

Six Nations receive \$2.4 million water line boost

By Donna Duric
Writer

The outdated water main in the village of Ohsweken is going to be replaced next year after Six Nations Band Council agreed to a three-way funding split with the federal and provincial government for the \$2.4 million project.

Six Nations elected council announced Wednesday that construction on the water main project will begin next spring after both the federal and provincial government agreed to pitch in \$790,000 each, while Six Nations commits the remaining third toward the project cost and any additional costs.

The \$790,000 is coming out of Band Council's minor capital fund.

The water main replacement will begin in front of the Six Nations Housing building on Chiefswood Road at Bicentennial Trail and extend down to Fourth Line Road in

the village of Ohsweken.

That water main replacement is part of band council's larger plan to pipe water throughout the entire territory, an ambitious quest that is expected to cost anywhere between \$120 and \$150 million.

"We want to replace it just so we can have the capacity so we can start extending the water main (throughout the whole reserve)," said Public Works Director Mike Montour.

Currently, water flow in the village is restricted because the water main is too small, he said.

The current size of the small, six-inch diameter watermain causes problems not only for future expansion, but for adequate fire protection should a large blaze break out in the village.

"If the GREAT building and White Pines Health Complex caught fire, we would not be able to put it out," Montour

said.

The announcement was made at the new \$40 million, state-of-the-art Six Nations Water Treatment Plant, which became operational last year.

Currently, only residents in Ohsweken have piped water from the water treatment plant. Rural Six Nations residents rely on wells and cisterns.

The water main replacement project will involve tearing up Chiefswood Road to install a 12-inch pipe next spring, which Montour warns will cause traffic disruptions, but there will be no disruptions to water service during construction, he said. Montour said since the road will be under construction for the water main, council is using the opportunity to put in a left-hand turning lane at the reserve's busiest intersection at Chiefswood Road and Fourth Line Road.

Brant Conservative MP Phil



Councillors Bob Johnson, Melba Thomas, Brant MPP Dave Levač, MP Phil McColeman, Elected Chief Ava Hill, councillor Helen Miller, SAO Dayle Bomberry and Public Works director Mike Montour at the announcement

McColeman, who is currently campaigning to keep his seat in the House of Commons in the upcoming fall election, said the money is coming out of the federal government's Small Communities Fund.

"We are pleased to invest in projects such as the watermain replacement for the Six Nations of the Grand River that will benefit our community by improving much needed local infrastructure," McColeman said.

"Our Government's commit-

ment to municipalities, big and small, has never been stronger. Through the 'New Building Canada Plan, Small Communities Fund,' we are investing in priority infrastructure projects that have a strong impact on the quality of life of Ontario's residents while helping job creation and economic growth."

Elected Chief Ava Hill said water main expansion throughout the whole territory is a "top priority" for band council.

Brant Liberal MPP Dave Levač said the project is a good example of teamwork and putting partisan politics aside to help Six Nations to have access to safe drinking water.

"Today's investment in water infrastructure addresses an important local need, and will help to ensure that the people of Ohsweken in the Six Nations of the Grand River community continue to have access to safe, clean drinking water for many years to come," he said.