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Budget short on specifics for York projects

BY DAVID FLEISCHER
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Is Thursday's provincial budget a bold step forward or not worth the paper it's written on? It depends who you ask.

Ontario Finance Minister Dwight Duncan unveiled the provincial budget at Queen's Park, but what it means for York Region remains to be seen.

While promising an aggressive economic stimulus package and numerous tax reforms, there was no news on some specific projects near and dear to the region.

Despite a promise of more than \$30 billion in infrastructure spending over two years, there was no information on whether it would benefit a planned extension of the Yonge subway or Viva's bus lanes.

Details will emerge in the coming weeks and

Ontarians will be pleased by the investment in infrastructure, Richmond Hill Liberal MPP Reza Moridi said.

Spending on infrastructure, health care and education were hot-button topics at a pre-budget consultation in his riding, he said.

All that is known now is that the money is targeted for areas such as roads, schools, hospitals, social housing, and is expected to create more than 300,000 jobs.

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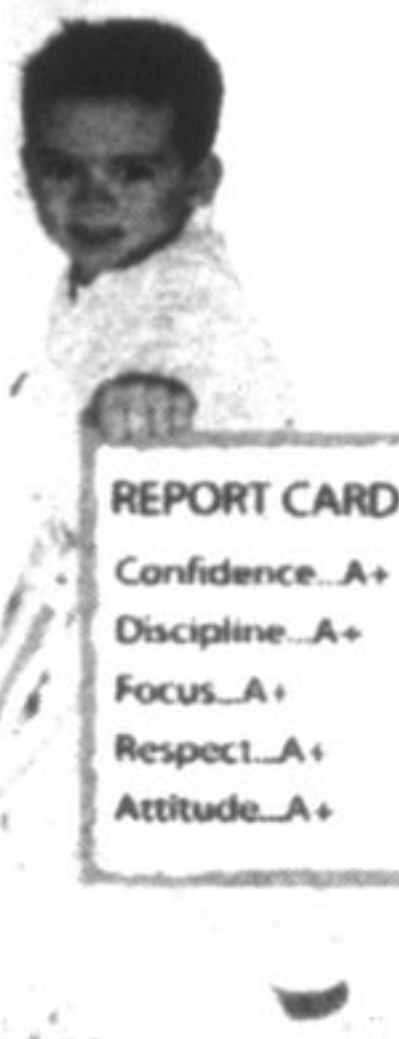
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Small business 'will suffer'

From page 1.

the Ontario Chamber of Commerce have been lobbying the provincial and federal governments for years to blend the two taxes. It will mean less paperwork for small business.

But, Whitchurch-Stouffville Chamber of Commerce president Helene Johnson is not entirely in favour.

"As far as we're concerned, it's not a great thing for our members because if they're not

going to give exemptions to some things, some of our members will suffer," she said.

The Main Street business group will have to charge its members an additional eight per cent on annual dues.

"I would not be happy with this," she said. "I think we need to help our businesses."

We will all pay more at the gas pump or grabbing a coffee at Tim Hortons but it will take time to see how the big picture pans out.

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