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*Baseline workers at the Gore Road jobsite.*

## BASELINE CONSTRUCTORS INC.

*A young company specializing in water- and wastewater-treatment plants*

BY JULIE SCHAEFFER

### AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:  
WATERLOO, ON

FOUNDED:  
2007

EMPLOYEES:  
8

AREAS OF SPECIALTY:  
GENERAL CONTRACT-  
ING, DESIGN-BUILD,  
PROJECT MANAGE-  
MENT

BASELINE CONSTRUCTORS INC. CELEBRATED ITS third year in operation this year—and won a contract that could be considered significant for a firm of any age.

The company was charged with completing portions of a planned \$700 million upgrade of Hamilton, Ontario's Woodward Avenue Wastewater Treatment Plant—the city's main sewage-processing station.

Chris de Lange, Bryan O'Hearn, and Brad Owens started Baseline Constructors in autumn of 2007, after working together for a number of years at another wastewater-management company. "After running operations for the other business for several years, we decided it was time to do it for ourselves," says de Lange.

Getting started was not difficult, de Lange says—90 percent of water and wastewater-treatment clients are municipalities that place jobs out to bid on the open market.

"Because building and upgrading water- and wastewater-treatment facilities is public-tendered work, anyone can bid on a project, and the lowest bidder is usually awarded the job," he explains.

Contacts made by the partners at their former company also helped. "Knowing people in the business allowed us to obtain good references, and that helped move the company forward in the evaluation process when bidding on jobs," de Lange says.

The company's primary focus is the construction and renovation of municipal water- and wastewater-treatment plants and pumping stations. Such stations remove contaminants from wastewater through a number of physical, chemical, and biological processes that transform waste into a form that is suitable to discharge back into the environment.

The work completed at the Woodward Avenue Wastewater Treatment Plant—which treats wastewater from Hamilton and several other communities—exemplifies Baseline Constructors' capabilities. The plant was badly in need of an upgrade to accommodate the region's rapidly growing population—which is expected to grow from 500,000 to 660,000 by 2031 in Hamilton alone.

"The plant needed to vastly improve polluting discharges into Hamilton Harbour," says de Lange. "We upgraded the equipment used to process water coming out after treatment, as well as biosolids handling facility."

A project at the Gore Road Sewage Pumping Station in Brampton, Ontario, also was significant for the company. The station was constructed in 1986 to provide sanitary services to industrial-commercial land in the Bram East Sanitary Catchment Area. By 2007, however, it was approaching capacity. Major upgrades to the station were undertaken, many with the help of Baseline Constructors, to ensure that the station would be able to handle peak flow from the catchment area, which was projected for 2021.

Baseline Constructors also recently completed a series of new and retrofitted pumping stations in the Niagara region that will remove sewage from the area to processing sites.

The company is unique in its approach to customer service, de Lange says. "We try to know what our customers want, and we make it our goal to achieve that," he explains. "We like to foster relationships with our clients, whether they're owners or consultants working on the project."

That strategy is clearly working—de Lange says Baseline Constructors experienced significant growth by its second year. In its third year, the company is building on its successes while exploring new opportunities.

"We're a general contractor, so we subcontract the majority of our work," says de Lange. "Looking ahead, we're hoping to dive into general contracting in the private sector, expanding manufacturing facilities. We're just getting started in that area, but we're hoping to have some success." CBQ

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—Chris de Lange,

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