

## The Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Information Report to Council

**SUBJECT:** Four Mile Creek Maintenance  
**DATE:** 2023-12-05  
**REPORT #:** OPS-23-010  
**PREPARED BY:** Darren MacKenzie  
**DEPARTMENT:** Operations Services

---

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Agriculture is one of the main industries in Niagara-on-the-Lake (NOTL) and has been for over a century. To ensure a sustainable food supply, a substantial amount of the growing community relies on raw water taken from streams and ditches throughout the community.

Under the Town's Private Members Bill for Irrigation (Pr 88), Engineering Reports were created to formally allow for irrigation water augmentation and usage from creeks, ditches and Municipal Drains from three identified systems that are still in place today. These systems are Airport, Bright and Lavigne (ABL), which covers the west portion of NOTL, Harrison/Routh, which covers the east portion of NOTL and Four Mile Creek, which services the central portion of NOTL.

The Town's Private Members Bill, in conjunction with the Engineering Reports and Irrigation Consolidated By-law (3534-01 as amended **Appendix II**), details how the systems are to be operated and maintained.

In early January 2023, the Town received a call from a concerned landowner that a bridge/culvert in the Four Mile Creek in St. Davids had collapsed, causing water to be backed up and flood out of the banks. This obstruction was near 29 Paxton Lane within Four Mile Creek.

Subsequently, a report was prepared for Council to consider at the February 21, 2023, COTW-General meeting for the maintenance of this portion of Four Mile Creek (Original version of OPS-23-010 attached as **Appendix I**).

At the February 21 COTW-General meeting, it was moved that the original OPS-23-010 Report be referred back to Staff and returned to Council following a meeting with the Irrigation Committee regarding the maintenance of the Four Mile Creek.

Staff reviewed the information with the Irrigation Committee at their August 30, 2023, meeting.

## **NEXT STEP / CONCLUSION**

Based on the discussions at the August 30, 2023, Irrigation Committee Meeting, there are a number of items to be worked on going forward:

1. As per Consolidated By-law 3534-01 (as amended), the Four Mile Creek Irrigation System will be inspected for any obstructions to the flow of irrigation water within the upper portion of the system (York Road south to approximately Glockner Lane). This will be conducted by Town Staff, Members of the Irrigation Committee and the NPCA. This inspection is anticipated to occur prior to the start of the 2024 irrigation season.

The original Report identified that the cost of maintenance would be approximately \$45,000. However, at this time, only obstructions will be identified that impact irrigation flows. If any areas are identified that require the removal of an obstruction will be discussed with the Director of Operations as per the By-law.

2. The current Irrigation System Engineering Reports and By-law require immediate updating to align with the upgrades that have been completed over the years and be more in line with current operations. This will be discussed at a future (2024) Irrigation Committee meeting, and the Town and Committee will work together collaboratively on this.
3. It was identified that there are concerns with parts of the Irrigation System that form supply channels and how fair maintenance costs can be assessed. These areas not only act as supply channels for irrigation but also natural waterways and stormwater pathways. The Irrigation System should not be responsible for all maintenance on channels that other water impacts. This needs to be addressed going forward.

Staff will continue to work with the Irrigation Committee to ensure we have a system that meets the needs of our growing community for years to come.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- **Appendix I –** OPS-23-010 - Four Mile Creek Maintenance - Original
- **Appendix II –** By-law 3534H-11 Irrigation System