

MAYOR'S COLUMN

Now that the Village 2008 – 2009 operating budget has been adopted, the Trustees turn their focus to the capital expenditure plan.

The Village operating budget process and timetable is dictated by New York State law, while a capital budget is entirely a managerial decision. The State Comptroller does recommend that communities have regularized capital spending plans as a component of good government policy. The Village has a five year capital plan that is updated annually.

Historically, the Village began the capital budget process in early summer with discussion and adoption often extending into fall. This timetable proved problematic for the execution of weather related improvements such as curbing and road resurfacing.

In the recent past, the process has begun in early spring to take advantage of good weather and the quieter summer months which decreases disruption to residents. Our plan also synchronizes well with those in neighboring Eastchester and Tuckahoe, allowing us to take advantage of discount bulk purchasing for items such as blacktop.

Items in our capital budget must have a minimum life of greater than one year and have typically been financed by the issuance of debt and State aid and sometimes from the Village's General Fund.

The Village's capital budget has increased in recent years from approximately \$600,000 to \$1 million partially in response to the repairs necessitated by an aging infrastructure, and increased cost of materials.

For example, last year we appropriated \$425,000 for street milling, road resurfacing and curbing, a number we expect to keep constant in the upcoming plan. If you believe your street is a candidate for repair, register it with our Department of Public Works at 337-7338. There is a permanent list that carries over from year to year. Streets are repaired on a priority basis. Factors include the presence of potentially hazardous conditions, volume of traffic, and the time lapse between past repairs.

Unfortunately, because Route 22 is a State-owned road it cannot be on the Village list. Recognizing that it is in extremely poor condition, Supervisor Colavita, Tuckahoe Mayor Fitzpatrick and I have joined together to petition the State to undertake the long overdue repairs.

The Village also expects to receive \$99,003 in State CHIPS aid (Consolidated Highway Improvement Program) which \$83,803 will supplement our paving program.

In the normal cycle of replacement, we anticipate the purchase of one police car and a dump truck in 2008 – 2009 at a combined cost of approximately \$110,000.

The capital budget process will be conducted in much the same manner as that of the operating budget. Department heads were requested to produce a needs list which will be reviewed in-house by the Treasurer, Village Administrator and Mayor. A revised

document will then be submitted to the Trustees for discussion and comment. This draft plan is a public document and will be available in time for the May 12th Trustees' meeting.

A formal public hearing on the proposed capital budget will take place at the June 9th Trustees' meeting. Modifications to the document may be made throughout the process.

Though the norm is to adopt a comprehensive capital plan once per year, it does not preclude the expenditure of capital funds if a supplemental project is needed. We are ultimately limited only by our reasoned judgment and financing abilities.