

Higher taxes will likely result

from POMEROY on page 1

That \$260,000 will likely have to come from property taxpayers, and if it does it means roughly \$1.50 each, or an 11 per cent tax increase instead of the previously planned 10.5 per cent hike. Rather than \$30.50 in additional property taxes per homeowner in 1992, the bill will come to about \$32.

The other option is to cut services, and the increase would be lessened accordingly, but that carries costs as well and it will be up to Halton regional councillors to determine how much of one measure and how much of the other to adopt, Halton chief administrative officer John Fleming said Thursday.

"There are a whole series of difficult, complicated ideas council could consider. They can raise taxes or lower service levels. It's up to them."

Regional Chairman Peter Pomeroy said the impact on Halton's budget is "pretty profound."

He also criticized the provincial government for failing to seize the initiative in the area of public sector salary caps.

"I would have liked to see a leadership role in the area of wages."

If all public sector wages had been capped at a one per cent increase, for instance, then Ontario's 800 municipalities would be spared ongoing negotiations, with the attendant cost savings — and the provincial government would have sent a stronger message on restraint, Mr. Pomeroy said.

"I expected to see that", he said.

Although he acknowledged that wage demands will probably be softened by the economic downturn, Mr. Pomeroy said that in Halton "we have people all over the wage scale," with some groups vying for a six per cent boost and others prepared to accept two per cent.

As matters stand, "there appeared not to be any real vision for our future," out of Queen's Park. "I was a little disappointed."

The TV show was basically a rerun, Mr. Pomeroy added. "The presentation was mostly a regurgitation of the difficulties Ontario has. I already knew that. I do not need a TV program."



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