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To: Chair and Members
Lambton Area Water Supply System Joint Board of Management

From: Clinton Harper
General Manager

Subject: LAWSS Master Water Plan Update- Municipal Class
Environmental Assessment (MCEA) Phase 1

Recommendation

It is recommended that the LAWSS Joint Board of Management receive this report as information.

Background:

The Environmental Assessment Act was established in 1990 for the "betterment of the people of Ontario by providing for the protection, conservation and wise management of Ontario's environment (Part I- Section 2)." The Act makes it illegal to build municipal infrastructure without EA Act approval. The overall objective of the Act is to ensure environmental effects are minimized and appropriate mitigation efforts are proposed. The Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) provides a framework for applying the act.

The MCEA recognizes the need for Municipalities to develop Master Plans. Unlike site specific projects, Master Plans are broad and usually include an analysis of a system in order to outline a framework for future works and developments. Master Plans typically recommend a set of works which are distributed geographically throughout a study area and which are to be implemented over an extended period of time.

"The work undertaken in the preparation of Master Plans should recognize the Planning and Design process of this Class EA, and should incorporate the key principals of successful environmental assessment planning identified within. It is imperative that public and agency consultation take place during each phase of the study process, specifically, at the initiation of the Master Plan study so that the scope and purpose of the study is understood, and at the selection of the preferred set of alternatives (Part A 2.4.1)."

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Schedules

The MCEA separates projects into three categories based on their anticipated level of environmental impact. In the Act these categories are referred to as “Schedules”.

Schedule A/A+

Projects in this category are typically limited in scale and have minimum adverse environmental effects. Projects include normal or emergency operational and maintenance activities and can be pre-approved. A+ projects advise the public prior to implementation.

Examples include:

- Normal operation and on-going maintenance of water treatment plants.
- Replace/expand existing water storage facilities provided all such facilities are in either an existing road allowance or an existing utility corridor or where no land acquisition is required.
- Establish, extend or enlarge a water distribution system and all works necessary to connect the system to an existing system or water source, provided all such facilities are in either an existing road allowance or an existing utility corridor, including the use of Trenchless Technology for water crossings.

Schedule B

Projects in this category have the potential for adverse environmental effects and generally include improvements and minor expansions to existing facilities. A screening process must be undertaken that includes mandatory contact directly with affected public and relevant review agencies. Projects in this category require a 30-day public review.

Examples include:

- Establish, extend or enlarge a water distribution system and all works necessary to connect the system to an existing system or water source, where such facilities are not in either an existing road allowance or an existing utility corridor.
- Establish new or expand/replace existing water storage facilities.

Schedule C

Projects in this category have the potential for significant environmental impact and generally include the construction of new facilities and major expansions. These projects must proceed under the full procedures specified in the Class EA including Environmental Study Report which must undergo a 30-day public review.

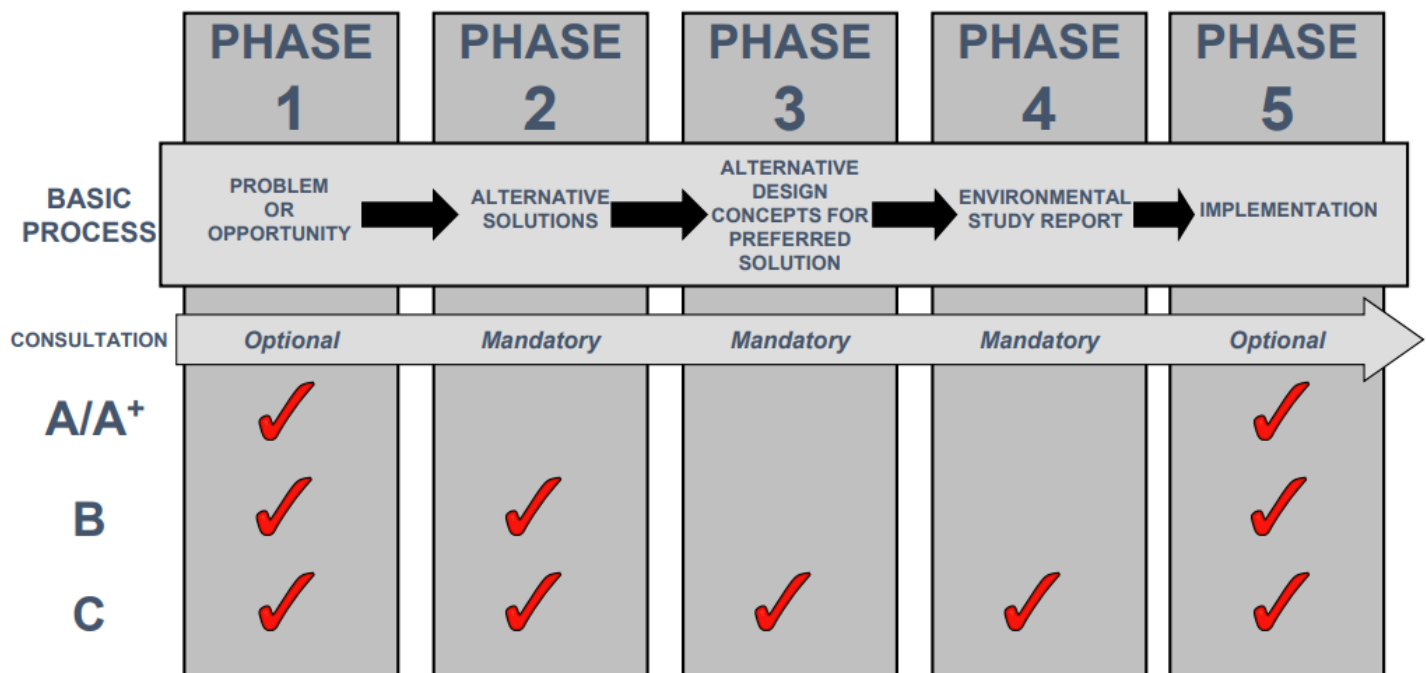
Examples include:

- Construct a new water treatment plant or expand existing water treatment plant beyond existing rated capacity
- Establish new surface water source

Planning and Design Process

Depending on the project schedule, there can be up to five phases that could be required prior to project approval under the Act. The “checkmarks” in Figure A indicate which phase must be completed to satisfy the Act’s requirements for a given schedule. A breakdown of each phase is provided in Appendix A.

Figure #1



Comments

Previous efforts made by LAWSS identified the following issues in the distribution network:

1. East Lambton Booster Station (ELBS) Fill Constraints,
2. ELBS to Watford Standpipe Capacity, and
3. ELBS to Forest Standpipe Capacity.

The environmental impact of addressing each of these three issues is not expected to exceed a Schedule B type project. In January 2020, AECOM was hired to complete an update of the LAWSS Master Water Plan that included MECA Master Planning “Approach 2” for a Schedule B project for each issue. AECOM’s scope also includes development of an addendum for the existing grid reinforcement and twining MCEA. The addendum will

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extend the MCEA for the previously approved project and incorporate it into the Master Plan strategy.

LAWSS Master Plan Update is moving into Phase 1 of the MCEA process related to the x3 schedule B projects.

Phase 1 – Define problem opportunity and begin public engagement.

The official Problem/Opportunity Statement that fulfils Phase 1 of the MCEA Planning Process is attached to this report. It was reviewed with member municipality representatives and will be presented at Public Information Centre (PIC) 1 scheduled for early October 2020.

PIC 1 will be online (no face to face meeting) which involves posting a slide deck on LAWSS website with a fillable comment card. PIC 1 will present LAWSS background including introduction to the system, overview of hydraulic analysis-need for infrastructure improvements and existing study area conditions. PIC 1 will also present preliminary preferred solutions for each issue and evaluation criteria for comment as well as next steps.

AECOM is working directly with CCI, LAWSS website provider, to ensure PIC 1 efficiently goes online as planned.

Consultation

AECOM, and OCWA Management were consulted in the development of this report.

Financial Implications:

There is no financial impact related to this report. All work is progressing within budget. It is not expected that sufficient information will be available to update the LAWSS Capital Plan. The 2021 budget proposal in October will include an undefined amount based on the best information available.

This report was prepared by: Clinton Harper, LAWSS General Manager

Attachment(s): LAWSS Master Plan Update MCEA Problem/Opportunity Statement

Appendix A

