

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS CIVIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING ON JULY 23, 2019
FROM:	KELLY SCHERR, P.ENG., MBA, FEC MANAGING DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES AND CITY ENGINEER
SUBJECT:	SEWER PRIVATE DRAIN CONNECTION POLICY REVIEW RESULTS: PROPOSED DRAINAGE BY-LAW (WM-4) AND WASTEWATER & STORMWATER BY-LAW (WM-28) AMENDMENTS

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Environmental and Engineering Services and City Engineer, the following actions **BE TAKEN** with respect to the Drainage By-law (WM-4) and the Wastewater & Stormwater By-law (WM-28):

- (a) the proposed by-law amendment attached hereto as Appendix 'B' **BE INTRODUCED** at the Municipal Council Meeting on July 23, 2019 to amend the existing Drainage By-law (WM-4);
- (b) the proposed by-law amendment attached hereto as Appendix 'C' **BE INTRODUCED** at the Municipal Council Meeting on July 23, 2019 to amend the existing Wastewater & Stormwater By-law (WM-28); and,
- (c) the Civic Administration **BE AUTHORIZED** to undertake all the administrative acts that are necessary in connection with this proposed by-law amendment.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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Sewer Private Drain Connection Policy Review, Civic Works Committee, September 25, 2018.

2019-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

The following report supports the 2019 – 2023 Strategic Plan through the strategic focus area of Building a Sustainable City including:

- London's infrastructure is built, maintained, and operated to meet the long-term needs of our community; and
- London has a strong and healthy environment.

BACKGROUND

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend amendments to the Drainage By-law (WM-4) and Wastewater & Stormwater By-law (WM-28) related to Private Drain Connection (PDC) policies and charges.

Context

A sanitary PDC is a pipe that conveys sewage from a home or business to the City's sewer system. At the October 2, 2018 meeting of Municipal Council it was resolved:

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. (2018-E01) (2.11/13/CWC)

A comprehensive review of PDC renewal and installation policies has been undertaken with input from key stakeholders including the plumbing community, development community, London Home Builders Association (LHBA), Consulting Engineers of Ontario, London Chapter, and Urban League. The following report outlines the recommended amendments to the Drainage By-law (WM-4) and Wastewater & Stormwater By-law (WM-28) based on this review.

DISCUSSION

What is a Private Drain Connection (PDC)?

Wastewater from a home travels from the toilet, sinks, and other fixtures through a building's internal plumbing to an external pipe connected to the municipal sanitary sewer system. The portion of this external pipe between the building face and the property line is called the building sewer, which is regulated by the Ontario Building Code. The portion of the external 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 property owner is responsible for the maintenance and ultimately the cost to replace their building's PDC.

Proposed By-Law Changes

The following discussion deals with a number of PDC policies which are recommended to be changed including PDC Renewal in Construction Projects, properties eligible for 'one-off' City PDC renewal, and PDC warranty. Each section describes the current practice, proposed change, and rationale for change.

PDC Renewal During Infrastructure Renewal Projects

Currently:

During any municipal led construction project where there is excavation below the road base, property owners are contacted and given the opportunity to sign up for a PDC renewal for a flat rate fee. Most PDCs were constructed at the same time as the home and those replaced as part of the City's lifecycle replacement program are between 60 - 100 years old. Depending on the extent of construction and property type, there are different flat rate fees outlined in the by-law that range from \$2,000 to \$5,000. If a property owner chooses to sign-up for a PDC renewal, the PDC is renewed between the mainline sewer and property line. If the property owner does not sign up, the 60-100 year old PDC is reconnected to the new sewer mainline. The choice to replace the PDC is completely the property owner's decision. The City subsidized replacement cost is to make the replacement choice more attractive for the property owner.

Proposed Change:

It is recommended that the program requiring an owner to fund a portion of the PDC replacement costs during a construction project be eliminated. It is also recommended that during sewer renewal projects that every active PDC be replaced at no charge to the homeowner from the sewer mainline to a point approximately two meters beyond

the curb (or sidewalk) at no charge to the property owner.

Rationale:

The current practice of soliciting PDC renewal agreements from every property owner within every sewer reconstruction project has proven to be cumbersome to administer and has had low participation rates. The proposed City funded program reduces the administrative requirement of the current program and provides a consistent approach for all property types which makes it less confusing for the property owners.

In addition, the new program provides a significant benefit to the City by reducing the risk of PDC failure underneath the new asphalt roadway. Under the current program, PDCs from the homes that do not participate in the replacement program are reburied under the new roadway. The PDCs are the same vintage as the mainline sewers being replaced (60-100 years) and are at a high risk of failing under the new roadway. Should these pipes actually collapse the newly constructed road would need to be re-excavated to make the repair or replacement. The recommended by-law changes would ensure that the all PDCs under the new road surface and sidewalks would be replaced as part of the overall infrastructure renewal project thereby potentially avoiding future pavement cuts and eventual pavement degradation of the newly constructed roadway pavement.

The financial impact of this change is estimated to be in the order of \$150,000 - \$250,000 per year; however, the change will have a corresponding overall increase in the life of the asphalt roadway. The impacts of this change is planned to be absorbed within the program funding envelope to be confirmed as part of the ongoing multi-year budget development.

Low Density Residential PDC Renewals Outside Infrastructure Renewal Projects

Currently:

When a single family, semi-detached, and duplex dwelling's PDC fails, property owners are eligible to have City Sewer Operations renew their PDC. This work is currently offered for a subsidized flat rate fee of \$5,000. All other low density residential property types, including triplex and properties up to six self-contained (six-plex) units must hire their own contractor to undertake PDC renewal.

Proposed:

It is proposed that the \$5,000 flat rate fee be extended to apply to all low-density residential properties, which will include properties with up to six self-contained units.

Rationale:

Extending the eligible properties is considered to be a more logical approach which does not discriminate between low density residential properties (for example between a duplex and a triplex). The demand for triplex to six-plex property PDC replacements is relatively small (two or less per year) so it is anticipated that extending the subsidy to these additional properties can be accommodated within the existing program's budget.

PDC Warranty

Currently:

The City currently offers a 20 year warranty when a PDC is replaced.

Proposed:

It is recommended that the current 20 year warranty be eliminated in lieu of offering a two year warranty that is standard in the construction industry.

Rationale:

Upon review of municipal comparators, no other municipality is offering a warranty

similar to the 20 year warranty offered by the City. It is therefore recommended that this warranty period be replaced with the standard two year warranty typically offered by the construction industry.

Clean Out Installation Requirements

As part of this review, the practice of requiring clean out (access to PDC for maintenance, inspection) installations was reviewed. Currently, all new residential construction requires the installation of a cleanout at property line. After review, it was determined that clean out installation shall no longer be required. Changes will be made to the City Design Standards and City Standard Contract Documents to reflect this change.

Stakeholder Consultation

During the PDC Policy review, City staff sought the feedback from multiple stakeholder groups including the plumbing community, development community, London Home Builders Association (LHBA), Urban League, and Consulting Engineers of Ontario, London Chapter to gain input and hear suggestions regarding changes to the City's current PDC Policies. The comments provided by the various stakeholders were in support of the suggested bylaw changes.

CONCLUSIONS

A number of amendments to the Drainage By-law (WM-4) and Wastewater & Stormwater By-law (WM-28) are proposed with respect to changes to the Private Drain Connection (PDC) policies and charges. These amendments are expected to be easier to understand, administer, implement, both for City staff and for property owners.

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared within the Wastewater and Drainage Engineering Division by Kyle Chambers, P. Eng., Environmental Service Engineer with assistance from Rick Pedlow, C.E.T, Division Manager, Sewer Operations Division.

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

July 15, 2019

KJC/kjc

Attach: Appendix 'A' - Diagram of Building Sewer and PDC Details
Appendix 'B' - Drainage By-law WM-4 Amendment
Appendix 'C' - Wastewater & Stormwater By-law WM-28 Amendment

c.c. Rick Pedlow