



Meeting Date: October 16, 2024

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Report No: CAO-26-2024

Subject: Potential Removal of Coldstream Dam

Recommendation:

THAT Report CAO-26-2024 re: Potential Removal of Coldstream Dam be received;

AND THAT Council provide direction in regard to informing the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority to proceed with an Environmental Assessment for the Coldstream Dam or not.

Purpose:

Earlier this year on [June 5, 2024](#), Council received a presentation from the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority on the potential removal of the Coldstream Dam. There were options proposed based on the condition of the dam and before any of these options are considered, an Environment Assessment (EA) is needed. The EA will confirm the various options that were presented as per the attached appendices.

The St. Clair Conservation Authority are requesting council direction to assist with their decision-making process on whether to proceed with an EA or to leave the Coldstream Dam in as-is condition (Do Nothing).

Background:

At the meeting, it was brought forward that consideration is being given to the Coldstream Dam and whether to proceed with options ranging from complete removal to doing nothing and leaving the dam in as-is condition.

In total, there are 7 options that have been outlined which are noted:

Option 1 Dredging of sediment with water in head pond followed by complete dam removal.

- Option 2 Temporary bypass of river around dam. Excavate sediment in the dry and complete dam removal.
- Option 3 Remove dam in phases over (+/-) 3 years and allow slow release of sediment over 3 years.
- Option 4 One time removal of complete dam. Allow one time release of sediment.
- Option 5 Partial dam removal. Construct rocky ramp step pool system to provide fish passage.
- Option 6 Construct permanent new, natural stream channel around dam headpond. Leave dam, head pond and sediment in place as is.
- Option 7 Do Nothing.

Analysis:

Based on the above noted options, a breakdown of the considerations are noted in the attached appendices such as economic, technical obstacles, social impacts etc.

Before moving forward with any of the above noted options, an Environmental Assessment is required and the purpose of the delegation from the Conservation Authority is to seek council feedback on whether there is support to proceed to this step.

Should the Conservation Authority proceed with an Environmental Assessment, it would take into consideration all of the options above at which time further information will be brought forward to council for information.

Based on the above noted options, a breakdown of the considerations are noted in the attached Appendices such as economic, technical obstacles, social impacts etc.

There is a provincial exemption from the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks under Ontario Regulation 334 to decommission dams built prior to the Environmental Assessment Act coming into effect in 1976. Coldstream dam was built in 1972 making it eligible for exemption. SCRCA will adopt an EA like process with Coldstream dam decommissioning.

The Conservation Authority is looking for guidance on which option to pursue further and is looking for financial support to advance this work through consulting services and its own resources.

Financial Implications:

TBD – based on the option selected, the Municipality will be costed accordingly.

Strategic Plan:

This matter aligns with following strategic priorities:

- Sustainable Infrastructure and Services

The Coldstream Dam is an asset that is managed by the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority who have reached out to ask for guidance by Middlesex Centre Council to assist them with the decision to maintain (or not) the Coldstream Dam.

Attachments:

Appendix 1 – Table 6: Sediment Management and Dam Removal Options

Appendix 2 – Table 7: Sediment Management and Dam Removal Options – Preliminary Cost Estimate