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Public Consultation Centre - Comments and Questions

A Public Consultation Centre (PCC) was held on August 3, 2023, to present and engage on Phase 1 consisting of the background conditions and problem/opportunity statement of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA) process for the Picton Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Master Servicing Plan (MSP). The format of the PCC was a drop-in centre with display panels. Project team members including Prince Edward County staff and members of the consultant team, CIMA+, were available to speak one-on-one with the public.

87 people signed the attendance sheet and 41 people returned comment sheets. A variety of questions and comments were received both during and after the PCC. Similar questions and comments have been grouped together and addressed below:

1. Concerns regarding the financial aspect of the projects in Picton and Wellington

The Picton MSP is reviewing the existing conditions of the water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure as well as the growth-related needs to 2047 and population projections within the urban boundary at buildout. Through this process, alternatives to address the infrastructure needs will be developed and preferred alternatives will be selected by comparing them head-to-head against a set of criteria. In this evaluation, capital and life-cycle costs will be key considerations. The MSP will outline a list of projects, estimated costs and additional requirements for implementation (if any). These projects will have different implementation timelines associated depending on project and phasing.

The identified projects and cost estimates will inform the cost-recovery policies that determine how the costs are shared between existing residents and new development. Hence, this MSP is required for financial planning. At this stage in the project, the short-listed alternatives are being developed further. The evaluation and cost estimates for the short-listed alternatives will be presented at the second PCC for comment.

2. Concerns regarding water rates

The water rates are set every five years; most recently in 2021. The County is setting up a Water and Wastewater Rates Community Working Group. The Working Group made up of water and wastewater rate payers will help inform the water and wastewater rates for 2027 - 2031. Currently, staff are looking at possible savings to lower, not increase, the water rates. As referenced in the financial aspects of the projects, the Picton MSP will identify the projects and cost estimates to establish the cost-recovery policies for development.

3. Questions about how the Picton MSP relates to the plans for future water supply in Wellington and across the region

The Picton MSP is specific to the needs of Picton for water, wastewater and stormwater.

Due to the age (1928), condition and capacity of the Picton Water Treatment Plant (WTP), the existing Picton WTP needs to be replaced. Due to site constraints at the existing facility and water quality concerns in Picton Harbour, a new WTP location and

intake may be required. This will be confirmed as the short-listed alternative is developed further and evaluated.

A short-listed alternative is to connect the new Wellington WTP (Schedule C EA ongoing) to service Wellington, Bloomfield and Picton. The 2021 Wellington MSP identified a new WTP to be located adjacent to the existing plant that could be used as a regional facility to provide water to other communities in Prince Edward County including Picton/Bloomfield. The ongoing Schedule C EA for the Wellington WTP has incorporated this concept to selecting the preferred treatment technologies to allow for modular treatment units for phased expansion. This option is being explored in coordination with the Regional Water Supply Servicing Master Plan. Should this alternative be identified as the preferred servicing option, the new WTP in Wellington will have space allocated for additional treatment trains to service the three communities.

4. How were population projections established and what if it doesn't occur?

The population numbers presented at the Picton Master Servicing Plan (MSP) PCC use the high growth scenario from the Growth Study prepared by Watson and Associates, dated April 2023. This report provides low, medium and high growth scenarios for Prince Edward County. However, for the purposes of calculating the development charges (DCs), the medium growth scenario was used for the Development Charges Background Study as Watson and Associates determined that this scenario is the most likely outcome during the time horizon of the background study.

When determining the size or capacity of a new treatment plants and linear infrastructure, both medium and high growth projections along with varying consumption rates/flows per capita are considered. If treatment plants are designed to accommodate high growth population projections in combination with high consumption rates/flows per capita, then the infrastructure would likely be oversized. Given the push to increase housing density, industry standard is to design to high growth projections with average consumption rates; however, we are still seeing a fair number of single residential development where medium growth and high consumption rates are more typical. When blended, the two scenarios are very close so the high growth with average consumption covers off both scenarios.

It is noted that the seasonal population in the Growth Study does not vary between the medium and high growth scenarios, but seasonal populations are still required to be accounted for when determining the capacity of new infrastructure as the sizing is based on peak demands, which historically at the Picton Water Treatment Plant have occurred during the summer months.

Phasing of all proposed works is an important consideration when developing the Master Servicing Plan. Population forecasting for infrastructure projects has been calculated in two phases to better reflect the rate of growth. Growth forecasting to the year 2047 (25-year horizon) represents Phase 1 population forecasts, and growth to buildout of the urban serviced area represents Phase 2. Phase 2 or buildout is not assigned a projected year but it is critical to consider to ensure the infrastructure is not undersized and has adequate capacity beyond a 25-year horizon. Although consideration is given towards Phase 2 full build out populations, this does not mean immediate implementation of the recommendations will occur. Infrastructure will be prioritized based on where growth is occurring and phases of the new and/or existing plants will be determined so growth of the infrastructure will happen alongside growth of the population.

5. Concerns on the visual consequences of the expansion projects (water and stormwater) in both Picton and Wellington

The Picton MSP will evaluate alternatives for water storage, preferred alternatives for water treatment and approaches to stormwater management. Locations of facilities will include aesthetics as criteria within the decision model.

The storm tank (EQ tank) in Wellington, a Council-approved project, which is currently under construction was included in the 2021 Wellington MSP. The EQ tank is designed to mitigate the impact of extreme wet weather flows to the Wellington WWTP. The recommended EQ tank size was 3,500 m³ and refined lower in detailed design. Due to the size of the tank, the only available location was in the space allocated for the new WWTP. The design and construction were performed to reduce construction costs and designed to be integrated into the new facility. The preferred alternative presented in the Schedule C EA for the new Wellington WWTP shows the EQ tank will be fully converted to aeration tanks in the new plant. It is anticipated there will be minimal wasted costs from the existing construction. This approach allows a significant portion of the capital cost of the tank to be “credited” to the eventual new plant.

The EQ tank is situated partially above ground due to the shallow bedrock and other in ground risks/costs. The partially above ground construction reduced capital costs by more than \$500,000 and mitigated the risk of dewatering challenges.

The new facility is proposed to have a building in front of the tank and landscaping to reduce visual impacts.

6. Concerns with water pressure

The project team is aware of low pressures in areas within Picton. Initial water modelling has been completed. The model will be projected in the various scenarios and various alternatives will be evaluated to supply adequate water pressure for existing as well as new developments.

7. General comments on the PCC format

The format of the PCC was with project boards and project team members present to answer questions and guide through questions. This approach allows a more accessible window of time for people to stop in and engage throughout the event rather than a fixed starting time. Additionally, the material is also posted online for viewing and receipt of comments or questions to the project team. This approach is an accepted format and preferred across many municipalities in Ontario.

8. Suggestions on the short-listed alternatives

The short-listed alternates are generated from screening the long list for necessary criteria to be met. For example, the Do Nothing or Limit Growth alternatives are not feasible long term servicing strategies as they do not meet the problem and opportunity statement and are not feasible with ongoing planning applications. Reducing water demand based on current per-capita rates and ongoing planning applications is not considered a viable stand-alone measure for a long-term servicing strategy.

9. General questions on design basis and phasing

The Picton MSP will review the capacity of the existing infrastructure and compare it to the future projections. The analysis for the water and wastewater servicing options will present phasing options and recommended project prioritization. This information will be presented in the next PCC with cost estimates.

10. Comments with WTP Intake and WWTP Outfall Locations

The existing WTP intake is located in Picton Bay and prone to poor source water quality, water quality challenges due to accidents as well as potential changes due to future development and climate change. The WWTP outfall discharges to Marsh Creek near Lalor Street Pumping Station and flows to Picton Harbour (see below)



11. Concern the recently upgraded Picton WWTP already needs upgrading

The Picton WWTP was commissioned approximately 10 years ago and is in good condition, with the ability to expand the treatment process. The project team is evaluating the existing plant capacity to expand the facility as much as possible. In the short-listed alternatives, the project team is evaluating expansion options that would allow for the continued use of the existing asset.

12. General comments on risk due to uncertain times

The Picton MSP is reviewing both the existing infrastructure and current needs as well as growth-related needs. This study is the first step to planning infrastructure for growth. These studies are typically reviewed and revised as needed every 5 to 10 years depending on conditions and need. Additionally, as answered above for population

projections, phasing of all proposed works is an important consideration. Infrastructure will be prioritized based on existing needs and where growth is occurring and phases of the new and/or existing plants will be determined so growth of the infrastructure will happen alongside growth of the population.

13. How is information communicated for the event and all projects?

The Picton MSP notices are distributed to the public in the local newspapers (2 consecutive issues prior to an event), posted to social media sites, posted to the County website and emailed to residents on the project list. The County also sends a public service announcement to local news agencies. There are currently four ongoing and closely related water and wastewater projects following the municipal class EA process. If you would like to be included on the project list please send an email to the following:

Picton MSP

Jeff Shortt – jshortt@pecounty.on.ca

Bradley Young – Bradley.young@cima.ca

Wellington Schedule C EAs new WTP and WWTP

Garrett Osborne – gosborne@pecounty.on.ca

Bradley Young – Bradley.young@cima.ca

Regional Water Supply Servicing Master Plan

Garrett Osborne – gosborne@pecounty.on.ca

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