

Fairbank-Silverthorn Storm Trunk Sewer System

Newsletter Issue 3, 2025



Tunnel Boring Machine after being extracted from the Bicknell Avenue and Nashville Avenue Shaft upon completion of tunneling (October 2024)

Overview

Since 2021, the City of Toronto's work on a new storm sewer system in the Fairbank-Silverthorn area continues to move forward. This large, complex project will reduce the risk of basement flooding for more than 4,600 homes by collecting and moving stormwater (rain and melted snow) away from the area and toward Black Creek.

The project involves three important infrastructure improvements:

1. Construction of a large storm tunnel (also known as a trunk sewer) that will receive stormwater from the new local storm sewers and transport it from the Fairbank-Silverthorn area to Black Creek. The large capacity of the trunk sewer will allow it to temporarily store stormwater during significant rain events.
2. Installation of new local storm sewers (also known as storm collector sewers) to collect stormwater from local roads through catch basins.
3. Installation of approximately 330 inlet control devices (ICDs) to help manage the rate at which stormwater enters the existing combined sewer system through catch basins.

Project Milestones

Main Trunk Sewer Completed

In October 2024, the project reached one of its most important milestones: the construction of the 2.4km tunnel from Fairbank Memorial Park to the connection point to Black Creek has finished. While the tunnel requires further construction of its final components before being placed into service later in 2025, this major piece of infrastructure, once in-service, will collect, store and carry stormwater away from homes that have long faced the risk of basement flooding.

The tunnel is central to the entire system. At 2.4 kilometres long and 4.5 metres in diameter, it is large in scale and technically complex. Built up to a depth of 40 metres underground, it was excavated using an 80-metre-long tunnel boring machine (TBM) that advanced at a rate of 8 to 10 metres per day, while also installing precast concrete lining to form the tunnel walls.

In May 2023, the TBM began its journey at Fairbank Memorial Park. After tunneling for 2.4 kilometres, it was extracted at the final shaft near Bicknell Avenue and Nashville Avenue in October 2024. Along the way, 20 shafts were constructed to support tunnelling and future connections to new local sewers.

Restoration of shaft sites is underway now with all sites anticipated to be restored by September 2025. Once full restoration of all shaft sites is complete, the tunnel will be commissioned for operation.

Once in operation, the tunnel will help manage stormwater during heavy rain by providing temporary underground storage and conveying flow to Black Creek. This will ease pressure on the existing sewer system and support flood protection for more than 4,600 homes in the Fairbank–Silverthorn area.



Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) – Breakthrough at Bicknell and Nashville Avenue after 2.4 km of tunneling (October 2024)

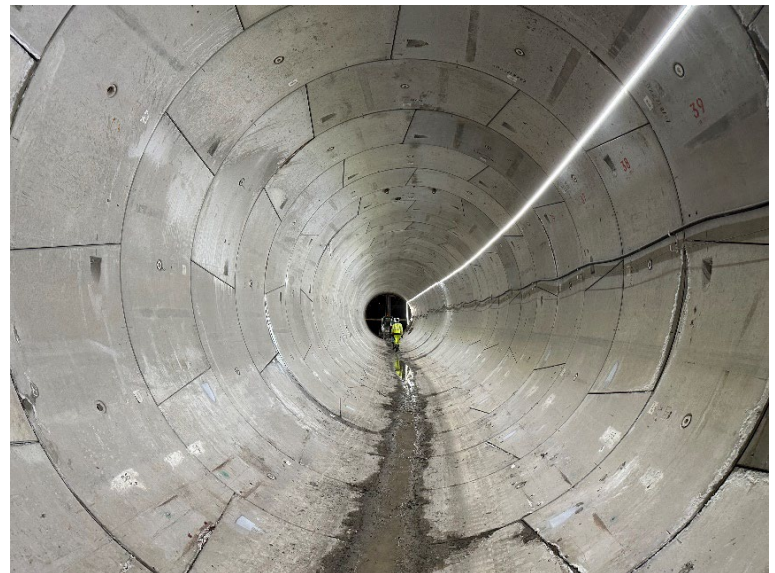


Photo of final inspection of the completed Main Trunk Sewer Tunnel (March 2025)



Extraction of the TBM from the Bicknell Avenue and Nashville Avenue shaft (October 2024)

Contract 2 – Shaft Sites

The 20 planned shaft sites under Contract 2 have all been constructed. As of July 2025, 18 of those shaft sites have been fully restored, including Eglinton-Gilbert Parkette, which was fully restored and reopened in late spring 2025. Final restoration work is ongoing at the two remaining shaft sites at Bert Robinson Park and Fairbank Memorial Park. This work is expected to be completed by September 2025.

Contracts 3 and 4 – New Construction Underway

The final two contracts for this project, Contracts 3 and 4, began construction in January 2025. As of now, approximately 0.8 kilometres of a total 15.6 kilometres of new sewer pipes have been installed. In addition to sewer work, crews are also replacing aging watermains and upgrading substandard water service connections. To date, approximately 1.4 kilometres of aging watermains have been replaced under the State of Good Repair Program, and 70 substandard water services have been upgraded.

Current and Ongoing Work

Restoration of Fairbank Memorial Park and Bert Robinson Park (Contract 2)

Restoration efforts have begun at Fairbank Memorial Park and Bert Robinson Park, with partial reopening anticipated for late 2025. A portion of the park will be restored with new grading, sodding, and plantings. The full restoration of the parks is anticipated to be completed by mid-2026, after a crucial connection between the local sewers to the main tunnel is completed.



Ongoing construction of final components of the main tunnel at Bert Robinson Park (July 2025)



Partial restoration underway at Fairbank Memorial Park (July 2025)



Completed restoration of Eglinton-Gilbert Parkette (March 2025)

Local Collector Sewers (Contracts 3 and 4)

Construction of new local storm collector sewers is now underway in Wards 5, 8, 9 and 12. Contractors are working in these areas to install new stormwater infrastructure, upgrade existing sewers and replace aging watermain in the City's right-of-way.

Ward 5 and Ward 8 (Contract 3)

In Ward 8, current sewer construction work is focused near Caledonia Road and Castlefield Avenue, and will move next to Bowie Avenue. These new sewers will begin carrying stormwater once the main trunk sewer is operational in September 2025.

Most of the construction in Ward 8 will take place over the next year, including a critical connection to the trunk sewer along Eglinton Avenue West. Afterwards, focus will shift to the Silverthorn Neighbourhood in Ward 5.

Ward 9 and Ward 12 (Contract 4)

Construction is currently centered around Oakwood Avenue and Rogers Road, the Holmesdale and Harvie Avenue areas, and streets surrounding Fairbank Memorial Park. Over the next 12 months, preparation will begin for large-scale microtunnelling between Holmesdale Road and Westmount Avenue, as well as in the area northeast of Fairbank Memorial Park.

As with Contract 3, the new local sewers under Contract 4 will be put into service after the main trunk sewer becomes operational in September 2025.



Left: Installation of local storm sewers (March 2025)

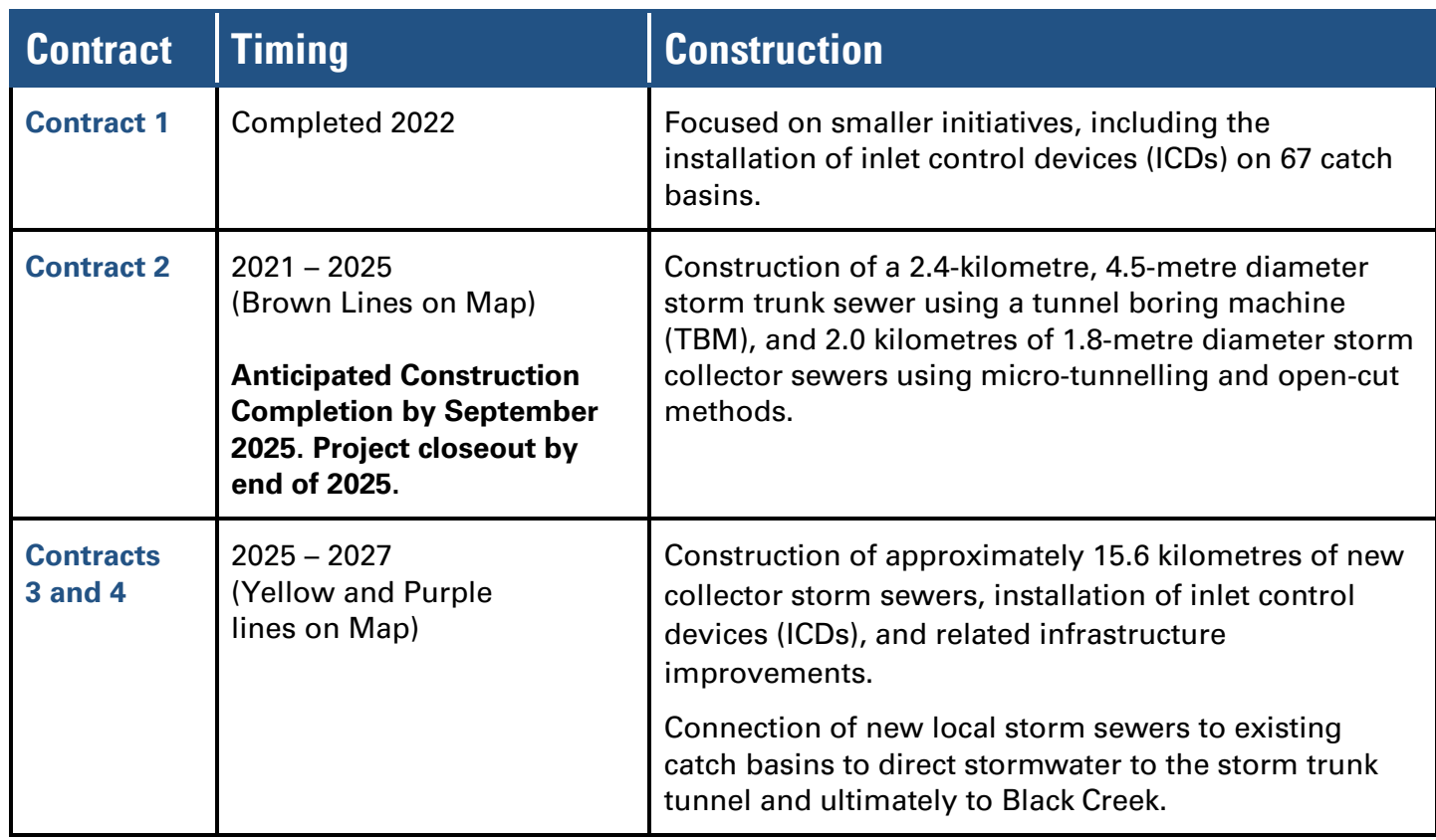
Right: Photo of watermain replacement (March 2025)



Left: Installation of High Capacity catch basin at Glenholme Avenue (March 2025)

Right: Completed installation of catch basin (April 2025)

Construction work is being delivered through multiple construction contracts due to different construction techniques and the large size of the project.



What This Project Means for Your Neighbourhood

How it works

The current sewer system in many parts of the Fairbank–Silverthorn area is combined, meaning it handles both stormwater (rain and melted snow) and wastewater. During storms, this can cause the system to become overwhelmed, resulting in basement and surface flooding.

New storm sewers will separate stormwater from the combined system, allowing it to flow through new sewer pipes into the main storm tunnel and then to Black Creek. In locations not receiving new storm sewers and the combined sewer system remains, inlet control devices (ICDs) are being installed on select catch basins to slow the flow of stormwater into the combined sewer during heavy rainfall, and allow more of the road to be used to drain stormwater to areas with enhanced infrastructure. These improvements will reduce pressure on the existing sewer system and lower the risk of flooding.



Completed restoration of Eglinton-Gilbert Parkette (July 2025)

The City's most extensive basement flooding project to date

This is the City of Toronto's most extensive initiative to address basement flooding to date. The total construction cost is estimated at \$380 million. The Government of Canada is contributing \$73.2 million through the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund, while the City is funding the remaining approximately \$306.8 million.

Investing in Canada
#fedinvest



Construction Impacts

Building this new storm sewer system is a major undertaking, and construction is affecting streets, traffic and access in some areas. The work is necessary to ensure the longevity of our communities, but we understand that it is disruptive, and we recognize the inconvenience it causes. Thank you for your continued patience as this important infrastructure project moves forward.

Maintaining Key Services

In active construction areas, contractors will be responsible for snow-clearing services. If waste or garbage cannot be collected from the front of your property, contractors will relocate garbage, recycling and organic waste bins for pick-up, and return the bins at the end of the day. Households should label their bins.

Access

Access to properties will be maintained by constructing temporary walkways. Additional illumination will be provided to improve visibility, as required. If you plan to move or have major deliveries, you can reach out in advance for coordination with the construction team. The contact information is provided below.



Restoration at Nashville and Bicknell Avenue near completion (July 2025)

Emergency Services

Emergency Services will continue to serve all properties at all times. Toronto Police Service, Fire Services and Paramedic Services have been informed of the ongoing construction work. Fire Services staff regularly conduct site walks with the construction team to ensure that their services are not impacted and access to hydrants is maintained. Paramedic Services have confirmed that a temporary walkway is sufficient to maintain their services.

Community Meeting

A community information meeting was held in October 2024 to provide updates on the Fairbank–Silverthorn Storm Trunk Sewer project and answer questions from residents. The project team shared progress updates, upcoming construction plans, and details about how the work will help reduce basement flooding in the area. For anyone who couldn't attend, presentation materials and a summary of the meeting are available online at toronto.ca/Fairbank.

Contact Us

If you have suggestions and questions related to the project, please reach out:

Shakha Vasdani, Field Ambassador

Email: fairbanksewer@toronto.ca

Phone: 416-338-5497

Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Hearing-Impaired Service: Dial 7-1-1

General Inquiries: Please call 3-1-1

Project Website: www.toronto.ca/fairbank

