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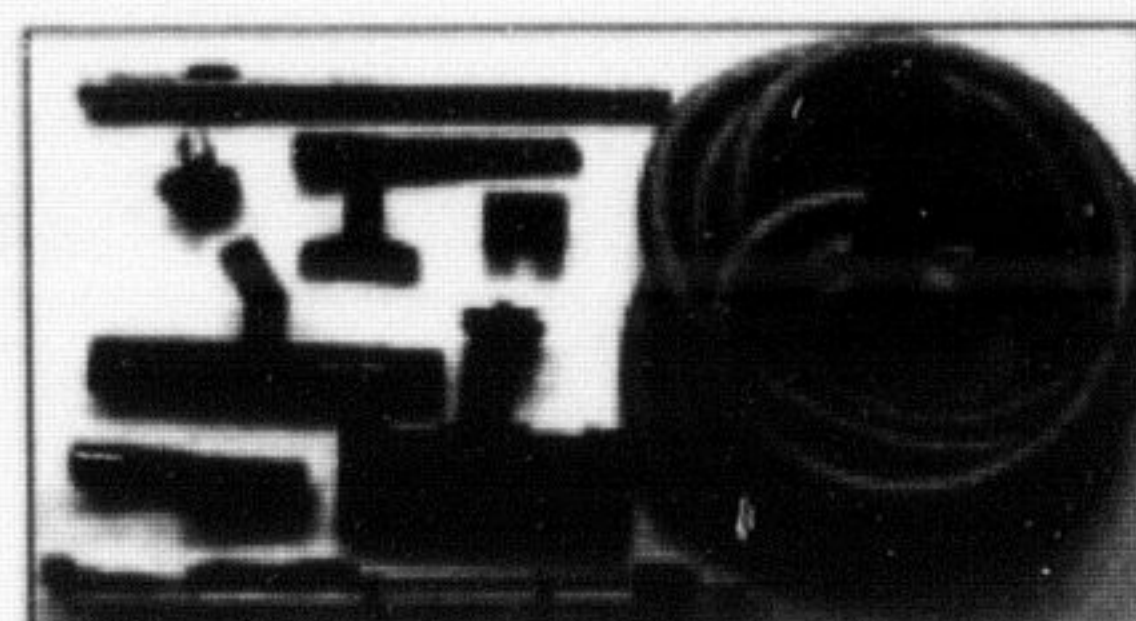
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# Infrastructure repair motion voted down by councillors

By Christina Commisso  
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

The future of Milton's roads, bridges and community centres sparked a lengthy discussion during Monday's budget deliberations.

Councillors Rick Di Lorenzo and Sharon Barkley put forward a motion that would see a \$100,000 yearly increase to the capital works reserve to deal with future infrastructure repairs.

Di Lorenzo pointed to the \$430 million of debt the City of Mississauga will be taking on by 2020 to fix deteriorating infrastructure. "Mississauga is facing year over year potential double digit tax increases and potential service cuts. We should be the poster child for thinking about infrastructure renewal and ensure we are building a community that's sustainable in the long term."

He continued, "We're getting drunk on development charges and we're going to have a huge hangover in the future. If you think \$100,000 is high you haven't seen anything yet."

While the majority of council agreed repairs on Milton buses, bridges and sewers decades down the road is a definite reality, 2012 won't be the year to start saving.

The budget committee voted down the motion.

"This is too serious of an issue to address in knee jerk reaction," said Councillor Mike

Chuett. "We should address staff for a forecast on what needs to be done. Tax increases should be the last resort not the first course of action."

Councillor Greg Nelson raised concerns about a new tax being brought to the public on short notice.

"You'd be hard pressed to get a good number of people who understand our reserve structure. They (the public) don't understand it. They haven't asked for it."

Milton CAO Mario Belvedere said the Town should put eight to nine per cent of its asset base into reserves for renewal.

"I think the motion has been put before council in previous years. It's always difficult to put money away for the future."

Added Town Treasurer Linda Leeds, "given the rate of growth, there's not any question you'll need additional funds to maintain those facilities." She said the infrastructure deficit will reach \$68.3 million by 2020.

Barkley said the infrastructure reserve is something previous councils could have implemented, but didn't. "If all we start tonight is the dialogue, it's an important thing to start...maybe next year we'll bite the bullet and start the process."

Christina Commisso can be reached at [ccommisso@miltoncanadianchampion.com](mailto:ccommisso@miltoncanadianchampion.com).



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