



Subject: Storm Sewer Rate Report

To: Council

From: Public Works Department

Report Number: 2021-134

Meeting Date: April 26, 2021

Recommendation:

That Public Works Department Report 2021-134 be received;

That the 2021 Storm Sewer Rates as set out in page 3 of Public Works Department Report 2021-134, be approved; and

That Council approve moving forward with Option 3 as set out in Appendix B to Public Works Department Report 2021-134.

Purpose:

During the March 11, 2021 meeting, Council referred the Storm Sewer Rates to the Director of Public Works to investigate while utilizing the City's Official Plan Urban Service Mapping.

The purpose of this report is to present the proposed 2021 Storm rates to Council for approval and provide an update to Council Report 2021-84.

Background:

In 2019, Council approved a Storm Sewer fee that applies to all properties in the Stormwater Boundary. This boundary refers to properties which utilize the Storm Sewer System including storm sewer piping, ditches and municipal drains that work as one interconnected system to convey stormwater to outlets at the Welland canal and Lake Erie. This Storm Sewer boundary is located mainly within the Urban Area Boundary as defined in the City's Official Plan. Further illustrations have been included as Appendices to this Report.

An effective Storm Sewer system can help reduce inflow and infiltration (I&I) in the wastewater system. There have been some questions brought forward regarding properties that are within the Stormwater Boundary that do not have piping infrastructure directly adjacent to properties. There are, however, surface drainage sloping, ditches or municipal drains that direct flow away from these properties and ultimately discharge by outlets to the Lake. This report provides Council with billing options to consider for these properties to help clarify any confusion. These options are included in Appendix B.

Staff note that all properties within the Stormwater Boundary benefit from the system and for this reason it is recommended every property within the boundary contribute to the cost of managing storm water. To this point, staff have also recommended all properties that contribute storm water to a drainage ditch that is in the Stormwater boundary should not be charged for the ditch and instead those costs should be borne by the Storm Sewer fee as both systems work together to provide relief from stormwater.

Discussion:

The storm sewer rate is a fixed rate charge. In this respect, the increase over 2020 actuals proposed in Rate Budgets, Report 2021-84 result in a 10% increase in rates. The most notable expense in that budget is the 64% borrowing cost for the Nickel Storm Sewer. A single-family property will experience a \$10.50 increase as a result. The 2021 proposed rates are as follows:

Property Description	Flat Fee per Year
	2021
Single Family Properties	\$ 115.50
Multi-Residential 2 to 5 Units	\$ 202.13
Multi-Residential 6 to 9 Units	\$ 259.88
Institutional / Multi Res > 10 Units	\$ 317.63
Small Commerical	\$ 202.13
Medium Commerical	\$ 259.88
Large Commercial	\$ 317.63
Light Industrial	\$ 433.13
Heavy Industrial	\$ 548.63
City Owned	\$ 259.88
CNPI Owned	\$ 259.88
Hydro One Owned	\$ 259.88
Niagara Peninsula Housing	\$ 317.63
Niagara Region	\$ 259.88
Niagara Regional Housing	\$ 317.63
Transport Canada Owned	\$ 259.88
MTO Owned	\$ 259.88

The comparison of 2020 to the proposed 2021 Fees are included in Appendix A. As noted earlier in the report, staff have reviewed the conditions of the Storm Sewer Charge and recommend the following:

1. All properties within the Stormwater boundary are charged the storm sewer rates
2. All properties on municipal drains within the Stormwater boundary will have those costs covered by the Storm Sewer fee

These recommendations are made after reviewing how this fee came about and recognizing one of the founding concepts was to try to keep the program simple. Further, it recognized the drains, ditches and storm sewers do have connectivity and work together to remove stormwater from properties within the City's Urban Area Boundary and more specifically within the Stormwater Boundary.

While staff have recommended the above option, other options for Council to consider are included in Appendix B.

Financial Implications:

Financial Services identifies the proposed 2021 storm sewer rates are a staff recommendation which Council can adjust, if required.

Conclusion:

Staff are recommending that the 2021 storm sewer rates as recommended in this report be approved.

In making this recommendation staff acknowledge these budgets continue to be underfunded in terms of capital investments. Once staff have completed the planned infrastructure needs assessment further, discussion on capital funding, which may include any available grant programs, will be required.

Appendices:

- a. Storm Sewer Rates
- b. Options for Storm Sewer and Municipal Drain Rates Charged to Properties
- c. Mapping Illustrating the Urban Area Boundary and the Stormwater Boundary

Respectfully submitted,

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Report Approval:

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final approval is by the Chief Administrative Officer.