

# 1. Problem and Opportunity Statement

The following key points form the Project's need and justification, or problem and opportunity statement:

The Township of West Lincoln, including the community of Smithville has experienced steady population, housing and employment growth over the past decade. As directed by the Regional Municipality of Niagara Official Plan and the Township's Growth Targets, continued significant growth is anticipated but is constrained by a shortage of available land and servicing capacity of transportation, water, wastewater and stormwater management municipal infrastructure.

The existing road network and capacity are considered to be insufficient to meet the servicing demands of the projected growth. The transportation network will need to provide sufficient capacity and connections to serve the needs of all road users (e.g. vehicular, active transportation and transit), both for recreational and commercial trip purposes. The planned expansion of the Smithville community will also require careful consideration of existing and new regional connections that should improve accessibility and the standard of living for all residents and businesses. To support the growth and development of the community, transportation policies and infrastructure that promote the intensification of the Community Improvement Plan (Smithville Downtown core area), an increase of employment opportunities and north-south connections with the QEW will be required.

Part of the local municipal water and wastewater (sanitary sewage) network is insufficient to accommodate planned growth and does not currently exist within the subject future development lands. These lands, once assessed and confirmed, will be brought into the Smithville settlement area through an urban area boundary expansion. Given Smithville's current reliance on a single municipal water feed from the London Road storage facility, there is also a need to enhance security of supply. There is also a need to consider current wastewater pollution prevention and control including Inflow and Infiltration reduction initiatives in addition to available municipal water and wastewater treatment capacity in the context of ultimate community build out.

Urbanization of the future urban growth drainage areas requires an overall strategy to manage storm runoff and snowmelt for flood and erosion control, as well as stormwater quality control to ensure that natural heritage systems and watercourses, do not become degraded. There is also a need to consider stormwater management requirements for future infill and redevelopment areas in the existing community, recognizing constraints imposed by existing drainage infrastructure within the existing urban area.

In order to address the above, a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Servicing Plan is required to provide the framework for transportation (including potential CPR grade separations and future Smithville Bypass), water and wastewater, and stormwater management services to be implemented in support of the Smithville Master Community Plan.

The Master Community Plan including Integrated Planning Act and Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process provides an opportunity to create a sustainable, compact, complete and resilient Smithville community. The study will identify and assess suitable corridors for any new transportation connections and provide a framework for any subsequent environmental assessment studies. It also streamlines the municipal planning and infrastructure planning processes, allowing land use planning decisions to occur at the same time as evaluating infrastructure servicing alternatives and associated works.

The Master Community Plan will be guided by the findings from a subwatershed study for the Study Area and conclude with the development of a municipal infrastructure servicing master plan or “road map” that will support future capital works planning, including funding opportunities, and meet the needs of the existing and future community.