



Public Information Centre – Consultation Report

PROJECT: Town of Erin: Urban Centre Wastewater
Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA)

DATE: June 22, 2017

LOCATION: Erin Community Centre / Centre 2000

TIME: 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

These notes summarize the Public Information Centre event held on June 22, 2017 at the Erin Community Centre / Centre 2000.

This consultation report includes: attendance numbers; the agenda for the event; a description of the format and content presented; a summary of questions and comments received from the public; and copies of both the display boards and the PowerPoint presentation used at the event.

Please note that this record of comments includes comments from direct conversations, questions asked and answers received from the Q&A session, and comments submitted to the Project email address following the event. The summary of comments is not meant to be exhaustive and is not verbatim. Names of visitors have not been associated with comments made in order to protect privacy.

PIC Agenda

6:00 p.m.	Doors open Display boards can be viewed by public Project Team available to public for informal discussion and questions
7:30 p.m.	Presentation by Project Team
8:00 p.m.	Q&A Period
9:00 p.m.	PIC Concludes

Attendance

In total, 62 people attended the PIC event.

Visitors were invited to arrive at 6:00 p.m. for an opportunity to see the display boards and to have informal conversations with the Project Team. The majority of visitors arrived between 6:00 p.m. and 6:45 p.m., taking the time to review the boards and ask questions.



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Event Goals

The primary purpose of this event was to share information with members of the public about the Erin Urban Centre Wastewater Servicing Class EA in order to give a better understanding of the project and the implications for the Town of Erin community.

The specific goals of this PIC were to:

- Introduce the project to residents who may not be familiar;
- Inform residents about the findings from the technical studies completed to date;
- Describe the process up to this point and explain why certain decisions have been made;
- Give residents an opportunity to ask questions of the Project Team;
- To hear back from the community about their thoughts and concerns for the project.

The desired outcome of the event was that community members would have all of the information that they may have been seeking about the Project, and that their concerns and questions have been appropriately addressed. It was also generally important for residents to become familiar with the Project Team and to feel comfortable to get in touch in the future if they have any questions or concerns.

Display Board Viewing

The PIC started at 6:00 p.m. and arriving visitors had an opportunity to see the display boards that were set up around the space and to have informal conversations with the Project Team. The boards provided an overview of the project up to this point as well as sharing the highlights of the technical studies that have been completed. Members of the Project Team were available to discuss the project and to answer questions on a one-on-one basis.

A copy of all display boards can be found in Appendix A of this report.

The following is a summary of questions asked of Project Team members and comments from visitors during the viewing of display boards.

- A visitor asked for an explanation of the Servicing Area Map, wondering why proposed but currently undeveloped areas weren't being depicted. A Project Team member explained that the map they were looking at was showing existing areas to be serviced and that a different display board had information about potential growth areas.
- A visitor expressed concern about the amount of growth that could happen.
- A visitor asserted that the community did not want this growth and expressed frustration that the Town was continuing to spend money to study something that people don't want.
- A visitor stated that this Project was very important for the future of the community and that both residential and commercial growth had been needed for years. They said that it was time to get on with it already and that the community was ready for growth.



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- A visitor asked about whether the population projections included commercial and industrial growth. They stated that they were very concerned about ensuring that there was job growth for the community because that is what would keep people in town for the long term. Too many young people had moved away for better job prospects, so ensuring employment growth should be a top priority for the town. A Project Team member explained that the wastewater flow numbers did include commercial and industrial flows.
- Three visitors discussed what new residential growth would ultimately look like. The discussion included locations for development, design and aesthetics, and what kind of population density would make sense for the area.
- A visitor expressed how important having this conversation was for the future of the Town.
- A visitor said that it would be important to keep communications open with residents so that they understand the process and can have their voices heard.
- A visitor asked about what the impact would be on the West Credit River after full buildout. A Project Team member explained the impacts on water quality and what it would mean for aquatic species in the river.
- A visitor asked for more details on how the serviced population had increased between the SSMP and the Class EA and on how the 7Q20 statistic had been calculated and updated. A Project Team Member explained the details.
- A visitor asked for more details on the water quality results from Hillsburgh and potential influences on it. A Project Team Member explained potential influences on water quality and how any influence of existing septic systems could not be conclusively determined from existing data and that long-term monitoring (after any plant was built) would be required to establish this.
- A member of the Press asked for details on how the ACS was conducted and the numbers derived. Project Team Members explained this.
- A visitor provided Project Team Members with their experience in alternative sewage treatment technologies in Sechelt, BC.
- A visitor asked about the treatment technology that would be used. A Project Team member provided a general explanation of common treatment technologies but explained that the specific technology to be used had not yet be determined for this project.
- Two visitors asked about the overall growth decision process and how the wastewater Class EA fits into it. A Project Team member explained that the three major pieces that would need to be completed the wastewater Class Environmental Assessment, the completion of the water supply Class Environmental Assessment, and the updating of the Official Plan. It was pointed out that while the wastewater and water supply issues would determine the technical limits on potential growth, the decision on actually how much to grow would be made through the Official Plan process.



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- A visitor expressed concern about what areas would be serviced and how that decision would be made. The visitor predicted that all of the community would inevitably want to connect to the communal system and that allowances should be made for that.
- A visitor stated that they were very happy with the amount of information and the availability of the Project Team to respond to questions.
- A visitor said that they were very optimistic about what this project could mean for the future of Erin.

Presentation Introduction

At 7:30 p.m. the formal presentation began.

Dave Hardy welcomed visitors and thanked them for coming out to spend the evening learning a bit more about the Project. The agenda for the presentation was reviewed. Dave then introduced the members of the Project Team. Finally, Dave reviewed a set of meeting courtesies that both visitors and the Project Team were asked to keep in mind in order to ensure that the meeting stayed focused, easy to understand, civil, and inclusive.

Main Presentation

Joe Mullan provided the formal presentation and covered the following topics:

1. Purpose of PIC & Project Background
2. Refresher on the Servicing and Settlement Master Plan (SSMP)
3. Update on Assimilative Capacity Study (ACS) and confirmed effluent objectives for the discharge to the West Credit River at 10th Line;
4. Overview of the existing Septic System Review and identified areas that should be connected to the Municipal Wastewater system;
5. Overview of the Potential Populations and Wastewater Flows for each Community, based on updated ACS and new effluent criteria;
6. Overview of the Assessment for Two Wastewater Treatment Plant discharge locations;
7. Overview of the Assessment for Large Subsurface Disposal Systems.
8. Next Steps & Schedule

A copy of the PowerPoint presentation slides can be found in Appendix B of this report.



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Q&A Session

The following summarizes all questions from the public and answers by the Project Team.

Q: You collected a lot of information on the septic systems in Erin and Hillsburgh. I'm wondering if you could have just done a water quality test of the river before it gets to Hillsburgh and then after it leaves the town. Wouldn't that have told you what pollutants are coming from the town itself?

That could be done, but it would take quite a bit of additional testing to determine the water quality at those locations. While that testing might be able to show a higher level of pollutants in Hillsburgh, it wouldn't definitively show the source of that pollution. We did not take measurements from the river around Hillsburgh. That data is from the MOECC and CVC. We followed the SSMP which identified downstream of Erin Village as the preferred discharge location. Our testing focused on the most likely place that the disposal of effluents would be allowed.

Q: In terms of water consumption, it looks like you are saying it is 385 litres per capita per day. Given all the water saving technology that exists today I think that number is very high. The numbers in Victoria are more in the 140-150 range. If you just drop that number from 380 to 200 you could cut the size of the treatment system in half. Water is not inexpensive here. This really should be factored in, especially in new dwellings. The numbers we are using for subdivision use is 75 litres per dwelling per day.

We realize that we selected a water consumption number that was high and conservative. The number we quoted was based on the gravity collection system alternative and included an allowance for infiltration. We looked at the average drinking water consumption levels in Erin and it was around 160 litres per dwelling per day. We then bumped up those numbers significantly because with a new wastewater system consumption levels may go up and we wouldn't want to undersize. If the facility is developed and we find that the actual numbers are different then the plant would be able to service additional people.

Q: What population density did you use to calculate the overall population?

All of the growth numbers came from the County. We used their density estimate of 45 persons per hectare.

Q: The SSMP said that the maximum number of individuals that can be handled by the river is 6000. Now you have said that it can handle up to 14,500. And you have said that you have taken conservative numbers. How many people can the plant actually handle?

It is important to remember that this study is only one part of the process. We are looking at what is technically possible given the river conditions and available technology. The actual decision on how much growth will occur will be made through the Official Plan process.

In regards to how many people the treatment facility could handle, that is variable based on the size of the facility and the treatment technology. There is not yet a specific system design or



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treatment technology identified for this project. We were asked to study whether it is possible to provide wastewater treatment for Erin Village and Hillsburgh up to the full buildout population currently stated in the Official Plan. We are saying that it's possible.

Q: What if the County comes back and says that they want to put 25,000 people in Erin. Will the treatment plant be able to handle that?

Given our understanding of the river and with current treatment technology, no, the treatment plant could not handle 25,000 people in Erin.

Q: I am on the Environmental Sustainability Committee in Erin and in January we asked if we could expand the scope of the study and the Town put aside \$30,000 for the expanded study. Two weeks later we were already hearing that subsurface disposal was not possible. Then we sent a letter in February and didn't get a response back until June. Could you explain what happened?

We first met with you in January to discuss the possibility of subsurface disposal as an alternative to a centralized treatment system. The gentleman you brought along did not have experience with wastewater systems in Ontario, where regulations are much stricter. Following that meeting we went back to the SSMP and determined that the whole issue of subsurface disposal had not been fully examined. We then went to Council for approval to complete that investigation. Over the next few months the study was completed and we have now confirmed that subsurface disposal would not be a viable alternative for the community.

Q: Do you know why the 7Q20 flow rate increased given that 2016 was a drought year?

We worked with Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) to get this information. The 7Q20 low flow statistic was derived by comparing flow between water gauges located at 8th Line and 10th Line. In 2013, CVC put a new water gauge in at 10th Line and we now have two more years of data to derive the 7Q20 than they did previously. CVC were able to statistically compare the flow from the two flow stations to better estimate the 7Q20. Interestingly, it was found that the lowest flow rate measured during the 2016 summer drought was still higher than the 7Q20 (the 7 day low flow rate over a period of the last 20 years).

Q: You keep talking about phosphorus but there's a lot of other things that you need to be sure you're cleaning up. One of the latest things being found as environmental contaminant is prescription drugs that go through our bodies and cosmetics.

We have not specifically addressed either of those contaminants at this stage of this study. This issue has come up over the last ten years all over the world and, so far, there have not been standards developed yet to address this. I know that this is not a great answer, but the sewage treatment facility would be able to remove some of these contaminants from the water. New standards and treatment approaches could be added in future years as any risks are identified and an approach for treating those contaminants becomes standardized.



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Q: You mentioned that the treatment plant would be between 10th Line and Winston Churchill Road. Do you have a specific area in mind of where it would be built?

That is a good question, but it is a matter that will to be discussed further in Phase 3 of this project. We have started that process and we will soon be starting to talk to land owners and to evaluate potential sites.

Q: There is a spot near 10th Line where lots of people fill water bottles and take water directly from the river and kids fish and swim.

Thank you for that information. The ACS identified a site at Winston Churchill Blvd. where people take water from a spring adjacent to the river but we were not aware of any Site at 10th Line. This is very important info. [The commenter later provided a map of the specific location through email.]

Q: There's a gravel pit that is going to be expanding towards Bush Street. So you'll have a sewage treatment facility on one corner and a gravel pit on the other. That's got to affect groundwater.

The wastewater treatment plant would not impact groundwater. By design it would not leak and would not impact groundwater and regulations are in place to ensure that it never does. Thank you for letting us know about the gravel pit location being moved. That is important information.

Q: One of the major issues is the sequencing of what you're going to do. You don't currently have a collection system or a treatment plant. It's kind of a chicken or egg scenario. Which will come first, the treatment or the collection?

The staging and phasing of implementation is an issue that is will be looked at in Phase 3. We will certainly be looking at how phasing will effect both costs and project timelines.

Q: In the SSMP, the price tag presented was very high. I hope that every resident here understands that the cost will be on them and it won't come from any grant scenario. The community has to know that cost number as soon as possible.

Actually, there have already been initial conversations going on between your Council and higher levels of government about funding. A key thing to recognize is that the Federal and Provincial governments have both said that they would not provide grants for any projects that aren't fully studied and planned. The process we are going through now is one of the key steps in that direction. Completing this work is a significant required step for getting funding for implementation.

Q: There hasn't been any conversation about whether rural residents will have to pay for a portion of the system even though they won't be connected. Could you comment on other places in Ontario and what they have done?

In Ontario the full cost of financing water and wastewater services is bourn by the actual customers. Rural residents who are not going to be connected will not be required to pay for the wastewater system.



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Comment Forms and Email Submissions

The following comments and questions were submitted either through the available comment forms at the PIC or through the project email following the event. Answers to the questions have been provided by the Project Team.

Q: I am concerned about the natural ecosystems once development begins and our population increases. Will development occur with this in mind? Or will Erin end up looking like Brampton or Mississauga?

The form of any future development is not a topic that was considered within this wastewater Class environmental assessment. However, under the Official Plan process it is within the Town's ability to set guidelines for any new development in a way that fits with the existing community.

Comment: I think that a big pipe single treatment facility is the best solution rather than continuing with septic systems, doing subsurface disposal, or making a second treatment plant in Hillsburgh.

Comment: I agree that there are a significant number homes in the old village of Erin that have lot sizes that are inadequate for private sewage disposal systems. The Province has historically funded community improvement projects like this and should step up to help Erin too. The Town should be seeking upper tier financial assistance.

Comment: An expansion of the Town's municipal water supply should be considered in conjunction with or prior to the provision of a sanitary sewer system in Erin. A full sanitary sewer system in Erin as outlined by the Consultant is not viable without expansion to the water system.

Comment: There are a number of relatively new subdivisions in the Town that are on large lots and have modern private sewage systems. The consultant seems to advocate for some of these subdivisions to be connected to the sewer system while others won't be. Some of those properties shouldn't need to connect and they would bear the financial cost in a seemingly unfair way.

Comment: It seems to me that the only way the project will proceed is properly identifying the properties that are of sufficient size and nature where a private sewage system is viable and not including those properties in the service area. The serviced area should be limited to the undersized lots and new development.

Comment: Hillsburgh is in need of an expanded water supply system. Erin has many small lots needing sanitary sewers. It appears to me that these two urban centres have different priorities.

Comment: We live in the area and have our own well and septic system that was approved in 2017. I am not in favour of hooking up to the proposed plan for our area.