

O'Leary pleads for Main St. S. improvements

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

A plea for staff to "massage" the budget so "intolerable" Main Street South road conditions in Acton can be fixed sooner, not later, was made by Acton Councillor Mike O'Leary at the Town's budget overview meeting on Tuesday.

Staff will report back on his request, and those made by other councillors, on Monday when the budget committee – all councillors and the mayor – begins debate on this year's operating and capital budgets.

As it now stands, with no further changes, the proposed operating budget would require \$20.4-million in taxes – a five per cent tax increase over last year, or \$50 more on a house assessed at \$300,000 for Town taxes. Two of the five per cent tax increase is dedicated to the Town's multi-year road improvement program. Treasurer Ed DeSousa said the Town received \$295,000 more than expected in assessment growth – taxes from new houses and business.

"It is quite a large increase (in assessment) and that's why we are able to bring the budget (increase)

down from 6.3 down to five (per cent)," he said.

He said the budget does not include any new equipment or expansion of existing programs. New staff includes three employees in the building and part-time firefighters with the third fire station.

Several councillors, including Town/Regional Ward 1/2 Councillor Clark Somerville raised concern with various items on a list of proposed cuts to further decrease the budget and proposed tax increase.

He suggested they might be "pound wise but penny foolish" to cut back on the amount they spend on materials to repair sidewalks, for gravel patching and gravel road shoulder maintenance programs.

On the issue of repairing Main Street, Councillor O'Leary wants staff to come up with enough federal gas tax money to do the engineering work this year and the \$553,300 reconstruction from Knox Street to the southerly urban limit, in 2007, not 2009 as forecast.

He said that his colleague, Councillor Clark Somerville, calls the road, which is a gateway- a main access into Acton, a "goat path," and residents complain that the condition of the road is "just intolerable."

Budget Overview

The largest project in the proposed \$10.7-million capital budget is a third station for the fire department. Other major projects include \$1.2-million for pavement management, \$1-million for the realignment of the Fifth Line, \$500,000 for construction of Eastern Avenue and \$500,000 for phase two of the Acton Sports Park.

The 2007-2015 capital forecast of \$69-million represents \$7.7-million per year of capital projects over the next nine years.

The Town has been setting aside money in a pay-as-you-go fund to avoid taking on debt for new projects,

but there's \$37-million in project requests and only \$11-million in pay-as-you-go funds.

The total tax bill – Re-

gional, Town and education – at this point would be \$3,367 on a house assessed at \$300,000. That's a 3.1 per cent increase from last year.

The budget committee will hear from delegations on Monday (January 16)

and has three nights booked for debate this month.

Council will discuss how to pay for a new library in Georgetown at a meeting on January 31, and final approval of the budgets is slated for the February 6th council meeting.

ACTON ROTARY CLUB ELIMINATION DRAW AND WINTER WARMER

at the

Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 197 - Acton

Saturday, January 28th, 2006

400 tickets available at \$50 each

You do not need to attend to win

The event is to raise funds for the Rotary Band Shell to be built in Prospect Park in 2006

There will be cash prizes and the final ticket drawn will receive an

- Alaskan Dream Cruise for two - Outside cabin
- Airfare from Toronto to Vancouver is included
- Cruise departs Vancouver, B.C. - July 2006

There will be entertainment throughout the night starting at 7p.m. and lunch served at 9p.m.

Tickets are available from

- Alexanians Carpet & Flooring
- Profile Hair Salon
- Halton Hills Furniture & Appliance
- Any Rotarian
- or telephone at 853-2423



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Burnt toast, gas leaks

A homeowner met arriving Acton firefighters and told them that smoke from burnt toast set off an alarm at the residence on the Fifth Line, just south of Highway 7, at 11:32 last Thursday morning.

Gas leak

A Pearl Court homeowner who called the fire department about gas leaking from

a neighbour's car was advised to call police if it happened again.

Acton firefighters were called to the scene at 2:16 last Tuesday by the homeowner who reported gasoline was leaking from the car parked on the street.

Firefighters used absorbent to mop up the gas, and the owner agreed to move the car by the end of the day.



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FITNESS CENTRE HOURS
MON/TUES. 5AM-1PM, 3:30PM-10PM FRI. 7AM-1PM, 3:30PM-9PM
WED. 7AM-1PM, 3:30PM-10PM SAT/SUN. 7AM-3PM
THURS. 5AM-1PM, 3:30PM -10PM