

## **Ridgewood Road Sanitary Sewer Update**

Date: May 13, 2024

To: Infrastructure and Environment Committee

From: General Manager, Toronto Water

Wards: Ward 25 - Scarborough-Rouge Park

### **SUMMARY**

---

The purpose of this report is to provide Infrastructure and Environment Committee with updated cost estimates and project information associated with the potential construction of a sanitary sewer on Ridgewood Road, the costs for which would be recovered from property owners through a local improvement charge.

Road reconstruction and new sidewalk construction is planned on Ridgewood Road, with construction anticipated to begin in 2026. Although delivering the proposed sewer with the road reconstruction and new sidewalk could provide some cost and construction coordination benefits, bundling the two projects would result in the 2026 construction start being delayed to accommodate potential sewer design work.

At its meeting on March 20 and 21, 2024, City Council directed the City Manager to consult with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on the feasibility of amending Ontario Regulation 596/06 under the City of Toronto Act (the "Regulation") and to make any other legislative or regulatory amendments to allow the City to impose local improvement charges using different methods from those set out in the Regulation for the construction of the Ridgewood Road sewer.

Toronto Water, in collaboration with the City Manager's Office, has initiated consultation and been informed that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing is currently analysing the City's request. Staff will provide an update on the conclusion of consultations with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing at an upcoming Infrastructure and Environment Committee meeting. It is expected that the time required for regulation amendments will exceed the timelines needed to coordinate the proposed sanitary sewer work with the scheduled road and sidewalk work.

The road reconstruction and new sidewalk work for Ridgewood Road should proceed as planned without bundling with the potential sanitary sewer project until such time that staff can confirm the use of an amended local improvement charge method to fund the sewer work.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

---

The General Manager, Toronto Water, recommends that:

1. Infrastructure and Environment Committee receives this report for information.

## FINANCIAL IMPACT

---

There is no financial impact from the adoption of the recommendation in this staff report.

Upon completion of the consultation with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, staff will report back on the outcomes, including associated financial impacts, if any.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

## DECISION HISTORY

---

On March 20 and 21, 2024, City Council requested the City Manager consult with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and report back to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee on the feasibility of amending Ontario Regulation 596/06 under the City of Toronto Act, and making any other legislative or regulatory amendments as may be required, in order to allow for the installation of a City-owned sanitary sewer on Ridgewood Road as a local improvement, and allow the City to impose local improvement charges using different methods including the City constructing and funding the improvement and property owners connection when the property changes owners, when the septic system is at the end of its life and/or is to be replaced, and other flexible options that allow the City to construct the sewer and recover cost from property owners over time. Link:

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.IE11.9>

On May 11, 2022, City Council directed the General Manager, Toronto Water, to undertake the preliminary engineering design of a new sanitary sewer on Ridgewood Road for the benefit of certain local residents on Ridgewood Road in Ward 25, Scarborough-Rouge Park, funded from the 2022 Approved Capital Budget and 2023-2031 Approved Capital Plan for Toronto Water. Link:

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.IE29.7>

## COMMENTS

---

### Ridgewood Road Servicing and Location

Ridgewood Road is located in southeast Scarborough, in Ward 25. Approximately 60 properties on Ridgewood Road are serviced by septic tanks because municipal sanitary sewer does not exist to service these properties. A map of the location of Ridgewood Road is included in Attachment 1.

Some of the residents serviced by private septic tanks have expressed to their Councillor an interest in having a new sanitary sewer constructed on Ridgewood Road. Toronto Water does not have funding in its capital plan to construct a new sanitary sewer on Ridgewood Road. Requests for servicing of this nature, from residents on private water or sewage systems in Ontario are typically funded through local improvement charges.

## **Local Improvement Charge**

A local improvement is infrastructure that is constructed to benefit a specific group of properties and is paid for, at least in part, by the owners of those properties through a local improvement charge. The actual cost of the improvement is shared among the benefiting properties through a local improvement charge levied by the municipality to recoup the costs of the improvement constructed.

Local improvement charges are governed by Ontario Regulation 596/06 under the City of Toronto Act, 2006 (the "Regulation"). If the City has authority to undertake a work, it may seek to undertake that work as a local improvement in accordance with the Regulation, which sets out the requirements and procedures to be followed. Eligible works include works for the collection, transmission, treatment, or disposal of sewage. By undertaking a work as a local improvement, the City can raise all or any part of the cost of the work through the imposition of local improvement charges on lots that abut the work or immediately benefit from it. Local improvement charges are levied per metre of frontage. The cost of the work may include engineering costs.

The Regulation requires that the City give notice to the public and to the owners of the benefitting properties of its intention to undertake a local improvement. Petitions may be filed with the City in favour of or against undertaking the local improvement. If, within 30 days of providing notice, the City receives a petition opposing the local improvement that meets the sufficiency test of the Regulation (signed by a majority of the owners representing at least one-half of the value of the lots liable to be specially charged for the work), the City is prohibited from undertaking the local improvement for at least two years, unless it obtains the approval of the Ontario Land Tribunal, or receives a sufficient petition (a higher threshold of owners as set out in the Regulation) in favour of undertaking the local improvement. If no petition against is received, the City can pass a by-law undertaking the local improvement; however, various additional steps are prescribed by the Regulation prior to imposing the special charge.

## **Ridgewood Road Sanitary Sewer Preliminary Design and Cost Estimate**

In 2022, City Council directed the General Manager of Toronto Water to undertake the preliminary design of a sanitary sewer on Ridgewood Road. At that time, the estimated cost of the sanitary sewer was approximately \$3.55 million. The purpose of the preliminary design was to properly scope the project, identify feasibility and construction considerations, and develop an updated cost estimate. Per Council direction, the cost of \$200,000 to complete the preliminary design was captured by Toronto Water's rate

budget and would be included in the local improvement charge should the project proceed.

Toronto Water retained a design consultant who completed the preliminary design in 2023. The preliminary design recommended a scope consisting of 837 m of new 250 mm diameter PVC sanitary sewer, complete with maintenance holes and laterals, to be installed through open cut construction. Sixty properties would be connected to the new sewer.

The estimated construction cost for the project, including contingency and allowances, is \$3.722 million, excluding HST. After including detailed design costs and the preliminary design, both of which would be captured by a local improvement charge, the total cost estimate for the Ridgewood Road sanitary sewer project is \$4.3 million excluding HST (approximately \$4.9 million including HST).

Local improvement costs are divided based on property frontage. Because the project would benefit 60 properties, the average cost per property would be approximately \$81,000. Property frontages on Ridgewood Road vary from approximately 15.2 m to 41.1 m (50 ft to 135 ft), and the cost for each property owner would vary, with larger frontages paying a higher proportion of the project cost.

The cost estimate includes the construction of the sewer and laterals to the property line. The cost to install the sewer lateral on private property from the house to the property line and connect is the responsibility of the property owner and is not included in this cost estimate.

## **Road Reconstruction and Sidewalk Installation**

Transportation Services staff have advised that road reconstruction and new sidewalk construction is planned on Ridgewood Road, from 350 m west of Starspray Boulevard to East Avenue. This work is included within the approved 2024-2033 Capital Budget and Plan for Transportation Services. This work is not considered a local improvement.

The road reconstruction is planned based on the condition of the roadway surface and pavement structure. This portion of Ridgewood Road has a rural road cross-section, consisting of a 6.1 m wide paved surface, narrow intermittent gravel shoulders and ditches. As part of the City's overall capital works program development and coordination process, the need for a new sidewalk connection was also identified. It is City policy that sidewalks shall be installed where they are missing, on one or both sides of local roads as part of road reconstruction.

In late 2024, Transportation Services staff plan to initiate the preliminary design of the new sidewalk and give residents along Ridgewood Road the opportunity to provide input on the proposed design. Transportation Services staff will evaluate designs that minimize impacts on adjacent properties, trees and utilities and adjust the design based on public feedback. A community consultation plan, which could include a mailed notice, a virtual or in person meeting and/or a site walk with interested residents, will be developed in partnership with the Councillor's office.

Although delivering the proposed sewer with the road reconstruction and new sidewalk could provide some cost and construction coordination benefits, bundling the projects would result in a delay of the road and new sidewalk construction to accommodate sewer design work.

### **Consultation with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on the Feasibility of Amending Ontario Regulation 596/06 under the City of Toronto Act**

City Council requested the City Manager's Office to consult with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on the feasibility of amending the Regulation to allow for the installation of a City-owned sanitary sewer on Ridgewood Road as a local improvement, and allow the City to impose local improvement charges in a more flexible manner not currently allowed under the Regulation.

Discussions with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing have been initiated by the City Manager's Office and Toronto Water. The Ministry has confirmed that the City's request is under review, however the time required for the analysis and consultation associated with the regulatory amendment process are expected to extend beyond the timelines necessary to bundle the proposed sanitary sewer work with the planned road and sidewalk work.

The road reconstruction and new sidewalk work for Ridgewood Road should proceed as planned without bundling to the potential sanitary sewer project.

Toronto Water will provide an update on the outcome of consultations with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing regarding changes to the Regulation at a future meeting of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee.

### **CONTACT**

---

Kevin Tudhope, Manager, Water Infrastructure Management, Toronto Water,  
Telephone: 416-338-2819, E-mail: [Kevin.Tudhope@toronto.ca](mailto:Kevin.Tudhope@toronto.ca)

Jacquelyn Hayward, Director, Planning, Design & Management, Transportation Services, Telephone: 416-392-5348, E-mail: [Jacquelyn.Hayward@toronto.ca](mailto:Jacquelyn.Hayward@toronto.ca)

### **SIGNATURE**

---

Lou Di Gironimo  
General Manager, Toronto Water

## ATTACHMENT 1

### Ridgewood Road Map

