

## REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

# Woodstock Wastewater Treatment Plant Washroom Renovations

**To:** Warden and Members of County Council

**From:** Director of Public Works

## RECOMMENDATION

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1. That County Council authorize the transfer of \$305,000 from the Wastewater - Woodstock Reserve to fund the renovation of the washroom/locker room at the Woodstock Wastewater Treatment Plant located at 195 Admiral Street, Woodstock.

## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

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- The purpose of this report is to seek County Council approval for the transfer of funds from the Wastewater – Woodstock Reserve to undertake planned washroom/locker room renovations at the County’s Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) in Woodstock.
- The planned renovations will accommodate increasing Wastewater operations staff levels and provide gender neutral and accessible spaces to accommodate a growing and diverse workforce in compliance with the County’s 2024-2025 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Plan (internal) and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.
- The existing washroom and locker room facilities were constructed in 1983 and have surpassed the end of their useful service life and, as a result, are in need of significant upgrades.

## IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

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Upon Council approval, a contract will be executed with the low bidder, PK Construction Inc. prior to proceeding with the work. The work will be completed in two phases to minimize the impact to operational staff during construction.

**Financial Impact**

The Woodstock WWTP washroom/locker room renovation project is being driven by its lifecycle needs. The project was originally included in the 2023 Business Plan and Budget at an estimated cost of \$110,250. Approximately \$20,000 of this budget was utilized in 2023 to complete detailed design for the project; however, the remaining construction budget (\$90,250) was not carried forward into 2024.

Due to escalating construction and material supply costs, design scope alterations to include accessible and gender-neutral spaces, staging of the project to accommodate staff, and the discovery of mould, the funds for the project are insufficient to complete the necessary work in 2024.

As shown in Table 1, project cost bid submissions received at the time of tendering indicated the revised 2024 construction project cost estimate to be approximately \$305,000 (based on the lowest bid received).

*Table 1: Funding Summary for Woodstock WWTP Washroom/Locker Room Upgrades*

	<b>Bid Amount (excluding HST)</b>
<b>911280 – Woodstock – WW Facilities Treatment</b> Washroom/Locker Room Upgrades (Tender Bid)	\$299,111
Non-Refundable HST (1.76%)	5,265
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$304,376</b>

**NOTE:** 2023 construction funding (\$90,250) was returned to the Wastewater Reserve and was not carried forward into 2024 as available budget to offset the increase in the total project cost.

The 2024 budgeted closing balance for the Wastewater – Woodstock Reserve is approximately \$12.1 million and is sufficient to fund the additional costs associated with the end-of-life replacement of this expired asset.

It should be noted that based on the 2024 Approved Budget, the current reserve balance and anticipated contributions were insufficient over the 10-year period to fund all projects. Staff will continue to review lifecycle needs and funding sources with each upcoming business plan and budget cycle to determine whether any further reserve pressures continue that may result in future project delays, additional debt requirements, or rate increases.

## Communications




Staff will continue to work with key internal stakeholders (County Management staff and Wastewater Operations staff) during the execution of this project, as required, to ensure the appropriate level of communication and outreach is maintained, and all parties are updated on the project status, as needed.

The temporary inconveniences anticipated during construction have been discussed with Wastewater Operations staff and temporary adjustments have been made within their operations to accommodate the washroom/locker room renovation project.

## 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:

PILLAR 1	PILLAR 2	PILLAR 3
		
<b>Promoting community vitality</b>	<b>Enhancing environmental sustainability</b>	<b>Fostering progressive government</b>
Goal 1.2 – Sustainable infrastructure and development		Goal 3.1 – Continuous improvement and results-driven solutions Goal 3.3 – Attract, retain and engage staff

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

## DISCUSSION

### Background

The Woodstock WWTP administration building contains the main washroom facilities and locker room for the treatment plant. The administrative building was constructed in 1983 and has undergone minor renovations over the years; however, the washroom and locker room no longer meet the needs of the current operation and have passed their useful service life.

In response to evolving needs, the staff recognized a pressing requirement for comprehensive upgrades in 2022, specifically targeting the shower/change/washroom areas. The project goal also addresses the internally-facing Oxford County Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Action Plan 2024-2025, which considers DEI and accessibility needs in the design or re-design of County spaces (Priority 2.3).

This project is also required to enhance accessibility to meet *AODA 2005* Integrated Accessibility Standards, Facility Accessibility Design Standards and Oxford County's Multi year Accessibility Plan (Policy 9.3). This gives regard to the accessibility of persons with disabilities when purchasing goods and services through the inclusion of an automatic washroom door operator, accessible lockers and space revisions to allow for wheelchair access while addressing essential sanitary needs of our staff by augmenting the number of gender-neutral, private spaces at County facilities.

A thorough condition assessment revealed critical areas requiring attention, thus necessitating the plans for much needed upgrades. Accordingly, the project was included in the 2023 Business Plan and Budget for design and implementation.

## Comments

The current WWTP washroom facilities fall short of meeting the needs and diversity of our staff and the standards that the County aims to provide in washroom and locker room areas to ensure gender equity, greater accessibility and essential sanitary conditions for staff as noted previously.

At present, the facilities are categorized into 'Male/Female', featuring common showers in the 'Male' area and only a single shower in the 'Female' area. The current arrangements lack privacy for all staff as there are no gender neutral facilities at the WWTP. The current 'Male' area suffers from inadequate ventilation, which has resulted in the growth of mould in the existing facilities. Further, mould growth was also later discovered in the existing 'Female' washroom section and is deemed a significant Health and Safety risk. The extent of the remediation of the 'Female' washroom has since escalated, reaching a point where demolishing the entire washroom emerged as the most economical and practical solution. This has resulted in the addition of significant expanded project scope that was not envisioned at the time of the preliminary 2023 budget cost estimation. The lockers located in both locker/changing areas are displaying rust and posing sanitation concerns.

When completed, the new space will provide four separate and secure washrooms that are available for individual use. Each space will include a shower, sink and toilet, no longer requiring the doors to have gender identifying labels. One of the washroom spaces will meet accessibility requirements and will be available for public use. There is a common area adjacent to three of the washroom spaces that is being augmented to accommodate lockers and the laundry facilities, a key addition to the new design to enable on-site cleaning of soiled work wear which serves to minimize contamination and the transfer of biological matter to staff personal vehicles and property.

The planned upgrades will address these above-noted deficiencies and design features to ensure a fully accessible washroom and shower facility that meets current *AODA* design standards, with a new estimated service life of 15 years. To ensure washroom facility access is maintained throughout the upgrades, the scope of work had to be divided into two phases.

County staff solicited bids from eligible Contractors and the project was tendered through a competitive bidding process. The County received three bids at tender close on Thursday, December 21, 2023. Bid costs returned at the time of tendering were inflated due to:

- Additional ventilation and exchange air requirements and presence of mould growth;
- Addition of second washroom full reconstruction;
- General material and labour cost inflation;
- Accessibility and gender neutral space accommodation; and
- New requirement to undertake the work in a two phase approach over a longer construction schedule period as noted above due to expanded project scope.

Staff reviewed the submissions received in early 2024 and believe the bid received from PK Construction Inc. represents good value for the work required.

## CONCLUSIONS

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It is recommended that Council approve the transfer of funds from the Wastewater – Woodstock Reserve to allow for the necessary asset renewal of the Woodstock WWTP washroom/locker room area in 2024.

## SIGNATURES

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### Report author:

Original signed by

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Dan Foster  
Supervisor of Facilities

### Departmental approval:

Original signed by

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

### Approved for submission:

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