

Background

To accommodate long-term growth, The City of Calgary (The City) and surrounding municipalities require a stormwater drainage solution for future development of lands within and east of Calgary. Discussions for a regional stormwater solution started in 2008 as part of the Shepard Regional Drainage Plan (SRDP), which encompasses lands along the eastern portion of Calgary (including Belvedere and a portion of residual lands east of Stoney Trail), Rocky View County (RVC) and Chestermere. Typically, The City manages drainage within its own municipal boundary, however, stormwater drainage in the east Calgary region is challenged due to flat topography, few natural drainage routes, numerous wetlands, agricultural activity, and a 1980s moratorium on new stormwater outfalls into the Western Headworks Canal. The SRDP was discontinued by stakeholders in 2013 due to feasibility challenges and high costs (\$230 million over 50 years). Two potential alternative drainage options were subsequently identified by The City: 1. Forest Lawn Creek (FLC) is a Calgary-only solution intended to direct East Belvedere stormwater runoff flows to the FLC system to the west. 2. Community Stormwater Management Initiative (CSMI) is a regional solution to drain development areas in East Belvedere into a new stormwater canal system largely on Western Irrigation District land separate from the existing irrigation canals (see maps in Attachment 2). The City has been participating in the CSMI since 2012 while concurrently assessing the technical feasibility of the FLC alternative. In 2020 June, The City undertook a sustainability assessment to compare both options which concluded that CSMI would outperform FLC across social, environmental, and economic outcomes. The assessment also found that implementing CSMI would also be more feasible.

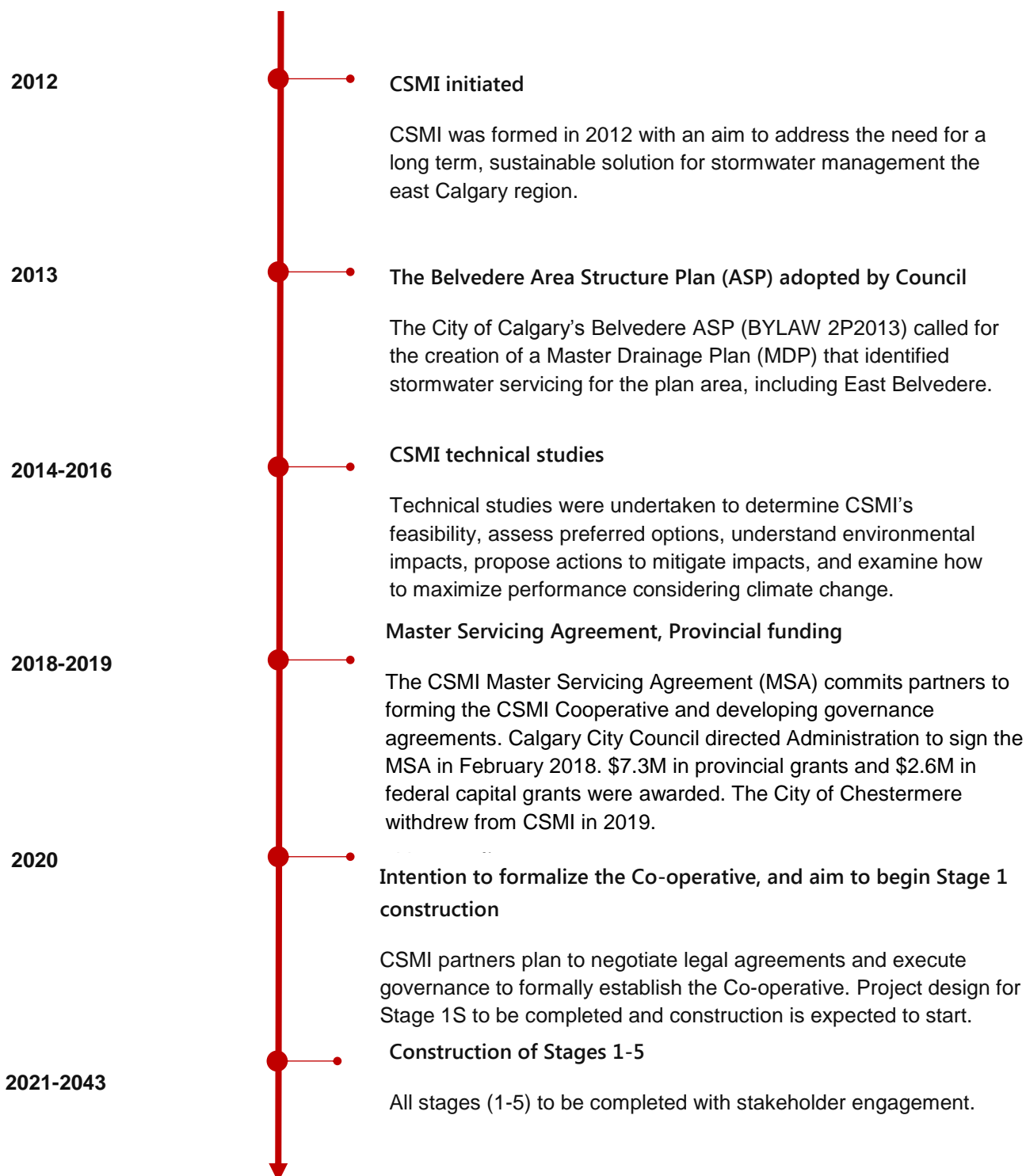
Context

Municipalities in the CSMI region are experiencing increased urbanization and industrialization, accelerating a need for a sustainable stormwater drainage solution. CSMI is an innovative partnership that enables a long-term regional collaboration to address this need. Current CSMI members include The City of Calgary, Rocky View County, Town of Strathmore, Wheatland County and the Western Irrigation District (WID). The City of Chestermere withdrew from the initiative in 2019. The WID will own, manage and operate the resulting system on behalf of, and under the direction of, the CSMI Board. To date, CSMI's work has centered on determining the most appropriate engineering solution and governance structure for the initiative. In early 2018, partners signed the CSMI Master Stormwater Agreement, which committed the partners to incorporate the CSMI Cooperative by 2020 through the development and execution of subsequent governance agreements. In 2020, CSMI members are expected to execute the legal agreements to formally establish the Cooperative and begin construction by the end of the year.

Previous Council Direction

On 2012 October 17, the Standing Policy Committee (SPC) on Utilities and Corporate Services received the Shepard Regional Drainage Plan (SRDP) (Phase 1) for information (UCS2012-0676). Following the discontinuance of the SRDP, Administration has participated in the CSMI. An in-camera verbal update was provided to City Council in 2015 June. In 2016, in-camera verbal updates were provided to IGA. The Intergovernmental Affairs Committee recommended that Council direct Administration to sign the Cooperative Stormwater Management Initiative (CSMI) Master Storm Water Agreement no later than 2018 February 28 (IGA2018-0166). This Master Stormwater Agreement enabled the formation the CSMI Cooperative and development of subsequent governance agreements. CSMI partners expect to finalize negotiations, legally form the Cooperative, finalize administrative and governance planning, and begin the first stage of construction by the end of 2020.

CSMI timeline of major milestones



Bylaws, Regulations, Council Policies

The City of Calgary Drainage Bylaw

Design, construction and operation of the CSMI within Calgary will comply with the Drainage Bylaw, which regulates Calgary's stormwater system by requiring that both the public and industry manage drainage and water quality.

The City of Calgary Offsite Levy Bylaw

Construction of Calgary's portion of the CSMI is intended to be guided by the Offsite Levy Bylaw. The City plans to recover capital costs through off-site levies paid by developers to pay for the growth portion of developing CSMI stormwater system infrastructure. The intention is that developers pay for the share of the off-site infrastructure that benefits new development and The City pays for its share of the off-site infrastructure that benefits existing residents and the region. CSMI partners will each fund their proportional share of the CSMI system to benefit the region as well.

Alberta Environment & Parks (AEP) regulations

AEP is regulating the development of the CSMI project, reviewing and approving each stage of construction. An Environmental Impact Assessment was not required by AEP for the first stage of construction, which was recently approved by AEP. Alberta's *Water Act* and *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act* will apply to this project.