



Staff Report

Legal Services & Operations

Report To: Committee of the Whole Meeting
Meeting Date: March 29, 2022
Report Number: FAF.22.068
Title: Flood Relief and Inflow and Infiltration Program
Prepared by: Will Thomson, Director of Legal Services
Shawn Carey, Director of Operations

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.22.068, entitled "Flood Relief and Inflow and Infiltration Program";

AND THAT Council direct Staff to provide up to \$20,000.00 in relief funds to affected residents who were displaced by sewage backup flooding related to the September 21, 2021, rain event, in accordance with this Staff Report.

AND THAT Council direct Staff to develop an inflow and infiltration reduction and rebate strategy and program as set out in this Staff Report.

B. Overview

This Report will set out options and plan to provide some direct relief to residents who were impacted by the September 21, 2021, flood event and also begin developing a program which can assist residents in implementing inflow and infiltration measures on their private property to help mitigate against the risk of future floods and/ or back-ups.

C. Background

On September 21, 2021, the Town was hit with a 100+ year storm event which produced an unprecedented level of rainfall within the Town in a very short time. As a result, the ground, waterways, ditches, creeks, rivers, ponds, and wetlands absorbed an extraordinary amount of water.

During this rainfall event, some residences within the Town experienced back-up of their sewage systems and suffered damage and/or displacement as a result.

While the Town maintains that it is not liable or responsible for this flooding event or any ensuing damages, the Town also recognizes that residents suffered possible displacement and damages because of this extraordinary rainfall event. Therefore, Staff recommend that Council

establish a *Resident Relief Fund* which can provide compensation to residents for costs related to displacement because of sewage backup.

Furthermore, Staff believe that an incentive program to assist residents in implementing infiltration and inflow mitigation measures on their private properties can help reduce the risk of future flooding and reduce the overall impact of public and private storm and sewer infrastructure alike.

D. Analysis

This section should include the analysis that led to the recommendation, including an analysis of the risks of following through (or not) with the recommendation. **Resident Relief Program**

Staff are seeking Council's direction to allocate \$20,000.00 and authorize Staff to disburse these funds to residents who (via an application form/process) can establish that they were impacted and displaced by the flood event.

To facilitate this program, Staff recommend the following terms & process:

- That any person interested in applying for relief advise the Town by email to claims@thebluemountains.ca on or before April 18, 2022.
- After April 18, 2022, no further inquiries will be accepted, and an application form will be distributed (by email) to those who advised the Town of their interest in applying.
- Residents can expect the application to require (among other things) the following:
 - o Evidence that their residence suffered from sewage flooding as a direct result of the September 2021 flood event;
 - o Proof that they were displaced from their residence as a direct result of the sewage flooding; and,
 - o Confirmation and proof of the costs directly attributable to said displacement.
- Staff will evaluate applications on a first come, first serve basis (based on when complete applications are received by the Town) and may approve and distribute up to \$1,500.00 per household for displacement costs upon the submission of a satisfactory application.
- Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.
- Staff will not approve any applications (based on a first come first serve basis) after the available funds have been exhausted.

This will be a one-time offer of relief to assist those impacted by an extraordinary weather event. The Town continues to maintain that it is not responsible for any damages, and any payments made under this program are strictly a without prejudice and good-faith effort to assist impacted residents.

Infiltration and Inflow Program

The Town's sewer system is comprised of two parts: storm sewers and sanitary sewers. Storm sewers collect stormwater such as excess water from rainfall, snowmelt or run off and properly manage it before discharging it to lakes and streams. Sanitary sewers carry wastewater to treatment plants for processing before returning to the environment.

Inflow and infiltration is the term used when water that should be entering the storm sewer makes its way into a sanitary sewer. Inflow happens when stormwater enters the sewage system through sump pumps or downspouts still connected to the sewage system instead of the storm sewer. Infiltration happens when water or groundwater from beneath the earth's surface enters the sewage system through damage or defects such as holes and cracks in manholes and sewer pipes.

Inflow and infiltration is an issue because it reduces the capacity of the sewage system leaving less water for existing residents and future population growth. It can also make sewage treatment less efficient as the sewage is diluted by water. This may increase the cost to residents because sewage treatment plants will then be required to treat a higher volume of flow. Inflow and infiltration may also cause sewage overflows and backups.

Managing stormwater is a large concern for municipalities especially as extreme rainfall events continue to become more frequent and intense and mid-winter snowmelts become more common place. Increased rainfall and significant wet weather events can be taxing on a municipal sanitary sewage collection system and its ability to effectively pump, store and treat wastewater. The impacts of this increased rainfall are compounded by the fact the many residents have downspouts or sump pump/floor drains that are illegally connected to the sanitary system. These systems discharge directly into the wastewater collection system and can cause sewage back up during extreme rainfall or wet weather events.

In response to these changing conditions and the need to find solutions to addressing inflow and infiltration the Town is undertaking a number of capital projects designed to reduce and fix leaky infrastructure. In addition, Staff are in the process of developing an Inflow and Infiltration Reduction Strategy that will include specific measure to address this issue. A vital component of the Strategy will be the inclusion of a proposed program that provides rebates to qualifying Town residents for disconnecting illegal downspouts, sump pumps and foundation connects to the sanitary sewer connection. The proposed program would cover a percentage of the costs associated with the disconnection. This will help residents protect their home from potential back-ups and reduce impacts to the Town's wastewater infrastructure.

Further information on Inflow and Infiltration can be found on the Town's website at www.thebluemountains.ca/resident-services/water-sewer-services/inflow-infiltration.

E. Strategic Priorities

1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

2. Organizational Excellence

We will continually seek out ways to improve the internal organization of Town Staff and the management of Town assets.

3. Community

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

4. Quality of Life

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

F. Environmental Impacts

N/A

G. Financial Impacts

Up to \$20,000 to be drawn from Wastewater Reserve.

H. In Consultation With

Shawn Everitt, CAO

Allison Kershaw, Manager of Water & Wastewater

Serena Wilgress, Manager of Purchasing and Risk Management

Ruth Prince, Director of Finance and IT

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Will Thomson, Director Legal Services directorlegal@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

N/A

Respectfully submitted,

Will Thomson
Director Legal Services

Shawn Carey
Director of Operations

For more information, please contact:
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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	FAF.22.068 Flood Relief and Inflow and Infiltration Program.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Mar 17, 2022

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Will Thomson - Mar 17, 2022 - 3:31 PM

No Signature found

Shawn Everitt - Mar 17, 2022 - 5:08 PM