



Stakeholder Interviews on the Alternatives To the Undertaking

The purpose of the Upper York Sewage Solutions Environmental Assessment (UYSS EA) is to identify a sustainable servicing solution to accommodate the nearly 100,000 new residents and 50,000 employees who will move to East Gwillimbury, Newmarket and Aurora by 2031. York Region has developed and assessed four alternative solutions:

Do Nothing – No additional wastewater collection and treatment capacity would be built to accommodate the approved growth.

Discharge to Lake Ontario – Would convey all wastewater to Lake Ontario by connecting to the York Durham Sewage System through some combination of tunnel, pumping station(s) and forcemain(s).

Discharge to Lake Simcoe – Wastewater from growth in East Gwillimbury would be conveyed to an Advanced Sewage Treatment Plant within the Lake Simcoe Watershed in compliance with the phosphorus loading targets established by the Phosphorus Reduction Strategy under the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan. Wastewater from approved growth in Newmarket and Aurora would continue to be conveyed to the existing York Durham Sewage System.

Lake Simcoe Water Reclamation Centre – Wastewater from approved growth in East Gwillimbury and a portion of Newmarket, would be conveyed to a Water Reclamation Centre within the Lake Simcoe watershed. Wastewater from approved growth in Aurora and portion of Newmarket would be conveyed to the existing York Durham Sewage System for treatment and discharge to Lake Ontario.

York Region values the input of community members and thanks those who took the time to share their opinions with us. Public input was also received on the four servicing alternatives at a workshop held in June 2010. A summary of this workshop is available on the UYSS website (www.uyssolutions.ca). Reflecting this input, York Region is tentatively recommending the Lake Simcoe Water Reclamation Centre Alternative to accommodate the forecasted growth in the UYSS service area.



To better gauge an understanding of these alternatives, York Region carried out several interviews with individuals representing organizations who showed a strong interest in the project. Representative organizations included the following:

- ☺ Farmers
- ☺ Golf Course Owners
- ☺ Research Institutes
- ☺ Industry Associations
- ☺ Environmental Organizations
- ☺ Government Agencies

Key Findings

In general, interview participants believed a sewage system in the UYSS service area should:

- ☺ Consider the environment and human health by reducing harmful substances released into wastewater and adhering to local environmental policies;
- ☺ Accommodate growth well into the future; and,
- ☺ Be acceptable to the communities it services.

Most participants were comfortable with using reclaimed water in some capacity. When asked what they liked about this alternative, they responded that reclaimed water would be an opportunity to conserve water, energy and money.

Participants identified the following challenges that York Region should consider when using reclaimed water:

- ☺ Practical implementation considerations, such as how much it would cost and how the reclaimed water would be conveyed to water users;
- ☺ Questions about how safe reclaimed water is, its chemical composition, and if any potential adverse health effects are associated with its use; and
- ☺ The public's attitude towards recycling wastewater.

"This is an opportunity for York Region to do something different and make us stand out as innovators and leaders globally as well as locally."