

Added Item 6.1



June 16, 2020

To the Chair and Members of the Public Works Committee,

I am writing to you on behalf of Environment Hamilton regarding Item Number 7.1 '*Wastewater Treatment Plant Bypass & Combined Sewer Overflow Reporting*', included in the June 17th, 2020 agenda of the Public Works Committee to express support for the staff recommendations set out in this report.

Environment Hamilton strongly supports all measures being taken by the City of Hamilton to provide as much information as possible to the public regarding the nature and operation of the municipality's wastewater infrastructure system.

The addition of real time reporting of wastewater treatment plant and combined sewer overflow tank bypasses has already generated public interest as demonstrated by the fact that bypass details are regularly shared and discussed in on-line community networks. People are concerned about the health of our local waterways; ensuring people are aware of on-going challenges with wastewater discharges can only help to make more positive change happen into the future, particularly since some of that positive change depends on people adopting appropriate personal behaviours when it comes to what they 'flush' into the system.

We applaud very recent staff efforts to post signage at significant discharge points. The signs are customized for each discharge point, providing any community member who might observe issues near a discharge point with a name for the site and a city telephone number to call to report concerns. This small step can make all of the difference in the world by facilitating the ability of observant community members to report issues to the municipality when they see them. It can also enable the municipality to respond to problems in a timely manner. We all know that city wastewater staff cannot be everywhere all of the time. With the right information, community members can play an essential role as more 'eyes and ears on the street' or, more aptly, 'more eyes and ears along the creek or harbourfront'.

We also applaud the coming additional enhancements to the city's on-line wastewater discharge reporting system, with the addition of combined sewer discharges to the list of discharge points that will be reported to the public. Again, this is an essential step towards full openness and transparency. It is also an important way to educate Hamiltonians about the fact that we do still struggle with wastewater discharges into our natural waterways. Public understanding can generate public support for additional investment in improvements to the system over time.

Finally, we understand that there may be challenges in establishing ways to monitor discharges from every combined sewer in the system. We urge the city to continue to work to resolve this problem so

that we might reach a point where every combined sewer discharge point is not only monitored, but that information is provided publicly.

Thank you

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. M. Lukasik". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

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Executive Director

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