

# Town planning for new sports arenas, art centre

## Five lit softball diamonds in plan

By IRENE GENTLE  
The Champion

Growth is poised to swell Milton to almost triple its current population. And when all those people arrive, they're going to need somewhere to play.

To ensure they find it in Milton, the Town is working on a draft Master Parks Plan to bring sports complexes to the area, beginning as early as next year.

"Essentially this will be one piece of our planning puzzle as we actually begin planning our parks," said the Town's community services director Jennifer Reynolds.

The draft project is a continuation of a number of existing planning principals in Milton, said consultant Jim Morgenstern of DMA Planning and Management Services.

He appeared before the Town's community services committee last week to unveil the plan.

From 33,000 today, Milton will likely top out at 85,000 by 2016.

To accommodate them, Milton will likely be the future host of two twin pad arenas, with construction of the first launching next year.

Ideally, they would be built side by side, eventually creating a four-

rink sports complex to host tournaments and other special events.

"By locating them together, we're minimizing the impact in residential areas and we can also achieve efficiencies," said Mr. Morgenstern.

That's a luxury many other municipalities have had to forgo due to space constraints.

"You have the opportunity to pretty much write your own planning principals," he said.

"You have a great deal of flexibility."

The plan also provides for an indoor pool in 2008 and an arts and cultural centre in 2005.

Two lit and five unlit baseball diamonds are in the works, with the first scheduled to come on board in 2002.

Five lit softball diamonds are also planned, along with three lit and 15 unlit playing fields.

Two three-court tennis areas are also scheduled to come on board in 2004 and 2012.

Grouping sports fields and arenas is the most cost-effective way to build, said Mr. Morgenstern.

"We wanted to ensure everything was working together and could be achieved," he said.

"I'm happy to report it works just fine."

That made sense to Councillor

Rick Day.

"I'd like to see a Tim Horton with a drive-through on one side that opens up on the inside. Maybe even a Wendy's. What I have in mind is a shopping concourse with an arena in there somewhere."

Councillor Brian Penman asked about the possibility of letting the private sector handle the complexes.

But while Mr. Morgenstern advised against closing any doors prematurely, he wasn't all in favour of the idea.

"My personal opinion? There's more apparent potential than there may be realized benefits," he said.

"My point, councillor, is there are alternatives to private sector marketing. It hasn't been nearly as successful as it was thought to be."

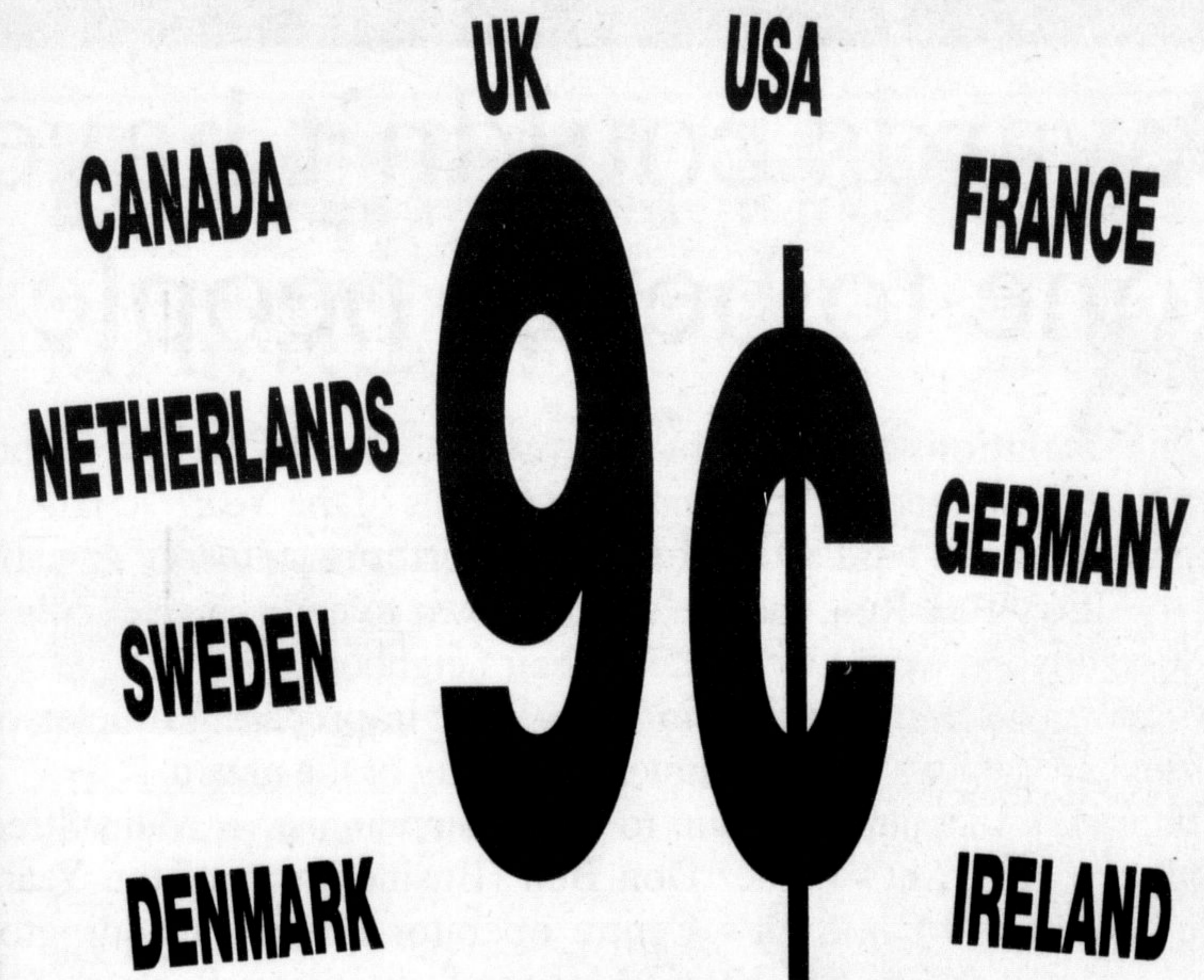
But Mayor Gord Krantz was eager to look into partnering with the private sector.

"When it comes to dealing with this, we're talking about it being bottom-line driven," he said. "Partnerships, that seems to be the buzzword these days."

And Councillor Ron Furik wanted to ensure there'd be ample parking at the new sites as well as fencing for increased safety.

"For me it's safety first, and safety means having a fence," he said.

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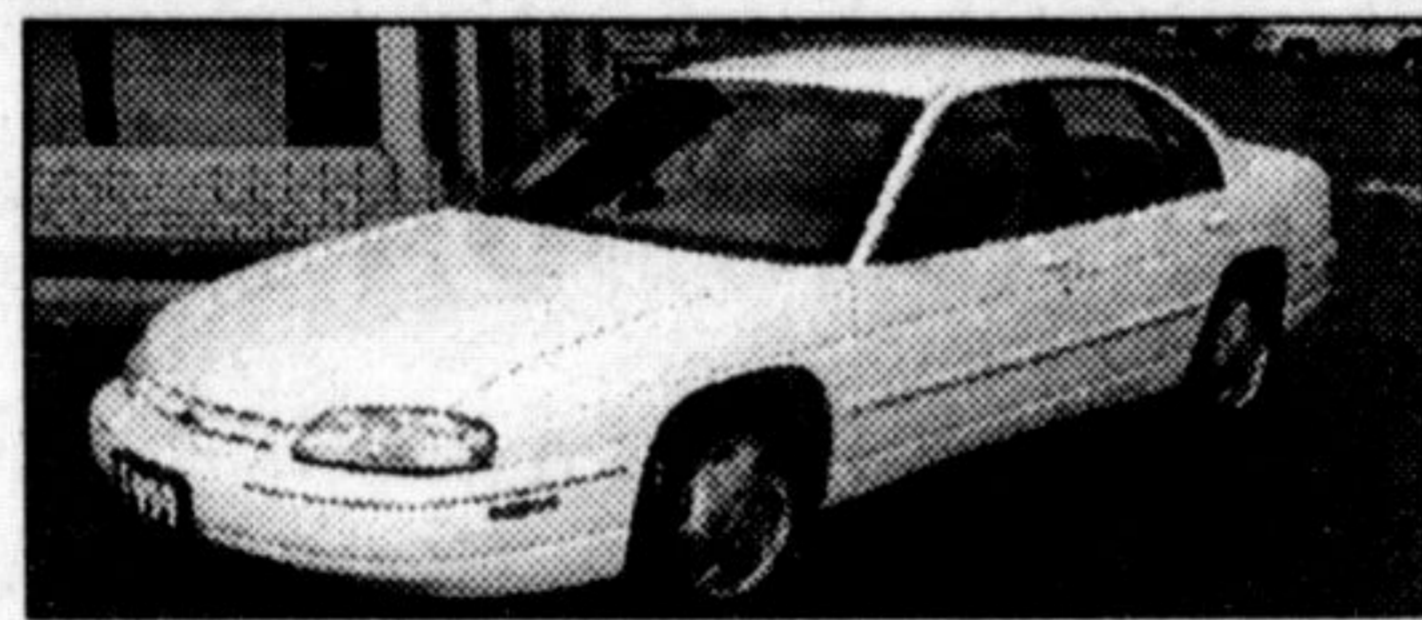
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