

Region lobbies for federal cash

By **JULIA LE**

Metroland West Media Group

In 2014, \$2 billion in federal funding for municipal infrastructure is set to expire, Halton Hills Regional Councillor Clark Somerville told his fellow regional councillors Wednesday.

What's worrisome, he said during the regional council meeting, is what that could mean for municipalities across Canada.

Somerville shared how the municipal infrastructure deficit is currently more than \$123 billion.

To eradicate that deficit, he said, each household in Canada would have to contribute about \$13,500 to build and maintain roads, water systems and other infrastructure in need of repair.

Somerville continued federal and provincial infrastructure support is necessary to help slow down the decline of cities and communities.

He put a motion forward asking regional council to endorse a Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) campaign that encourages the federal government to keep its commitment of replacing the programs set to expire by developing a long-term plan for municipal infrastructure funding. The motion was endorsed at the last Halton Hills council meeting.

The motion, which also backs a plan to urge the Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities to work with



CLARK SOMERVILLE

FCM to ensure the new plan meets the core infrastructure needs of cities and communities, was unanimously supported.

Somerville, who's a board member for FCM, said the organization recently released the first nationwide study of infrastructure, detailing the conditions of municipal roads and the systems that manage drinking water, wastewater and storm-water.

The key finding was that Canada's municipal infrastructure is at risk, with more than half of municipal roads requiring significant repairs and one in four wastewater plants needing major upgrades.

Over the next year, FCM plans to lobby the government to ensure the new plan reflects the infrastructure priorities of the cities and communities across the country.

"The federal government and provincial government has always been involved in municipal infrastructure and we need their help. We can't do it alone," Somerville told the Champion after the council meeting. "Municipalities only collect 8 cents out of every tax dollar. We own 60 per cent of all the infrastructure out there."

For more information about FCM's campaign, visit fcm.ca.

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Accident left local woman seriously hurt

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increase his blood-sugar level, Elson was traveling north on McLaughlin Rd. when he said he missed two left turns that he would normally take to get home and then doesn't recall anything after that until he regained consciousness in an ambulance in Georgetown at about 4:50 p.m.

Elson's vehicle had struck a number of vehicles on Maple Ave. between Mountainview Rd. N. and Guelph St. about 4:30 p.m.

The seriously hurt Georgetown woman, now 57, suffered cracked ribs, collapsed lungs, a broken shoulder, head and foot lacerations and had to have her spleen removed. She was left unable to work and still has little independence due to her injuries. Another victim received significant burns and bruises from a deployed air bag and his steering wheel.

Justice Ricchetti said that he was

satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that when Elson felt his blood sugar was low "he had sufficient time and was aware and made a conscious decision to drive."

He said at the time Elson made the decision to continue to drive he "was placing the lives and safety of others at risk."

Elson's lawyer, John Navarette said he would be looking into an appeal.

When asked for a comment, Elson's lawyer spoke on his behalf saying, "he has always been remorseful which is why he agreed to the majority of the Crown's case."

Navarette said that Elson "did everything he was told to by his doctor," explaining that the doctor told him to eat something if his blood sugar was low.

Navarette added, "it never occurred to him it would get to that stage."

When asked if he planned to drive again Elson said, "I doubt it."

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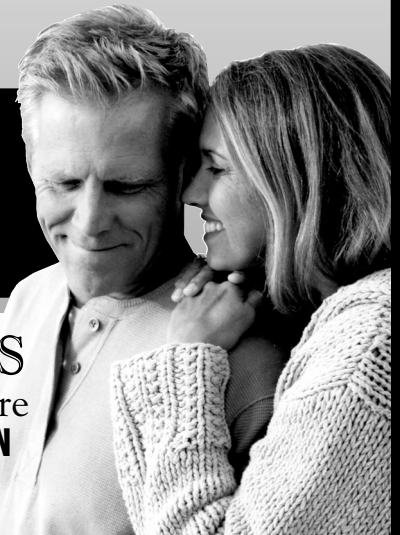
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