

Downtowns need work—consultant

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However, Willis said work still needs to be done in the Downtown Georgetown area including improvement on the second storeys, which are under-utilized, side streets, which are still areas of opportunity for revitalization and investment, and enhancement of the historic features.

"Downtown Acton does not have the locational advantages of other retail areas in the town," said Willis, "and probably suffers from competition from surrounding communities. Being a smaller community by nature it is not able to support some of the services that are becoming more and more central (i.e. banks)."

He pointed out the busy through traffic, which doesn't have the advantage that Downtown Georgetown does of being able to slow down traffic and getting people to stop and shop.

"It certainly could benefit from numerous CIP tools and we're looking at it as a key candidate," Willis said.

The GO Station lands represent a significant opportunity to "showcase" appropriate intensification. "This is another area where CIP investment tools could be brought to bear to support the planning objectives on the site."

Willis said there is currently intense pressure on agricultural areas from urban and market forces—often beyond the control of the Town—but there may be opportunity to create marketing opportunities.

Wards 3&4 Regional Councillor Jane Fogal asked the consultants to look at the two older industrial areas of Georgetown and Acton.

The total cost of the CIP will be \$136,000. In March, the Town received word it will receive \$68,000 from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. The Town will make up the difference. However, the Town is partnering with the Region to apply for a \$50,000 Rural

Economic Development grant.

In August the consultants will finalize its strategy and present it to council for approval. If approved, the project moves into Phase 2, which includes the preparation of specific incentive programs and decision-making required for each key area.



Cool shades

Gerald Rennie of Acton tries on a pair of shades Saturday during the Acton Seniors' Centre's annual garage sale. Proceeds from the sale go towards future renovation and expansion of the centre. Rennie is an original member of the centre which was formed in 1987.

Photo by Calvin Dyke



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