

To: Warden and Members of County Council

From: Director of Public Works

2024 Water and Wastewater Master Plan – Project Update

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Oxford County Council receive Report No. PW 2022-47 entitled “2024 Water and Wastewater Master Plan – Project Update” as information on the progress of the 2024 Water and Wastewater Master Plan project and its associated public consultation approach.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The 2024 *Water and Wastewater Master Plan* (W/WW MP) is a strategic planning document that will set out the long-term water and wastewater servicing strategies to support existing needs and accommodate future growth in population and employment through to the year 2046.
- The purpose of this report is to provide Oxford County Council with a project update on the 2024 W/WW MP, including details on recently completed public engagement and consultation events.
- A project webpage with all information related to the W/WW MP is currently active on *Speak Up, Oxford!*. Included on this webpage are the project’s Notice of Commencement, Notice of Public Consultation Centre (PCC) No. 1 and the associated presentation, along with any future project updates.
- 2024 W/WW MP consultation opportunities to date include Internal and External Technical Advisory Committee Meetings, virtual PCC #1, three open houses at community events, and an online feedback form.

Implementation Points

Upon County Council’s review of this report, staff will continue to effectively facilitate communication, project development, and community consultation associated with the W/WW MP. Future opportunities to participate in discussions related to the W/WW MP are outlined below in Table 1.

Table 1 – Future Consultation Opportunities for the 2024 W/WW MP

| Consultation Activity | Tentative Date |
|--|----------------|
| External Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #2 | February 2023 |
| Internal Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #2 | February 2023 |
| Public Consultation Centre #2 | March 2023 |

Oxford County staff will report to County Council in May 2023 with the final draft W/WW MP Report and will seek authority to proceed with the final public review period. An overview of the project timeline for the W/WW MP is shown in Figure 1.

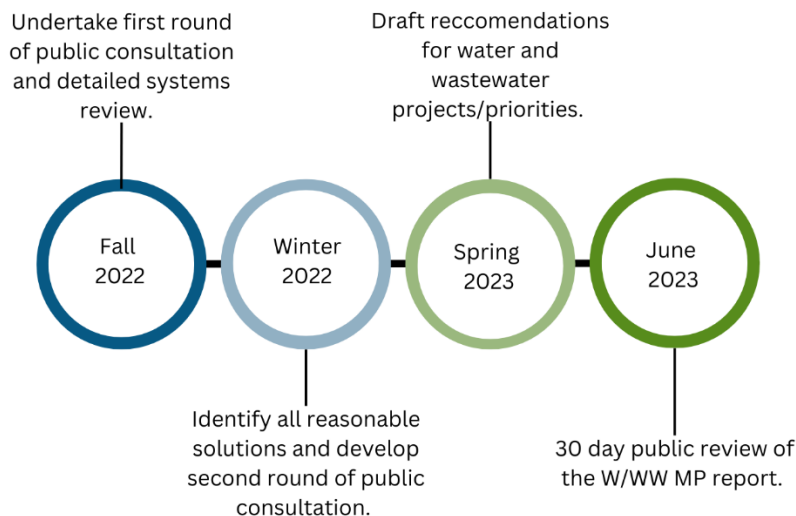


Figure 1 – Planned 2024 W/WW MP Undertakings

Financial Impact

No financial impacts will result from adopting the recommendations contained in this report. Once completed, the W/WW MP will become an input to the County’s 2023 Water and Wastewater Development Charges Technical Study which will inform the upcoming 2024 Development Charges Background Study and future updates to the County’s 2022 Asset Management Plan.

Communications







Public consultation on the 2024 W/WW MP was undertaken through a range of tools to seek feedback from Oxford's various communities and demographics as follows:

- **Speak Up, Oxford!** This served as the engagement hub for consultation. It was published in March 2022, with 836 total visits to the site since its launch.
- **Feedback survey and question form:** Together, the interactive tools drew input from 89 contributors, who participated in the feedback form (survey) and/or question tool. A total of 127 visitors viewed the feedback survey with 79 different people completing the survey.
- **Public Consultation Centre #1:** On September 29, this event drew approximately 10 participants over a nearly one and a half hour discussion (see Comments section, "*Public Consultation Centre #1.*").
- **"Pop-up" events:** Several in-person events were provided for members of the public to speak directly with the project team, including Canada's Outdoor Farm Show (September 14), Tillsonburg Ribfest (September 23/24) and Ingersoll Town Council Chamber (September 26) (see Comments section, "*Public Consultation Centre #1.*").
- **Print advertising:** For audiences that prefer to receive news through newspapers and community publications, information on how to provide input was outlined in 19 print ads and **public notices** between July 15 and September 22 in the Oxford Review, Norfolk-Tillsonburg News, Woodstock Sentinel Review, Ayr News and Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette. This included public notices as well as information provided to *What's On Woodstock* and the *Village Voice* rural editions in July, 2022.
- **Radio ads:** A radio campaign ran in October 2022 on Woodstock (104.7 Heart FM) in advance of the close of the consultation period.
- **Social media:** Social media included organic posts throughout the consultation period and promoted (paid) campaigns for a week in each of September and October.

Speak Up, Oxford! will continue to serve as an engagement hub leading up to the release of the W/WW MP and will include public notices and news releases, public meeting recordings and presentations (including those from PCC#1), question forum, Council reports and project contact information.

Report No. PW 2022-47, along with any potential amendments, will be circulated to all of the County's Area Municipalities for information.

Strategic Plan (2020-2022)

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| WORKS WELL TOGETHER | WELL CONNECTED | SHAPES THE FUTURE | INFORMS & ENGAGES | PERFORMS & DELIVERS | POSITIVE IMPACT |
| 1.ii. | | 3.ii. 3.iii. | 4.i. 4.ii. | 5.ii. | |

DISCUSSION

Background

Oxford County retained R.V. Anderson Associates Limited to comprehensively develop a long-term municipal water and wastewater servicing strategy for its 17 drinking water systems and 11 wastewater systems across the County. Specifically, the 2024 W/WW MP is being developed as a strategic planning document that will set out these long-term water and wastewater servicing strategies in order to support existing needs and accommodate future growth in population and employment through to the year 2046.

It will also afford on-going servicing continuity for existing communities (“designated settlement areas” as defined in the County Official Plan), including fully serviced (municipal) large urban centres and villages, which are intended to be the primary focus for future growth and development, as well as partially serviced (municipal) villages. The W/WW MP assumes that any current privately serviced (well and/or septic) villages and/or rural clusters will remain on such servicing given growth is limited to minor infilling in these areas.

The 2024 W/WW MP is being undertaken in accordance with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) process for Master Plans (Appendix 4, Approach #1 of the MCEA, October 2000, as amended in 2007, 2011 and 2015). Master Plans are long-range plans that integrate infrastructure requirements for existing and future land use with environmental assessment principles. Master Planning is a critical component in the County’s planning for growth and will provide the framework, timelines, and vision for its water and wastewater system infrastructure and related servicing needs. The MCEA process for Master Plans will ensure that all reasonable alternatives are considered and that a preferred alternative will have minimal impact on the natural, cultural, social and economic environment of the community.

Integrated Growth Management

The County’s W/WW MP will identify the path forward to comprehensively develop, evaluate and select preferred long-term water and wastewater servicing strategies and infrastructure improvements to support current and future levels of population and employment in accordance with the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement and the County’s approved Phase I Comprehensive Review (2020). This report provided up-to-date growth forecasts and land supply information to 2046. Tables 2 and 3 below illustrate the population and employment forecasts for the County and its eight Area Municipalities over the forecast period.

Table 2 – Forecasted Population Growth for the County and Area Municipalities

| Municipality | Estimated Annual Population Growth * | | | | | | Growth 2021-2046 |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| | 2021** | 2026 | 2031 | 2036 | 2041 | 2046 | |
| Woodstock | 47,965 | 51,825 | 55,815 | 59,825 | 63,595 | 67,295 | 19,330 |
| Tillsonburg | 19,120 | 20,020 | 20,980 | 21,980 | 22,960 | 23,890 | 4,770 |
| Ingersoll | 14,065 | 14,955 | 15,915 | 16,895 | 17,855 | 18,785 | 4,720 |
| Blandford-Blenheim | 7,770 | 8,090 | 8,440 | 8,810 | 9,190 | 9,550 | 1,780 |
| East Zorra-Tavistock | 8,050 | 8,530 | 9,040 | 9,560 | 10,050 | 10,510 | 2,460 |
| Norwich | 11,450 | 11,920 | 12,420 | 12,960 | 13,490 | 13,990 | 2,540 |
| South-West Oxford | 7,785 | 8,025 | 8,295 | 8,555 | 8,765 | 8,975 | 1,190 |
| Zorra | 8,860 | 9,110 | 9,370 | 9,650 | 9,950 | 10,240 | 1,380 |
| Oxford County | 125,065 | 132,475 | 140,275 | 148,235 | 155,855 | 163,235 | 38,170 |

* Where a Township contains more than one fully serviced settlement area, assumptions regarding the allocation of the Township's total forecasted growth to each settlement will also be used to inform the study findings for each system.

** 2021 Census Population with preliminary correction for undercount of approximately 3%

Table 3 – Forecasted Employment Growth for the County and Area Municipalities

| Municipality | Estimated Annual Employment Growth * | | | | | | Growth 2021-2046 |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|
| | 2021 | 2026 | 2031 | 2036 | 2041 | 2046 | |
| Woodstock | 28,440 | 30,040 | 31,690 | 33,720 | 36,050 | 38,730 | 10,290 |
| Tillsonburg | 9,060 | 9,320 | 9,600 | 9,950 | 10,360 | 10,810 | 1,750 |
| Ingersoll | 9,710 | 10,080 | 10,470 | 10,950 | 11,510 | 12,150 | 2,440 |
| Blandford-Blenheim | 1,910 | 1,950 | 1,990 | 2,050 | 2,120 | 2,210 | 300 |
| East Zorra-Tavistock | 2,950 | 3,020 | 3,100 | 3,200 | 3,320 | 3,450 | 500 |
| Norwich | 4,200 | 4,280 | 4,360 | 4,470 | 4,600 | 4,740 | 540 |
| South-West Oxford | 2,920 | 2,960 | 2,990 | 3,040 | 3,090 | 3,150 | 230 |
| Zorra | 2,890 | 2,920 | 2,960 | 3,010 | 3,080 | 3,150 | 260 |
| Oxford County | 62,080 | 64,570 | 67,160 | 70,390 | 74,130 | 78,390 | 16,310 |

* Figures may not add precisely due to rounding

To support current and future levels of population and employment to 2046, the 2024 W/WW MP will serve as the basis for determining where and what water and wastewater infrastructure is required, and when and how this infrastructure should be implemented and prioritized based on available resources and funding. It will identify any potential gaps in servicing and provide guidelines which are needed to support the design and construction of this infrastructure. As part of the County's integrated growth management process, the W/WW MP will be further used to guide future technical studies as shown below in Figure 2.

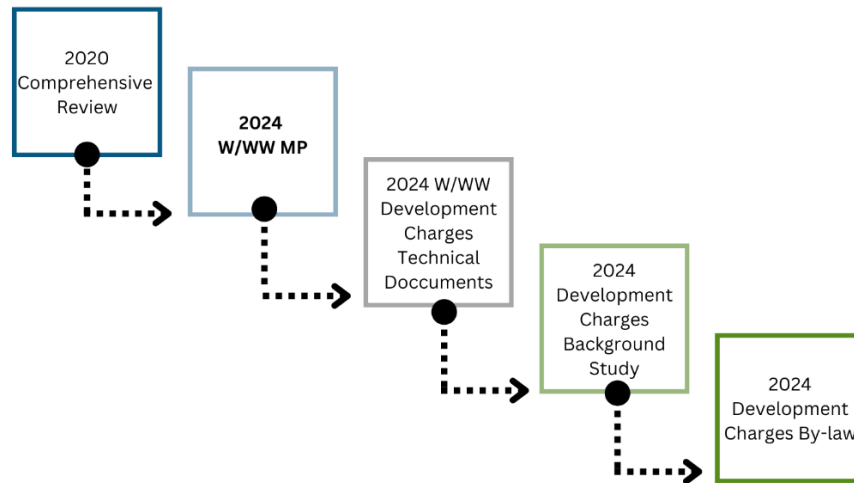


Figure 2 – County’s Integrated Growth Management Process.

2024 W/WW MP Objectives

In order to inform future plans and policies, several goals and objectives have been identified for the W/WW MP. The goals of the W/WW MP include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Provide water and wastewater strategies to service existing designated settlement areas and growth to the year 2046;
- Integrate growth management planning and infrastructure servicing in a manner which ensures alignment with the County’s Official Plan and Strategic Initiatives;
- Offer infrastructure solutions that recognize potential for growth beyond current planning horizons;
- Develop infrastructure systems which meet the County’s established asset level of service framework and MECP legislative requirements;
- Optimize the current infrastructure to realize all capacity available, while considering sustainable infrastructure expansions;
- Provide reliability, redundancy and security in the infrastructure systems, including consideration of reserve capacity;
- Optimize pumping and storage infrastructure to maintain level of service under emergency conditions;
- Recommend proven, reliable, and financially sustainable technologies that meet long-term servicing requirements;
- Recognize water conservation and efficiency measures to support environmental sustainability;
- Consider infrastructure operating and maintenance costs, including lifecycle costing, to evaluate overall long-term financial implications and sustainability; and
- Identify growth-triggered water and wastewater system infrastructure which will serve as inputs to the 2023 DC Water and Wastewater Technical Reports and 2024 DC Background Study.

2024 W/WW MP Methodology

The 2024 W/WW MP is being undertaken using the following methodology:

- Adherence to the MCEA Master Plan process, including extensive public consultation and engagement;
- Ensuring the W/WW MP is consistent with and conforms to all Provincial, Regional, and Municipal standards, plans, policies and legislation;
- Development and validation of water demand and wastewater flow design criteria;
- Modelling of population and employment growth impacts on the water and wastewater systems including sensitivity analysis to examine the potential implications of higher than forecasted growth on W/WW infrastructure needs;
- Identifying opportunities to optimize the effectiveness of existing and planned water and wastewater infrastructure;
- Evaluation of reasonable alternative solutions to achieve W/WW MP vision and goals;
- Development of preferred W/WW MP strategy and 20 year implementation plan, along with integration within the 2022 Oxford County Asset Management Plan;
- Identification of future Class EA Study requirements for applicable water and wastewater capital projects as applicable; and
- Develop and/or update capital cost estimates for required infrastructure for use in developing the 2024 Development Charges By-law.

Comments

Public Consultation and Engagement

Public participation and feedback is an important part of identifying the water and wastewater servicing needs and priorities of communities throughout Oxford County. The project team has engaged with key stakeholders, residents and businesses. A summary of the outreach and consultation to date for the W/WW MP is demonstrated in Table 4 below.

Table 4 – W/WW MP Consultation Activities to October 2022

| Consultation Activity | Date |
|--|--------------------|
| Notice of Commencement Memo to County Council | March 14, 2022 |
| Notice of Commencement Memo to Area Municipal Councils | March 14, 2022 |
| Internal Technical Advisory Committee (INTAC) Meeting #1 | April 13, 2022 |
| Notice of Commencement Posted (Online) | March 14, 2022 |
| External Technical Advisory Committee (EXTAC) Meeting #1 | April 7, 2022 |
| Notice of Commencement sent to Stakeholders and Indigenous Communities | March 14, 2022 |
| Notice of PCC #1 Memo to County Council | September 15, 2022 |
| Notice of PCC #1 Posted (online) | September 9, 2022 |
| Notice of PCC #1 Memo to Area Municipal Councils | September 15, 2022 |
| Notice of PCC #1 sent to Stakeholders and Indigenous Communities | September 14, 2022 |

The Internal Technical Advisory Committee (INTAC) was comprised of members from the County Water and Wastewater Services, Community Planning, Finance, and Engineering Services Departments. Invitations to External Technical Advisory Committee (EXTAC) meetings were distributed to Conservation Authorities, Area Municipalities, the local Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, and Southwestern Public Health.

The project webpage for the W/WW MP went live on March 14 on *Speak Up, Oxford!* (SUO). All notifications and project updates have been posted on the SUO project page, which can be found at: www.oxfordcounty.ca/wwwmp.

Public Consultation Centre #1

The W/WW MP first PCC was held virtually on Thursday, September 29 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. A video recording of this meeting, including the presentation and the question-and-answer period that followed is posted on the SUO project page.

Additionally, as part the W/WW MP public engagement strategy, a feedback response form (survey) was created and posted on the SUO project page at the end of August. Residents could fill out the survey form to provide feedback on water and wastewater services for three weeks after the virtual PCC, until October 19, 2022.

To provide residents the opportunity to engage with the project team in-person and to create awareness about the virtual PCC and feedback response form, County staff carried out three “pop-up” engagement events (one each in Woodstock, Tillsonburg and Ingersoll) as listed in Table 5.

Table 5 – W/WW MP “Pop-Up” Event Engagement Summary

| Location | Dates | Times |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Canada’s Outdoor Farm Show - Woodstock | September 14, 2022 | 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM |
| Tillsonburg Ribfest | September 23-24, 2022 | 11:00 AM to 7:00 PM |
| Ingersoll Town Hall | September 26, 2022 | 12:30 to 4:30 PM |

All feedback received will be summarized in the final draft 2024 W/WW MP report upon completion.

Conclusions

Oxford County's communities are growing and so is our water and wastewater infrastructure. The County and its consultants will continue to engage with interested stakeholders and community members.

The second Public Consultation Centre is scheduled for March 2023, where staff will provide more information on alternative solutions and recommended projects identified through the 2024 W/WW MP Study.

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
Interim Chief Administrative Officer