

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS CIVIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 25, 2018
FROM:	KELLY SCHERR, P.ENG., MBA, FEC MANAGING DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES AND CITY ENGINEER
SUBJECT:	SEWER PRIVATE DRAIN CONNECTION POLICY REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Environmental and Engineering Services and City Engineer, a review of the current private drain connection policies **BE ENDORSED** noting that the review process will include consultation with external stakeholders prior to a recommendation being advanced to Council.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER

Flooding Matters Work Plan Phase I (Investigation), Civic Works Committee, June 8, 2016.

2015-19 STRATEGIC PLAN

The 2015 – 2019 Strategic Plan identifies this objective under Building a Sustainable City: 1B – Manage and improve our water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure and services.

BACKGROUND

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to address Deferred Matters list Item No. 11:

“That the Director of Water and Wastewater BE REQUESTED to review the Wastewater and Stormwater By-law WM-28 as it relates to fees and charges for Private Drain Connection (PDC) work undertaken as part of a City of London construction project and report back with respect to a potential blended fee for mixed use properties that is reflective of a balanced charge between the current residential and commercial fees; it being noted that a communication dated January 16, 2018, from Councillor T. Park was received related to this matter.”

Based on the requested review, a number of other policy issues have been identified. To address these issues it is recommended that the initial scope of the review be expanded to consider a comprehensive review of all Private Drain Connections (PDC) related policies in the Wastewater and Stormwater By-law WM-28. It is also recommended that the review include a consultation process that will engage the Urban League, development community, and plumbing community.

Context

Wastewater and Stormwater By-law WM-28 includes many policies related to PDCs. These policies include definition of the ownership, initial construction, replacement, and repair of PDCs. It also provides the details of the City's PDC subsidy program. These policies were developed over many years and when reviewed in a holistic manner, several of these policies are inconsistent and confusing. In order to correct this, it is recommended that a comprehensive review be undertaken with input from key stakeholders including the plumbing community, development community, London Home Builders Association (LHBA) and Urban League.

DISCUSSION

What is a Private Drain Connection (PDC)?

Wastewater from a home travels from the toilet, sinks, and other fixtures through a building's plumbing to a pipe connected to the municipal sanitary sewer system. The portion of this pipe between the building and the property line is called the building sewer, which is regulated by the Ontario Building Code. The portion of the pipe between the property line and the municipal sewer is called the Private Drain Connection or PDC. A property will generally have one sanitary PDC and, depending upon the year of home construction, may also have a storm PDC. The storm PDC would provide an outlet for sump pump discharge or a private side catchbasin. A diagram is provided in Appendix 'A' to help illustrate building sewer and PDC locations and definitions. In London, the PDC is owned by the property owner. The property owner is responsible for the maintenance and ultimately the cost to replace their building's PDC.

PDC By-law Inconsistencies

The City's by-law provisions related to PDCs have been added to, edited, and modified many times over the past 50 years. A comprehensive review of the by-law was completed, as requested by Council, and many different inconsistencies and issues were identified. In addition, it has been the experience of staff that provisions of the by-law are confusing, and staff have received comments from residents that the subsidy provisions are unfair to certain land-use types. As such, it is recommended that the overall PDC policy framework be reconsidered with the goal of providing a policy and associated by-law that is fair, efficient, and transparent.

PDC Policy Framework Review: Focus Areas

The PDC policy framework review will provide a comprehensive update of all PDC related by-law provisions and will focus on the following priority areas:

- Review of the scope of PDC replacements as part of infrastructure renewal construction projects.
- Reconsideration of the subsidy and fee structure related to the installation, repair, or replacement of a PDC (Appendix 'B': Existing PDC Charges).
- Reconsideration the service delivery model for PDC repairs outside of infrastructure renewal projects.
- An assessment of the need and design requirements related to the installation of PDC cleanouts.

Stakeholder Consultation Plan

In order to gain the widest possible perspective as part of the PDC policy review, a stakeholder consultation process will be undertaken that will include all relevant stakeholders. Steps and timelines for the consultation plan are outlined below:

- Individual meetings will be held with stakeholders including the plumbing community, development community, London Home Builders Association (LHBA), and Urban League to gain input and hear suggestions regarding changes to the City's current PDC Policies (Q4-2018).
- A PDC policy in draft form will be circulated to the stakeholders along with a request for input and comment (Q1-2019).
- The final proposed policy and any non-monetary related by-law amendments will be brought to Civic Works Committee for consideration (Q2-2019).
- Any monetary related policy outcomes will be brought forward for consideration during the multi-year budget deliberations (Q4-2019).
- Any monetary related by-law amendments will be brought to Civic Works Committee for consideration following approval of the multi-year budget.

CONCLUSIONS

A comprehensive review of PDC renewal and installation policies is recommended to be undertaken with input from key stakeholders including the plumbing community, development community, LHBA, and Urban League to provide a policy that is fair, efficient, and transparent.

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared within the Wastewater and Drainage Engineering Division by Kyle Chambers, P. Eng., and Kevin Graham, P.Eng, Environmental Service Engineers.

SUBMITTED BY:	REVIEWED & CONCURRED BY:
TOM COPELAND, P. ENG. DIVISION MANAGER WASTEWATER AND DRAINAGE ENGINEERING	SCOTT MATHERS, MPA, P. ENG. DIRECTOR WATER AND WASTEWATER
RECOMMENDED BY:	
KELLY SCHERR, P.ENG., MBA, FEC MANAGING DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES AND CITY ENGINEER	

September 17, 2018

KJC/kjc

Attach: Appendix 'A' - Diagram of Building Sewer and PDC Details
Appendix 'B' - Existing PDC Charges

c.c. Debbie Gibson