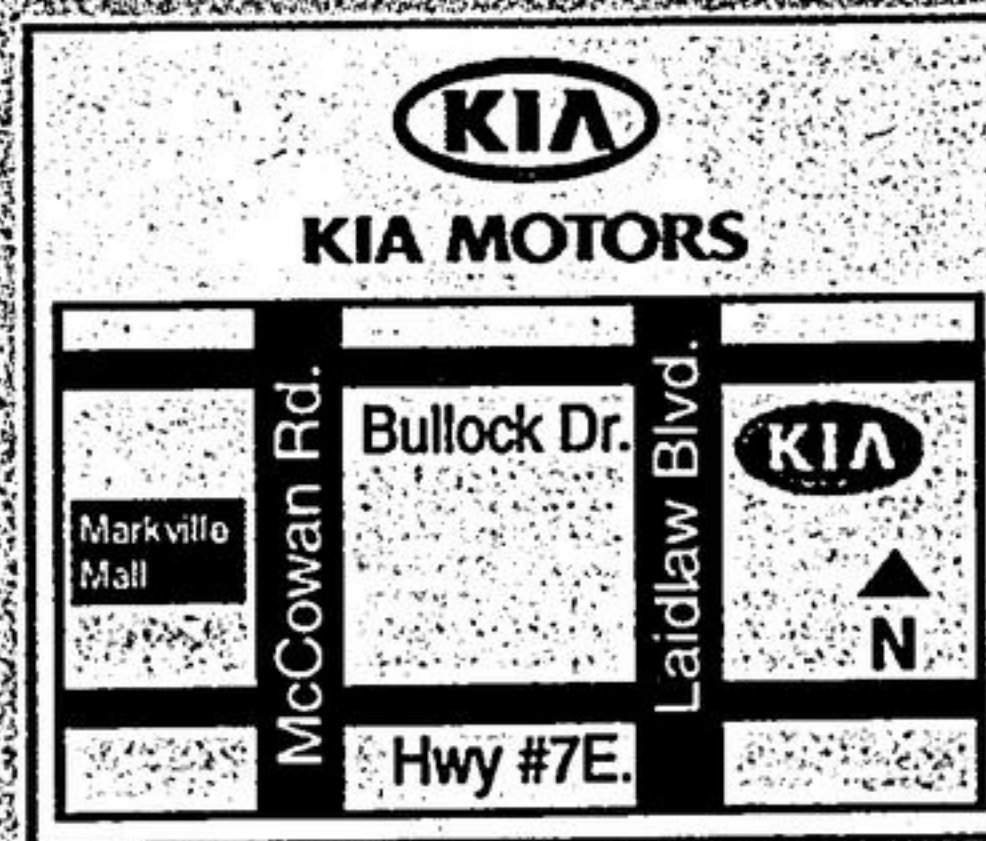
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Gallery not considered in town budget

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and sponsorships and fees from programs and memberships. The gallery obtained back-to-back Trillium grants because of this high level of support from the community, Ms Pritchard said.

In 2002, the gallery received no monetary support from the town, but did receive rent-free gallery space in the old library building on Main Street with utilities paid.

The next year the gallery also received studio space downstairs in the Silver Jubilee Seniors Club.

A significant part of the gallery's funding from 2000 to 2002 came from the gallery's first Trillium grant of \$225,000.

HIRED BACK STAFF

The money enabled the gallery to hire back professional staff it lost when the gallery was closed in 1997. The gallery then was under the auspices of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Library Board, which abruptly withdrew all funding from the gallery and reclaimed the gallery space.

During the following three-year period, the gallery resurrected itself and rented space in a Main Street storefront.

In the first phase of lobbying, letters of support for the gallery are being sent to local councillors and Mayor Sue Sherban on a daily basis. Early next month the Latham Gallery will bring a delegation to council in its quest for more support.

Since the town wasn't involved in the gallery's submission for funding from the Trillium Foundation, no funds were earmarked in the town's budget, Mrs. Sherban said. Therefore, when the gallery comes to council, any funds it receives would come from town grants.

"I haven't received a feeling from councillors where they stand regarding the current request," Mrs. Sherban said.

She's hoping councillors will come up with ideas to help the gallery. She has also contacted the Trillium Foundation for advice on additional financial help.

Having a local art gallery is important because "if people don't learn about art, music and dance in their community," Ms Brock said, "they won't go to the larger galleries".

Last month, council refused to grant an exemption of close to \$324,000 in development charges for the new Parkview Home because of worries about the cost of infrastructure for new development coming into town and the long-term implications for the town's finances — and taxpayers.

"We have core services that we must deliver," Councillor Ken Ferdinands said. "If commercial assessments would be at a higher level, we would have a higher degree of flexibility."