

Questions remain with Erin's wastewater treatment plant

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News

Town of Erin says it's had extensive consultations with community groups

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Residents of Erin continue to raise a brow, questioning the town's proposed wastewater treatment plant. The town states developers will pay for building the treatment plant and main trunk lines, while residents will pay some costs.

The town estimates an average capital cost of \$15,000 to \$18,000 spread out over 10 to 15 years for infrastructure, \$4,000 to \$8,000 to connect to the system and \$500 to \$600 annually for user costs.

"That is entirely based on speculation," said Bob Pearson, spokesperson of the Erin Citizen Action Committee (ECAC). "There is no undertaking by the town to have accurate estimates or a survey done to obtain more reasonable estimates of what it would cost the average property owner."

[Town council accepted a bid](#) for the wastewater treatment plant for \$114 million from North American

Construction Ltd. It is only for the plant and carry out in the West Credit River before Belfountain. It will not cover the cost of the main trunk lines. The town confirms that it will be presented to a different developer.

The town says it has been transparent with residents, stating they have had extensive consultations with a wide range of community groups during all the stages of the wastewater treatment project.

"The Town values meaningful two-way public engagement and communication evidenced by creating the Citizen Engagement Charter, as our enhanced commitment to welcoming and supporting all residents to voice their opinions," reads an emailed response from Erin's communications department.

Residents, however, feel their concerns about the effect on the West Credit River and living fish life are not being heard by town staff.

"The town has consistently dismissed our concerns and declined to work with the coalition," said Judy Mabee, chair of the Coalition for the West Credit River. "The town continues to repeat their tag line, that expert consultants have ensured the plant would not harm the river, that the plant was in compliance with all laws and went through a rigorous environmental assessment process."

Opponents are also against an official plan amendment requiring residents to pay for sewage running through their property, as well as taxes, connection costs and decommissioning of their current septic tanks. They presented the town with documents outlining their concerns, claiming the town refused to take them.

"We have circulated a document," said Pearson. "Many people have read, signed and taken it to town hall saying we want the clause removed from the amendment. The town was refusing to accept and date-stamp these documents. In many cases, they refused to accept a signed letter to the clerk."

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The town has said the plant is needed as they expect the urban population to increase from 4,415 residents to between 7,000 to 10,000 by 2040. They will be posting upcoming public information centres (PICs) on their website and social media platforms for residents once the dates have been finalized.