

## **Manitoba Floodway Expansion EIA – Round 1 Municipal Meetings**

### **Meeting Highlights**

**Meeting With  
RM of West St. Paul  
Municipal Office – West St. Paul, Manitoba  
February 12, 2004**

---

#### **In Attendance**

##### **For RM of West St. Paul Council**

E. Arnold – Chief Administrative Officer  
B. Henley  
G. Kraemer  
D. Garcea  
R. Michalishyn

##### **For Environmental Assessment Team**

D. De Pape – TetrES/InterGroup  
B. McGurk – TetrES/InterGroup

##### **For Manitoba Floodway Expansion Authority**

D. McNeil – Vice-President – Hydraulics

---

#### **Purpose of Meeting**

The meeting was requested by the Environmental Assessment Team for the Floodway Expansion Project to:

- Begin dialogue about the Environmental Assessment process
- Provide initial information about the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and its associated Public Involvement Program (PIP)
- Provide background information about the proposed Floodway Expansion Project
- Identify issues and concerns Council has with the proposed project, the EIA and the PIP.

The meeting is one of a series of sessions being held with municipal Councils in the areas affected by the proposed Floodway Expansion Project as part of Round 1 of the PIP. At least two additional rounds of meetings with municipal Councils are contemplated as information from the Environmental Assessment becomes available.

## **Meeting Process**

Council had very limited time to meet with the EIA Team due to a lengthy meeting agenda. Denis De Pape of the Environmental Assessment Team made a brief presentation about the background and current status of the proposed Floodway Expansion Project EIA process, plans for involving the public in the EIA, and next steps in the process. In conjunction with Denis' presentation, Doug McNeil of the Manitoba Floodway Expansion Authority (MFEA) briefly described the five components of the proposed project – Floodway Channel Expansion, Inlet Control Structure, Outlet Structure, Channel Crossings, and the West Dyke. Each Council representative in attendance was provided a copy of the presentation and the first PIP newsletter. Extra copies were left with the Administrator for general distribution.

Throughout the presentations, discussion took place in which:

- Council asked questions, offered perspectives, and identified issues about the proposed project, the EIA and the PIP
- Where appropriate, representatives of the Environmental Assessment Team and MFEA offered perspectives on items raised by Council.

The following are highlights of the meeting and are intended to capture the key points that were raised or presented. They are not presented in the sequence that they were raised at the meeting, nor are they a detailed or verbatim transcription of what was said.

## **Key Perspectives and Issues Identified by Council**

### **Project Impacts and Management of Project Impacts**

- RM would be pleased to see the project licensed since it will provide greater flood protection for the municipality.
- Impact of the proposed project on groundwater quality and quantity is a major concern in the area; many residents obtain their water from wells.
- Concerned about how floodway water will affect dykes, outfalls, and drains (e.g., Grassmere, Northumberland and Parks Creek drains) within their municipality if the Floodway Expansion Project proceeds.

## **Key Perspectives from the Environmental Assessment Team**

- Following the 1997 Red River flood, extensive studies and consultation were conducted to identify and evaluate alternatives to improve flood protection for the Winnipeg area.
- Before construction can commence, a licence must be obtained by the proponent under the provincial *Environment Act*, and federal approvals must be granted. As part of the Environmental Assessment

## TetrES/InterGroup Round 1 PIP

- process, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) must be prepared. The EIS will be subject to review, including public review through the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission.
- Current information indicates that impacts of the proposed project are diverse and vary substantially in different areas. To recognize these differences, the study region has been divided into six zones. A color map, as presented in newsletter #1, outlines the key impacts relative to each of the six zones.
  - As part of the EIA process, the Environmental Assessment Study Team will be conducting a PIP. The results of the program will be used by the study team to identify and evaluate potential effects and mitigation measures. There will be three rounds of public involvement: **Round 1** (begin dialogue, provide information, identify issues); **Round 2** (share and seek feedback on initial assessment, discuss ideas to mitigate impacts); and **Round 3** (review results of the EIA). The program includes meetings with municipalities, affected and interested stakeholders, and open houses. This PIP for the EIA is independent of any other public consultation that MFEA will be undertaking.
  - An EIA Open House that might interest your municipality will be held on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2004, in Selkirk at the Royal Canadian Legion Hall.

### **Key Perspectives from the Manitoba Floodway Expansion Authority**

In response to questions and comments, MFEA representatives noted:

- The project is currently in the pre-design stage. Design of the Floodway Expansion Project continues to be refined and will be improved as input is received through engineering studies, the EIA, and public involvement.
- The floodway will not necessarily be deepened and widened along its entire length; decisions pertaining to what areas of the floodway will be deepened and widened have not been made.
- MFEA has hired two engineering firms to look at possible groundwater effects. One study focuses on groundwater effects in Birds Hills. The other study addresses groundwater effects along the entire floodway.
- MFEA will be holding public involvement events to address the following topics:
  - Compensation
  - Recreational opportunities associated with the project
  - Spring operating rules
  - Summer operating rules
  - State of nature water levels.
- Even with the Floodway Expansion Project, backwater effects from Lockport south could affect the municipality under extreme flood conditions (1 in 700 year). Current studies are evaluating the extent of these effects.
- After the floodway is expanded, however, a 1997 flooding event would result in a lower water level in the Red River south of Lockport due to the additional capacity created by widening and deepening the floodway.