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Asset Management Plans may lack direction

Despite rumours to the contrary, Dufferin County has not ?run out of money? to continue it scheduled work on County Road 11, Public Works Director Scott Burns told the committee Wednesday morning.

The first section of the road, from CR 109 to CR 10 had been contracted and had been completed to 5 Sideroad. The onset of winter has delayed completion of the contract north from 5 Sideroad, but Mr. Burns said the contracted work would resume in the spring.

There's a new question troubling some members of Dufferin's Public Works Committee, related to climate change and what effects that might have on infrastructure.

It might have arisen because of the Ontario Good Roads Association's current questionnaire on Asset Management Plans: ?In order to gain a better understanding on the progress our membership is making with the development of an asset management plan and your use of Municipal DataWorks in meeting your asset management needs the Ontario Good Roads Association has prepared the following questionnaire,? the introduction states.

This initially raised the question of ?what constitutes an acceptable AMP,? and Amaranth Mayor Don MacIver said there is no consistency in plans across the province. He pointed out that there have been no guidelines from the province on calculating the lifespan of infrastructure.

?There's no oversight. If you say a bridge will last 80 years, (you would amortize at 80 years therefore set aside less money than if you say it would last 50 years),? he said.

But, opined the Nobel-winning environmentalist, the roads and bridges are not going to last their projected lifespan under climate change.

Perhaps as that discussion came at the end of the meeting, and hadn't been listed as new business, it's not known what follow-up, if any, would be pursued.

Just as pressing, chairman Ken McGhee says he ?would like to know whether the province will reconsider downloads (especially Highway 9, now county 109) as part of its review.?

By Wes Keller