

# Stouffville Sun-Tribune

SATURDAY, JAN. 29, 2005 ■ SERVING THE COMMUNITY OF WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE ■ 36 PAGES/\$1 INCLUDING GST



17 Our panel picks favourite beer for Super Bowl Sunday

Health .....	4
Opinion .....	6
Sports .....	12
Classified .....	19

## REGION TRIMS TAX HIKE TO 6%

Transit, police, roads budgets lose funding

BY ROY GREEN  
Staff Writer

York Region is considering nearly \$14 million in cuts to its 2005 budget, meaning residents would face a 6.1-per-cent tax hike instead of the 8.9-per-cent increase proposed in the first draft.

Regional politicians are hoping they can make further cuts by the time the finance committee meets next week.

During a budget workshop Thursday, councillors looked at staff proposals to trim the taxpayers' portion of the budget from \$45.9 million to \$32 million.

No current services or programs would be cut but there would be reductions in service expansion or new services.

### SOLID WASTE CUT

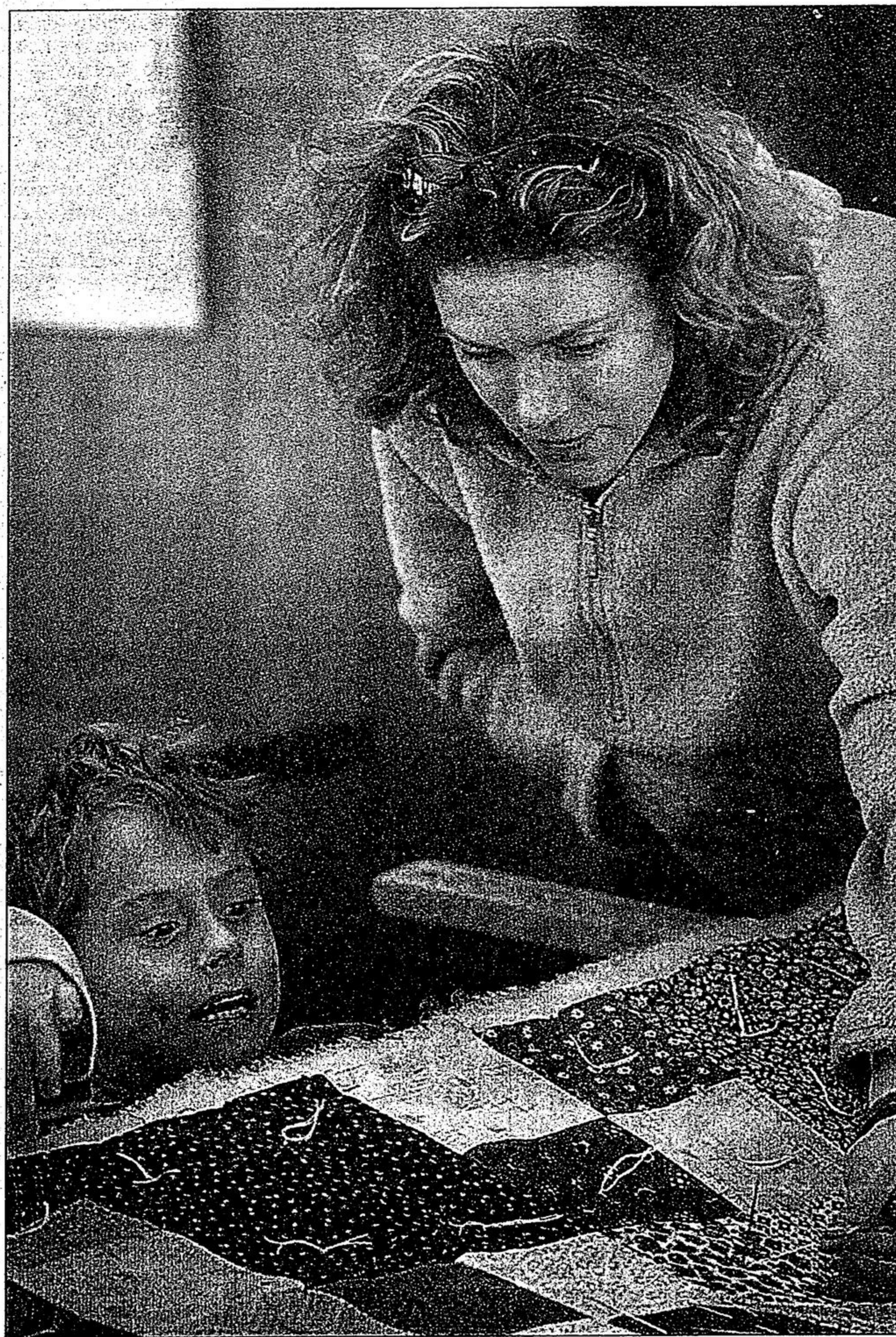
The plan includes \$2.6 million in cuts from transit, \$3 million from the roads budget and \$1 million from solid waste.

But it also calls for \$2.9 million to be trimmed from the \$154-million police budget, which must first be approved by the police services board and Chief Armand La Barge.

Police board chairperson Dave Barrow promised the board will consider extending the chief's five-year plan to hire 378 new officers over six or

See MORE, page 10.

## What's up, Matthew?



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Matthew Doyle, 6, pops up from underneath a quilt to watch his needle come through during a quilting bee for students at Willowgrove Primary School on McCowan Road. His mother, Claire Doyle, provides assistance. The students made two quilts, which will be sent overseas by the Mennonite Central to assist with tsunami relief.

## 'Justify greenbelt plan': Tories

Public hearing on plan Tuesday in Markham

BY MIKE ADLER  
Staff Writer

It's time the Ontario government properly explained its greenbelt plan to those whose lives it will change, Conservative Leader John Tory says.

Tory MPPs have stepped up criticism of the plan, which would restrict development in most of York Region, calling it rushed and based "on political science" instead of natural science.

But when asked in an interview to prove these charges, Mr. Tory only mentioned some mistakes in mapping for the greenbelt, such as a garbage dump included in error and a farm that was half in the greenbelt and half out.

### AGREE ON SCIENCE

He did not dispute the greenbelt consultation period is longer than consultation for the Tories' Oak Ridges Moraine protection plan or that the same scientific principles were used for both plans.

But unlike with the moraine, an "obvious topographical feature" that is the source of local rivers, the greenbelt's proposed natural heritage system is much more complex and includes enough "strange little zigs and zags with no rational explanation at all", that someone could conclude it's not based on proper science, Mr. Tory said.

Such arguments and more calls for compensation for farmers are likely to be heard

See FARMERS, page 9.

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