



**THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF AMHERSTBURG**  
**OFFICE OF ENGINEERING & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES**

*MISSION STATEMENT: Committed to delivering cost-effective and efficient services for the residents of the Town of Amherstburg with a view to improve and enhance their quality of life.*

<b>Author's Name: Todd Hewitt</b>	<b>Report Date: February 7, 2023</b>
<b>Author's Phone: 519 736-3664 ext. 2313</b>	<b>Date to Council: February 21, 2023</b>
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**To: Mayor and Members of Town Council**

**Subject: Amherstburg Water Treatment Plant Expansion – Environmental Assessment**

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**1. RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that:

1. The report regarding the Amherstburg Water Treatment Plant Expansion Environmental Assessment **BE RECEIVED for information.**

**2. BACKGROUND:**

The Amherstburg Water Treatment Plant (AWTP) was constructed in 1971 and has a rated capacity of 18,184m<sup>3</sup> (18,184,000L). The AWTP services Amherstburg as well as portions of the Town of Lasalle and the Town of Essex.

**3. DISCUSSION:**

In the summer of 2022, the plant exceeded 80% capacity on at least one occasion. In the fall of 2022, the Town hired a consultant to analyse the future capacity of the AWTP.

Amherstburg has recently experienced unprecedented residential growth, far exceeding the official plan and development charges study projections and surpassing all communities in building permits in 2022. As a result of strong residential growth, commercial activity has quickly followed creating jobs and more reasons to stay and play in Amherstburg. The announcement of the battery plant in Windsor has created new activity and interest in Amherstburg industrial properties. Increases in all of Windsor Essex for more residential growth and demands on housing as those jobs come on line

in 2025, as well as the provincial drive to build more homes over the next 10 years are positive indicators that Amherstburg will continue to grow and flourish.

The number and types of developments which have occurred were not expected nor included in the 2018 Water Masterplan. Two specific examples of this are the dramatic increase in multi-residential construction, including but not limited to; Riversedge apartments; 219 Brock and 365 Sandwich, as well as introduction of a greenhouse Jack's Organic.

Based on the 2022 AWTP capacity study, the most recent projection is that the plant will reach 90% of rated capacity by 2029. 90% is typically the trigger point for planning and design for expansion. With continued residential, commercial and industrial growth in the Town, the impact of each development needs to consider the impact it will have on water demand, particularly if it accelerates the capacity to 90% before 2029. Implementation of any solution for water capacity expansion will take several years, as such it is prudent to commence the Class Environmental Assessment (EA) process for expansion now. This will help to mitigate the potential risk of restricting development of all kinds, industrial, commercial and residential, due to capacity constraints. Given these factors, and that timing required to complete an EA is often 2-3 years, administration has put forward capital project Amherstburg Water Treatment Plant – EA (ENV-007-230) requesting \$350,000 in 2023 to commence work on this critical study.

The Town, if funding is approved as presented, would hire a consultant to complete a Schedule B Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA process includes identifying all potential problems, what opportunities exist to address these issues and alternative solutions for future servicing needs as well as current critical and capacity constraints. A major pillar of the EA process is the requirement for public consultation, including reaching directly to major stakeholders (i.e. developers, federal and provincial agencies) as well as Indigenous Communities. The Town will hold at least one Public Information Centre as part of the public consultation as well as on-line consultation through the Talk the Burg website.

Results of the study will be reviewed by Administration so that a full report on the recommended approach, timing, costs and financial strategy are provided to Council for consideration.

#### **4. RISK ANALYSIS:**

There is a risk that, as we begin to near capacity, the Town would have to consider measures such as:

- Denying development which would significantly accelerate the current 2029 projections for capacity;
- Preserving debt capacity for water expansion requirement and;
- Water usage reduction strategies including usage restrictions and watering bans should the Town hit capacity issues, and without direction and action towards resolution.

**5. FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

The estimated cost to complete the EA is \$350,000, and is recommended in the 2023 capital budget.

While the EA will provide clarity on how to expand water capacity, previous cost estimates for expansion developed in 2018 totalled \$31,000,000+/- including engineering costs. The 2018 cost estimate included the construction of a new reservoir cell to increase water storage capacity. On June 27, 2022 Council authorized a Transfer Payment Agreement to receive an ICIP Green Stream grant for \$3,662,833 to assist in funding the construction of a new reservoir cell to allow for the rehabilitation of the existing reservoir cells. The funding for this project is included in the proposed 2023 Capital Budget and includes \$3,730,000 in debt. The completion of the project will reduce the outstanding 2018 cost estimate of expansion to \$23,600,000.

This number may be significantly higher now due to recent impacts of cost inflation, especially in the construction industry. With the current reserve balances in both Water Reserve and Water Development Charges, a significant amount of debt will likely be required if the decision is made to expand the AWTP. Any decisions with respect to taking on additional debt prior to this decision being made must consider the impact it would have on being able to fund and address water capacity needs.

**6. CONSULTATIONS:**

Senior Management Team

**7. CONCLUSION:**

It is recommended that Council approve the funding to complete the Class Environmental Assessment for the expansion of the Amherstburg Water Treatment Plant.



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Todd Hewitt  
**Manager of Engineering**

## Report Approval Details

Document Title:	2023 02 21 - Amherstburg Water Treatment Plant Expansion - Environmental Assessment.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Feb 15, 2023

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:



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