



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Public Works Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	September 17, 2018
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Approval of Water Servicing for Development (PW18084) (City Wide) (Outstanding Business List Item)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Dave Arsenault (905) 546-2424, Extension 6413
SUBMITTED BY:	Bert Posedowski (Acting) Director, Water & Wastewater Planning and Capital Public Works Department
SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction:

Public Works Committee, at its meeting of June 18, 2018, passed a motion:

“Staff were directed to report back to the Public Works Committee with a response to the concerns raised by the Hamilton-Halton Homebuilders’ Association (HHHBA), an outline of how long it takes for water main approvals to be processed and what issues affect how long it takes for the applications to be processed and approved”.

Information:

This report provides:

- A brief overview of Hamilton Water’s role in the approval of development applications, with respect to municipal water servicing;
- Summary data for Hamilton Water review and comment timelines; and
- Information regarding review of the City of Hamilton’s (City) fire flow policy for water infrastructure.

With respect to municipal water servicing, Hamilton Water has different roles and responsibilities in the City’s approval process for two categories of land development projects that are regulated under *Ontario’s Planning Act*:

1. Development without new municipal infrastructure, and

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2. Development with new municipal infrastructure.

In both cases, the development approval process is managed and co-ordinated by Planning & Economic Development Department (P&ED). Hamilton Water receives circulations for review from P&ED staff, and provides comments and/or recommendations for approval to P&ED staff.

Although the HHHBA's concerns are focused on the second category of approvals, where "Form 1" approval of new water infrastructure is required, we have summarized timelines for both categories of approvals. The City's policies for available fire flow apply to both categories of approvals. It should be noted that the review durations presented in this report reflect only the periods between Hamilton Water's receipt of the documents from P&ED staff, and the submission of Hamilton Water's comments back to P&ED staff. Processes and factors before and after Hamilton Water's review periods, or the total time from the applicant's first submission to receipt of final approval, are not addressed in this report.

❖ Development Without New Municipal Infrastructure

- P&ED is the approval authority for the development and manages the overall process. Hamilton Water and other City entities have supporting roles in the process.
- Hamilton Water is responsible for reviewing and confirming that the City's existing infrastructure is capable of providing adequate domestic and fire-fighting water supply needs for the proposed land use and building systems.
- The City's "Comprehensive Development Guidelines and Financial Policy Manual" outlines in detail the analysis and reporting that must be completed and submitted by the proponent to demonstrate that the proposed development can be adequately serviced without new municipal water infrastructure.

Table 1 summarizes Hamilton Water's review statistics for development applications where new municipal water infrastructure is not required. This includes Formal Consultation, Zoning & Official Plan Amendment Applications and Site Plan Applications.

Table 1: Development Reviews – No New Municipal Water Infrastructure

	January 2017 to May 2018 (17 months)
No. of Submissions Received (including resubmissions)	720
No. of Technical Reviews Completed (including resubmissions)*	360
Average Review Time	14 working days
Typical Range of Review Times	8 to 17 working days

Note:*Typically, upon screening, about 50% of development circulations received by HW are found to not require water servicing technical review.

The data in Table 1 demonstrates that the typical time taken by Hamilton Water to review a development submission and return comments is approximately three weeks.

For development applications (no new municipal infrastructure) reviewed over the period January 2017 to May 2018, it has been observed that two review iterations per file is typical, but about 25% of development files require 3 or more review iterations.

❖ Development with New Municipal Water Infrastructure

- Where a project requires new municipal water infrastructure, there is a greater role and responsibility in the process for Hamilton Water, and the approval bears greater compliance and liability risk for the City.
- Changes to the City's water infrastructure are regulated under Ontario's *Safe Drinking Water Act*. Hamilton Water's engineers are responsible for certifying the approval amendment documents ("Form 1") on behalf of the City as owner of the water system. Hamilton Water has a responsibility to ensure that the new water infrastructure design is compliant with regulations, and that the alterations to the system will not create undue risk of water quality compliance violations and consequent health risks.
- Approval of the site plan for the proposed development is contingent on approval of the new municipal water infrastructure design.
- Typically, the design of the infrastructure is carried out by the development proponent. However, as the assets will become property of the City, the design must meet the requirements of the Hamilton Water's engineers. City staff must consider operational, maintenance, and performance needs, in addition to regulatory compliance. The proponent may need to revise and resubmit the design and supporting documents multiple times if information is missing, incomplete or inaccurate.

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- Approval of developments that require new municipal water infrastructure are typically more complex and involve applications that often require more time and effort on the part of both the proponent and Hamilton Water staff, in comparison to those that do not. A higher level of technical scrutiny is applied to submissions of this type.

Files approved from January 2017 to June 2018 averaged four detailed review iterations, plus an average of two screening iterations before the application was deemed complete.

Table 2 summarizes Hamilton Water's review statistics for development application where new municipal water infrastructure is required. The summary includes only technical reviews of applications deemed complete.

Table 2: Development Reviews – New Municipal Water Infrastructure Required

	Received January 2016 to June 2018 (30 months)	Received July 2017 to June 2018 (12 months)
No. of Development Sites	19	10
No. of Technical Reviews	56	27
Average Review Time	23 working days	14 working days
Typical Range of Review Times	2 to 53 working days	2 to 28 working days

Table 2 shows that the time taken by Hamilton Water for review and comment on submissions currently averages less than 15 working days.

❖ Review Time Summary

In summary, Hamilton Water's application reviews typically take between 14 and 23 working days, depending on whether they are associated with new municipal infrastructure or not. Problems arise when applications are submitted incomplete or with errors, this leads to re-submissions and additional review iterations.

In most cases, the iterations represent a progression of the file, and each review becomes more focussed. In some cases, re-submissions have not addressed any of the review comments provided by Hamilton Water in the previous submission, causing needless delay to the review and approval process.

❖ Staff Resource Shortages January to March 2017

At the end of 2016, and extending through the first few months of 2017, Hamilton Water experienced a temporary shortage of staff with the appropriate specialized training to fulfil the development review role in a timely manner. Senior staff departures and

difficulty in quickly recruiting qualified staff to fill vacancies were key factors in this problem. During this period, Hamilton Water's review and response times increased well beyond our performance targets. Hamilton Water implemented a number of corrective actions to address this problem, and by mid-2017, the team's turnaround performance improved considerably, as evidenced by Table 2.

❖ Fire Flow Policy

Hamilton Water, with the assistance of our consultant for the on-going Water Master Plan update project (commenced in 2017), is conducting a comprehensive review of the City's existing water servicing and planning policies, including the fire flow policy.

Our consultant has reviewed Ontario municipalities fire flow policies, consulted with staff (PW as well as P&ED) and stakeholders (including HHHBA) and developed a process for identifying fire flow constraints within the water distribution system. The consultant has developed preliminary recommendations for the policy based on the City's key considerations and objectives of: fire safety / building protection, water quality, community/built form quality, implementation, fairness/transparency and overall cost effectiveness.

Further consultation is planned with staff and stakeholders in the Fall of 2018 prior to presenting the final recommendations for a Master Plan Fire Flow Policy to Council.

Appendices and Schedules Attached

N/A