

## City Hall to oversee boat launch project

COUNCIL "DISMISSES" GOLDER AS COST OF CENTENNIAL PARK PROJECT SOARS TO \$13.5 MILLION

GEORGE MATHEWSON  
THE JOURNAL

Sarnia has dismissed the multinational corporation that administered the Centennial Park project and has opted to oversee construction itself of the final remaining piece – the long-delayed boat launch in Sarnia Bay.

Following a closed-door meeting Oct. 2 council emerged to say it had decided to "dismiss" Golder Associates as the contract administrator due to "unsatisfactory performance."

But before being shown the door, Golder and its subsidiaries did OK by the city, earning more than \$1 million from the project, according to Coun. Dave Boushy.

"It seems to me, right from the beginning, we were on the wrong path," Boushy told The Journal.

"Golder was responsible for some of it but we (city council) could have said to them, 'You're spending too much money.'"

Council also voted last week to pay Bre-Ex Construction up to

\$682,000 in additional funding to complete the stalled boat ramps in Sarnia Bay.

The new spending was approved in a 6-2 vote, with Boushy and Mayor Mike Bradley opposed.

Bre-Ex tried three times last fall to build cofferdams in the bay, and each time water seeped back in before the dock foundation could be installed.

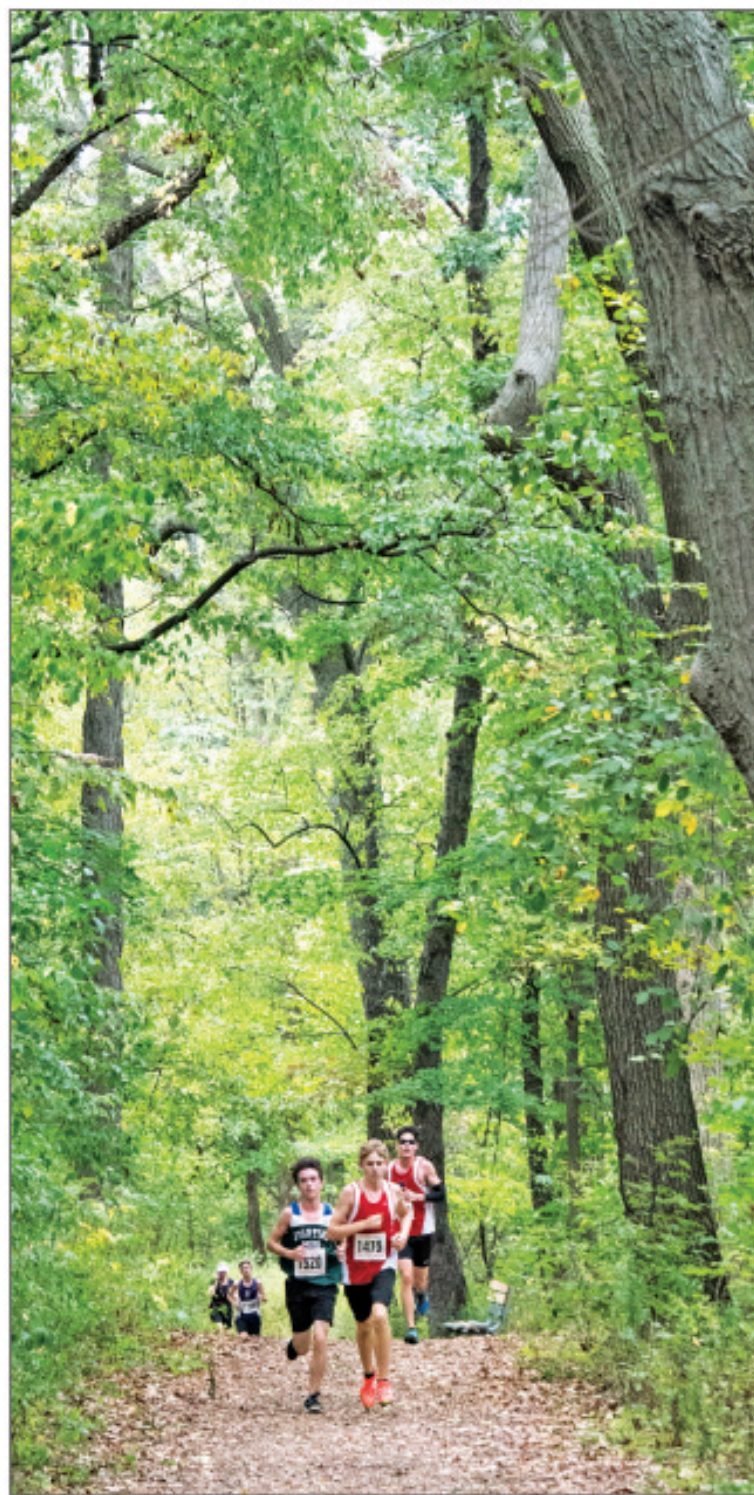
It would cost another \$2.23 million to build boat ramps "in the dry," according to a new staff estimate. So the city is instead proceeding with an alternative design that doesn't require "dewatering" the site.

If the weather cooperates the launch could be ready in 10 to 12 weeks, city staff say.

The total bill for Centennial Park has now reached \$13.54 million — including \$2.6 million for new infrastructure. That's more than twice the original estimate and doesn't include what the city owes Bridgview Marina for providing the community with interim boating services this year.

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## Over hill and trail



DWARFED BY THE majestic and towering trees of Canatara Park, runners Connor Antosiak of St. Patrick's and Blake Freer of Northern Collegiate jockey for position at the Canatara Meet of Champions last week. For more on the annual cross country event please see page 38.

GLENN OGILVIE, The Journal

## Fibre-optic cable coming to Sarnia

BELL INVESTING \$50 MILLION TO BRING BETTER PHONE, TV AND INTERNET SERVICE TO 20,000 HOMES.

CATHY DOBSON  
THE JOURNAL

Bell Canada is about to dig deep to connect about 20,000 homes in Sarnia and Point Edward with fibre-optic cables the company say will provide "world class" Internet and "rock solid" reliability.

The telecommunications giant is spending more than \$50 million in Sarnia to provide home and commercial customers with better phone and TV service and gigabit-Internet speeds 200 times that of existing ones.

Not only will the company need to dig deep to cover the cost, work crews will literally have to dig into the front yards of thousands of properties.

The massive upgrade locally is part of a multibillion-dollar investment Bell is making across Canada to keep up with consumer demand for Internet service much faster than copper wiring can provide.

Toronto, Sudbury, Cornwall and Hamilton have already been connected with fibre optics and the work is

underway in Windsor.

Sarnia was chosen to be up next because of its aging Bell infrastructure, said Mike Berkvens, the city's acting director of engineering.

"They haven't invested in Sarnia for a number of years," he said. "We haven't had upgrades in a long time."

Calvin Deleavey, senior manager with Bell's Fibre To The Home (FTTH) program, said Bell chose Sarnia and Point Edward to be next on the rollout because of the strong level of co-operation coming from the city and village.

"The difference (in service) is really night and day," he said.

About 75% of local homes will require surveying to pinpoint existing services and digging to bury the fibre-optic strands.

"Three quarters of Sarnia has buried plant, it's under the ground, so we end up marking up the lawns ... we do have to dig up stuff," Jamie Nightingale, director of Bell's FTTH program, told city council last week.

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