



INTRODUCTION

This newsletter is part of a series of communications from the Public Works Department intended to inform residents of projects *in the works*. This issue is addressed to property owners in Teeswater & Formosa to provide a progress update on the sanitary sewer project.

If you have any questions or comments concerning any of the issues presented in this newsletter, or anything else related to the sewer project please feel free to call me or drop by.

Kind Regards,

Sharon Chambers

Manager of Operations

TEESWATER & FORMOSA SEWER PROJECT: Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is the project going ahead?

A: Yes. The Municipality has received 13.1 million dollars in funding under the Build Canada Fund. This represents 2/3 of the estimated project costs at the time of the funding application which was approximately 20 million dollars. The Municipality has applied for funding to complete the project under three separate intakes of the Canada Ontario Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (COMRIF 1, 2 and 3), before finally being successful under the first intake of the Build Canada Fund. The unprecedented amount of infrastructure funding which has been distributed over the past couple of years has been part of a government initiative to create jobs in a down economy. It is felt that funding awards of this magnitude will not be seen again for many years, if ever. South Bruce is fortunate to have acquired this funding and Council is committed to moving forward with this project while we have the funding in hand.

Q: When will the system be constructed?

A: At this time, it is anticipated that the project will be ready to tender in the Fall of 2010, with construction beginning in the Spring of 2011. The work will be divided into three separate contracts: Sewage Treatment Plant and Pumping Stations; Teeswater Collection System; and Formosa Collection System. Barring any major setbacks, the Municipality anticipates that the system will be commissioned and service connections will take place in 2012.

Q: Why do we need sewers?

A: This has been a subject of debate in the communities of Teeswater and Formosa for more than 30 years. Many residents have expressed their support in moving forward with this project. On the other side, there are people who believe that sewers are not needed. A decision to install sewers in Teeswater was overturned in the 1970's, when 85% funding was available. Similarly, the Township of Culross and the Village of Mildmay carried out a feasibility study in 1992 to investigate the installation of a sewage collection system in Formosa, with treatment occurring at the Mildmay Sewage Treatment Plant. This proposal was also turned down due to a core of public opposition.

More recently, in May of 2004, Henderson Paddon and Associates (now Genivar Consultants) completed an Environmental Study Report (ESR) which evaluated alternative sewage collection and treatment solutions for Teeswater and Formosa, with the preferred solution being to provide sanitary sewers in Teeswater and Formosa and build a common sewage treatment plant located on municipal property east of Teeswater.

Aside from economic considerations, the Municipality must also consider a responsibility toward environmental sustainability.

In 2005, a survey of 125 on-site sewage systems was completed for residences and businesses in Teeswater, in addition to a survey of 110 private groundwater wells and on-site sewage systems in Formosa. The study found that almost 65% of properties in Teeswater, and 75% of properties in Formosa have sewage systems that have exceeded their life expectancy. In Teeswater 33.6% of properties and in Formosa 23.6% of properties have insufficient area for a proper Class IV (leaching bed) sewage system.

The survey included two rounds of water sampling of private wells in Formosa. In Round 1, 24.8% of wells tested above the Maximum Allowable Concentration (MAC) for Total Coliform and 2.8% tested above the MAC for E.Coli. In Round 2, 21.1% of samples exceeded the MAC for Total Coliforms, 0.9% exceeded the MAC for E.Coli.

During the survey, several Teeswater property owners complained of sewage odours emanating from the storm sewers along Clinton Street. In 2003, stormwater samples were collected from storm sewers in Teeswater and Formosa. E.Coli counts as high as 20,000 counts/100 mL were found at a sampling point located at the corner of Elora and Clinton Streets which receives storm drainage from the southern portion of Teeswater. In Formosa, the highest E.Coli count of 4,400 counts/100mL was found in the storm sewer behind the Formosa Community Centre. In both Teeswater and Formosa, Total Coliform was present at various sampling locations. The study concluded that "these results point to possible contamination of stormwater from septic tank discharges and the need for a proper long-term sewage solution for both communities."

For more information on the water/sewer reports highlighted in this newsletter please visit our website at www.town.southbruce.on.ca (Public Works - Water/Sewer Reports - downloads).



TEESWATER & FORMOSA SEWER PROJECT: Frequently Asked Questions Cont.

Q: My septic system is still working well. Do I have to hook on to the sewers?

A: Yes. The Municipality intends to pass a By-law to regulate the management of the sewage works (Sewer Management By-law), which will include a mandatory requirement for all buildable lots within the project area to install a sewer service, and all buildings to be connected to the sewage works.

Q: What will I have to do with my septic system once I'm hooked up to the sewers?

A: The Sewer Management By-law will also contain a provision describing the process for decommissioning septic systems within a specified period after the sewer connection has been completed. The Municipality will inspect the septic decommissioning to ensure that it has been completed in accordance with the By-law.

Q: Do I have to hook onto the system right away?

A: The Sewer Management By-law will stipulate the length of time which will be given to landowners to connect to the system. This matter will be reviewed by Council, and they will have to decide upon an appropriate length of time to allow landowners to complete their sewer connections.

Q: Will there be a public meeting?

A: Yes. In May of 2004, Henderson Paddon and Associates (now Genivar Consultants) completed a Municipal Engineers Association Class Environmental Assessment (MEA Class EA) which evaluated alternative sewage collection and treatment solutions for Teeswater and Formosa. At that time, an EA had an expiration period of 5 years. The Municipality will apply for an extension of the EA, which is called an "addendum". Having a public meeting will be a requirement in order to receive an addendum to the EA.

With that being said, the Municipality would also like to hold a public meeting to keep the public informed on the progress of the project. Naturally, residents will have many questions about the project that they want answered. We ask for your patience while we continue to work out the project details in preparation for the public meeting. In the meantime, we will keep you informed through newsletters, such as this.

Q: Will the Municipality install the sewer line right to my house?

A: No. For public utilities such as water and sewer, Municipalities are responsible for installing the sewage collection system up to the property line. Landowners will be responsible for installing, operating, maintaining, repairing and replacing all private sewer laterals and appurtenances from the property line to the buildings.

Q: Can I get any contractor to hook up my sewer service?

A: The Municipality is currently investigating a process to coordinate the installation of private sewer laterals so that connection to the sewer system can be done in an orderly and efficient manner. A meeting was held with local contractors on July 14th to obtain their input into the process. Further information will follow.

Q: I have been told that I'm going to have a grinder pump at my house. When will I receive more information about how the grinder pump works?

A: Approximately 157 properties in Formosa and 59 properties in Teeswater will require a grinder pump which will typically be located in a small underground tank near the existing outlet to the septic tank. The pump and tank will come as a single unit and the initial cost will be included in the one-time connection fee levied to all serviced properties. Specific information meetings for residents with grinder pumps will be planned to discuss the operation and maintenance of the pumps.

Q: Do I have to service my vacant lot?

A: Yes. Although Council has not adopted official policies to this effect, the project is being planned with the intent to require all "buildable" lots to be serviced during the initial construction of the sewage works. This will ensure that the cost to construct the system will be shared by all property owners within the project area who have the potential to connect to the system.

Q: How much is it going to cost?

A: This is likely the "# 1" question on everyone's mind. Unfortunately, we don't have the answer yet! There are many factors involved which will affect the end cost per connection. The participation of local industry will have a major impact on project design. Discussions with local industry are ongoing. When that piece of the puzzle has been put in place, the project design can be finalized. When the project design is finished, approvals have been obtained, and the EA addendum is complete, the Municipality will be ready to tender the project. When the design is complete, a pre-tender estimate will be prepared, however we will have a better idea of total project costs after the project has been tendered and bids have been received.

Q: Will I have to pay for the connection fees right away?

A: No. It will be the option of each homeowner to either pay the connection fees up front, or it can be financed and paid in installments on the tax bill over a period of time. The Treasury Department is investigating financing options, and Council will have to make a decision about the length of the repayment term.