



Staff Report

Operations – Capital Projects Division

Report To: COW - Operations, Planning and Building Services
Meeting Date: October 28, 2025
Report Number: OPS.25.003
Title: Drainage Master Plan Notice of Completion and PIC 3
Prepared by: Pruthvi Desai, Manager of Capital Projects

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report OPS.25.003, entitled “Drainage Master Plan Notice of Completion and PIC 3”;

AND THAT Council approves the issuance of the “Notice of Completion” for the 30-day review for the Drainage Master Plan.

B. Overview

The purpose of this staff report is to present Council with the [Final Drainage Master Plan](#) and the feedback and comments received during the Town-wide Drainage Master Plan Public Information Centre (PIC) 3, held in October 2024, along with key points discussed at the in-person Question & Answer Session on October 29, 2024. This information will support Council’s consideration of issuing the Notice of Completion for the 30-day public review period, marking the final stage in the Master Plan process.

C. Background

In 2021, the Town of The Blue Mountains (the Town) retained Tatham Engineering Ltd. to undertake a Town-wide Drainage Master Plan (DMP) in accordance with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) process. The study is being completed under Phases 1 and 2 of the MCEA, following Approach 2 of the MCEA Master Plan process, which focuses on identifying problems and evaluating alternative solutions through sufficient study, consultation, and documentation to fulfill the requirements for Schedule “B” projects under the Environmental Assessment Act.

The Notice of Completion for this Master Plan will also serve as the Notice of Completion for all identified Schedule “B” projects. Any Schedule “C” projects identified within the DMP will require the completion of Phases 3 and 4 of the MCEA process, culminating in the preparation and filing of an Environmental Study Report (ESR) for public review. The Master Plan will therefore serve as the basis for future investigations and approvals for Schedule “C” projects.

In addition to project-specific recommendations, the Master Plan process allows for the development of strategic guidance and policy recommendations that are not tied to a single infrastructure project. Public Information Centres (PICs) form a core part of the consultation process, with the number and content tailored to each study's unique scope and scale. While this study was initially planned to include two PICs, a third PIC was held in October 2024 to provide additional opportunities for public engagement in response to the evolving scope and feedback received.

Below summarizes the major milestones completed to date:

- **November 2021** – Issued and distributed the *Notice of Study Commencement*.
- **February 2022** – Hosted *Public Information Centre (PIC) #1* virtually over a four-week period.
- **May 2022** – Presented [Staff Report CSOPS.22.039 Drainage Master Plan PIC 1 Follow-up](#) to Council, summarizing public survey results, consultation feedback, and the background review that completed Phase 1 of the DMP study.
- **February 2023** – Presented [Staff Report CSOPS.23.007 Drainage Master Plan PIC 2](#) to Council, including materials and presentation slides for PIC #2.
- **March 2023** – Hosted *PIC #2* virtually for a four-week period and conducted a virtual and in-person Question & Answer session following PIC #2.
- **October 2024** – Hosted *PIC #3* virtually for a four-week period and held an in-person Question & Answer session at Town Hall following PIC #3.

D. Analysis

Purpose and Scope

The Town is completing a comprehensive Drainage Master Plan (DMP) under Approach 2 of the Municipal Engineers Association (MEA) Class Environmental Assessment (EA) process, which satisfies Phases 1 and 2 of the process for Schedule “B” projects. Phase 1 defines the problem or opportunity, while Phase 2 develops and evaluates alternative solutions through public and agency consultation to identify a preferred solution. The DMP covers the settlement areas of Lora Bay, Thornbury, Clarksburg, Craigleith, Camperdown, and the Blue Mountain Village, extending from Christie Beach Road in the west to Grey Road 21/Osler Bluff Road in the east, and from Georgian Bay south to the settlement boundary. The study's primary objective is to identify drainage deficiencies and recommend sustainable, cost-effective improvements that balance environmental, social, and economic considerations.

Study Methodology

The process began with developing Town-wide hydrologic and hydraulic models for both the minor and major systems to identify flooding areas, capacity issues, and infrastructure gaps. Findings from these models were supplemented by public and stakeholder feedback received through the PICs and surveys. Alternative solutions, including infrastructure upgrades, low impact development measures, and enhanced water quality controls, were evaluated based on technical performance, environmental impacts, community input, and cost-effectiveness. The

final preferred solution was refined through feedback from PIC #2 and PIC #3 for final public review prior to issuing the Notice of Completion.

Final Recommended Solutions

The preferred solution includes Town-wide general recommendations, typically Schedule A/A+ projects, and site-specific drainage improvement projects. Schedule A/A+ projects are pre-approved under the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) process and do not require further environmental assessment steps, allowing them to proceed directly to design and tender. The general recommendations focus on upsizing storm sewers to meet current standards, relocating infrastructure to municipal lands, filling drainage system gaps during road reconstruction, encouraging lot-level and linear low impact development measures, and installing mechanical stormwater treatment devices. The estimated cost for these measures ranges from \$20.25M to \$56.80M depending on the extent of low impact development integration. In addition, 80 individual drainage projects were identified, including one stormwater management facility retrofit, three minor drainage system upgrades, 74 culvert and watercourse improvements, and two trunk storm sewer and overland flow route upgrades. After deducting costs attributable to asset renewal at current service levels, the Town's share of these improvements is estimated at \$47.02M.

Special Area Considerations

The DMP aligns with existing and concurrent drainage-related initiatives. In Lora Bay, drainage improvements are being implemented by the developer under the Master Development Agreement. In Thornbury West, the recommendations are consistent with the 2019 Thornbury West DMP EA. Additionally, the plan incorporates and endorses conceptual designs from ongoing Drainage Act petitions for Watercourses 7, 8, and 9, including overflow channels, culvert upgrades, and flow diversions.

Major Events Post PIC 3

In 2025, the Town experienced two notable high-intensity rainfall events. One during March 30 to April 4, 2025, and another on the evening of June 30, 2025; that resulted in localized flooding and stress on the storm drainage network. The Drainage Master Plan has monitored these events closely, specifically the runoff patterns with field observations. To further strengthen the accuracy of the Town's stormwater modelling, the streamflow monitoring program for select watercourses will be extended until April 2026. This additional year of monitoring will provide a more comprehensive dataset, which will be instrumental in updating the storm model calibration and improving the reliability of future design and investment decisions.

Implementation Plan

A 10-year implementation program from 2025 to 2034 prioritizes 14 high-need projects, with a total estimated cost of \$20.19M, averaging approximately \$2.02M annually. Project scheduling has been coordinated with planned Ministry of Transportation works on Highway 26, planned Grey County projects, neighborhood renewal programs, and downstream-to-upstream sequencing to optimize system performance and reduce risks.

Funding and Policy Considerations

While some drainage improvements will be funded through Development Charges, this source alone will not fully cover the costs. DMP recommends further study into the creation of a stormwater utility as a sustainable, dedicated funding source. The plan also introduces a framework for new developments requiring enhanced water quality controls, erosion protection, and low impact development measures. Climate change adaptation measures have been incorporated, including a 10% increase to rainfall Intensity-Duration-Frequency (IDF) curves based on projections to 2050, with recommendations for periodic reassessment. A streamflow monitoring program has been initiated to calibrate the Town's hydrologic models, refine infrastructure sizing, and potentially reduce cost estimates.

In addition, staff would like to inform the Council that the Townwide Drainage Master Plan has been selected for presentation at the 65th Annual MEA Conference in London, Ontario, November 11-14, 2025. This recognition underscores the Town's leadership and innovation in proactive stormwater and drainage planning. By presenting our work to municipal peers from across Ontario, the Town is not only showcasing the technical excellence of the Drainage Master Plan but also reaffirming our commitment to transparency, collaboration, and building resilient infrastructure that protects our community for generations to come.

Staff Recommendations

Staff would like to recommend that Council receive Staff Report OPS.25.003, "Drainage Master Plan Notice of Completion and PIC 3," and approve the issuance of the Notice of Completion for the Townwide Drainage Master Plan. This action will initiate the 30-day public review period as required under the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process for Schedule "B" projects. Proceeding with the Notice of Completion will advance the Town's drainage infrastructure planning and position the municipality to undertake the recommended projects in alignment with the 10-year implementation plan.

E. Strategic Priorities

1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

2. Organizational Excellence

We will continually seek out ways to improve the internal organization of Town Staff and the management of Town assets.

3. Community

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

4. Quality of Life

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

F. Environmental Impacts

The recommended improvements in the Drainage Master Plan have been developed to enhance stormwater management, improve water quality, reduce flooding risks, and mitigate impacts to natural systems. Measures include low impact development techniques, mechanical stormwater treatment devices, and infrastructure upgrades designed to meet or exceed current design standards. Climate change resiliency has been incorporated through a 10% increase in rainfall design intensities, with a commitment to periodically reassess these projections. The plan supports the protection of natural features, restoration of capacity-constrained Town Infrastructure, and alignment with provincial environmental objectives, thereby contributing to the long-term environmental sustainability of the Town.

G. Financial Impacts

The Drainage Master Plan identifies an estimated total investment of approximately \$47.02M for individual drainage projects and \$20.25M–\$56.80M for Townwide general recommendations. Of these, \$20.19M in priority projects are planned for completion over the next 10 years (2025–2034), averaging \$2.02M annually. Funding will be sourced from a combination of Development Charges, capital reserves, and tax-supported capital budgets. Given that Development Charges will not fully fund the required improvements, additional sustainable funding options, such as a stormwater utility, can be investigated. Budget allocations for individual projects will be presented to Council through the annual capital budget process.

H. In Consultation With

Jacob Macdonald, Tatham Engineering

Brian Worsley, Manager of Development Engineering

Jim McCannell, Manager of Roads & Drainage

Jason Petznick, Communications Coordinator – Capital Projects.

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report is consistent with the public consultation approach for the Townwide Drainage Master Plan, which has included three Public Information Centers (PICs) to date, executed as follows:

PIC #1 – February 24, 2022

- December 2, 2021 – Notice of Study Commencement advertised in the Collingwood Connection;
- December 2, 2021 – Notice of Study Commencement mailed to stakeholders;
- January 13, 2022 – PIC #1 Notice mailed to stakeholders;
- January 13 and January 27, 2022 – Notice of PIC #1 advertised in the Collingwood Connection;
- January 18, 2022 – Committee of the Whole – Initial staff report [CSOPS.22.002](#) with recommendation to proceed to public consultation;
- January 31, 2022 – Council – Recommendations from January 18, 2022 Committee of the Whole confirmed;
- February 1, 2022 – Virtual Drop-In posted on the Town of The Blue Mountains website;
- February 24, 2022 – Virtual Question & Answer session(s);

PIC #2 – March 30, 2023

- February 21, 2023 – Committee of the Whole – Initial staff report [CSOPS.23.007](#) with recommendation to proceed to public consultation;
- March 6, 2023 – Council – Recommendations from February 21, 2023 Committee of the Whole confirmed;
- March 7, 2023 – Public Meeting Notice posted;
- March 9 and March 23, 2023 – Public Meeting advertised in the Collingwood Connection;
- March 29, 2023 – Virtual Question & Answer session at 5:00 p.m.;
- March 30, 2023 – Public Meeting at 5:00 p.m.;

PIC #3 – October 29, 2024

- October 1, 2024 – PIC #3 Notice advertised in the Collingwood Connection and posted on the Town's website;
- October 1, 2024 – PIC #3 Notice mailed to stakeholders and agencies on the project mailing list;
- October 1, 2024 – PIC #3 materials posted to the Town's website for a four-week virtual public review period;
- October 29, 2024 – In-person Public Information Centre Question & Answer Session held at Town Hall Council Chambers from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Pruthvi Desai, Manager of Capital Projects managercapitalprojects@thebluemountains.ca .

J. Attached

1. Drainage Master Plan – Council Presentation
2. PIC 3 Memo, Summary and Public Comments
3. Notice of Completion.

Respectfully submitted,

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Manager of Capital Projects

Alan Pacheco
Director of Operations

For more information, please contact:
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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	OPS.25.003 Drainage Master Notice of Completion and PIC 3.docx
Attachments:	- Attachment 1 Drainage Master Plan Council Final Presentation.pdf - Attachment 2 PIC 3 Memo Summary and Public Comments.pdf - Attachment 3 Notice of Study Completion.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Oct 16, 2025

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

Pruthvi Desai - Oct 14, 2025 - 2:22 PM

Alan Pacheco - Oct 15, 2025 - 1:40 PM

No Signature found

Adam Smith - Oct 16, 2025 - 9:25 AM