



Administration and Operations Committee Report

To: The Chair and Members of the Administration and Operations Committee
From: Dave Mellor, General Manager of Operations
Stefanie DiGiovanni, Project Engineer
Date: June 17, 2025
Report #: RPT-0235-25
Subject: Phase Two (2) Scotland-Oakland Master Environmental Servicing Plan (MESP)
Consultant Award
Purpose: For Approval

Recommendation

Whereas the Scotland-Oakland Master Environmental Servicing Plan (MESP) was initiated in 2024, with Phase One (1) of the MESP completed in February 2025 by Stantec and Arcadis;

And Whereas the results of the Phase One (1) MESP were presented to Council via RPT-0017-25 in February 2025, with the recommendation to initiate an integrated Master Plan Study as Phase Two (2) of the Scotland-Oakland Master Environmental Servicing Plan (MESP);

And Whereas a Drinking Water Quality Advisory was issued in March 2025 to the communities of Scotland and Oakland pertaining to high nitrate concentrations as found during Phase One (1) of the MESP;

And Whereas a One-time Nitrate Sampling opportunity was offered to the residents of Scotland and Oakland in response to the Drinking Water Quality Advisory, the results of which indicating that the average nitrate concentration in the primary drinking water aquifer exceed the Ontario Drinking Water Quality Standard (ODWQS);

And Whereas a total budget of \$350,000 was approved through RPT-0110-24 for the Scotland-Oakland MESP, with \$185,018.37 remaining in the budget as of May 2025;

And WHEREAS RPT-0017-25 approved the initiation of the Phase Two (2) MESP in 2025 with the remaining approved budget with the provision that additional budget would be required in 2026 to complete the Phase Two (2) MESP;

That Council approve \$115,000 be allocated from water reserves, wastewater reserves, water development charge reserve and wastewater development charge reserve and;

That Council approve the extension of Stantec's and Arcadis' existing contracts to complete Phase Two (2) of the MESP in the amounts of \$220,850 and \$56,850, respectively.

Executive Summary

County of Brant (County) staff are seeking approval for \$115,000 of budget funded by water, wastewater and development charge reserves to fund the completion of Phase Two (2) of the Scotland Oakland Phase Master Environmental Servicing Plan (MESP) and, as per the County's purchasing policy approval, to extend Stantec and Arcadis' existing contract.

Staff have undertaken a two-phase Master Environmental Servicing Plan (MESP) in response to development interest in the settlement areas of Scotland and Oakland. Phase One (1) of the MESP was completed in early 2025 and direction was given to staff to proceed to Phase Two (2) in February 2025.

Since February 2025 staff have scoped the study components required for Phase Two (2), which includes an integrated Master Servicing Plan (MSP) completed in accordance with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA) process, that will evaluate all water, wastewater, stormwater, and transportation servicing alternatives. The evaluation includes identifying the problem statement and developing and evaluating alternative solutions through a robust evaluation and consultation process to determine the preferred solution for the community.

Following the finalization of the Phase One (1) MESP findings, a Drinking Water Quality Advisory was issued, followed by a One-Time Nitrate Sampling Program conducted in April 2025, that confirmed that 44% of residential well samples exceeded the Ontario Drinking Water Quality Standards (ODWQS) for nitrates, presenting a public health concern that is also potentially growth prohibitive.

County staff recommend extending the existing consultant contracts with Stantec and Arcadis, who completed the Phase One (1) studies, to maintain project continuity and avoid delays. Stantec has proposed a fee of \$220,850 for the water, wastewater, and stormwater components, while Arcadis has proposed \$56,850 for the transportation component. With \$185,018.37 remaining in the current capital budget, staff recommend that Council commit an additional \$115,000 funded by water, wastewater and development charge reserves to fund the completion of Phase Two (2) of the MESP.

If Council choose not to approve the additional funding, the scope of Phase Two (2) of the MESP will need to be significantly reduced. This limited approach would not fulfill Class EA requirements for Schedule B or C projects, resulting in delays.

In conclusion, County staff recommend that Council approve the \$115,000 budget allocation and authorize contract extensions to Stantec and Arcadis. This will allow Phase Two (2) of the MESP to proceed in accordance with the preferred master planning approach.

Strategic Plan Priority

Strategic Priority 2 - Focused Growth and Infrastructure

Impacts and Mitigation

Social Impacts

The Scotland-Oakland Phase One (1) MESP provided valuable information on how the communities of Scotland and Oakland can develop sustainably, while mitigating potential negative impacts on the existing community. The completion of a Master Servicing Plan as part of Phase Two (2) will indicate the preferred solutions for water, wastewater and stormwater servicing and transportation upgrades to ensure sustainable and safe build-out of the community. Of primary importance is a more immediate recommendation to address the existing water quality concerns and ensure that future development does not compound these issues.

Environmental Impacts

The completion of a Master Servicing Plan, completed in accordance with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process, will evaluate all potential servicing options and ensure that the preferred servicing solution will have minimal impacts to the environment.

Economic Impacts

The Scotland-Oakland MESP has approved funds in the 2024 and 2025 Capital Budgets for Policy Planning, and as of May 2025 there is \$185,018.37 remaining in the approved budget. As per the approved RPT-0017-25, additional budget would be required in 2026 to complete the entirety of the proposed Master Servicing Plan. County staff are requesting that the \$100,000 budget to be allocated during the 2026 budget process be approved now and increased to \$115,000 funded through various water, wastewater and development charge reserves.

Report

Background

The County initiated a two-phase MESP in 2024 to assess environmental and infrastructure conditions and guide sustainable growth in the neighbouring communities of Scotland and Oakland.

Phase One (1) concluded in early 2025, identifying hydrogeology, stormwater, transportation and natural heritage systems as areas for further assessment. A critical finding of Phase One (1) was elevated nitrate levels in the shallow groundwater aquifer, the primary drinking water resource for the communities.

In February of 2025 Council approved proceeding with Phase Two (2) of the MESP, to evaluate all water, wastewater, storm water and transportation servicing alternatives. Phase Two (2) of the MESP will consist of an integrated Master Plan Study that will assess all alternatives, engage with project partners and outline a path forward for the communities of Scotland and Oakland.

A Drinking Water Advisory was issued in March 2025, followed by County-led well testing in April. Of 39 samples collected, 17 (44%) exceeded 10 mg/L which is the Ontario Drinking Water Quality Standards (ODWQS) for nitrates. The County is working with the Grand Erie

Public Health team to develop a plan to ensure the information and risk is communicated and understood.

Analysis

Contract Extension Allowance

In February 2024, Council approved RPT-0110-24, which included approval to staff to directly negotiate with consultants and single-source Phase One (1) of the Scotland-Oakland Master Environmental Servicing Plan (MESP). Stantec was awarded the scope-of-work for the hydrogeological, stormwater, natural heritage and servicing studies, and Arcadis was awarded the scope-of-work for the traffic and transportation study.

In accordance with the County's purchasing policy approval is required to extend contracts where the total value exceeds \$250,000. To complete Phase Two (2) of the MESP, consisting of a Master Servicing Plan, County staff recommend that the two (2) existing contracts with Stantec and Arcadis be extended to perform this work. This approach provides continuity in the work and limits the extent of rework required for a new consultant team to understand the MESP studies completed to date.

Scope of Work

Phase Two (2) will follow Approach two (2) for Master Plans within the Municipal Class EA process including problem definition, evaluation of alternatives, and stakeholder consultation. Phase Two (2) will assess all potential solutions, including both private (the status quo) and municipal options, based on their natural, social and economic impacts. A thorough public consultation process with relevant stakeholders and agencies will be undertaken to assess potential solutions to the problem statement.

This approach would satisfy the Class EA requirements for any Schedule B projects recommended through the Master Plan. As such, after Phase Two (2) is complete, including a presentation to Council the detailed design of any Schedule B projects recommended from the Master Plan could commence without further works under the Class EA process.

Budget Analysis

The draft scope-of-work as described in the previous section was provided to Stantec and Arcadis to guide their proposal development. Stantec was asked to provide a proposal for the water, wastewater and stormwater servicing components of the Master Servicing Plan (Attachment 2), and Arcadis was asked to provide a proposal pertaining to only the traffic and transportation evaluation component of the Master Servicing Plan (Attachment 3).

The budget for the Phase One (1) Scotland-Oakland Master Environmental Servicing Plan (MESP) as approved via RPT-0110-24 (Attachment 4) was \$350,000, with \$250,000 allocated for 2024 and \$100,000 allocated for 2025. The scope for a Master Plan Study, completed in accordance with the Municipal Class EA process, was not included in this initial budget approval.

The following table summarizes the proposals received from Arcadis and Stantec:

	Stantec	Arcadis
Original Approved Budget	\$350,000	
Phase One Contract	\$133,361.75	\$26,559.37
Phase Two Extension	\$220,847.70	\$56,850.85
Variance*	-\$87,619.67 (-\$91,679.18*)	

*This variance does not include the approximate \$5,000 of miscellaneous expenses incurred directly by the County for advertising, printing and traffic data collection. Actual variance shown in brackets.

As of May 2025, the remaining approved budget is \$185,018.37. Since then, Staff have completed the One-time Nitrate Sampling Event, at a cost of \$2,000.

Staff are requesting that Council approve an additional \$115,000 funded by water reserves, wastewater reserves, water development charge reserve and wastewater development charge reserve to complete Phase Two (2) of the Master Environmental Servicing Plan. The variance between consultant contract totals and the \$115,000 additional budget includes allowances for advertising, additional water sampling and contingency.

Summary and Recommendations

The Phase One (1) MESP reports have been received and reviewed by County staff. The results of these reports indicate challenges with the existing drinking water resources, as well as opportunities to improve the transportation network and stormwater management system. Recommendations included the completion of further studies, done in accordance with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA) process, to determine the preferred solutions for the water, wastewater, stormwater and transportation systems.

Existing water quality data indicates the presence of high nitrate concentrations within the existing overburden aquifer drinking water supply that approach or exceed the ODWQS for nitrates. Recent residential nitrate sampling data indicates that 44% of sampled wells exceed the ODWQS.

Per the D-5-5 Guidelines for Private Well Water Supply Assessments, the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) recommends against development on private wells when health-related parameters in the drinking water supply exceed the ODWQS. Nitrate is a health-related parameter, and as such the elevated levels observed across the community present a public health concern that is also potentially development-prohibitive as it relates to private water and wastewater servicing.

Via report RPT-0017-25, Council approved the initiation of an integrated Master Servicing Plan (MSP) as Phase Two (2) of the MESP to evaluate and determine the preferred servicing options for water, wastewater, stormwater and transportation in accordance with the Municipal Class EA process. The initiation of the MSP was approved with the provision that additional budget would be required in 2026 to complete the total scope-of-work. Pricing was received from the consultants that requires additional budget to award the contracts and approval for contract extension under the purchasing policy.

Stantec and Arcadis completed the Phase One (1) MESP throughout 2024 and 2025. County Staff have worked directly with these consultants to develop the proposed scope-of-work for Phase Two (2) of the MESP, to complete an integrated MSP in accordance with Approach 2 for Master Plans under the Municipal Class EA process.

Staff recommend that Council approve \$115,000 funded by water reserves, wastewater reserves, water development charge reserves and wastewater development charge reserves and approve the contract extensions to Stantec and Arcadis to complete an integrated Master Servicing Plan as Phase Two (2) of the Master Environmental Servicing Plan, as approved via RPT-0017-25.

If the recommendation of advancing additional budget, Council may instruct staff to proceed with a limited scope of work that is within the remaining pre-approved budget. Proceeding with a limited scope of work and current approved budget requires Council approval to divide the work under the purchasing policy. Staff will also require contract extension approval for both Stantec and Arcadis.

This limited scope could identify the problem statement, the potential alternative solutions, and a preliminary identification of the preferred solution. However, the requirements for neither Schedule B or C projects would be satisfied by this approach, and as such the County would be required to complete an additional study and consultation upon completion of the Phase Two (2) MESP prior to beginning detailed design of these recommended projects. County staff advise against this approach, as it would extend timelines for the confirmation and implementation of the preferred solutions.

Attachments

1. RPT-0017-25 – Scotland-Oakland Master Environmental Servicing Plan Phase One Results
2. Stantec Proposal – Phase Two (2) Master Environmental Servicing Plan
3. Arcadis Proposal – Phase Two (2) Master Environmental Servicing Plan – Traffic Study
4. RPT-0110-24 – Scotland-Oakland Master Environmental Servicing Plan and Community Master Plan

Reviewed By

M. Maxwell, Director of Engineering and Infrastructure Planning
A. Bazzard, Director of Environmental Services

Copied To

A. Newton, Chief Administrative Officer
R. Welchman, Solicitor and Corporate Counsel
R. Walton, General Manager of Operations
A. Dyjach, General Manager of Development Services

By-law and/or Agreement

By-law Required	No
Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and /or Clerk	No