



ENGAGE COBOURG

Your voice, your town.

Public Engagement Report

Stormwater Management Funding Assessment

Date: June 9, 2022

Prepared by: Communications Department

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Background

Past practice in Ontario has commonly been to fund stormwater management costs from the general tax levy. Recent trends are now moving towards dedicated funding sources similar to the full cost recovery system that is in place for water and wastewater assets in Cobourg. Having a stable funding source for critical infrastructure such as water and wastewater ensures that operating and capital budgets are funded adequately in order to keep our residents and environment safe and healthy.

Until 2021, the Town had a minimal operating budget for storm sewer and stormwater pond maintenance. Following a condition assessment of the Town's six (6) stormwater ponds in 2020, an additional \$50,000 was noted to be required annually for pond maintenance plus significant upcoming capital works expenses. Capital budgets that are required for major restorative works have no funding source other than the general tax levy and the occasional grant, when available.

As part of the Town's ongoing development of a comprehensive asset management plan, staff are currently undertaking a complete assessment of alternative funding models and rate structures that are available for recovering costs associated with stormwater assets.

A dedicated funding source, paired with a well-designed rate structure, is a more sustainable and equitable way of recovering operating and capital costs under a user pay principle where revenue is directly aligned with the provision of service. A dedicated fund can also create more awareness of the importance of stormwater management and the high costs associated with the upkeep and replacement of the assets that support this service.

Stormwater management is also a form of wastewater treatment, whereby rain water and snowmelt runs off across dirty roads and properties, makes its way through the storm sewer system and into a stormwater pond to settle out contaminants before being released to our creeks and drinking water source, Lake Ontario.

Objectives

The public engagement objective for the Stormwater Management Funding Assessment project was to:

- Inform residents
- Receive feedback and questions from residents

Engagement Strategy & Approach

The engagement approach for the Stormwater Management Funding Assessment project was comprised of the following public engagement tools on Engage Cobourg (www.engagecobourg.ca), the Town of Cobourg's online engagement platform.



Open-ended forum



Question and Answer tool

An online forum was launched for residents to provide further comments, opinions or feedback on the proposed Stormwater Management Funding Assessment. The forum question asked:

We'd love to hear your thoughts! Share your feedback on the Stormwater Management Funding Assessment.

To promote further questions, the Question and Answer tool was also utilized, which asked:

Have a question about Stormwater Management Funding? Ask it here!

Engagement Process

The Stormwater Management Funding Assessment public engagement process was launched on the Town of Cobourg's online engagement platform, Engage Cobourg. Powered by Bang the Table, a complete end-to-end online platform driving inclusive, transparent and measurable community engagement that empowers collaborative learning, discussion, and debate.

Interested members of the public were encouraged to review the Frequently Asked Questions document and supporting documentation prior to engaging in the Forum or engaging in the Question and Answer section.

Promotions to drive residents to the Engage Cobourg online public engagement platform was managed by the Communications Department through a variety of communication vehicles and tactics, including:

- ✓ Public Notice - April 20, 2022 introducing upcoming Public Engagement project and notifying members of the public to view Watson & Associates presentation to Council on May 9, 2022
- ✓ Public Notice for Launch of Project, May 12, 2022
- ✓ Engage Cobourg newsletter
- ✓ Print advertisements in local newspaper Northumberland News
- ✓ Online social media posts on Facebook and Twitter
- ✓ Website notices on the municipal homepage

Public Engagement Timeline

2 Weeks
May 12, 2022 to
May 26, 2022

Key Values of the Engagement Process

The Engagement Spectrum that the Town of Cobourg follows is a globally recognized standard for identifying levels of participation, which has been adopted from the International Association of Public Participation.



The spectrum outlines the Town of Cobourg’s objectives for each type of engagement process delivered.

IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum - Increasing Level of Public Impact				
Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
<i>Public Participation Goal:</i>	<i>Public Participation Goal:</i>	<i>Public Participation Goal:</i>	<i>Public Participation Goal:</i>	<i>Public Participation Goal:</i>
To provide the public with balance and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
<i>Promise to Public:</i>	<i>Promise to Public:</i>	<i>Promise to Public:</i>	<i>Promise to Public:</i>	<i>Promise to Public:</i>
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
<i>Example Tools:</i>	<i>Example Tools:</i>	<i>Example Tools:</i>	<i>Example Tools:</i>	<i>Example Tools:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact Sheets • Web Sites • Open Houses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public comment • Focus Groups • Surveys • Public Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Deliberate Polling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen Advisory Committees • Consensus-building • Participatory decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen Juries • Ballots • Delegated Decisions

Communication and Marketing Materials

The Communications Department continued to utilize brand and visual identity for the Stormwater Management Funding Assessment project that was used across all marketing collateral. The marketing collateral maintained consistency with the images and design of the project page to create a unique and friendly identity. This identity further helped enhance the concise messaging for the public engagement process.

Project Page

Stormwater Management Funding Assessment

Background
 Past practice in Ontario has commonly been to fund stormwater management costs from the general tax levy. Recent trends are now moving towards dedicated funding sources similar to the full cost recovery system that is in place for water and wastewater assets in Cobourg. Having a stable funding source for critical infrastructure such as water and wastewater ensures that operating and capital budgets are funded adequately in order to keep our residents and environments safe and healthy.

Until 2021, the Town had a minimal operating budget for storm sewer and stormwater pond maintenance. Following a condition assessment of the Town's six (6) stormwater ponds in 2020, an additional \$50,000 was noted to be required annually for pond maintenance plus significant upcoming capital work expenses. Capital budgets that are required for major restorative works have no funding source other than the general tax levy and the occasional grant, when available.

As part of the Town's ongoing development of a comprehensive asset management plan, staff are currently undertaking a complete assessment of alternative funding models and rate structures that are available for recovering costs associated with stormwater assets.

A dedicated funding source, paired with a well-designed rate structure, is a more sustainable and equitable way of recovering operating and capital costs under a user-pay principle which reflects a direct alignment with the provision of service. A dedicated fund can also create more awareness of the importance of stormwater management and the high costs associated with the upkeep and replacement of the assets that support this service.

Stormwater management is also a form of wastewater treatment, whereby rain water and stormwater runoff off streets, roads and properties, make its way through the storm sewer system and into a stormwater pond to settle out contaminants before being released to our creeks and drinking water source, Lake Ontario. Be sure to read this [FAQ](#) for more information.

The public engagement objective for the Stormwater Management Funding Assessment project is to:

- Inform residents
- Receive feedback and questions from residents

We're looking for your feedback:
 To share your thoughts on Stormwater Management Funding Assessment please contribute to the following public engagement opportunities:

1. Review the Stormwater Management Funding Assessment presentation and reports.
2. Share your feedback in the forum.
3. Ask a question of staff.

Note: Public Engagement for the Stormwater Management Funding Assessment closes at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 26, 2022.

If you require any of the information in an accessible format, please contact the Communications Department at communications@cobourg.ca

FORUM QUESTIONS

Have a question about Stormwater Management Funding? Ask it here!

Ask a question...

Submit

Where Listening

Laurie Willis
 Director of Public Works
 The Town of Cobourg
 Phone: 905.372.4671
 Email: llwillis@cobourg.ca

Terry Hoekstra
 Manager, Engineering and Capital Projects
 The Town of Cobourg
 Phone: 905.372.9671
 Email: thoekstra@cobourg.ca

Lan Devey
 Treasurer/Finance CMO
 The Town of Cobourg
 Phone: 905.372.4201
 Email: lan@cobourg.ca

Tracey Vaughan
 Chief Administrative Officer
 The Town of Cobourg
 Phone: 905.372.4301
 Email: ivauhan@cobourg.ca

Key Date
 Public Engagement Project Opens
May 12 2022
 Public Engagement Project Closes: 4 p.m.
May 26 2022
 Sealing Council Approval
June 2022
 Implementation (If Council approves)
October 2022

Documents

- Stormwater Management FAQ (38 KB) (pdf)
- Peter Simpsco, Watson & Associates, Council Presentation May 8, 2022 on the Stormwater Management Funding Assessment
- Stormwater Management Funding Assessment - May 9, 2022 Staff Report (pdf) (274 KB) (pdf)
- Cobourg Stormwater Asset & Funding Assessment Report (147 KB) (pdf)

Facebook Post

Town of Cobourg, Ontario
 Published by Jerry Trevisi · May 11 at 12:07 PM · 0

ENGAGE COBourg: We are pleased to announce the launch of the Stormwater Management Funding Assessment project and invite Cobourg residents to share feedback through the following Public Engagement opportunities:

- Review the Stormwater Management Funding Assessment presentation and supporting documents
- Share their feedback in the online forum
- Ask a question of staff

Visit www.engagecobourg.ca today!
 This public engagement project closes on Thursday, May 26th at 4 p.m.

TOWN OF COBourg

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FUNDING ASSESSMENT

Twitter Post

Town of Cobourg @TownofCobourg · May 12

ENGAGE COBourg: We are pleased to announce the launch of the Stormwater Management Funding Assessment project.

- Share your feedback today on engagecobourg.ca

This public engagement project closes on Thursday, May 26th at 4 p.m.

TOWN OF COBourg

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FUNDING ASSESSMENT

Public Engagement Notice

Engage Cobourg Launches Stormwater Management Funding Assessment Project
 Residents are encouraged to review the information and submit feedback.

Cobourg, ON (May 12, 2022) – The Town of Cobourg's Public Works Division in partnership with the Communications Department is pleased to announce the launch of the Stormwater Management Funding Assessment on Engage Cobourg, an online public engagement platform designed to gather feedback and comments from residents.

The goal of the stormwater management funding assessment is to create a recurring funding model to support the maintenance of this essential infrastructure. Past practice in Ontario has typically been to fund stormwater management costs from the general tax levy. Recent trends are now moving towards dedicated funding sources, similar to the full cost recovery system that is in place for water and wastewater assets in Cobourg. Having a stable funding source for critical infrastructure such as water and wastewater ensures that operating and capital budgets are funded adequately to keep residents and the environment safe and healthy.

"As part of the Town of Cobourg's ongoing development of a comprehensive asset management plan, we are currently undertaking a complete assessment of alternative funding models and rate structures that are available for recovering costs associated with stormwater assets," said Laurie Willis, Director of Public Works.

Stormwater management is also a form of wastewater treatment whereby rainwater and snowmelt runoff off across roads and properties, makes its way through the storm sewer system and into a stormwater pond to settle out contaminants, before being released to our creeks and drinking water source, Lake Ontario.

Members of the public are invited to visit Engage Cobourg until May 26th to review the May 9th Committee of the Whole presentation by Watson & Associates who summarized the results of the funding assessment that will better enable the Town of Cobourg to plan for long-range investments in stormwater management. The full Watson & Associates stormwater assessment report can also be viewed on Engage Cobourg.

Ad Block: Northumberland News

Town of Cobourg News
 May 12 2022

GO-WALK Bus Mobile Clinic Visits
 Cobourg Community Centre May 15
 The Town of Cobourg Community Services Division will be hosting the GO-WALK Bus Mobile Vaccine Clinic at the Cobourg Community Centre, 750 Okeby Street, on Sunday, May 15, 2022 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 You may schedule a first, second, third or booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine as of May 11 at 8 a.m. by calling the Provincial Vaccine Contact Center at 1-833-943-3900.
 Visit Cobourg.ca/news to learn more.

Boat Lift-In Operations at the Cobourg Marina Scheduled for May 11-15, 2022
 There are some temporary closures May 11-15 to ensure the safe operation of the Marina Boat Lift. **Parking lot closures include:** The Esplanade East and West lots, Division Street South and the Marina Parking lot (on May 15). **Street closures include:** The Esplanade, Third Street (from Hiberna to the Esplanade), Hiberna Street (south of Third St.) and Division Street (south of the Esplanade).
 Visit Cobourg.ca/news to learn more.

Changes Coming to Waterfront and Downtown Parking Effective May 20
 The Town of Cobourg will be implementing updates to the Downtown and Waterfront Parking structure and fee schedule.
 For a full outline of available parking, including information on the NEW Resident Waterfront Parking Passes, visit Cobourg.ca/parking.

Vote Cobourg - 2022
 Candidate Information Packages are Available
 The 2022 Municipal Election Candidate Packages are available for pick-up at Victoria Hall, 55 King Street West.
cobourgvotes.ca

Stay Informed. Stay Connected.
 @townofcobourg

Have Your Say, Cobourg!
 Join Engage Cobourg today.
engagecobourg.ca

SAVE THE DATE CANADA DAY PARADE 2022
 Save the Date for this year's Canada Day Parade on Friday, July 1 at 11 a.m.
 For those interested in submitting an entry, visit experiencecobourg.ca/efestivals.

Active Public Engagement Projects
 Offer feedback on many initiatives

Stormwater Management Funding Assessment
 Potential Affordable Housing Sites
 What's Next for the Memorial Arena?
 Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (Phase 2)
 Your input is valued and makes a difference! Sign up at engagecobourg.ca today.

Book Your Community Event Today!
 Visit ventures13.ca or call 905-372-5900. **V E N T U R E S Eastern Ontario's Innovation & Entrepreneurship Centre**

Next Council Meeting
 cobourg.ca/council **16**

Ad Block: Northumberland News

Town of Cobourg News
 May 12 2022

Cobourg Transit and Municipal Closures on Monday, May 23 for Victoria Day
 The Town of Cobourg would like to advise residents that Conventional and WHEELS Transit will not be operational on Monday, May 23, 2022 (Victoria Day).
 All Municipal buildings will also be closed including Victoria Hall, the Cobourg Community Centre, Public Works Building 7 and the Veterans 3 Innovation and Entrepreneurship Centre. The Town of Cobourg wishes everyone a safe and happy Victoria Day long weekend.

Celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee
 Save the date for Sunday, May 29
 This year marks the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, with 2022 being the 70th anniversary of her accession to the Throne. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II is Canada's longest reigning Sovereign.
 The Town of Cobourg is pleased to invite the community to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on Sunday, May 29 starting at 2 p.m. Check out the list of activities planned at Cobourg.ca/queensjubilee.

Changes Coming to Waterfront and Downtown Parking Effective May 20
 The Town of Cobourg will be implementing updates to the Downtown and Waterfront Parking structure and fee schedule.
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Stay Informed. Stay Connected.
 @townofcobourg

Share Your Thoughts on the Stormwater Management Funding Assessment
 The Town of Cobourg wants to hear what you think as part of the Town's ongoing development of a comprehensive asset management plan, staff are currently undertaking a complete assessment of alternative funding models and rate structures that are available for recovering costs associated with stormwater assets.
 Your input is valued and makes a difference! Sign up at engagecobourg.ca today.

SAVE THE DATE CANADA DAY PARADE 2022
 Save the Date for this year's Canada Day Parade on Friday, July 1 at 11 a.m.
 For those interested in submitting an entry, visit experiencecobourg.ca/efestivals.

Seeking Local Artist Submissions for the Painted Picnic Table Program
 The Town of Cobourg in partnership with the Downtown Business Improvement Area is calling on local artists to submit their creative picnic table designs to be displayed in Downtown Cobourg this summer.
 Local artists are encouraged to submit their Painted Picnic Table designs no later than June 3, 2022 to Jackie Chapman-Davis, by emailing jchapman@townofcobourg.ca. Visit Cobourg.ca/news to learn more.

Next Council Meeting
 cobourg.ca/council **16**

Engage Cobourg Newsletter

Good morning,

The Town of Cobourg's Public Works Division in partnership with the Communications Department is pleased to announce the launch of the **Stormwater Management Funding Assessment on Engage Cobourg**, an online public engagement platform designed to gather feedback and comments from residents.

Stormwater Management Funding Assessment

The goal of the stormwater management funding assessment is to create a recurring funding model to support the maintenance of this essential infrastructure. Past practice in Ontario has typically been to fund stormwater management costs from the general tax levy. Recent trends are now

Marketing Analytics

DIGITAL PROMOTIONS



PLATFORM	POSTS	REACH	ENGAGEMENT	CLICKS
Facebook	1	693	3	3
Twitter	1	163	1	1
	2	856	4	4



PLATFORM	FEATURED	REACH	OPENS	CLICKS
Engage Cobourg Newsletter	1 email	2,446	1,594	73
	1	2,446	1,594	73

PRINT PROMOTIONS



PLATFORM	FEATURED	CIRCULATION
Northumberland News <i>Town's Weekly Ad Block</i>	2 editions <i>May 12 and 19, 2022</i>	56,000 <i>28,000 each week</i>
	2	56,000



ENGAGE COBOURG
Your voice, your town.

Stormwater Management Funding Assessment

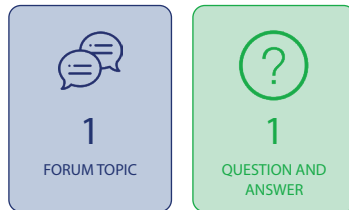
Engagement Results



Summary of Project Engagement

This section presents a summary of the public engagement received for the Stormwater Management Funding Assessment project through the Town of Cobourg's online public engagement platform, Engage Cobourg.

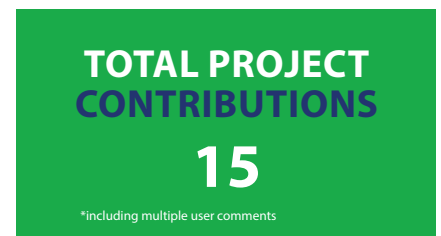
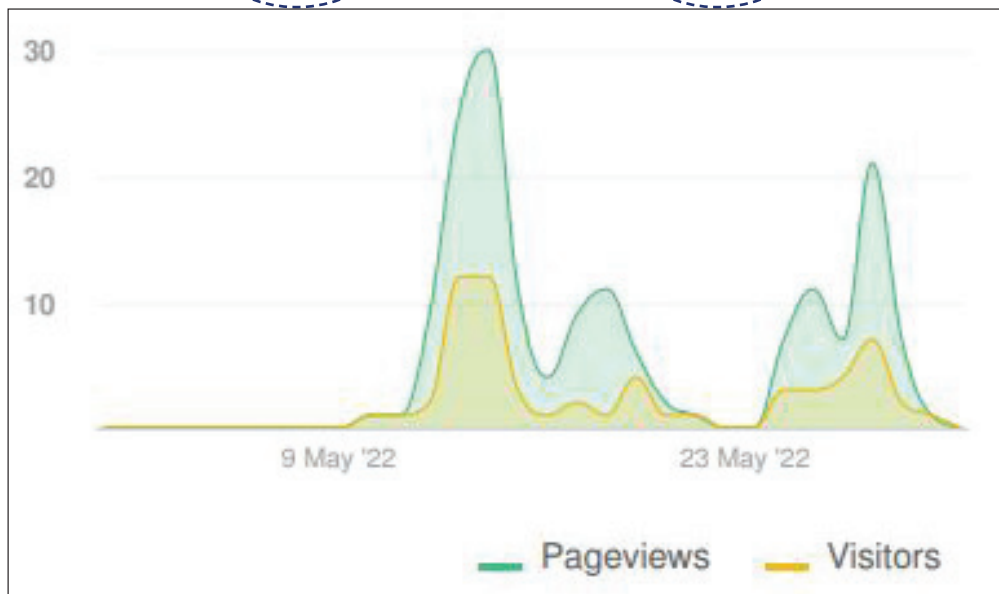
Engagement Tools Utilized:



Participant Summary

The engagement for the project was measured in three distinct variables:

- **Aware:** Unique visitors who have visited the site page but have not opened a document or participated in an engagement tool.
- **Informed:** Unique visitors who have visited the site and opened a document, looked at an image, read the project page but have not actively participated in an engagement tool (survey, forum, etc.).
- **Engaged:** Unique visitors who have actively participated in providing feedback in a forum, etc.



Forum Responses

Stormwater Management Funding Assessment

Forum Question: ***We'd love to hear your thoughts! Share your feedback on the Stormwater Management Funding Assessment.***

Here's what the community told us:

Storm water mgt. requires financial sustainment in order to ensure the ongoing safety of our drinking water. Suitable funds need to be budgeted each year as a line item perhaps by developing an algorithm that reflects water usage by each residence and industrial user. This should be posted to the water usage portion of Lakeshore Utility billing. If a major project is identified for the future, it needs to be amortized over time in order to avoid a billing level too large for the user to pay without discomfort.

- McKenzie | 1 agree, 3 disagrees

Reply: Hi @McKenzie, The stormwater funding assessment has created the algorithm for distributing the costs of stormwater management proportionately across different land uses and sizes. The new rate will be reflected on the Town's utility bill distributed by Lakefront Utilities, similar to how water and wastewater rates are collected.

Laurie Wills, Director of Public Works

I have viewed the presentation by Peter Simsisco of Watson & Associates, and heard the questions asked by Council members. It sounds like a much easier financial plan for residents (in the long run) and a little bit harsher for Commercial, Industrial and High capacity residential. Nevertheless, it does make sense in balancing the taxable proportions by size/type of property. Maybe I could add some other thoughts?

- Could some roads, footpaths, etc., be constructed of cobbles or slabs to allow drainage of excess water in those affected areas, and would this help?
- Could new industrial, commercial facilities be encouraged to use gravel for driveways, parking lots (to enable better drainage)?
- Could areas subject to flood waters have trees planted to help soak up the excesses?
- Is there any way the flood locations can become useable as possible drinking water reservoirs (in case the waters of Lake Ontario are severely contaminated in any way) ?
- Can road sweeping/cleaning be more frequent in areas of real concern, and less frequent in areas without the flooding problems ?
- Council to look at the future (development and climate issues) and start to change By Laws NOW, not wait until issues arise.
- Enforce water runoff control By laws (e.g. 2 of my neighbours have raised their ground levels, so my garden now floods to about 9-12-inches deep over an area of 45ft x 25ft during the Spring season).
- Do not permit construction on known flood areas!!
- If there isn't one yet, have a map showing the location of known "springs" and "old wells" in Cobourg.

- Sheila McCoy | 1 agree, 2 disagrees

Reply: Hi @Sheila McCoy,

Please also refer to the FAQ's provided on Engage Cobourg (and attached) for further information.

1. Roads would not be possible to be permeable due to the sheer maintenance requirements of permeable pavement. Permeable pavements have many voids that become clogged with sand, debris, etc. that need to be removed regularly by either flushing and/or vacuuming and replacing the sand substrate which is extremely cumbersome and expensive process. Without regular maintenance, permeable pavement will become impermeable the same as asphalt. Cobbles would not be permitted as they are not compliant with accessibility standards. Footpaths have potential to be more permeable being left as grass, gravel, wood chips, etc. however the compaction of any soil under well trodden paths will also become impermeable over time.
2. Currently, commercial and industrial lots are encouraged to use gravel for large areas of parking.
3. The Town has an urban forest master plan that addresses tree planting across Town.
4. Flood waters are typically contaminated and would not be able to be considered as a drinking water source.

Forum Responses

Stormwater Management Funding Assessment

Forum Question: ***We'd love to hear your thoughts! Share your feedback on the Stormwater Management Funding Assessment.***

Here's what the community told us continued:

5. The Town sweeps the road ways continually from March through to November and do not have the capacity to increase that level of service. During a real 'flood' event where rainfall is more intense than a 5 year storm event, stormsewers are running full and streetsweeping would have no impact on flood conditions.
6. The Town is currently conducting an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan and Green Development Standards.
7. A lower property owner has the right to protect their property from surface water. The best approach is to initiate discussions with your neighbour to solve the problem – the solution could be formalized with a mutual agreement on how to drain their lands without impacting yours. There are no applicable By-laws to enforce between private properties.
8. Construction is not permitted in the regulated flood plain without a permit from the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority. There are engineering options that can allow for new construction in flood plains however they require offsetting actions so that the net result is zero and there is no impact to adjacent land owners.
9. There are no known springs in Cobourg. Any wells that are registered can be located by contacting the Ministry of the Environment.

Laurie Wills, Director of Public Works

Sorry but this sounds simply like another way to raise tax revenues by another name. The money currently going to general revenues will continue to go to general revenues and taxes will increase at a time when gasoline prices and grocery prices are rising substantially for the average family. Look at past examples. At one time sewage came out of general revenues and then there was a sewage surcharge added. Garbage was once paid for out of general revenues and now we have bag tags (far more expensive here than in neighbouring Quinte West). I believe the fees from criminal records checks stayed with the police service instead of going back into general revenues. Perhaps it is time to look for a way to cut costs instead of adding revenues through an already overstretched tax base.

- JLB | 3 agrees, 0 disagree

Reply: Hi @JLB,

The water and wastewater rates were developed in a similar manner to the stormwater rates. Drinking water is drawn from the lake, treated and distributed to properties via watermains. Wasted water in our homes is drained/flushed into a sanitary sewer collection system, treated and discharged safely back to the Lake where our drinking water comes from. Stormwater falls on our properties and also wasted by running off our homes, driveways, roads, into a stormsewer collection system, treated in stormwater ponds where possible and released safely to the Lake where our drinking water comes from. Stormwater is considered 'wastewater' by the MECP for the reason that as it runs off of our driveways, roads and parking lots it becomes dirty and polluted before reaching our creeks and lake. Stormsewers also prevent our roads from flooding under certain storm events (5 yr reoccurrence as required by MECP). Infrastructure requires dedicated and planned funding that must be considered on a very long term basis and for the whole lifecycle of assets which is why a 'rate' is calculated to apply to the users/producers of wastewater to ensure that the funds collected annually are sufficient to fund all of the lifecycle needs of our infrastructure to keep them able to function to their full capacity and keep our community and environment safe and healthy. All funds that are collected are dedicated only to stormwater infrastructure operations and/or capital works as is the same for water and wastewater funds. Please also refer to the FAQ's provided on Engage Cobourg (and attached) for further information.

Laurie Wills, Director of Public Works

No stormwater management on my street, we have a ditch with culverts that are clogged. It is beyond me why the town of Cobourg spends so much money on the extras like the CCC, 2 extra arenas etc. etc yet infrastructure is an after thought. Why is there an engineering, public works department when infrastructure spending is an after thought and consultants get hired to tell

Forum Responses

Stormwater Management Funding Assessment

Forum Question: ***We'd love to hear your thoughts! Share your feedback on the Stormwater Management Funding Assessment.***

Here's what the community told us continued:

the town what is needed. Staff start madly applying for grants, loans to cover the costs and taxes goes up. How about some forward thinking? The east pier has been in disrepair for years and nothing ever gets fixed. West headland is falling apart too, the armour stone has fallen into the lake and staff suggests paths, signs and pavilions.

- northumberlan | 4 agrees, 0 disagree

Reply: Hi @northumberlan,

The Town has water and wastewater rates to ensure that adequate funds are available to address the maintenance and capital needs of this important infrastructure. This is why the Engineering department is also proposing the stormwater rate to ensure that storm sewers and stormwater ponds are also adequately funded for proper maintenance and replacement needs. Funds collected by water, wastewater and stormwater rates are not permitted to be spent on anything else.

Watson & Associates was hired to conduct the economic analysis of the Town's history of expenditures on stormwater infrastructure, analyze our current inventory of assets, project the growth of the community and the anticipated new assets coming online and to project a 10 year financial plan including inflation values based on the historical economic markets. Town Staff are limited in resources that have the capability to conduct this level of analysis however were able to compile all the data and information necessary for Watson to conduct the financial analysis being experts in the field.

Culverts and ditches are a form of stormwater management and unfortunately in older parts of town, ditches were not designed to the standard that they now are required to be constructed at and there is often little if anything that can be done to improve drainage as there may not be adequate fall (elevation) to a storm outlet. As per the Town's boulevard by-law, culverts are required to be maintained by the property owner to ensure they are not clogged however the Town is responsible for the replacement of culverts at the end of their life. Asset Management is a forward thinking approach to address municipal infrastructure funding gaps where it has been problematic in the past for municipalities to juggle the wants of a community with the needs of their failing infrastructure. Asset Management will ultimately identify ALL assets (their condition, lifecycle, risk/consequence of failure) and the costs associated with their upkeep and replacement. Infrastructure spending can then be prioritized so that Municipalities can make better informed choices to dedicate more funds towards the needs of the community rather than the wants. Please also refer to the FAQ's provided on Engage Cobourg (and attached) for further information.

Laurie Wills, Director of Public Works

Hopefully the review will examine what other like-size towns are doing to address the issue. No sense in reinventing the wheel here.

- Elmo | 3 agrees, 0 disagree

Reply: Hi @Elmo,

You are correct that the Town is not reinventing the Wheel which is why Watson & Associates were brought on to assist with the development of the asset management planning and rate structure having conducted many of the same for various other municipalities such as Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Brampton, Middlesex Centre, Mississauga, London, Ottawa, Newmarket, Orillia and Markham. A comparison of several other municipalities was also provided in the presentation conducted by Watson & Associates at the May 9th Committee of the Whole meeting which has also been posted on the Engage Website for the Stormwater Asset Management and Funding Assessment page.

Laurie Wills, Director of Public Works

Forum Responses

Stormwater Management Funding Assessment

Forum Question: ***We'd love to hear your thoughts! Share your feedback on the Stormwater Management Funding Assessment.***

Here's what the community told us continued:

I think the town should encourage and support residents in creating rain gardens along the curbs of their yards to reduce the amount of storm water entering the drain system. For a town that wants to be *seen* as a leader in environmentalism and sustainability, this is something that would be both visibly noticeable and effective.

- JNW | 4 agrees, 0 disagree

Reply: Hi @JNW,

The Town is indeed developing Green Standards and Low Impact Development techniques for stormwater management to encourage the retention and/or reuse of stormwater on the lands where it falls such as through the installation of rain gardens on private property.

Laurie Wills, Director of Public Works

Hello, Cobourg, the world, are in a climate emergency.... so we need to do everything we can to have all residents use best environmental practices.... have land properly sloped so that precipitation will both not flood and be retained on the property for natural watering.... Planting lots of trees, especially evergreens, using rain gardens, trenches etc can help. For those of us also using rainbarrels, which water our plants, this saves water from going into the storm sewers and saves us from using the external hose for watering. You can get lots of ideas for how to do this from Ontario's Low Impact Development plan: <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-4971>.

Using grey water from showers and veggie water for watering cuts down on general water use. Those of us who don't have swimming pools, hot tubs etc... should be paying for storm water which actually is diverted from our properties. How about we use option 6? yes, it is more complicated, but if you are going to change the system, use this as an opportunity to teach and reward we residents about best natural practices to both prevent flooding and conserve water on the property.

The town is developing Green Development Standards, this is a critical component of the plan....

Thanks for asking and keep us posted.

- terry marrocco | 0 agrees, 1 disagrees

I believe that it is reasonable to have a good look at stormwater management funding. Since there is a wide range of runoff from one property to the next, it seems unfair that those who generate little stormwater should subsidize those who generate much. It reminds me of the discussion we had a generation ago before we had water meters and everybody paid the same water and sewer rate regardless of how much they used. While it may take some work to set up an assessment system, once it's in place it could pay off in fairness in the long run.

- Harry Meester | 2 agrees, 1 disagrees

I do not know why storm water is in need of being micro managed as storm water is a fact of life. Our town planners have set up the water drainage and disposal criteria for the town. Cobourg should bear the burden of drainage and disposal as a whole. We all enjoy the streets we drive on in our daily routine being properly drained. Individual charges for storm water is totally an unfair system to implement surcharges on basis of where we choose to own property. Micro managing our sewer disposal based on our water intake is totally out of line as we are paying for sewer charges to water our lawn, flower beds and washing our cars in the drive way. Let's use the theory of KISS..... I believe the cost of having personnel on over sight for managing will be another cost burden to the town. ie) No taxpayer savings.

- walker | 2 agrees, 0 disagrees

Question and Answer Tool Responses

Stormwater Management Funding Assessment

'Question and Answer' Question: ***Have a question about Stormwater Management Funding? Ask it here!***

Here's what the community asked us:

Since this was part of the general levy and would come out of there, would there be a decrease overall or would taxes just go up more?

- *Spiritdancer*

Reply: Stormwater management currently has had an operating budget of ~\$400k which will in future be absorbed by the new Stormwater Rate and reduced from the Operating budget. There will be a decrease in the operating budget that is funded by the Tax Levy related to stormwater management which will be evident by the allocation of recoveries for activities such as streetsweeping and stormwater pump stations. There will also be new activities added to the operating budget as part of the new stormwater management program including CCTV of sewers, and staffing to conduct the work so it is expected that the general tax levy will not be reduced substantially as a result of the stormwater management plan. The stormwater rate is not considered to be part of the tax levy, but instead a user fee similar to water and wastewater user fees that are invoiced on your utility bill.

What percentage of the new developer fees/ levies are being placed towards the Stormwater Management budget? e.g. Tribute Communities, etc. What strategies are in place to improve the antiquated infrastructure in downtown Cobourg and within the historical districts? What are these plans?

- *TaxPayer of Cobourg*

Reply: Please refer to the Development Charges By-law 2022-001 and the Development Charge Background Study, dated November 5, 2021 as prepared by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. Stormwater Management services are included in development charges by-law however development charges are specifically collected for capital investments in infrastructure ie. the initial construction of all new infrastructure required for each development. The stormwater user fee considers growth for when the Town assumes ownership of the new infrastructure from a development and the costs required to budget for operations, maintenance, and lifecycle replacement.

Please indicate where you feel the infrastructure in the downtown and historical districts is 'antiquated'? All infrastructure (assets) within the Town of Cobourg is required by the Province to have an Asset Management Plan in place by July 1, 2025. Currently Public Works is completing one aspect of the plan for all core assets which include stormwater, water, sanitary, bridges and roads. Each asset will have a condition assessment either physically conducted or assigned based on age/material, etc. Each asset has an established lifecycle (how long it lasts), assigned rehab activities (ie. resurfacing, crack sealing), and a risk/consequence of failure evaluation. Each of these criteria are what drives the capital and operating budgets associated with the assets and determines their priority. Asset management requires a 10 year forecasted financial plan (including how the plan is to be funded) for all assets which is what has now been completed for the Town's stormwater management assets and why there is a stormwater user fee being proposed. Laurie Wills, Director of Public Works

Question and Answer Tool Responses

Stormwater Management Funding Assessment

'Question and Answer' Question: ***Have a question about Stormwater Management Funding? Ask it here!***

Here's what the community asked us:

Where are the 6 stormwater ponds that are well maintained? What does pond maintenance consist of?
- Francis

Reply: Please refer to the Stormwater Asset Management Plan and Funding Assessment report prepared by Watson & Associates. On Page 3-3 there is a detailed list of all operating and capital activities required for each type of stormwater assets including ponds.

The 6 pond locations are as follows:

- Terry Fox, 965 Frasor Court
- Burnham (Water Tower), 60 Strathy Road
- Densmore Road, 128 Densmore Road
- Read/Otto, 959 Otto Drive
- Chris Garret Park, 990 Birchwood Trail
- Foote Cres (Brook Meadows), Foote Crescent

Laurie Wills, Director of Public Works



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Public Engagement Report

*Brought to you by the Town of Cobourg's
Communications Department.*



55 King Street West
Cobourg, Ontario
K9A 2M2



905-372-4301



communications@cobourg.ca

