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# TOPIC

**Questions  
For Electors  
1978**



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Better Government through Research



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# Questions For Electors 1978

Topic No. 6  
October, 1978



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## INTRODUCTION

Municipal elections across Ontario are scheduled for Monday, November 13, 1978. To continue our tradition, the Bureau is presenting what we feel are the most important issues being faced by municipal representatives.

We have made three changes from our previous election publications. Unlike previous years we are not only covering Metropolitan Toronto but are presenting brief issue outlines for Hamilton, London, Ottawa, Sudbury and Windsor. Second, there is a listing of some Province-wide concerns affecting many of these and other municipalities across Ontario. Third, instead of simply listing questions this year, we are also providing a small amount of background information on the issues.

This Topic is presented to help voters in various areas assess their municipality, its problems and the candidates that come forward.

We are grateful for the assistance received from Professor Andrew Burghardt, Hamilton; Daniel Mayo, Ottawa; and Ronald Meredith, Sudbury.



### MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS: WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

Decisions made at the municipal level affect an individual's life more directly than those made at any other level of government. Although municipalities must work within Provincial guidelines, they have responsibility for the operation of such departments as fire, road repair, garbage and to a certain degree police. Municipalities also determine how a large portion of the property tax dollars collected at the local level are spent. A municipality's power to plan, and enforce planning, limits the uses any land owner may undertake on his property.

There have also been some indications from the Province that more powers may be transferred to the municipal level. With this wide range of responsibilities, the importance of elected municipal representatives can begin to be appreciated. Each resident of a municipality should, therefore, be concerned about local government and be trying to make local government responsive to the needs of the citizens.

Despite the importance of government in everyone's life, voter turnout does not usually go beyond 30 - 40% in most locales. The Bureau studied this problem in 1976<sup>1</sup> and found there were three main reasons for this. First, many non-voters mentioned that there was a "lack of issues" during the election. Second, despite the local responsibilities, municipal governments were seen as weak compared to the "real" decision-makers at the Provincial and Federal levels. Third, not having a full understanding of the basics of how government functions, some people were lost in the complexity of the issues.

These three areas are difficult to remedy. The Bureau has suggested that the schools and news media take a more active role in trying to solve some of the information problems. More action in this area is certainly needed, however.

What the Bureau is attempting to do here is to make some of the issues clearer and some of the complexities of government easier to understand.

With this basic information, voters should be better prepared to analyze campaign literature and candidate's statements. It should not be enough that a candidate emphasizes his personal and home life. These aspects will not tell a voter all that individual needs to know before

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<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Municipal Research, Comment, No. 157, "Low Voter Turnout in Municipal Elections - No Easy Solution", February 1976.



electing the candidate. Nor should the candidate rely solely on "charisma" or the appeal he or she has to a group of voters. The importance of municipal decisions dictates that each candidate be well prepared for the issues that will be faced during the two years in office. Voters should insist that issues be addressed by everyone running for office.

To do this, voters must know what issues they feel are important. The items presented here may not be the ones which everyone perceives as most important. They are, however, a base from which to work. The municipal government is not weak. It directly controls more portions of an individual's life than either the Provincial or Federal governments. For this reason, it is important that the councils elected this Fall be well informed and truly representative of the people.

### MUNICIPAL ISSUES ACROSS THE PROVINCE

There are a number of general items which should be noted as problems in many municipalities across Ontario. These issues appear in some of the individual municipal presentations but deserve to be identified separately since they are common to so many areas.

All responsibilities and functions of the municipality are determined by the Province. The right to tax, plan, educate and provide other services are given to the various municipalities by enabling legislation passed at the Provincial level. This close connection between municipal and Provincial decisions has presented some problems in the administering of responsibilities at the local level. These problems and others are presented here.

#### Money

Just about every municipality is being faced with the problem of how to balance its budget. The two main sources of revenue for municipalities are property taxes and Provincial grants. The Provincial government does not allow municipalities to obtain revenue from other sources such as sales or income tax.

Property taxes in most areas have increased over the last few years. The reactions of residents have also heightened, however, and future increases will meet with opposition. Municipalities are increasingly being made aware of the fact that alternative revenue sources are needed.

Provincial grants are given to municipalities on both a conditional and unconditional basis. That means that some grants (72% of those offered) are only available for very specific purposes. The Provincial grants budget for 1977-78 was approximately \$3.4 billion of which \$1.9 billion was allocated to schools and \$1.5 billion went to municipal governments and agencies.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the commitment made by the Province in 1973 at Edmonton,<sup>2</sup> the Province has not only refused to increase grants but has cut back on them. This situation has been further aggravated by the fact that the Province has frozen property tax assessment levels for the municipalities and has not made a decision on property tax reform. The only options open to individual municipalities under the present system are to increase the mill rate, increase efficiency within departments, or cut services.

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Provincial-Municipal Grants Reform Committee, Vol. 1, p.20.

<sup>2</sup> The Edmonton Commitment refers to a commitment made by the then Ontario Treasurer, John White, in 1973. He promised that Provincial assistance to municipalities would grow at a rate not less than the growth of Ontario's total revenue.



- (1) What should municipalities do to better their situation? Should municipalities seek new ways to finance their expenditures? What are the possibilities of such things as: unconditional grants from the Province; municipal income tax schemes; user charges? What process should be established to determine which form of funding is the most appropriate? Should a deadline be set for Provincial action in this matter?
- (2) Is it possible for municipalities to become more efficient through technical and management innovations? Should municipalities cut programs, raise taxes, both? What criteria should be used to determine this? Should more use be made of such items as public opinion polls and surveys?

#### Regional Government

Regional governments exist in a number of areas across Ontario. Each regional government has specific roles in relation to the municipal governments (lower tiers) of which they are composed. The roles, budgets and responsibilities of the regional and municipal levels are at times in conflict with each other. Reviews have been completed for Toronto (Robarts), Ottawa (Mayo), Niagara (Archer), and Hamilton (Stewart) that have suggested some changes to the present system operating in the area. The suggested changes have ranged from mere housekeeping items to some extremely controversial items. Further the municipalities have agreed with some recommendations but not all. The Province has the authority to assess these studies and decide which recommendations will be implemented and which will not. In other words, it is up to the Province to determine the overall framework within which the lower and regional tiers of government function. The Province in all four cases mentioned above has not agreed to most of the changes which were recommended.

The Provincial decisions have not followed the municipal analyses but have been done based on the Provincial perception of how the governments should relate. This decision to not act in any of the areas indicates an unwillingness to solve some problems related to two-tier government. The result is that many of the conflicts and problems between the two tiers of government at the local level have not been solved.<sup>1</sup>

- (1) In spite of this situation, what steps should be taken to establish a better division of power between the two tiers? Who should establish the overall policies, finance local government services and deliver programs? How can the potential conflicts between these two levels be eliminated

to allow for the more efficient government that is possible under the two tier system?

- (2) Can the Province be pressed for action to allow comprehensive reform in each area?

#### Jobs

Unemployment has been mentioned by a number of municipalities as a problem. This is another area where the cooperation of the Provincial government is felt.

- (1) Are there actions which can be taken locally to help the unemployment situation? Should jobs be a consideration when analyzing various schemes before a local council? How much weight should job creation at the local level be given?

#### Development

Development issues arise in all parts of Ontario. These can take the form of a municipality encouraging development or discouraging development. It can involve regulation of where development takes place. The issues can revolve around commercial proposals such as shopping centers; housing, particularly for low and moderate income individuals; location of roads or other transportation facilities; or even airports. The overriding concern remains that of planning. All development schemes are currently subject to review by the Ontario Municipal Board. Because decisions are made initially at the local level and then subject to review at the OMB, the authority of municipalities is undermined and no one can be held accountable for decisions.<sup>1</sup> This relationship has caused some problems, particularly when there is a conflict between the two views.

- (1) How much autonomy should municipalities be given over their planning? What should be the relationship between the wishes of the citizenry of a municipality and the plans that are passed? How accountable are the municipal politicians to the development decisions that are made? Should a higher level of government decide the "public good" in areas such as housing, transportation, or land use?

<sup>1</sup> For an analysis of some conflicts see BMR Topic, "In Response to The Robarts Report", October 1977.

<sup>1</sup> BMR Topic, "Changing the Planning Act: Risks and Responsibilities", November 1977.



### Special Purpose Bodies

Almost all municipalities in Ontario have one or more special purpose bodies controlling some aspect of service delivery within the municipality. These bodies are groups formed by the Province to have responsibility for such areas as schools, libraries, transportation, or even police. They are run by a board which can consist of appointed members from the general citizenry or elected representatives as is the case with school trustees. Regardless of the composition or the function of the body, there are a number of issues which have arisen in recent years around special purpose bodies.

These services are financed usually by a combination of provincial conditional grants and municipal tax dollars. In some cases, the municipalities fund a large portion of the expenses, while in others the Province might assume the larger share. The question that arises, however, is one of accountability. For the most part, the boards can not be held directly accountable to the residents of the municipality. The decisions made are theoretically beyond intervention by outside groups. Although pressure can obviously be exerted on members of the board, there is no lever, such as the next election, to help ensure responsiveness to needs.

The problem is compounded by the fact that taxpayers and elected officials have little control over the costs to provide the services under the control of special purpose bodies. The bodies usually set their own budgets and determine how the money will be spent. The municipalities are sometimes given the option by the Province of approving the final budget but not items within the budget. The municipal tax dollars are therefore used according to the priorities of the board not the municipality or taxpayer.

Obviously, problems do not arise with every special purpose body. Situations must be reviewed on a case by case basis. Some general questions arise, however, for all cases.

- (1) Can special purpose bodies be more responsive to the needs of citizens? Would the city agencies be more accountable for actions than these bodies? Would city agencies be less protective of the separation of services than the boards of these bodies? Will services necessarily deteriorate if not controlled by a special purpose body?
- (2) Some municipalities have 75% of their budget controlled by special purpose bodies over which they have little control. Can efficient and cost effective budgeting be undertaken in such cases? What options are open to a municipality to do effective management of resources? How can the taxpayer ensure that the taxes are used as effectively as possible? Who can be held accountable?

- (3) What should be the relationship between the Province and the municipality in service delivery?

These are just a few of the issues which municipalities are experiencing. Many of the answers here rely on decisions by the Provincial government. The questions have relevance to the municipal politician and electorate, however, since it is at this level that all programs and decisions must be adapted and administered. Lower levels of government must decide the answer to many of these questions to function properly.



### METROPOLITAN TORONTO

Metropolitan Toronto includes East York, Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough, Toronto and York. The size of this area only allows general issues to be identified and these are presented here. There are, obviously, issues specific to a municipality that may be as important. These should be identified by the borough or city resident and presented to candidates along with those suggested here.

#### CANDIDATES FOR SCHOOL TRUSTEE

Metropolitan Toronto has a two level or tier system for administering public school education for the six municipalities. Each of the five boroughs and the City has an area board of education that operates at the local level. The public school trustees are elected for a two-year term to one of the six area boards of education. This election takes place at the same time and with the same ward boundaries as the municipal elections. There are also separate school trustees elected at large from a municipality to the public school boards -- two for each area board, with the exception of Toronto, which has three. Each area board then chooses from its members the representatives who will serve on the Metro School Board, which is the higher or second tier.

The Metro School Board has responsibility for distributing all the municipal tax levies and Provincial grants to the six area boards. It prepares the education budgets and serves other functions such as salary negotiations with teachers, reviewing problems with public school closings, engaging in long-range planning. The area boards are then responsible for operating within the budget set by Metro and fulfilling the day-to-day responsibilities.

School board trustees have important responsibilities and should be held accountable for the actions they do and do not take during their term of office. About 50% of all taxes collected in the City and five boroughs goes for education purposes. This amount of money as well as the problems faced recently in the education system have made school-related issues much more prominent than in past years. Control on spending, declining enrollment in some schools, accountability of the education system and curriculum requirements are the major problems identified in both the City and boroughs.



Since election of school trustees will be taking place at the same time as the municipal elections, a number of questions should be addressed by the candidates.

- (1) A trustee is the person most directly accountable for the decisions made regarding education in Metro. Because of the importance of this position special attention should be paid to the candidates for trustee. What are their views on the major issues facing both the area boards as well as Metro as a whole? What amount of time are they willing to spend undertaking their responsibilities? Will they keep in close contact with the school personnel and facilities? Why do they want to become a trustee?
- (2) Many of the most important decisions for the area boards are made at the Metro level. These include budgets, handling of teachers, and future planning. Are the people at the Metro level accountable for the decisions they make? Is it known who was on the last Metro Board from each of the areas? Voting records are as important for trustees as they are for politicians.
- (3) Various area boards are being faced with the problem of a decrease in student population. This problem manifests itself in different ways for different boroughs: (a) Etobicoke is the hardest hit to date. The board here is trying to use the extra class space in as innovative a way as possible. Some is being used for community facilities while others are being rented to the Province. Is this an appropriate way of dealing with the problem or should the schools be sold? What are the benefits of keeping the schools and renting them? (b) In Scarborough, the problem manifests in a different way. Although school enrollment is declining in the southern section of the Borough, the north and furthest eastern sections are experiencing increased populations. Should neighbourhood schools be built in the growing areas even though there are schools which would have to be closed in the south? Is busing an alternative to capital expenditures for new buildings? Should taxpayers in the newer sections be allowed a rebate if they do not have "community" schools? (c) North York, York and Toronto may all be faced with drastic enrollment problems in the next few years. All the areas must consider this problem. What guidelines should be established to determine when a school should be closed? Should more than statistics be considered in determining the efficiency of schools and future needs? Should parents be involved in the decisions made?

- (4) As an adjunct to the school closing question, the question of the hiring, firing and treatment of teachers is also relevant. Some boards have fired many teachers only to rehire them in a month or two for a different school or transfer them to another area. Can better coordination of personnel at all levels be done so costs are kept to a minimum, efficiency maintained, and job stability increased? Should the system be continued where the teachers with least seniority are the first to be fired?
- (5) Many people are complaining about the curriculum being taught in some schools. A cry to go back to "basics" is sometimes presented. Do you feel that schools are neglecting basics and need to return to a more structured system? Is this problem really one of the community and parents not having a full understanding of what is done in schools? Would better school/community coordination improve the situation and allow better programming in the schools?

#### CANDIDATES FOR MUNICIPAL POSITIONS

##### Finance

The major sources of finance available for either the local governments or Metro government is through municipal property taxes and Provincial grants. (This is supplemented to a small extent by levies for such things as parking tickets, fees for garbage dumps and any surplus from previous years.)

Provincial grants have been decreasing in terms of the overall budget of Metro. It is now at a level of about 34% of all revenue (excluding education). Many of these grants, however, are given only for specific purposes. For example, the Province gives a yearly grant of \$15 per Metro resident for police services to cover all the boroughs and the City. This amounted to about one-fifth the cost of police services this year. The other four-fifths are paid by municipalities. The Province also picks up about 70% of the operating deficit of the Toronto Transit Commission. Only \$38 million of the approximately \$200 million given by the Province can be used by municipalities and Metro as they determine from their priorities.

The rest of the expenditures that are necessary to run the local and Metro governments must be collected out of property taxes. Taxes in the last few years have gone up in all five boroughs and the City. The rates have varied but most have been in the 15 - 20% range for a three-year period. Ratepayers in all the areas, however, have begun



to react against any new increases whether for education, Metro government or local expenditures. This reaction makes the area of municipal finance one which must be looked at in the local election.

When dealing with finance, however, three factors must be considered equally: how to control spending; the structure of payments from the Province; and tax reform.

- (1) Many of the ratepayer groups are asking for expenditures to be cut at the local level. The real question, however, is how should expenditures be controlled? What specific measures are needed to ensure that the budget process of a municipality is as efficient as possible? The Borough of York has suggested a task force be set up in the Borough to look at their budgeting procedures and make recommendations for improvement. Is this a solution? Or is the question better solved by individual initiatives on the part of council members and department heads?
- (2) The solution that is suggested quite often is to simply cut back on some services. If services have to be cut back, what should be cut and how do we decide? What programs have the lowest priority in the municipality? What about the alternative to cutting services -- increasing efficiency? Is this the area that should be considered first before any drastic measures are taken. Beyond these questions, however, it is essential that the other factors besides spending control be explored fully.
- (3) The level of Provincial support is an issue since there are no other alternatives for money open to the boroughs or the City. Should the municipalities ask the Province for more support? What process should be used to determine what to ask from the Province? (It is not enough to simply demand more money.) Are unconditional grants which allow more flexibility the answer? Other alternatives?
- (4) Since Metro is so tied by the revenue options open to it, what should be done to get new revenue sources? What process should be used here to determine the most appropriate means of new revenue? What about such alternatives as: a percentage of the federal income tax? a municipal income tax? a municipal sales tax? user fees for some services?

#### Transportation

The six municipalities and Metro have major responsibility for the road system in Metro. Major roads are handled at the Metro level with minor throughfares being a local responsibility. The public transit in Metro

is controlled, however, by a special purpose body -- the Toronto Transit Commission. The T.T.C. is not controlled by either level of government (the same as the Metro School Board) although its five-member board is chosen by Metro Council. Both the road systems and the transit are financed by municipal property taxes and special purpose grants by the Province. Since the Provincial grants are fixed, (although sometimes on percentage basis), a portion of any capital expenditure or operating deficit must be absorbed by the municipal tax structure.

There are a number of local issues regarding roads which particular wards or even boroughs and the City might have. They should be easily identifiable at the local level by residents. What is identified here are a number of overall issues which might be useful to consider and have municipal candidates address.

- (1) The largest question in the area of public transit each year is, should there continue to be fare increases? Many people contend that increases limit the use of the system and thus further the T.T.C. deficit. Others argue that there are few options to increasing fares. Should fares be increased? What other measures could be undertaken to sustain the level of service but not increase the deficit of the Transit Commission? Should the T.T.C. be placed under the direct control of Metro Council to make it more accountable to the municipalities who must pay part of its deficit?
- (2) A number of the boroughs are struggling with the problem of what to do about the building of major roads or transit lines. Scarborough wants a transportation line linking the downtown Toronto area with the Scarborough Town Centre. Many people in Scarborough feel that this is essential to allow industrial development in their downtown area -- a concept they are promoting. The decision is one that is ultimately going to affect all the boroughs and the City because of the expenditure needed. The same is true for the question of the extension of Highway 400 or the Allen Expressway. Both of these are supported by members of York and North York since it would help alleviate some of their transportation problems. It would also encourage development of their boroughs through better access to other parts of Metro. Should either of these expenditures be considered, however, if the burden of their cost must come at the municipal levels? What criteria should be used to determine when a new transportation line should be undertaken? Are there other measures which should be encouraged that would substitute for new transportation lines? Should the effect of lines on neighbouring municipalities be considered?



### Housing

Housing is an area which affects all residents in the Metropolitan Toronto area. Whether one rents or owns a home, few people have been unaffected by the increasing costs of housing throughout the area. The increases have resulted in many households moving from the Metro area. Many who might want to own a home are not able to afford one. Many households living in accommodation that does not suit them either from a physical or economic point of view have few options. The reasons for the increases are complex and truly understood by very few. The results are felt by all.

- (1) What can each municipality do to stabilize the cost of both ownership and rental housing? Some suggestions have been smaller lot sizes, smaller impost fees, innovative zoning techniques such as zero lot line housing. What each municipality must decide is how can it help to limit the cost of new housing? What are the tradeoffs that must be made?
- (2) Low cost housing is a problem in all five boroughs as well as the City. The City is the only one which is directly intervening to solve the problem. Should other municipalities assist the Metro Housing Corporation to provide low cost housing in their area? Should Metro set targets to allocate units to those municipalities which are not assisting in this question? Metro has the power to force compliance, but how should the targets actually be set and implemented? Should municipalities develop capabilities to build their own housing or encourage private development?
- (3) Rent review was initiated as a direct intervention in the spiraling costs of rental housing. Should similar measures be considered to regulate market sales of houses?
- (4) Group homes have developed around Metro in the last few years to help adults and children in need. The homes' residents range from the handicapped and the retarded to ex-alcoholics and people on parole. Opposition to group homes have also developed in almost all boroughs. Group homes for the handicapped and retarded are acceptable to most areas but other homes are not. Should a municipality discriminate against certain individuals in need by excluding some group homes being proposed? Should zoning be changed to allow group homes in all areas? some areas?

### Employment & Development

Employment and development patterns are a problem that the boroughs have been struggling with for a number of years. The centralization of employment in the downtown Toronto area is a trend that local councils are trying to reverse. York wants to revitalize its downtown area on the hope that business will be attracted there and it will be in a better financial position. Scarborough has a town centre that they hope will become just that -- the focal point of the Borough of Scarborough both culturally as well as with employment. Etobicoke is also hoping that it can increase its industrial base to become more financially stable as well as solving the problem of concentration of business in a few areas. In one way these ideas for development are not only to help with the tax base but with the unemployment problem felt across Metro as well as the country.

- (1) What steps can be taken to encourage development in the downtown areas of the boroughs? What measures should be followed to ensure that the locations and industries developed in the areas are compatible with the existing land uses?
- (2) Can jobs be stimulated by an effective use of the development controls? Should job creation be considered as important as such things as environmental assessments, control of development in certain areas, financial constraints when politicians are making decisions at the local level?

### Police

The Metropolitan Board of Commissioners of Police is a special purpose body much the same as the Metro School Board and the Toronto Transit Commissions. Excluding the cost of education, the police department uses about 30% of Metro's budget. The Province contributes the same per capita amount to Metro that it does to each of the other municipalities in Ontario. This amounts to about 20% of the police budget. The rest is obtained from property taxes. The police budget is compiled by the Board of Commissioners of Police and has to be approved by Metro Council. Metro Council does not have final authority over the budget, however, since it is the Ontario Police Commission that makes the final decision.<sup>1</sup>

- (1) Should the Police Commission be held more directly accountable for its actions and budgets? Should Metro exert more control over the operations of the police department and the amount of money that it spends?

<sup>1</sup> For further details see Bureau of Municipal Research, Comment, No. 160, July 1976, entitled "Is Policing the Public's Business?".



### Garbage Disposal

The Metropolitan area has traditionally used landfill as a method of disposing of solid waste. The number of landfill sites has decreased and will soon be exhausted. Metro will then be faced with the problem of how to dispose of its waste. There are also varying levels of service which parts of municipalities receive. This can take the form of more frequent collection or whether garbage is placed on the curb or picked up in the back yard.

- (1) What alternatives are open for the disposal of solid waste in the Metro Toronto area? Should recycling be more actively pursued as an option to disposal? Can other citizen participation such as separation of garbage at home be given consideration as an alternative? What options are available to solve this problem at the least expense?
- (2) Should the system of solid waste pickup be analyzed to determine any inequities? Is the level of service which is provided more than needed, satisfactory or less than needed?

### HAMILTON

#### Government

During the past year the Stewart Commission released its report on the review of Regional Government in Hamilton-Wentworth. The report recommended one-tier government and changes in representation, organization, and cost-sharing. The City of Hamilton disagreed with the suggested formula for representation but strongly supported the move to one-tier of government. The outlying areas opposed the changes based on a desire for local autonomy. Because of suburban opposition, however, the provincial government elected not to implement the recommendations of the Commission.

- (1) Is one-tier the only fair way to govern this Region? Are there other groupings which might be supported? Should representation on regional council be strictly by population? Should municipal representatives be urged to cooperate with the representatives of other municipalities in the Region to seek a common solution?

- (2) Should the unified police department be subdivided to the extent that each municipality has its own local policemen who know the locality and its people? Should assessments be shared completely so that no municipality feels the pressure to attract more industry? Should the costs of all public institutions, such as Hamilton Place, be shared by the whole Region?

Hamilton City Council has often expressed its discontent with the City Board of Control. The aldermen feel that the controllers exercise too much power and tend to act without the approval of the whole Council. At a recent meeting the Council voted to abolish the Board of Control. Some kind of Executive Committee chosen from among the aldermen would serve as a replacement. Such drastic changes would require the approval of the Provincial government and hence cannot be implemented immediately.

- (1) Should the Board of Control be abolished? What are the advantages and disadvantages of having a Board of Control? What would be the powers of an Executive Committee? How should the committee members be chosen from among the elected aldermen?



### Waste Disposal

The disposal of waste products is a major problem. The development of a new landfill site in Glanbrook is now being debated before an OMB hearing.

- (1) Should the Region continue to depend in the future on landfill operations for garbage disposal? Does the danger of polluting ground water and stream courses make it best to seek alternatives? Should much more money be invested in SWARU or other garbage reduction and burning units? Should citizens be required to sort their garbage by type: glass, can, paper, etc.?

### Medical Care

Below "the mountain" all the hospitals of Hamilton are in the centre or west end of the City. Residents of the east end and adjoining Stoney Creek have been requesting that a new hospital be built in their area. Meanwhile the old Hamilton General Hospital is scheduled to be renovated at a cost of approximately \$40,000,000.

- (1) Should a new hospital be built in the east end? Should the money assigned to the General be devoted to this instead? If so, what level of facilities should the new hospital provide? If so, what is to be the future of Hamilton General?

### Major Construction

The new Library-Market complex will certainly run over initial estimates in final cost. Tenders received for portions of the construction have all run far beyond the estimates.

- (1) Is the City's method of estimating costs at fault? Should an independent team of economists make a study of the whole estimating and tendering system? Should the City accept the tenders regardless of how high they are?

The Federal government has committed itself to the expansion of the Hamilton Airport, but has not yet budgeted the funds. The Airport is on the margins of the built-up area of Hamilton Mountain and the extensions will take it close to the built up portions of Ancaster. A study has shown this to be the most feasible location.

- (1) Should the City try in some effective way to get the expansion going? Should the construction of the adjoining industrial park and its roads be initiated even before the federal contribution becomes effective? Should the whole idea of having an airport that close to the built up areas be reconsidered? Should some sort of tax-abatement be allowed the existing home-owners who will be within the noise belt of the flight lanes?

Hamilton lacks a good large arena for hockey or other ice competitions. The successful and popular Hamilton Fin-cups hockey team left the City because of the lack of a suitable arena. A referendum voted down one particular arena project. Yet the need for an arena is keenly felt by some and the issue continues to arise.

- (1) Should the City or region commit itself to the construction of an arena? Should it be large enough for a Triple A team? An NHL team?
- (2) Should the City welcome future proposals for a road race, or a similar project? Should the City (or region) exercise control over the planning of such a project?

### Education

Whereas the Separate School Boards of Hamilton and Wentworth have been unified, the Public Schools still operate under two systems, Hamilton and Wentworth. The latter endured a prolonged teachers' strike and lock out during the past Spring. Enrollments are declining but costs are not. Several schools have been vandalized.

- (1) Should the two public school systems be merged into one regional system? What are the advantages and disadvantages of having two systems? Should the trustees and the teachers try to find some way other than confrontation of settling disputes? Should costs be forced down?
- (2) Should some teacher-pupil ratio be set and then costs adjusted as numbers decline (or increase)? Should parents have some meaningful input into school curriculum, course content, and reading lists? Are the cultural needs of the Francophone, and ethnic students being met adequately? Should convicted vandals and/or their parents be required to pay for the damages?

### Transportation

For many years the completion of a freeway belt around the City has been held-up by opposition to the use of the Red Hill valley, and a number of other factors.

- (1) Should a freeway be built? Through the Red Hill Creek valley? If not, how else should a north-south connection be achieved? Should the proposed east-west freeway be constructed as soon as possible? If not, should Highway 53 be changed into a freeway?



Bus service to suburban communities is frequently criticized.

- (1) Should all bus transportation within the region be integrated into one system? Should suburbanites be able to transfer to the City buses? Should bus service to outlying areas be made more frequent? If so, how are the costs to be met? Should public transportation be paid for largely out of taxation? Should the City or region invest heavily in plans for rapid-transit?

#### Taxes

- (1) How can industrial assessment be increased without harming good agricultural land or good housing sites? How can the flight of industries to new locations in Burlington be stopped or reversed?

The enlargement of Lloyd D. Jackson Square has evidently shifted retailing in Hamilton's downtown, to the west. The eastern part of the City core is suffering.

- (1) What kind of special efforts can be made to keep this strip vital and prosperous? The realty market is depressed in Hamilton. What methods or inducements can be devised to keep the older homes attractive to potential buyers? How can the number of unrented apartments be reduced? Should the City interfere in any way in the housing market? How serious is the housing problem in terms of availability and affordability?

#### LONDON

##### The Penitentiary

City Council was favourably predisposed toward locating a prison in the City from the time it was first proposed by the Federal government in late 1976. In this, Council was soon to be supported by the Police Chief, the Free Press, labour, and virtually every social agency. From the start, then, the prison issue was that of finding a suitable site, that is, a site on which the proposed prison would be (at least) tolerated by the majority of residents living nearby. In March of 1977 Council voted by a large (12-3) margin to invite the development of the prison, conditional upon a suitable site being found.

By early August two sites in northeast London had been optioned, and then abandoned in the face of concerted opposition from citizens in the area. In part because of this opposition, Council's early support for the prison weakened to the point where a motion to rescind the March invitation drew 9 YEAS and 8 NAYS, but was lost for want of the required two-thirds majority.

Board of Control then appointed a committee of citizens to recommend one or more suitable sites. The prison committee announced three potential sites in south London in December 1977. It then set about explaining to nearby residents the merits of the prison. Decidedly unswayed by the prison committee's pro-prison line, the hundreds of people who attended the information meetings voted overwhelmingly against situating a prison in their area. But, despite the fact that a significant minority (and possibly a majority) of area residents had recorded their opposition to the prison at public meetings, the prison committee recommended that it be built at one of the south sites. City Council endorsed the location and plans for the prison are now well advanced.

A debate over the desirability of locating a prison in London is something that can go on ad infinitum. There are a number of other issues present here, however, which should be discussed.

- (1) How should the site selection process have been handled? Area residents are opposed to the present site. Is there any way of finding a more suitable location? Can anything be done to appease the local residents?



- (2) How responsive should council members be to the protests of the citizens? Was the committee of citizens a representative group or those who were in favour of the prison in London? Did the committee diffuse citizen protests that should have been handled by the council?
- (3) Is there anything which can be done now to solve the controversy?

#### Talbot Square

This multi-million dollar office-hotel-retail-parking complex ran aground in the Summer of 1975, by which point the footings for the parking garage had been completed. Despite the City's guaranteeing an additional \$1 million for the garage, construction did not resume. The City sealed the site in July 1977, and sued the developer (who responded in kind) for breach of contract in the Spring of 1978. In August 1978 Council turned the project over to Bell Canada, for the construction of administrative offices, for \$4 million. The deal is conditional on London getting clear title to the site (and somehow discharging \$3 million in mechanics liens) by mid-November 1978. Regardless of what happens the project will cost the City of London a great deal of money.

- (1) What happened to the Talbot Square project? Why did it end the way it did? What attempts were made and by whom, to revive it?
- (2) Were there other offers to take over the project? Why did Council accept Bell Canada's offer against the advice of the City administration?
- (3) What should be done to ensure future success? Should the project even be continued?

#### The Boulevard

Largely at the insistence of the East London Businessmen's Association (ELBA), City Council spent \$230,000 of public money on a \$390,000 "busway mall" for a two-block stretch of Dundas Street in East London. The mall opened in late November 1976 as a one year experiment. Only four months later, ELBA, evidently attributing business losses to the mall, was petitioning Council to re-open the mall to traffic. Council voted 14-4 to oblige ELBA in May 1977, using \$7,000 provided by two of the largest retailer's on the mall. Many ELBA members did not want to comment on the mall's demise for the press. The comments that did emerge suggest that the ELBA membership was far from unanimous in wanting the mall re-opened to traffic and that the smaller merchants favoured continuing the experiment.

- (1) What was the basis for the decision initially to undertake the busway mall and then to close it? What evidence did ELBA present regarding the beneficial impact of The Boulevard in the first place? What evidence did it present to document business losses, and then to link these losses causally to the mall?
- (2) Will this experience preclude the establishment of the long considered Dundas Street mall between Wellington and Ridout? What criteria should be used here to determine whether it should go ahead? If it is a success?

#### Methane Gas

On March 21, 1978 a methane gas explosion levelled a house that had been built near a former landfill site, which was presumed to be the source of the gas. The City had the City Engineer compile a list of former dumps and landfill sites, and had a team of consultants conduct systematic tests for methane in and around these sites. Despite the concerns of many individual homeowners that their properties might be endangered by methane gas, Council has not announced its findings to date.

- (1) Are the landfill sites dangerous? When should the findings of the surveys be presented? Why has Council waited to present them?

#### Citizen Appointments

City Council and its standing committees are advised by a number of boards, committees and commissions involving roughly 50 citizens appointed by Council. Currently, interested citizens submit their names to, and are interviewed by, the Board of Control which recommends certain citizens for appointments by Council which, in turn, meets in closed session to approve them. For the year 1977 five of these appointments went to candidates for Council who had been defeated in the 1976 election.

This led to the January 1977 remedial motion that the Board of Control's citizen appointments be debated in public by City Council. The motion lost on a tie vote of 9-9.

- (1) If the citizen appointees are to serve a legitimate and important function in the governmental process, then should the appointment process be designed to select the most qualified applicants?



- (2) Can this be best done by having a close or open debate on who is appointed? How can fairness of decisions and criteria for selection be known if the debates are closed?

#### Warbler Woods

Warbler Woods, named for the Golden-winged Warbler that nests there, is a 150 acre woodland just outside London's southwestern boundary. Along with three other areas among 34 ecologically sensitive natural areas recently catalogued, Warbler Woods has been cited by a team of U.W.O. geographers as having such a rare collection of flora and fauna that "no development should be permitted within the area". A London Developer has since January of 1977 been battling BARG, a group formed to preserve the Woods, for approval to build houses in them. In several recorded votes on the issue, Council has tended to favour the developer by a small margin. It has approved the annexation of the land by the City, although it has also extracted from the developer a dedication of about 50 acres of the woods for open space. An OMB hearing in November is expected to resolve the issue finally. There is no better case for preserving a local area in its natural state than that of Warbler Woods. Nor is there likely to be a better case to illustrate the need for the City to acquire such unique natural areas and to give them the protection of the Official Plan.

An issue which arose during these debates should be noted. A development agreement was made between the developer and the City. This agreement, however, was kept private and, in fact, an alderman was even denied access to the proposal. This incident led to a freedom of information policy which was passed by Council.

- (1) Are the City's negotiations with the developer allowing the best use of the site? What presentations are being made to the OMB? Did the City invite public comment before the agreement was instituted?
- (2) Did the freedom of information policy solve the problem of access to important agreements for both council members and private groups. What other measures should be taken?

#### London Board of Education

Presently the members of the Board of Education are all elected at large. A referendum may be scheduled for this year's election which would ask whether the school elections should take place on a ward basis. A referendum will take place if the Board of Education and the city council can agree on how it will be worded and who will pay for it.

The basic issue to be considered is whether representation by wards would be a more equitable system. Presently many of the board members are from the west side of the City, causing over representation of this segment. With an at-large system, this is a problem which can easily arise.

- (1) Would a ward system ensure that each area had representation on the Board? Would more equitable representation result?
- (2) Would ward representatives be more accountable to the local residents for their decisions? Would this result in merely more interest groups?



## OTTAWA

### FEDERAL-MUNICIPAL ISSUES

The future of Ottawa-Carleton is inextricably linked to the fortunes of the Federal government. Hence many of the most important municipal issues have a large federal component. Municipal politicians across the region's 11 area municipalities can be expected to face the following federally-involved issues both during the election campaign this Fall and their two year terms of office.

#### Shift of Federal Employees to Hull

By next Spring the Department of Public Work's program of relocation will have moved some 20,000 federal employees ( $\frac{1}{4}$  of the total federal employees in the region) to new office complexes in downtown Hull. Numerous effects on Ottawa are starting to be felt, such as:

- \* excess downtown office space (estimated at 4 million square feet);
- \* loss of retail business trade downtown;
- \* more pressure on already inadequate road and bridge system linking Ottawa and Hull.

City politicians have been examining various options including asking the Federal government to slow down the rate of transfer to Hull, revitalizing the downtown core, building a new convention centre and stimulating private sector investment.

- (1) Are the actions being taken by municipal politicians adequate to meet the extensive problems caused by federal employee relocation? What additional pressures can be placed on the Federal government to be sensitive to the problems of Ottawa? How can the transfer of personnel and businesses be countered by the Region?

#### Grants-in-lieu of Taxes

For many years Ottawa has complained of a shortfall in grants-in-lieu of taxes on federal properties. This is estimated at \$30 million, which means about \$150 in extra taxes yearly borne by the average Ottawa homeowner. Ottawa's mayor has threatened to cut off water to federal buildings, a step not supported by regional council (water is a regional service). Other municipalities in the Region are also affected, but Ottawa has the largest proportion of federal buildings.



- (1) What can be done to ensure that the Federal government pays an appropriate amount in lieu of taxes? Should the burden of the federal buildings in Ottawa be carried by the average homeowner? What actions can the City take?

#### NCC Policies

The National Capital Commission is the Federal government's largest landholder with its extensive Greenbelt holdings. Present use and future development plans for these lands affect municipal activities and planning greatly. As well, the NCC has several joint ventures with municipalities. Possible developments for the future are: extension of the western Parkway to CMHC's Woodroffe demonstration project in Nepean Township; leasing of Greenbelt lands for commercial and industrial purposes; more regional parks. Also important is the NCC's overall regional plan which emphasizes a northwest-southeast development axis spanning both the Outaouais Region in Quebec and the Ottawa-Carleton Region -- this runs counter to Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton's official plan.

- (1) Should the National Capital Commission undertake plans for future development without the agreement of the municipalities involved and the Regional municipality? What is the relationship between federal planning and local planning? Does federal planning necessarily take priority?
- (2) What process should be established to involve citizenry and local governments in the federal plans?

#### Other Federal/Ottawa Issues

- (1) Should the local government press the federal level to consider the following policy areas?
- \* need for more bridges joining Ottawa and Hull, especially at Deschenes in the west end and Kettle Island in the east end;
  - \* participation in the Rideau Centre project to help revitalize downtown Ottawa;
  - \* participation in financing a major part of the cost of the long-delayed regional sewage treatment plant for the Outaouais Region. Lack of sewage treatment by the Quebec municipalities has been a major source of animosity on the part of Ontario municipalities whose own efforts to clean up the Ottawa River are nullified by raw sewage from Quebec.

#### REGIONAL PLANNING ISSUES

The Region's draft official plan was adopted in 1974 but planning battles have continued ever since, on a variety of issues. OMB hearings to resolve objections still go on. Major issues include:

- \* Proposed rapid transit routes to the south and west -- Many community groups have objected to the Region's land acquisition plans. Transportation groups have lobbied for consideration of commuter rail system using old railway lines and rights-of-way;
- \* Distribution of regional growth -- RMOC's plans of major growth nodes or areas to the west (Kanata-Glen Cairn), south (Barrhaven-Rideau River) and east have sparked disputes among landowners and municipalities as to their size and necessity. With reduced expectations of growth (RMOC's 1974 projection of 1,000,000 by the year 2000 has been questioned by provincial demographers who now predict 780,000), there may be intensified battles over what areas do or do not need to be developed;
- \* Southeast regional shopping centre -- A planning battle over the location of a major commercial development is before an OMB hearing which began September 11. The City of Ottawa and Gloucester Township are supporting competing bids by developers to win planning approval for sites in South Keys and Blossom Park respectively. The Region supports the Ottawa side;
- \* Conservation-recreation zoning -- The Region has recently proposed that large areas of land especially in the outlying municipalities and along the Rideau River and Ottawa River corridors be zoned conservation and further development be stopped. Naturally many affected landowners are objecting, claiming loss of value and the right to be compensated;
- \* Arterial road system -- The Region is proposing to build new arterial roads through the Overbrook and New Edinburgh communities to link the Queensway to the MacDonald-Cartier bridge to Hull via the existing Vanier arterial. Community groups are opposing these plans as disruptive and unnecessary.

Questions of where transportation, shopping or growth should be located are being actively debated.

- (1) What criteria should local politicians use to determine which of the proposals under the Region's draft official plan they should support? How do the individual interests of the municipalities and the people within them combine to help decide regional growth problems? When should local interests give way to regional concerns?



- (2) If various portions of the draft official plan are rejected at the OMB hearings because of objections, how can the Region still ensure that the overall plan is logical? If the arterial road system is rejected what implications does this have on the regional growth areas or shopping centre?

#### OTTAWA-CARLETON REVIEW (Mayo Report)

The Provincial government's response to The Ottawa-Carleton Review, a 2-year study of local and regional government, was quite modest. As with the Niagara (Archer) and Metro Toronto (Robarts) Reviews, as well as property tax reform, little action was taken on those areas of reform involving controversial issues.

The only major reform to be enacted by Queen's Park was the creation of a new western municipality encompassing the former March Township (containing Kanata), the Glen Cairn and Hazeldean portions of Goulbourn Township and the Bridlewood portion of Nepean Township. The new municipality (whose name will be chosen by referendum on the same ballot as the elections on November 13) was set up primarily so that the development of the western growth area could proceed under one jurisdiction instead of three. Major challenges facing the new city include integration of different planning and service standards, financing a large amount of new infrastructure, division of assets and liabilities, and resolving a major dispute about the location of commercial development (Kanata Town Centre vs. Glen Cairn).

In the Ontario Treasurer's White Paper this Spring, several other reforms were initially accepted but dropped from the legislation in June including, (1) abolishing the separate status of Rockcliffe Village, (2) abolishing Ottawa's Board of Control in favour of an executive committee system. Many other recommendations in the Review which had generated much interest and controversy were left completely alone, e.g.;

- \* creation of a regional police force (Ottawa-Carleton is the only region in Ontario without a regional force)
- \* abolition of many special purpose bodies such as Public Health Board, library boards, etc.
- \* increased regional role in public housing
- \* enlargement of the City of Vanier
- \* creation of regional hydro service
- \* direct election to regional council
- \* change in election of mayors at large to selection by councils.

A further area of critical importance which the Treasurer's White Paper left completely to the Minister of Education was the question of school board reform. The Mayo report made 2 key recommendations regarding school boards: (1) that a French language school board be established serving the whole region; and (2) that the two existing public boards, the Carleton Board of Education and the Ottawa Board of Education, be reorganized geographically so that one board would serve the western half of the region and one board the eastern half.

The French language board received a great deal of support from franco-phone groups including the Association of Franco-Ontarians, but the Province has not responded favourably. The east-west public board reorganization was intended primarily to solve the problems of over-capacity in the Ottawa Board and growing pains in the Carleton Board caused by their central city/suburban geographic split. Numerous past attempts to negotiate agreements between the two existing boards to share space and facilities have ended unsatisfactorily. The Province has not itself devised a workable alternative either to the present problem or Review's recommended solution.

- (1) Was the Ottawa-Carleton Review a good analysis of the problems and solutions of the area? Are the recommendations accepted by the member municipalities? Would the recommendations ensure more effective division of responsibility between the regional and local level of government?
- (2) Should the Province be pressured to respond to the many proposed changes? If the local and regional levels want a particular change, should the Province still reject it? on what grounds?
- (3) Should the issues listed be addressed and actively pursued by local, regional and provincial governments? Should the Province respond to all the issues?



## SUDBURY

### Economic and Environmental

Sudbury is located on a nickel lode in the heart of Northern Ontario's rich mineral deposits. This fact dominates the Sudbury economy, causing Sudbury to assume the role of resource extractor with raw materials being sent to other provinces for refinement and processing.

The dependence of Sudbury on this type of economy has left it extremely vulnerable to changes in international supply and demand in the resource industry. As demand for nickel goes down around the world, the effect on the Sudbury economy can be felt. Major cutbacks by both Falconbridge Nickel and Inco have left many unemployed. The latest Inco cutbacks were an effort to subsidize losses being experienced in Guatemala and Indonesia.

About 11,000 people (13.6%) are currently registered as unemployed. This is a result of both the cutbacks and the strike of approximately 11,700 nickel workers which began on September 15, 1978. Some workers have found jobs in surrounding areas but prospects of absorbing this amount of unemployed are slight.

Obviously this high unemployment will have a detrimental effect on other aspects of the Sudbury economy. Merchants will be particularly hard hit.

Pressure has been increasing at the local level to reduce certain environmental standards and development controls as a method of pumping some life into the local economy. Provincial action has already been forthcoming in this area as air quality standards were reduced to spare Sudbury's two main employers the capital expense involved in meeting the previously strict air quality control standards. At the regional government level, it has been suggested that planning standards also be reviewed in an effort to encourage development which is especially needed in the Sudbury area. Local officials have been encouraging a proposal for the El Dorado nuclear power plant which has a great deal of community opposition but would help to stabilize the economy.

Obviously, local politicians can not solve all the problems Sudbury is experiencing with its economy. A number of issues can be addressed by local candidates, however.



- (1) Although some decisions are controlled by the Provincial and Federal government, what things can be done at the local level to expedite the process? What answers does Sudbury want to its problems? Are local politicians being strong enough in the negotiations with the other levels of government?
- (2) Are reductions in environmental and development controls the answer? Many years have been spent trying to improve these two areas, should this trend be reversed? What are the long term implications of strengthening or reducing controls?
- (3) What other measures can be taken at the local level to help stimulate the economy? Can local officials help, in any way, to end the current strike?

#### Service and Taxation Issues

With an extremely high number of people laid off or on strike, the costs of maintaining a home and a family are being more closely scrutinized. This includes the area of property taxes. Sudbury is facing the same problems of financial resources as other areas of the Province. Provincial grants are reduced but costs of services increase.

Sudbury recently went through a cost control review based on zero based budgeting, a concept which requires each city department to give justification for all the money it wishes to receive during the next year. Reviews such as this should allow the City to establish areas where efficiency might be increased or cutbacks made if necessary. All cutbacks should be according to planned priorities.

- (1) What measures should be undertaken to ensure that municipal monies are spent as effectively as possible? Would full-time aldermen help to ensure that operations and issues are effectively administered?
- (2) What are the priorities of each candidate in terms of which services are essential and which are less essential?

#### Transportation

The Sudbury public transportation system has been experiencing an increase in yearly deficits since its introduction in 1971. The amount of the deficit has some people concerned. In comparative terms, however, the deficit on a per person basis as well as the fare structure places Sudbury in a favourable position compared to many other municipalities in Ontario.

- (1) Is the deficit out of line or can the expenses be justified? Should transit be viewed as an essential service which is provided on an equal basis to all? Should routes which are underutilized be eliminated in an effort to reduce or avoid future deficits?
- (2) Are there other more effective ways of meeting the demand?

#### Citizen Involvement

In the issues previously mentioned and those that have gone unmentioned, an underlying question is raised regarding the citizen's role in the development of these important policies affecting their lives and future. Particularly now with the institution of regional government, some citizens are feeling removed from the process.

- (1) Are citizens consulted enough? Do they feel that the two-tier system of regional government has removed the decision-making process from their easy access? And will the citizens use the upcoming municipal elections as the start of a campaign to re-establish their voice and presence at City Hall?

#### Health Unit

The Sudbury and District Health Unit controls public health services for the City as well as other parts of the region. The Board consists of appointed individuals including some aldermen. The Board is cutting back on a number of health services, including areas like public health nurses. Since the Health Unit is a special purpose body it does not have formal accountability to the citizens of Sudbury. Citizens and elected officials not on the Board can only give input as it is requested.

- (1) Are the cutbacks that are being made ones that are most appropriate? Does the Health Unit have specific priorities that are used to determine which services are cut?
- (2) Are area residents or local councils consulted regarding the cutbacks? Could the process be improved?



## WINDSOR

### Financing and Special Purpose Bodies

There are four small issues which may be linked together by a common thread to form an issue with broader implications. These involve the library system, the Humane Society, the Conservation Authority and the Suburban Roads Commissions. Common to each of these areas is the City's concern that it raises some or all of the money to operate these "special purpose bodies", but has little or no control over the amount of each appropriation and/or the way it is spent.

In December 1977 the City Administration recommended that the City take over the operation of the Windsor public library system and animal control services. At the time the library system was financed (\$2.25 million) by the City and administered by a library board made up of private citizens and two school board representatives. All animal control services, except dog catching, a public works department function, were then provided by the Essex County Humane Society (ECHS) on contract to the City for roughly \$170,000.

The principle underlying the library proposal was "public accountability". Briefly this means that politicians who authorize appropriations should be clearly responsible to the citizens for the way the public money is spent. At present, the library board has control over spending. Transferring the functions of special purpose bodies to departments of the City contributes to public accountability by shortening the chain of command, and making it easier for a voter to assign responsibility for decisions. In the Humane Society case the argument is mainly one of cost savings, although public accountability is also involved. The Administration contended that the public works department could offer all animal control services at a satisfactory level for about \$70,000 less than the total City-ECHS service costs combined. City Council was unconvinced and defeated the proposal in a 5-3 vote.

- (1) Should special purpose bodies be replaced by departments of the City which could be held more directly accountable? Would the departments and elected officials be more responsive in making decisions?
- (2) Would the City be better able to provide services such as libraries directly? Would this reduce the tendencies of some special purpose bodies to be protective of their area of authority?



- (3) What evidence should be presented by the city administration to convince council that their proposals are not only workable but cost efficient? Can costs be cut by having the City administer these?

Costs were also at the heart of City Council's objections at budget time to the budgets of the Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA) and the Windsor Suburban Roads Commission (WSRC). Both of these bodies are mandated by the Province to set their own budgets, to which member municipalities must contribute according to formulas again set by the Province. Windsor is the largest contributor to the two bodies. It pressured both bodies to reduce their budgets, not only because it viewed the proposed increases as inflationary, but also because it felt that Windsor's benefits were not commensurate with its financial contributions.

- (1) Is the takeover of the ECRA and the WSRC by the City of Windsor a viable way to enhance accountability and decrease the cost to Windsor?
- (2) Is there another method to evaluate the use of two levels of government -- regional and local -- to provide services? The Silcox Report on regional government suggests some breakdown of responsibilities. Are these viable alternatives to the problems of accountability and cost?

#### The Proposed Windsor International Plaza

The WIP was to have been a \$33 million hotel-commercial complex situated on land adjacent to the city-owned Cleary Auditorium. The project was promoted by two businessmen and an architect who had to rely entirely on outside financing, and who had no previous experience with such a large project. Their proposal was one of two responses to a request from the Mayor and Council, who had been trying for some years to improve Windsor's attractiveness as a convention centre. But, despite Council's grant of numerous extensions to financing deadlines over a year and a half (latterly against the advice of the Administration), the promoters failed to secure "adequate" funding guarantees by the final May 1978 deadlines. The word adequate is emphasized because the City Administration rejected the promoters' claims to have secured adequate guarantees. City Council, on the recommendation of the Administration, thereupon voted to end its longstanding in principle agreement with WIP. Following this decision the City resumed its search of some five years for a viable proposal for a major downtown hotel development.

- (1) Is the idea of a downtown hotel development one which is viable for Windsor? Should politicians be spending such a great deal of time on the project to pursue future sites and developers?
- (2) Are there other ways of increasing the economic base? the attractiveness of Windsor? What are the priorities of the citizens?

#### Health Care

As a result of cutbacks at the Provincial level, Windsor is experiencing problems with its medical care facilities. Whole departments are being closed in some cases. The Ministry of Health has ordered the four city hospitals and Essex County District Health Council to develop a complete plan of reorganization by November 30, 1978. The idea is to establish which units in which hospitals will be closed and which hospitals will lose active beds. Although this matter is not one which is under the jurisdiction of the City Council, it does have implications for Windsor. As such, a number of issues arise.

- (1) Should the City take a stand on which units should be closed and where? Are there areas where the City feels that certain facilities are essential for the City's well being?
- (2) If jobs are going to be lost to any degree will this have an adverse effect on the community? Are measures by the City needed to counter this?

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