

**DATE:** July 17, 2023

**REPORT NO:** PW-22-2023

**SUBJECT:** **Consolidated Linear Infrastructure Environmental Compliance Approval Update**

**CONTACT:** Tray Benish, ORO, Manager of Operations (Acting)  
Mike DiPaola, P. Eng., Director of Public Works and Recreation

**OVERVIEW:**

- The Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) has developed a new sanitary collection and stormwater management system approvals program referred to as the Consolidated Linear Infrastructure Environmental Compliance Approval (CLI-ECA).
- Municipal participation in the CLI-ECA program is mandatory.
- Through the CLI-ECA program the Province is enabling municipalities to issue approvals for low risk publicly owned sanitary collection and stormwater management infrastructure projects on their behalf.
- Prior to this new program, all sanitary collection or stormwater management projects had to receive an Environmental Compliance Approval permit by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP).
- The CLI-ECA program will create a more efficient approval process, enhance environmental protection, reduce processing timelines and provide clear, transparent consistent requirements across all Ontario municipalities.
- The Township applied for the CLI-ECA program back in Q1 of 2022 and received both the sanitary collection and stormwater management system approvals as of December 2022.
- Staff are currently working through the permit / program requirements that were provided by the Province including the development of Operation and Maintenance Manuals, updating the GIS and mapping of any new sanitary collection/stormwater systems added throughout the year, and updating the Township development agreements to include the specified design criteria that was provided. This may lead to a possible budget increase in 2024, as the Township may need to outsource a portion of this work, and/or require more staffing resources in order to administer this new program.
- Township Staff are working collaboratively with the other Local Area Municipalities throughout the Region, as part of a CLI-ECA working group, to share resources and to better streamline this process for each municipality.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That Information Report PW-22-2023, re: “Consolidated Linear Infrastructure Environmental Compliance Approval Update”, dated July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, be received for information.

## **ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN:**

### **Strategic Priority #1, #2 & #4**

- **Build** – a safe, connected, caring and active community
- **Champion** – strategic and responsible growth
- **Advance** – organizational capacity and effectiveness

## **BACKGROUND:**

Starting in 2022, Ontario adopted a Consolidated Linear Infrastructure Permissions Approach for Environmental Compliance Approvals (CLI-ECA) for low-risk projects related to sewage collection and stormwater management.

Prior to the implementation of this new CLI-ECA, anytime the Township and/or developers had to alter, extend, or replace existing sanitary or stormwater management infrastructure, an Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA) Permit had to be received from the Ministry of Environmental, Conservation and Parks (MECP). Depending on the scope and type of project that was being undertaken, the application was either reviewed by the upper tier municipality under what was known as the “Transfer of Review Program” on behalf of the MECP or reviewed directly by the MECP.

The goal of the new CLI-ECA process is to advance important, low-risk public infrastructure projects sooner by reducing the time it takes for the review and approval of applications by the Ministry. The transition of the ECA review and approvals process to municipalities is mandatory and has introduced new responsibilities and/or work that municipalities have not previously undertaken.

Under the new CLI-ECA process, a municipality will no longer need to submit individual “pipe-by-pipe” applications for future alterations, provided they are built in accordance with specific design criteria and all other Ministry approved conditions. These pre-authorizations allow municipalities and/or developers who are constructing infrastructure on behalf of municipalities, to proceed without first having to obtain an individual Ministry permission.

The CLI-ECA approach will:

- Create an efficient review/approval process for low-risk projects
- Provide clear, transparent and consistent requirements to obtain an ECA, which can be administered directly by the municipality
- Improve environmental protection through updated and consolidated terms and conditions (i.e., implementation of consistent design criteria)
- Establish a more holistic picture of sewage and stormwater works across the Province

All existing and future approvals will be incorporated into two CLI-ECAs for West Lincoln: One for municipal sanitary collection systems and one for stormwater management works.

### **CURRENT SITUATION:**

The Township completed its application for this new program in Q1 of 2022 and received both of the CLI-ECAs for the sanitary collection and stormwater management systems in December 2022. All ongoing and future developments and/or sanitary and stormwater management projects will now fall under these two approvals.

As part of the Township's CLI-ECA permits there are various requirements and conditions associated with these permits. The Township went through a similar process when Drinking Water Licenses and Drinking Water Works Permits were mandated years ago. Staff are currently looking at the best methods to address the various requirements and conditions associated with the CLI-ECA permits.

Staff are in collaboration with all of the Region Local Area Municipalities through a CLI-ECA working group. The working group will help streamline this transition for all Regional municipalities through resource sharing, standardized form development, etc.

The scope of this work related to the new CLI-ECA permits and program is quite large, and outside consulting may be required to fulfil these obligations properly and/or additional Township staffing resources may be required. This may lead to budget implications in 2024.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no financial implications at this time as a result of this report, however input may be required from consulting engineers and/or additional staffing resources may be required. This is currently being reviewed and may have some budget implications in 2024.

### **INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTS:**

This Report was reviewed by the CAO, the Director of Finance, and the Clerk's office.

### **CONCLUSION:**

This report with respect to the new Consolidated Linear Infrastructure Environmental Compliance Approval (CLI-ECA) outlining CLI-ECA's permits and program for sanitary collection and stormwater management systems, is being provided for information.

#### **Prepared & Submitted by:**



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**Tray Benish, ORO**  
Manager of Operations (Acting)

#### **Approved by:**



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**Bev Hendry**  
Chief Administrative Officer

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. DiPaola', with a stylized, cursive script.

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**Mike DiPaola, P.Eng.**  
Director, Public Works and Recreation