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Council seeks public's opinion on funding hospital project

Halton Hills council will host a public meeting Monday, Jan. 24 to solicit public opinion on whether or not the Town should fund an expansion of Georgetown Hospital to the tune of \$4.5 million.

The meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. in the council chambers at the Halton Hills Civic Centre, 1 Halton Hills Drive.

At the January 10 council meeting Halton Healthcare Services formally requested financial support from the Town in the amount of \$4.546 million toward an expansion and renovation to accommodate a CT scanner at the Georgetown Hospital and increase the area of the emergency department.

Georgetown Hospital first opened its doors in 1961. Since then there has been significant growth in the town and the hospital now faces daily challenges meeting the healthcare needs of the community, particularly emergency and diagnostic imaging services.

In 2009 Halton Healthcare Services received approval from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to acquire and operate a CT scanner at the Georgetown Hospital. The existing building requires renovations to accommodate this new service.

HHS has proposed that this project be funded through funds generated by HHS as well as the community. The current

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**RICK
BONNETTE**

projected cost of this project is \$12.196 million. The Georgetown Hospital Foundation has committed \$5 million, HHS \$2.4 million and the Georgetown Volunteer Association \$250,000.

Based on the current estimated costs, HHS has asked Town council to consider the contribution of \$4.546 million.

Halton Hills Mayor Bonnette said, "We all recognize the importance of the Georgetown Hospital to our community. Making grants to hospitals while possible, is not a usual mandate of a Town."

"Other communities have given financial grants to their hospitals. Therefore in considering such a grant request, Town council wants to hear from the community because if council gives such a grant it will need to raise property taxes to do so. We hope the community will respond with comments on the Town website or in person at the council meeting on Jan. 24".

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