

TOWN OF WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

GET INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Council is seeking interested residents to sit on:

MILLENNIUM EVENTS COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Millennium Events Committee is to act as a catalyst, partner and facilitator in local events for the year 2000.

The Committee shall endeavour to unite service groups and businesses in Whitchurch-Stouffville which will assist in the organization and implementation of activities.

The Committee shall converse with other Town committees for ideas/suggestions (e.g. Strawberry Festival Committee, Parks and Recreation Committee) and include and amalgamate ideas with other towns and cities to incorporate the concept of millennium celebrations throughout Canada.

Application forms may be obtained at the Clerk's Department, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday and at the Public Library, Recreation Complex and Museum.

Application forms should be delivered in person, by mail or by fax (905-640-7957) by 4:30 p.m. Thursday, May 16, 1998.

Personal information is collected under the legal authority of the Municipal Act, R.S.O., 1990, c.M.45 and will be used to determine eligibility for appointment.

Regional taxes to rise \$90 to pay for roads

LISA QUEEN
Metroland Staff

The average tax bill in York Region is expected to increase by almost \$90 this year after regional councillors committed \$10 million to improving

York's inadequate road network.

Last Thursday's decision by the finance committee, which oversees all departmental budgets before sending them on to council for final approval, doubles the \$5-million boost to the roads budget the transportation committee agreed to two weeks ago.

The extra funding could result in a 2.5 per cent tax increase on the total property tax bill. The average homeowner will see his taxes go up about \$88 this year, unless local municipalities and the school boards can reduce their spending.

More than a quarter of the region's \$335-million budget will go to help pay for Toronto's social services. After years of watching the roads bud-

BUDGET

get slashed to keep taxes down, the transportation committee agreed spending had to be increased this year.

Transportation committee members were hesitant to increase the budget by \$10 million, the amount transportation commissioner Kees Schipper warned is needed every year for the next several years to make up for the cuts.

But finance committee members argued the region's growth depends on hiking the roads budget dramatically this year.

The \$21-million capital roads budget will be used to widen existing roads and build new ones. The operation budget for roads, including plowing, is \$14 million.

The neighbourhoods, which will house tens of thousands of new residents, will be completed in the next couple of years, while the regional roads aren't slated to be built for up to a decade.

New road construction is financed 70 per cent by development charges, the fees on new homes. But existing taxpayers are responsible for 30 per cent of the bill.

Whitchurch-Stouffville Mayor Wayne Emerson said the region must make it clear the tax increase is not a way of getting back at the province.

"It's not the year to raise taxes to make the province look bad. It's the year to spend money because residents need the roads in place."

The roads aren't the only thing responsible for the tax increase. For example, the police budget is climbing from \$64.2 million to \$72.2 million.

the welfare budget is jumping from \$10 million to \$82.5 million, including \$52.3 million being sent to Toronto.

social housing, which the province had paid for in the past, will cost property owners \$76 million, including \$41.3 million going to Toronto.

public health expenses are jumping to \$11.9 million from \$1.9 due to provincial downloading.

\$411,000 will be spent this year upgrading the regional headquarters.

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