

DATE: February 26, 2024

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: Deanna Wasnik, Director Planning & Development

SUBJECT: Integrated Stormwater Management Plan (ISMP) Update

ATTACHMENT(S): Powerpoint Presentation

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Council RECEIVES FOR INFORMATION the report dated February 26, 2024 from the Director of Planning & Development and titled 'Integrated Stormwater Management Plan (ISMP) Update.'

PURPOSE:

To provide an update on the City's progress with the actions identified in its Integrated Stormwater Management Plan (ISMP).

BACKGROUND:

The City manages stormwater to prevent flooding and erosion and to protect watersheds, including creeks, rivers, and groundwater aquifers. In order to do this the City has constructed over \$380 million of stormwater infrastructure since the 1970's, including storm sewers, ditches, culverts, pumping stations and engineered ponds. This means that the City is responsible for inspecting, cleaning, repairing, and replacing these assets, as required. There are also natural assets, like wetlands, that help manage and convey stormwater that require maintenance from time to time.

The ISMP was developed to help the City work through the stormwater management challenges it currently faces:

- Sprawling development;
- Aging infrastructure;
- Increase in environmental and safety regulations;
- Climate change;
- Localized flooding;
- Erosion;
- Lack of dedicated funding;
- Protection of natural assets that help manage stormwater; and
- Need for updated City bylaws.

The ISMP was created in 5 parts: 4 technical working papers and an overarching guiding document. The guiding document includes a roadmap that identifies the vision, goals and top actions required for the City's stormwater management service delivery to be sustainable into the future.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The City's ISMP supports Council's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan priorities: Preserve the environment and continue to improve processes and practices to support effective and efficient service delivery.

PROGRESS MADE IN 2022/2023:

Since the finalization of the ISMP at the end of 2021, several actions have been completed or are underway:

- Stormwater management information sharing continues to be available through the City's website,
- Renewing and replacing existing infrastructure is one of the top priorities and since the end of 2021, a variety of stormwater assets have been renewed and replaced,
- Protecting natural assets like rivers and creeks.

See more details in the presentation attached.

NEXT STEPS FOR 2024 AND BEYOND:

Some of the top actions in the ISMP roadmap are related to updating bylaws and guidelines to ensure stormwater infrastructure can withstand future demands, including more severe storms. Bylaws also help the City reduce the amount of contaminants entering the storm sewer system which eventually discharge into creeks and rivers. Less contaminants in stormwater also means less required maintenance. The bylaws that will be updated over the next several years include:

- Storm Sewer Bylaw
- Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw and Design Guidelines
- Development Cost Charge (DCC) Bylaw
- Erosion & Sediment Control Bylaw (*NEW*)

As resources become available, a consistent condition assessment program will be implemented to gather more data to prioritize renewals. In the meantime, conducting assessments on corrugated metal storm pipe is the focus for the next few years.

Stormwater management is funded primarily through property taxes. Because this is not a dedicated source of funding, stormwater must compete each year with other infrastructure needs for funding such as parks, sidewalks, and civic buildings. Currently, \$3 to \$4 million per year is spent on the stormwater system. It is estimated that \$12 million per year, on average, is needed to keep up with repairs, maintenance and replacements of aging infrastructure over the next 20 years. This leaves a significant funding gap every year that threatens the sustainability and reliability of the stormwater service.

One of the top actions in the ISMP is to create a dedicated fund so that stormwater infrastructure doesn't have to compete with the other areas. Over the next couple of months, the City will be reaching out to the community to help us decide how we pay for stormwater management in Prince George. There will be social media posts about the importance of stormwater management and a survey will be launched in April. Council will be provided with the results of the public engagement this summer, along with, a recommendation from Administration regarding a funding model informed by the results of the survey.

See more details in the presentation attached.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

The City continues to progress in stormwater management in order to provide safe and sustainable stormwater drainage services for the community. By updating bylaws and securing a dedicated stormwater infrastructure fund, the City can ensure these services will continue to be provided for future generations.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Deanna Wasnik, Director Planning & Development

PREPARED BY: Kristy Bobbie, Asset Manager

APPROVED:

Andy Beesley, Acting City Manager

Meeting Date: [Enter 2024/02/26]