

# Councillors cut \$39,530 from capital budget

By **STUART JOHNSTON**  
Staff writer

Approximately \$39,530 of taxpayers' money was cut from the town's capital budget Tuesday during council's first run at trimming expenses for 1993.

While the majority of the various department's 53 projects remained intact, only a handful were either trimmed down in size or tossed altogether.

In all, the total tally of the capital budget sits at approximately

\$7.9 million, but only about \$877,000 is made up from taxes. The rest is compiled from grants, subsidies, development fees and debentures.

By far, the majority of projects, and the most expensive ones, belong to the engineering department,

which will require \$519,000 in tax money next year.

However, council's trimming earlier this week was only their first kick at the cat. They next have to review the operating budget, which deals with salaries, garbage pickup, snow removal and such, sometime in December. All decisions will be in principle only, until council formally adopts the budget in February.

Councillors credited the departments' tight budgets for the small amount of cuts required this time around.

The evening began with an eager mayor Russ Miller suggesting that cuts must be made in the budget in order to keep taxes down.

"Staff has done a wonderful job with their budgets, but we must be serious here," he said. "People are hurting out there...and I'm going to be picking on all projects."

However, from that point on, Miller refrained from voting one way or the other throughout the discussions, and left the meeting early. Councillor Norm Elliott cau-

tioned his colleagues from eliminating projects just for the sake of trimming. "If the mayor wants to approach the budget that way, why are we sitting here discussing it?" he asked. "We just sat down and already we're hearing the 'people are hurting' speech...We're here to examine each item, and then make an educated decision on what can be cut."

In the end, council agreed to eliminate \$30,380 from the various departments' computer budgets, which originally totaled \$205,380. The tax portion of that, \$130,380, was trimmed to \$100,000. Council left staff to decide which hardware and software they need the most.

They also took out \$14,500 from the fire department's future reserve fund, allocating \$75,500 instead of \$90,000.

Councillors also believed a pathway through Acton's Rotary Park was an extraneous project, and sliced it from the budget altogether. The path's total cost was \$18,300, half of which would have been paid by the taxpayers.

## Water woes may end for 6th Line residents

More than two dozen rural Limehouse residents are one step closer to solving their water woes by hooking their homes into Georgetown's municipal water supply.

A regional committee dismissed a staff report last Wednesday that suggested more negotiations be held on whether or not, and how, the residents should hook into the town's water supply.

They agreed with residents' spokesman Tony Harborow that the Sixth Line/20 Sideroad homeowners have been waiting long enough for a solution to their taint-

ed well water, and urged staff to formalize an agreement.

For the past two decades, the 44 homeowners in the area have experienced serious water problems, and have long sought a solution. For some time now, they have been forced to truck water in from Georgetown to supplement their supplies.

In early summer, the majority of the residents proposed extending Georgetown's municipal pipeline another two kilometres and hook it into their homes, at their own expense.

Due to fiscal and legal ques-

tions, regional councillors at the time told their planners to look into the matter further.

The total cost of the project is estimated at \$400-500,000, which will be shared equally over the next 10 years by the 26 homeowners willing to be hooked in.

Although Harborow strongly disagreed, councillors nevertheless sided with their planners that the residents pay additional fees totaling at least \$64,000 for processing the proposal.

Regional councillors reaffirmed their decision at council Wednesday.

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**NEXT WEEK: Surge protection and why all electronics must be protected**

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