

REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

2024 Water and Wastewater Master Plan – Extended Consultation

To: Warden and Members of County Council

From: Director of Public Works

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That County Council endorse, in principle, the draft 2024 Water and Wastewater Master Plan (W/WW MP) as the recommended servicing strategies to meet Oxford's growth needs to 2046, as well as provide effective ongoing continuity to existing serviced settlement areas as previously detailed in Report No. PW 2023-33 entitled "2024 Water and Wastewater Master Plan";
2. And further, that County Council direct Staff to file a Notice of Completion and commence the 30-day public review period as required under the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) process.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The purpose of this report is to seek County Council's endorsement, in principle, of the draft 2024 W/WW MP which provides a strategic roadmap to service existing needs and accommodate future growth.
- Following the July 12, 2023 Council Resolution to Report No. [PW 2023-33](#), County staff was directed to commence a 75-day informal review period for Area Municipalities to further comment on the draft W/WW MP.
- All feedback received was reviewed and considered in the final draft W/WW MP, which resulted in refinements to the multi-year capital implementation plan as appropriate.

IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

Upon Council approval, staff will proceed to issue and file a Notice of Completion for the final draft 2024 W/WW MP. Printed copies of the final draft W/WW MP report will be available upon request, as well as posted to the Oxford County website and online engagement hub at *Speak Up, Oxford!*.

Following a 30-day public review period and subject to comments received, the 2024 W/WW MP Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA) Study Report can be finalized and filed.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts to the 2023 Business Plan and Budget based on the recommendations contained within this report.

Communications

The draft W/WW MP report and appendices were previously posted to *Speak-Up, Oxford!* (<https://speakup.oxfordcounty.ca/wwwmp>) in July, 2023. In accordance with the resolution to Council Report No. PW 2023-33, dated July 12, 2023, the W/WW MP Executive Summary and a link to the full W/WW MP report on *Speak-Up, Oxford!* were forwarded to all Area Municipal Clerks on July 20, 2023 for distribution to members of their Councils for their information, as well as any appropriate staff, requesting their feedback within 75 days.

Since July 12, 2023 there has been over 920 *new* project webpage visits and 310 additional downloads of the W/WW MP document. Additional formal feedback was received from four of the eight Area Municipalities.

Members of the W/WW MP team provided Council delegations as requested at the following Area Municipalities and fielded several questions from the respective Councils:

- Town of Tillsonburg (August 14th, 2023).
- Township of East-Zorra Tavistock (September 6, 2023).

Report No. PW 2023-41 will be circulated to Area Municipalities for information.

2023-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

Oxford County Council approved the **2023-2026 Strategic Plan** on September 13, 2023. The Plan outlines 39 goals across three strategic pillars that advance Council's vision of "Working together for a healthy, vibrant, and sustainable future." These pillars are: (1) *Promoting community vitality*, (2) *Enhancing environmental sustainability*, and (3) *Fostering progressive government*.

The recommendations in this report supports the following Strategic Plan Pillars and Goals:

		
Promoting community vitality	Enhancing environmental sustainability	Fostering progressive government
Goal 1.2 – Sustainable infrastructure and development	Goal 2.2 – Preserve and enhance our natural environment	Goal 3.2 – Collaborate with our partners and communities

See: [Oxford County 2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#)

DISCUSSION

Background

Report No. PW 2023-33, which included a draft W/WW MP executive summary and *Speak Up, Oxford!* link to the full draft report, was deliberated at Oxford County Council on July 12, 2023. Council subsequently directed County staff to circulate the Report to all Area Municipalities and to commence a 75-day informal review period for Area Municipalities to further comment on the draft W/WW MP.

Comments

Overall, the additional feedback from the Area Municipalities received since the July 12, 2023 Council meeting through the 75-day review period indicated general support for the draft W/WW MP. The water and wastewater system feedback centered around specific system servicing capacities; growth related impacts to infrastructure, infrastructure cost, project funding options, design criteria, drinking water quality and specific scope and requirements of certain projects.

A summary of formal comments received from the Area Municipality Councils are as follows:

- Township of Blandford-Blenheim submitted a Council resolution (Attachment 1) on August 2, 2023 that the 2024 W/WW MP be received as information. They affirmed their support for the proposed drinking water system interconnection between Bright and Plattsville and subsequent decommissioning of Bright Well 5. They requested the interconnection be moved ahead in the project schedule. As a result County staff have rephrased the proposed work from the 2034-2046 horizon to occur in 2032-2033.

The Township of Blandford-Blenheim provided a second Council resolution on August 2, 2023 (Attachment 1) moving that the W/WW MP consider an additional 64 acres of property be designated as development and brought back into the Bright settlement boundary. This request was forwarded to Community Planning for future consideration as the scope of the 2024 W/WW MP was limited to service planned growth in accordance with the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement and the County's approved Phase I Comprehensive Review (2020) growth forecast (Report No. [PW 2022-47](#)), which did not include such lands.

- Town of Ingersoll submitted a Council resolution (Attachment 2) on September 18, 2023 requesting that the complete data set used for determining the drinking water system and wastewater treatment design criteria in the W/WW MP be provided to the Town. The W/WW MP already describes how the Town of Ingersoll design criteria was established using actual residential and non-residential metered water demands and associated residential and non-residential populations.
- Township of South-West Oxford provided a resolution (Attachment 3) from their Council meeting held September 19, 2023 resolving that the draft W/WW MP be received as information and further that the Township support and endorse the plan as presented to meet the Township's future growth needs until 2046, which includes prioritizing future development within the Township's only current fully serviced village, Mount Elgin, unless servicing becomes critically required by another village.
- Town of Tillsonburg provided a Council Report (Attachment 4) on the draft W/WW MP on September 25, 2023 indicating that the growth forecasts used were not reflective of current/anticipated future growth rates, that project funding opportunities be further explained and that more refined project phasing be provided. During the County staff delegation to Tillsonburg Council on August 14, 2023, it was explained that adjustments to the growth forecast and more detailed project phasing would be provided through the preparation of the 2024 Development Charges Background Study. The range of project funding options was also explained during the same delegation.
- No other formal comments were received from the City of Woodstock, Township of Norwich, Township of East Zorra-Tavistock or Township of Zorra.

All above feedback was reviewed and considered in the update to the original draft 2024 W/WW MP, which resulted in refinements to project phasing within the multi-year capital implementation plan.

The complete final draft W/WW MP Report can be viewed on the W/WW MP project webpage at www.oxfordcounty.ca/wwwmp and is ready for public release.

CONCLUSIONS

Staff appreciated the additional comments received in this 75-day review period and intends to proceed with filing a Study Notice of Completion and commence with the 30-day public review period as required under the MCEA process.

County Council approval of the final draft W/WW MP is required to move forward with projects included in the 2024 budget (also shown in the 2024 W/WW MP implementation plan).

SIGNATURES

Report author:

Original signed by

Don Ford, BA, CMM III, C. Tech.
Manager of Water and Wastewater Services

Departmental approval:

Original signed by

David Simpson, P.Eng., PMP
Director of Public Works

Approved for submission:

Original signed by

Benjamin R. Addley
Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Council Resolutions: Township of Blandford-Blenheim
- Attachment 2: Council Resolution: Town of Ingersoll
- Attachment 3: Council Resolution: Township of South-West Oxford
- Attachment 4: Council Report: Town of Tillsonburg