Problem Statement

In 2015, The Town of The Blue Mountains retained C.C. Tatham & Associates Ltd. (CCTA) to complete a "Stormwater Management (SWM) Needs Study" as part of the Thornbury Road Improvements Project. Through this study, several deficiencies in the existing drainage system were identified. Specifically, portions of the Thornbury West drainage area were identified with deficient infrastructure under minor and major storm events. Furthermore, several areas were identified where municipal drainage (minor and major flows) is currently conveyed across private property or through privately owned infrastructure with no easements or formal allowances, making it difficult to access and maintain. This private infrastructure is largely undocumented and its level of service is largely unknown.

In addition to capacity issues under existing conditions, the existing storm infrastructure is reaching its service life expectancy and deteriorating. Development, intensification, urbanization and growth in the watershed have also adversely impacted the stormwater quality and ecological health of the receiving water bodies. The culmination of the above noted factors results in a storm system that does not meet the Town's engineering and development standards.

Watershed & Site Specific Problems

Several existing problem areas have been identified through our review of the available background information and analysis performed for the "SWM Needs Study." These problem areas include the following:

1. A makeshift drainage system consisting of a series of pipes and catchbasins north of Alfred Street and east of Lemon Street to Moore Crescent is located on private property with an indeterminate level of service. Field investigations indicate that the infrastructure is deteriorating and likely undersized.

2. A major drainage system behind Rankin's Landing receives municipal stormwater and conveys it across private property. The drainage system is limited by pipe obstructions and is undersized for major storm events such that there is a high probability of flooding under existing conditions.

3. The Little Beaver tributary watercourse has significant conveyance capacity deficiencies. Under major storm events, there is a spill north of King Street that will travel through the backyards of the properties fronting Huron Street. A second spill point exists at the low point on Huron Street, west of Lansdowne Street. This spill also has potential to impact a number of private properties as it travels north towards Georgian Bay.

Through implementation of the Public Engagement Plan, public feedback will be solicited to determine any additional areas with historic drainage problems that merit additional attention.

Opportunity Statement

The Town is planning to mitigate the drainage deficiencies and replace the aging and deteriorating storm infrastructure throughout the study area as part of future works. Opportunity exists to improve the drainage systems beyond the level of service currently provided, improve water quality and water balance conditions, reduce flooding and erosion, improve maintenance opportunities and eliminate public safety hazards. As such, the Town has initiated this Master Plan Municipal Class Environmental Assessment for the Thornbury West drainage area to identify and evaluate drainage improvements based on their impacts to the social, physical, natural, cultural and economic environments. A set of preferred improvement alternatives having the greatest positive impact and a recommended approach for implementing the alternatives will be the end product of the study.

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