

Burlington Chamber of Commerce Survey



Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital Expansion Funding

Survey conducted February 25 to March 7, 2010

Total Responses: 162

	<u>10 yrs</u>	<u>15 yrs</u>	<u>20 yrs</u>	<u>>20 yrs</u>
Tax Levy spread over how many years?	53	32	38	30

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
Which year to start tax levy?	40	112

	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Total Agree</u>
2010 Portion from Hydro	22	50	54	33	54.7%
2010 Portion from City Surplus	18	27	67	47	71.7%
2010 Portion from Existing Taxes	43	53	42	21	39.6%

Comments:

- In submitting knowledgeable answers, it would be helpful to know the timeline over which the expansion is set to take place, therefore providing a sound basis to determine how long the levy might need to last.
- Profits from the Performing Arts Centre should also fund JBMH. I cannot believe that the city put the PAC ahead of the needs of its citizens' health and JBMH.
- I feel the business community and citizens have to face the music and pay for this primarily through a special tax levy starting right away. The condition should be that the province agrees to go ahead with the project ASAP. If for some reason this does not happen the city has to refund this special tax to business and citizens.
- What is JBMH doing for fundraising themselves. Have they looked to past contributors? How does Oakville get the job done now having two hospitals?
- If there is a 2009 operating surplus, that would suggest that there is some room in the existing annual income to at least partially fund the JBMH expansion. Without knowing what percentage \$60 million represents in the total budget it is difficult to answer the above. Is \$60 million even the correct amount that the City should kick in?
- There is no doubt, that a more modern facility is required. Whether we increase taxes(worst option), lower services(best option), use surplus or dividend, the question I have relates to location, cost associated with new facility vs. working around existing facility and ability to sell current land at a premium for other purposes. I would hate to see us going through expensive work around solutions, when a new facility from a fifty year perspective makes better economic sense.
- the tax levy should be spread over the useful life of the expansion
- JBMH funding has a greater priority than pet, "wild-goose chase" projects of Council.
- The hospital should first be directed to do an ask of all households in Burlington to make a donation towards the redevelopment. The hospital is being allowed to take the easy route by taxing homeowners and not renters and just taking the money from the pocket of homeowners and business owners. Why doesn't the hospital have to do some work and make the case to each and every one of us and if we buy their story, we be asked to send in a donation. Send a mailing to all of us with a self addressed envelope so we can send a cheque or give credit card info - it will be cheaper than the survey of a few hundred people. Send a blast email through the Chamber's email network and give us a button to click to make a donation.
- Is there a phase 2? Do these numbers double if there is a phase 2? Delay any tax levies until ministerial approval is received.
- While I think a special levy over 20 years is the least cost route for a home owner I have no faith that it would ever come off and it would likely be required again in 20 years since the original hospital would be getting really old buy then and the expansion will be well aged as well.
- I think it should be portioned between property tax levy, Burlington Hydro and city operating surplus rather than an either/or scenario.

Comments cont'd:

- The city should reprioritize its capital spending to pay for the hospital. No additional levy is required. They can raise debt and fund along with everything else.
- I have little faith that a 20-year levy will ever come off particularly since in 20 years JB will likely require more upgrading. The original building would close to 90 years old by then I do believe. Maybe annual surpluses should be always sent in that direction although I suspect our surplus this year is likely attributable to our lack of snow we can't rely on that so lets use it now while we have the chance.
- It is important the city come to the table with this funding or we could "lose our place" in the ministry's priority hospital projects. Ten years is appropriate since population growth could well make further expansion necessary after 10 or 15 years.
- Don't think we should be affected by increases in tax' parking costs alone are ridiculous when at the hospital
- Let's not forget that a portion of the \$312M is for parking spaces. Each parking space is approximately \$30,000 (realistic numbers). This portion should be offset through parking fees so I think they should reduce the \$312M by the amount of the cost of parking. Then we have a realistic amount that should be shared as part of the 1/3 scenario. JK. (In other words why would taxpayers contribute to parking if the expense or investment is paid off through parking fees.) Having revenue to offset an expenditure should not be a taxpayers responsibility
- Since local taxpayers are financing for some of this expansion, it is hoped that local businesses would be given preferences in providing equipment or services required in this expansion. Perhaps local businesses would also be interested in discounting their products or services if they are given such preferences.
- I encourage all Burlingtonians to vote wisely in the next elections and remove those in either provincial, regional or municipal elected who have defaulted on the effective governing and distribution of current tax levies
- Funding of the JBMH expansion through property taxes is utterly ridiculous. Where do the large components of our personal Federal and Provincial income taxes including the Ontario Health Premium go??? These are the questions that our local elected politicians should be asking - is this not their job and why they were elected in the first place - instead of taking the easy way out. When our levels of government stop putting their hands in our pockets?? There is nothing left.
- The fact is that we need to re-develop our hospital. The fact is that we, as a community, must be part of the financial solution. The fact is that the City has ongoing budgetary obligations and will need to look for new money of a substantial amount. A Tax levy is inevitably necessary. And we, as Chamber members, must be prepared to advocate to the community our shared obligation to make this capital redevelopment happen with or without the Province coming onside with their financial contribution.
- The expansion should be funded by the province without a reduction in services in other areas. In other words, the province MUST develop and utilize innovative and more effective procurement strategies to get the job done within the confines of a budget that is implicit in the level of taxes we pay for health care now. The city of Burlington should not have to kick in dollars to fund construction of a needed addition to a health care facility that should be funded by provincial and federal tax dollars.
- Is it really necessary, given that JBMH is a relatively small, local hospital? I'd rather spend money to develop large, efficient health centres with high levels of expertise. Trillium and Princess Margaret come to mind. JBMH doesn't seem to be able to fund existing beds let alone expanded facilities.
- The funding of this expansion should not cut into funding for existing programs. This is especially true for programs that promote active and/or healthy living, health care, or other preventative programs aimed at improving health, reducing risk of injury or illness, and the need for hospital care.
- Good survey. Great that the chamber is asking us.
- 15 years makes sense to me as that will probably be when a further large capital spend will be required.
- Lets just get this long overdue hospital built.
- These committed funds should come directly from the Hydro dividends prior to those monies being included in general revenues. The tax base, in particular should not be asked to support this commitment, as they will also be required to raise the remainder of the 'community portion'. The allocation of Hydro monies to the Jo Brant project would simply mean that the City will have to either a) postpone legacy projects on the table; or b) stretch the current capital works projects over an additional span of time (1-3 years).
- I find it shocking that, with council deliberations on this topic at this time, and without accurate and complete information being provided, you're seeking such answers to these questions as a local board. There is further context and background, objectively relayed that could be more useful in resulting in valid responses to the questions.
- No money should be collected or set aside until we have the provincial money in the bank...are we not still waiting for funds the minister promised during the bi-election....Our Rotary club has taken a lead role in committing funds again contingent on the provincial contribution.
- A provincial commitment -- not a maybe -- to the future of JBMH is a prerequisite. I am disillusioned by hearing over many years of shutting down beds, reopening them, then shutting down again -- that is not my concept of commitment.

Comments cont'd:

- I think the hospital should build a new, safe and properly managed facility in a more accessible area for all of Burlington and sell their existing lands for residential purposes to fund the new hospital. Burlington, Ontario and Federal taxpayers are already paying enough taxes for health care and in the case of JBMH, we're not getting our money's worth.
- JBMH expansion assumes ONE hospital for the City of Burlington. It makes no mention of demographic differentiators south and north of the QEW, with increased needs for a rapidly aging population and new family formation. The concept of a gerontology centre ought to be factored in, as well as a hospital north of the QEW. Despite all the politics to raise awareness, there is nothing to suggest that City Hall is capable of making an informed decision and Halton Region Community Services is known to favour Oakville regardless of what they say. Bottom line - the process to get the Province off their duffs is NOT in place.
- Could there be a tax break at the provincial or federal level for this levy/contribution?
- The hospital should wait until McGuinty is turfed and we get a gov't without its head up its rear regarding fundamental priorities. There is no more direct tax money to give. Especially with HST!!!!
- Funds from this tax levy cannot be put into the general consolidated revenue fund and used for other means. Annual independent audit of this account and confirmation of its use for 100 % of the expansion should be occur.
- The expansion of JBMH needs to be a priority. Burlington is extremely under serviced compared to other cities of similar size and our population is aging. We should take care of any available funds including Burlington Hydro dividend and operating surplus to make this happen. Also, a small increase in property taxes would be appropriate and affordable for all.
- we should utilize all options available to raise the necessary revenues for hospital construction. There shouldn't be one single burden, such as placing a levy only on homeowners. The city should also consider special fundraising projects such as a city hospital lottery and a small surcharge at hotels and on events such as the Ribfest, so visitors help contribute.
- Don't think we should have to pay a municipal charge for either new hospitals or expansion/improvements - THIS IS WHAT WE PAY PROVINCIAL TAXES FOR! If it's deemed that we are under supplied then the province needs to buck up and build new/expand or improve. If we are already properly supplied then the hospital is just "empire building". On the other hand if this is going forward and we are going to have to pay for it at local level then we should pay for it as quickly as possible through a "special levy" on our property taxes (this should disappear immediately once paid for - not continue to be charged for in general revenues from now until the end of time).
- Burlington should utilize the money that it already has on hand first (use surpluses). Once those funds are depleted, use hydro dividends to fund construction. I strongly disagree with tax levies over any length of time...not fair that those of us living in the area paying property taxes should have to foot the bill. This option does not spread the burden over the entire Burlington population fairly (what about newcomers to Burlington in future years; what about out-of-towners using the hospital now and in the future, etc.... I could go on and on). I strongly disagree with funding the construction through existing revenues to the detriment of other services.
- Spread the financing out as long as possible because the levy will never disappear. Once a tax goes into effect it stays around forever. If something is paid off our leaders will find another use for it
- NO MORE TAXES. DO WHAT I DO. SPEND WHERE REQUIRED. EG. HOSPITAL OVER A PIER! THOSE ARE SIMPLE DECISIONS. MAKE THEM!
- Re: Question 3, if there wasn't a commitment from the city for JBMH's expansion project, what would the Burlington Hydro Dividends be used for? Would it result in reducing our tax increase for 2010?
- The property taxes are high with minimal benefits for many of us in the city. Those of us who do not use the buses, the schools, the library, the sports arenas, the recreation centres AND have to pay high rates for downtown parking on top of property tax
- This is so long overdue - time to stop talking and start building. There will always be nay-sayers, lets get the ball rolling on this project!!!!
- Re #5 this question should have included some background info such as how much is the contribution for 2010 and if it does not come from the existing tax revenues from where would it come? Where could it be sourced? There is not enough info to answer it.