

Oakville Beaver

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Town launches new hospital survey

Should the Town of Oakville chip in \$200 million to help build the new Oakville hospital?

The Town wants area residents to weigh in on that question and is launching a massive consultation campaign to make sure they do.

Beginning this week, all Oakville households and businesses will receive a survey asking for an opinion on the \$200 million local share funding contribution requested by Halton Health Care Services.

This written survey will be followed by a telephone survey of 600 residents, which will begin on Monday, Feb. 1, and a public meeting on the funding issue, scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 11, from 7 - 9 p.m.

Staff will report the results of the public consultation campaign to council on Monday, March 1.

"I believe that the proposed new hospital will enhance the quality and scope of health care services provided to our community, and this is key to the health and well-being of our citizens," said Oakville Mayor Rob Burton.

"At the same time, financing a \$200 million contribution to the hospital is a significant decision, and we want to hear the public's views on this issue."

The Province of Ontario has agreed to fund 90 per cent of the cost of the hospital's construction with the hospital responsible for funding the remaining 10 per cent of the construction costs and 100 per cent of the furnishings and medical equipment costs.

The hospital must also pay 100 per cent of construction costs for retail space, cafeteria and future expansion space.

In light of this Halton Health Care Services estimates that it requires a total local share of \$530 million.

The Oakville Hospital Foundation has committed to raising \$60 million from donors while hospital revenues are expected to generate an estimated \$270 million.

Under the proposed funding agreement the Town would begin paying its \$200 million portion of the local share costs in 2015.

The estimated tax impact of such a funding contribution would begin at \$15 per year per \$100,000 of assessment in 2015, increasing to \$35 per year per \$100,000 of assessment over 30 years.

While the Town would not have to begin paying until 2015 Halton Health Care President John Oliver noted the commitment to pay needs to be made now as the hospital must demonstrate that it can pay all of the local share costs before it can tender the project for construction.

"The \$200 million contribution from the Town of Oakville towards the local share is a crucial step in securing Ministry of Health approval to move our project to the next phase. We are scheduled to tender the project this spring, begin construction in 2011 and open the new hospital in 2015," said Oliver. "As a community, we have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create a state-of-the-art hospital, which will have built-in capacity to expand with Oakville's growing and aging population."

The proposed new hospital will replace Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital (OTMH), which no longer has the capacity to expand in its current location.

The Province of Ontario has donated 50 acres of land at Third Line and Dundas Street for the new hospital.

If constructed the new hospital will be one of the first facilities in Ontario built to the new provincial government standards and will include:

- a higher percentage of single-patient rooms to reduce the risk of infection and promote healing;
- increased patient privacy and comfort;
- enhanced clinical support systems;
- additional diagnostic services;
- a new cancer therapy program,
- sleeping areas and lounges for families,
- 457 beds (OTMH now has 320) with capacity to move to 600 by 2018/2019.

For more information on the new Oakville hospital visit www.newoakvillehospital.com.

The hospital funding survey can also be found online at www.oakville.ca.