STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON

INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL AND PUBLIC WORKS

QUESTION PERIOD

Minute No. 690
Councillor Smith questioned why the bicycle stand in front of city hall and the one beside the courtyard were removed to which the Speaker advised that the question was not a policy matter and should directed to the administration.

In reference to a presentation that outlined that the infrastructure funding deficit in 2006 is 142 million and that the figure will go up to 260 million by 2016 with the present rate of funding, Councillor Wyatt questioned what steps were being taken to deal with the looming crisis to which Councillor Clement advised that the issue in question would be dealt with by the Executive Policy Committee through its budget process and long term planning.

Councillor Wyatt requested clarification that nothing had been done to move forward a plan to deal with the issue. Councillor Clement advised that the City has reduced the debt by over 250 million dollars in the last few years, has frozen taxes and has the best credit rating that the City has ever seen, and is now capable of creating a plan to deal with infrastructure.

Councillor Wyatt noted that the Chair was speaking of a financial plan that was adopted some time ago and asked about the status of the infrastructure renewal plan.

Councillor Clement acknowledged that the City's finances are in order and that an infrastructure program is imminent. He added that a significant amount of GST money is starting to flow from the federal government and, as a result, funding for regional streets was increased by approximately 30 to 35 million dollars. He further noted that the City has a five year capital budget and that, hopefully, the capital plan can be expanded as the money flows a little freer from the other levels of government.

Councillor Swandel asked if the City would do a comparison of the current rate of inflation on infrastructure projects, or costs, and the projected rate of inflation to the current borrowing rate to see if it would be a greater cost benefit to not be borrowing at the present time to which Councillor Clement stated that the question should be posed to the Chair of Fiscal Issues.