
Urban Storm Water System Operations and Financing Options Executive Summary for Public Consultation

The Township of Zorra (Zorra) has two (2) urban areas with municipal water and wastewater systems and urban drainage systems; Embro and Thamesford. The urban drainage systems include catch basins, pipes, maintenance holes and storm water management (SWM) ponds. Both urban areas have experienced growth, and more is projected. Zorra is looking at developing a sustainable operating and financing program for the urban drainage systems, much like water and wastewater rates. rw2 Engineering Ltd was retained to develop options for future operations and financing. The rw2 report was considered at the May 4, 2022 Council meeting and public consultation was approved to get public input on the recommendations. The full rw2 Ltd. Report can be accessed at www.zorra.ca

Drainage systems in the urban areas have been constructed in various ways over the years; using *the Drainage Act*, installed by developers and installed as part of the wastewater servicing projects from 2000 to 2011. Zorra needs to decide the route forward for future maintenance and financing. Fortunately, Zorra is working ahead on this matter, long before expensive maintenance such as storm pond cleanouts are required. Developing an operations and financing plan and then collecting fees over time into a reserve allows for low yearly costs instead of a much higher bill out when maintenance occurs.

The highlights of the report are as follows:

- There are three (3) options to consider for financing the future maintenance:
 - *The Drainage Act*
 - General taxation
 - Storm water fee
- All three (3) alternatives are viable but for each the amount of money needed for maintenance has to be increased for each one; currently \$7,000 per year for catch basin cleaning needs to be increased to \$30,000 per year and eventually to \$100,000 per year over a ten-year period (funding storm water pond cleanouts).
- It is recommended that a storm water fee (\$60 to 80/year for a property of 0.4 hectares or 1 acre) be implemented in 2023. Financial details are included in the report.
- Other operational issues for developing the maintenance program are discussed in the report.

Dated: May 10, 2022