



STAFF REPORT INFORMATION ONLY

Review of City Policies Regarding Water and Sewer Service Connections for Infill New Development

Date:	June 13, 2007
To:	Public Works and Infrastructure
From:	Lou Di Gironimo, General Manager, Toronto Water
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	P:\2007\Cluster B\TW\pw07027 (AFS # 5017)

SUMMARY

This report reviews the citywide protocol for the installation of municipal service connections in new developments, including infill developments.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact arising from this report.

DECISION HISTORY

The Public Works and Infrastructure Committee requested Deputy City Manager Richard Butts, in consultation with the appropriate staff from Toronto Water, Transportation Services, Technical Services, Fire Services, and City Planning, to conduct a review of the City's policies regarding water and sewer service connections for infill new development and report to the June 27, 2007, meeting of the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee with the findings.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

After amalgamation there was a need to harmonize practices from the former municipalities related to the provision of water and sewer services to new developments. Of particular interest was the case of townhouse condominium developments. The traditional approach was to provide only one service connection per property. Therefore, condominium developments, with many different owners on one common property, would receive only one sewer and one water connection and one water meter at the property line.

The condominium developer would then distribute the water and sewer services within the development in any way they liked, provided they were compliant with the Ontario Building Code. Often, in order to save space, the services are placed in narrow lanes with very little room between water and sewer services and other utilities making it difficult in the future to maintain and rehabilitate all the services. Each homeowner's costs for water consumption and sewer use would typically be incorporated into their annual condominium maintenance fees and would not relate to their actual water consumption.

However, experience has shown that there are a number of concerns with this approach:

(1) Water Conservation and Efficiency:

Since unit owners do not pay for the actual amount of water that they consume, there is no incentive for them to use water wisely. In order to promote water conservation, it is necessary to have as many water consumers as possible pay directly for the water they actually use. Therefore, the City requires all grade related residential units that front onto a City street to have their own individual water and sewer service connection, with an individual water meter.

(2) Maintenance of Infrastructure:

Some condominium corporations are not able or do not want to maintain the water and sewer systems that they are legally responsible for. The unit owners pay similar taxes and water rates as everyone else, so they feel that they should be entitled to have the City repair and maintain the common portion of their private system. Therefore, in order to minimize the amount of shared, privately owned, water and sewer infrastructure, the City requires all grade related residential units that front onto a City street to have their own individual water and sewer service connections.

(3) Water Quality:

As noted above, some condominium corporations are unable to properly maintain their water systems. As a result, proper maintenance may not be carried out which in turn may jeopardize water quality. Therefore, it is in the property owners' interests to have individual private water and sewer connections directly to a City owned facility to the greatest extent possible.

A harmonized Water Supply By-law has been under development by Toronto Water with significant input from other City divisions. Public meetings are being held throughout the City to receive comments on the draft by-law which will be forwarded to Council for review later this year. The new Water Supply By-law will better regulate how properties are connected to watermains and how they are metered.

COMMENTS

Since March 1, 2006, Toronto Water and Development Engineering staff have harmonized their requirements for water and sewer service connections such that, where units have a footprint on the ground, have no other units above or below them, and front onto a public street they shall have an individual connection to the public water and

sewer main within the adjacent public street. Each water service connection will be individually metered.

The above policies were formalized with Development Engineering in consultation with Toronto Water and Legal Services into a Staff Directive to provide a consistent approach to all applicants for water and sewer service connections across the City. This Directive is consistent with what the revised Water Supply By-law will be requiring.

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SIGNATURE

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