TO: Mayor and Members
    General Issues Committee

WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE

COMMITTEE DATE: July 4, 2011

SUBJECT/REPORT NO: Residential Protective Plumbing Subsidy Program
(3P Program) (PW11056) - (City Wide)
(Outstanding Business List Item)

SUBMITTED BY: Gerry Davis, CMA
    General Manager
    Public Works Department

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RECOMMENDATION

(a) That the City of Hamilton Residential Protective Plumbing Subsidy Program be revised effective immediately to reflect the proposed changes to the program described in Appendix “A” to PW11056;

(b) That the General Manager of Public Works and City Solicitor investigate and report back to the appropriate standing committee on the options available for extending the Residential Protective Plumbing Subsidy Program to registered owners of residential rental properties;

(c) That “Residential Municipal Relief Assistance Program” be identified as completed and removed from the Outstanding Business List.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On September 30, 2009, Council approved Item 1 of Public Works Committee Report 09-012 which included the following:

That the General Manager of Public Works be authorized and directed to implement a program to subsidize the cost of investigations, installation of devices, drainage improvements and related works to help protect basements from chronic flooding as a result of storm water overloading of the wastewater collection system;
In response to this direction the Residential Protective Plumbing Subsidy Program (3P) was created. The purpose of the program is to provide guidance and financial assistance to residential property owners seeking to undertake improvements to their homes that will reduce the potential for basement flooding due to sewer surcharge. A key element of the program is a grant intended to assist property owners with the costs associated with making such improvements. The program currently includes the costs of assessments, installation of devices, downspout disconnections, sewer lateral repairs and related works to prevent sewer surcharge related basement flooding in future. The program provides grants and loans with a maximum value of $2,000 each per residential property.

3P is a key element of the City's climate change adaptation strategy. In terms of capital/program dollars and number of residents assisted, this is possibly the largest and furthest reaching program that addresses adaptation to climate change in Hamilton.

It is understood that the intent of the program is to assist residential property owners to reduce the recurrence of basement flooding as well as the number of repeat recipients of the City's Residential Municipal Disaster Relief Assistance Program (Compassionate Grant). It is also accepted that while a program such as 3P will provide protection for property owners against basement flooding due to sewer surcharge, it may not be effective 100% of the time as there may be circumstances relating to existing plumbing and property issues that may prevent the works from performing effectively in all circumstances. A maintenance regime prescribed by the manufacturer must also be followed by the homeowner to ensure proper functioning of the backwater valve.

Since its implementation, the 3P program has provided grants for the installation of approximately 2,100 backwater valves and other plumbing improvements in homes throughout the City. Expenditures for the program to date include $4.2 million in grants, $380,000 for program development and administration and approximately $210,000 for reimbursement of building permit fees. It is expected that future participation levels will vary dramatically depending on the occurrence of severe storms however, at the current pace of activity it is expected that administration costs will be approximately $150,000 per year. While 3P has been a success, it is evident that revisions are required for the program to remain successful and sustainable. A summary of revisions includes proposed clarification of the rules regarding eligibility for the program, revised eligible costs, removal of sewer lateral repairs as an eligible cost and stricter assessment rules regarding initial plumbing estimates.

Staff within the Water and Wastewater Operations Group (WWW) conducted a review of the program’s first year and visited a number of sites to investigate complaints respecting the program, the performance of the backwater valves, as well as industry response to the program. While there were a small number of complaints in these areas staff believe the vast majority of program participants have been well served by the actions undertaken to prevent further basement flooding. It is as a result of this review that staff believe there remains opportunities to derive greater value from the grants provided and ensure that property owners remain more closely involved in the process.
WWW conducted a robust campaign of outreach to those property owners who had received compassionate grants for the storms identified in the Public Works report PW09082 - Protective Plumbing Subsidy Program for Basement Flood Relief. Three rounds of notification were completed to ensure past recipients of the compassionate grant were made aware of the program’s existence. This outreach was undertaken to ensure that eligible property owners are well informed that they may not be eligible for future compassionate grant programs should they chose not to participate in 3P.

It is important to reinforce the understanding that the 3P program relates to basement flooding caused by sewer surcharge only and does not provide relief or assistance for flooding due to any other condition such as overland flooding. Additionally, it is noteworthy that this is essentially a grant program and that neither City staff nor contractors working on behalf of the City perform any of the works identified in the program.

The purpose of this report is to obtain approval for the proposed revisions to the 3P program which will allow City staff to continue to successfully manage the program.

Alternatives for Consideration - See Page 12

FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial

Approximately $4.2 million in grants has been provided throughout the first twenty months of the program. In recent months there has been a decline in the number of applications as those most affected who wished to participate in the program have already done so. It is difficult to predict how many property owners will be interested in participating in this program going forward as it appears that program activity is tied very closely to the occurrence of severe wet weather events.

Throughout the first thirteen months of the program expenditures of $380,000 related to the hiring of temporary staff and consulting services to develop and administrate the program were necessary. In addition approximately $210,000 in building permits were issued related to the program and are an expenditure of 3P as well.

The 2011 Water and Wastewater budget contains within it $3 million to fund 3P, and an additional $1 million is identified in 2012.

Staffing

The original report (PW09082 - Protective Plumbing Subsidy Program for Basement Flood Relief) identified the hiring of contracting and/or consulting services to assist with program development and administration and that in the 2010 budget process WWW will assess program delivery, the need for additional in-house resources and make appropriate recommendations to council.

As a result of organizational changes within the Environment and Sustainable Infrastructure Division additional staff are not being requested at this time. Should the City experience another extreme event similar to July 26, 2009, WWW may require the
use of additional temporary resources to respond to the anticipated uptake in the program.

Legal

Downspout Disconnection

Currently there exist a number of By-Laws relating to lot drainage and specifically downspout drainage throughout the new City of Hamilton. As the 3P program has eligibility for downspout disconnection, further analysis is required to determine the implications of this from a bylaw perspective. While the value of downspout disconnection remains difficult to quantify, staff believe including this element in 3P going forward is a good investment for the City.

Bonusing

Section 107 of the Municipal Act, 2001 enables a municipality to make grants, on such terms as the Council considers appropriate, to any person, group or body, including a fund, within or outside the boundaries of the municipality for any purpose that the council considers to be in the interests of the municipality. This includes a loan and is subject to the bonusing provisions of Section 106 of the Act. A grant or loan to an individual residential property owner in an owner-occupied situation would not trigger the bonusing provisions. However, where a residential property is not owner-occupied and is a rental property, in the opinion of Legal Services, such a situation would trigger the bonusing provisions as the City would be assisting a commercial enterprise. Therefore the eligibility criteria set out in Appendix A to this report also contains a clarification that the 3P program does not extend to residential rental properties. This approach is consistent with how the program has been managed to-date.

Recommendation (b) supports a desire to make available the protective plumbing grant program to residential rental properties and thereby offering a level of protection to tenants who have or may potentially experience basement flooding.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

On July 26, 2009 the City of Hamilton experienced a storm that delivered rainfall accumulations and intensity that overwhelmed much of the City’s wastewater collection system. Subsequently the City received over 7,200 reports of basement flooding on the central and east mountain as well as the lower central and east end of the City.

Less than a month later the City experienced another storm that, while smaller and more geographically focused, resulted in another 365 reports of basement flooding being registered with the City. In response to these events City Council enacted the Compassionate Grant program for victims of basement flooding and directed Public Works staff to develop and implement a program to assist property owners endeavouring to protect their properties from future flooding.

On September 30, 2009 Council adopted Public Works Report PW09082 - Protective Plumbing Subsidy Program for Basement Flood Relief directing staff to implement the
program. By October 28, 2009 staff had processed the first 3P grant payment to an eligible property owner.

Throughout the first year of the program staff identified a number of issues that require correction or resolution to ensure the program is equitable and effective. Additionally, concerns from program participants respecting the effectiveness of the program are addressed and included in the analysis section of this report.

### POLICY IMPLICATIONS


The recommendations from this Report will assist in meeting Public Works key goal, to be recognized as the centre of environmental and innovative excellence in Canada. In addition, implementing the recommendations will also assist Public Works in building on our four Strategic Vision Drivers as follows:

**Communities (Services our communities connect with and trust)**

Implementing the proposed changes to the 3P Program will provide equal access to homeowners, regardless of previous history of sewer lateral back-up. A thorough assessment will provide the homeowner with valuable information about their home’s drainage and plumbing systems, giving them the information they need to make an informed decision. 3P is a key element of the City's climate change adaptation strategy. In terms of capital/program dollars and number of residents assisted, this is possibly the largest and furthest reaching program that addresses adaptation to climate change in Hamilton.

**People (Skilled teams ready for any situation)**

This program demonstrates the ability of City staff to engage and assist the community in protecting property, public health and the environment and deliver timely services. The proposed program changes will help to ensure that appropriate measures are undertaken and that homeowners are properly informed.

**Process (Smart processes to match our needs)**

Public Works will maximize its investment by improving our processes and program to meet the needs of residents.

**Finances (Sound finance management for the long haul)**

The proposed changes to the Protective Plumbing Program will result in more value for money since the works completed are more likely to be of direct benefit to the properties, which will, in turn, deliver a good return on investment by reducing the extent of future flooding and the need for compassionate grants.
Vision: To be the best place in Canada to raise a child, promote innovation, engage citizens and provide diverse economic opportunities.

Values: Honesty, Accountability, Innovation, Leadership, Respect, Excellence, Teamwork

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Corporate Services has been consulted respecting the updates to eligible costs proposed in this report.

Legal Services has been consulted respecting the bonusing provisions and updates to eligible costs discussed in this report.

Planning and Economic Development Department - Building Services Section has been consulted.

Throughout this program staff worked with Building Services to address concerns with contractor behaviour and installation requirements. Where it has been reported that contractors have misrepresented themselves as working on behalf of the City, WWW staff along with Building Services staff have met with the contractor to explain the complaints and to inform them of the consequences of such continued behaviour. WWW staff also consulted with Building Services respecting installation requirements related to multi-unit dwellings.

ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The 3P program endeavors to assist property owners with guidance and grants for improvements undertaken to protect their properties from basement flooding due to sewer surcharge. To this end the program makes available grants to offset the cost of installing backwater valves, sump pumps and pits, sewer lateral repairs and where applicable, disconnecting downspouts. While these activities are recognized as being effective for protecting properties against basement flooding they require proper assessment, good quality workmanship and regular maintenance.

Throughout the initial implementation of 3P there became a number of scenarios that were not contemplated at the outset of the program that relate to eligibility into the program. Additionally staff received a small number of complaints about the effectiveness of some of the eligible works and whether or not they are appropriate for this program. As a result of these concerns staff recommends changes to the program that will enhance the effectiveness and value of the program.

The following analysis includes a review of:

- Program Eligibility
- Sewer Lateral Repairs
- Stricter Assessment Rules
- Site Investigations
- Downspout Disconnection Pilot
- Outreach and Communication

Program Eligibility

Program eligibility for 3P was reviewed and relates to two issues. The first respecting eligibility for those property owners who have never flooded but are endeavoring to be
proactive. The second issue relates to whether the grants and loans under 3P can be made for residential rental properties.

1. Currently the program description requires that a property owner must have experienced basement flooding during one of the specific dates since 2005 or for any other storm event that is recognized as a “disaster” by Council for the purposes of invoking the Residential Municipal Relief Assistance Program for Basement Flooding. Additionally, any works undertaken must have been completed after the July 26, 2009 date or else the expenses are not eligible. Throughout the implementation of the program staff have also made eligible a small number of property owners who requested to be part of the program however had not registered a flooding complaint on the specified dates but reside in close proximity to these areas. The questions respecting eligibility that remain relate to property owners who have never actually experienced basement flooding but would like to be proactive.

Over the implementation period staff received approximately 150 requests for acceptance into the program from property owners who have not yet flooded but want to be proactive and reduce their risks. Unfortunately the original program description did not include these properties and gives the appearance of disadvantaging property owners who are trying to do the right thing by being proactive. As a result, staff recommend that property owners who have not previously flooded and wish to participate in the program now be eligible for the program. The proposed changes are set out in Appendix “A” to this report.

As mentioned earlier in this report it is difficult to predict future program activity as it is related to the occurrence of severe storms however, based on the number of requests for program acceptance from property owners who have never flooded the expectation is that by including this sector of the community into the program the additional costs would be small in comparison to the overall value of the program. This recommendation does remain a financial risk that is difficult to quantify.

2. The second concern respecting eligibility for 3P relates to properties that are not owner occupied and may be viewed as a commercial enterprise. As noted above, a grant or loan to an individual residential property owner in an owner-occupied situation would not trigger the bonusing provisions. However, where a residential property is not owner-occupied and is a rental property, in the opinion of Legal Services, such a situation would trigger the bonusing provisions as the City would be assisting a commercial enterprise. Therefore, while it is proposed that City staff continue to provide grants and loans for only owner-occupied residential properties recommendation (b) above will allow staff to bring back to Council options to consider relating to the provision of grants to residential rental properties. The owners of residential rental property have the ability to deduct the costs of backwater valves and other plumbing improvements as business expenses. As such, the eligibility criteria set out in Appendix A to this report also
contains a clarification that the 3P program does not extend to residential rental properties.

**Sewer Lateral Repairs**

Report PW09082 - Protective Plumbing Subsidy Program for Basement Flood Relief establishing 3P included sewer lateral repairs as an eligible cost for use of the grant. Repairing sewer laterals is known to have a beneficial effect on the wastewater collection system as a whole as it reduces the intrusion of extraneous flows into the system through failures and open joints in piping material. System wide these flows are believed to represent a significant amount of load on the system.

The City of Hamilton through its existing sewer lateral management program (SLMP) provides for the repair of sewer laterals within the road allowance or the “public portion” at 100% cost to the City. Additionally the section of sewer lateral that resides on the “private portion” or private property, which is being adversely affected by roots from City trees, is eligible for a $1,500 grant from the City under SLMP.

Since its inception in 2006 SLMP has been very effective at responding to and resolving sewer lateral issues for property owners. Additionally a robust program of inspection and repair through the City’s capital program has also been effective since 2006.

Throughout the first year of 3P it became evident that the use of 3P grants for sewer lateral repairs may not deliver the value envisioned at the beginning of the program. This is a result of the small number of participants who elect to complete the repair and what staff believes is the intent of 3P to affect solutions at the lot level. Essentially 3P supports making discrete repairs on an individual property whereas the value of sewer lateral repairs requires system wide involvement to have a tangible benefit.

As a result staff recommend that due to the fact that the City already provides a comprehensive program for assisting property owners with sewer lateral repairs that they no longer be eligible under the 3P grant.

**Stricter Assessments Rules**

The initial intent of 3P is to provide guidance and financial assistance to property owners who had experienced sewer back-up on one (or more) of the eligible dates since 2005 that resulted in Council enacting the Compassionate Grant Program for Basement Flooding, to help protect their homes from future incidents of sewer back-up and to reduce the number of properties for which repeat Compassionate Grants are paid.

It was understood that eligible homeowners would have a thorough assessment of their home’s drainage system (including pertinent plumbing components) completed in order to determine the best course of action for their individual home and that the grant funds of $2,000 per home would offset expenses to undertake one or more of the eligible works.

Staff believe that the scope and completeness of assessments generally being undertaken of the property’s drainage system could be more comprehensive and as a result have proposed stricter language in the program guideline. There is a risk that
these stricter assessment rules may place upward pressure on the price of these works and in turn result in a requirement for homeowners participate to a greater extent financially.

Site Investigations
Throughout the implementation of 3P a number of observations and complaints were reported for a variety of reasons. WWW staff undertook a number of site investigations with specific interest in determining the following:

- Backwater Valve Failure
- Quality of work
- Plumbing assessment
- Regular maintenance

Backwater Valve Failure
Since the implementation of 3P WWW staff have received approximately 62 calls related to a sewer lateral backup from a home where a backwater valve had been installed. This equates to approximately 3% of the 2,100 backwater valves installed under 3P.

In response to homeowner’s complaints about backwater valves that have “failed” and resulted in sewer lateral back-ups, City staff conducted six site visits to follow up with the property owner to determine if the device actually failed, or if the reported sewer lateral back-up was caused by another reason.

All devices were tested upon arrival to determine their existing status prior to the investigation. Of the six valves tested two passed the initial test and were functioning properly. In both of these cases the cause of the flooding is believed to be either the existence of connections upstream of the backwater valve that likely allowed flow to continue while the valve was engaged or possibly ground water making its way above grade. If the mechanism of flooding is the existence of live, upstream connections this would be an example of an incomplete or incorrect assessment.

Of the remaining four valves which did not pass the initial test all four valves had debris accumulation in the gate. Although these devices failed the initial test, all devices passed a subsequent test after they were properly cleaned. Recognizing that during the initial test these valves did not close fully due to debris, staff believe that they likely did provide a measure of protection by limiting the amount of the backup. The importance of proper installation, regular maintenance and cleaning cannot be overstated. None of the devices tested were found to be defective. Cleaning of these valves is a relatively simple undertaking for property owners. As a result of the findings from these investigations staff will be providing an annual maintenance reminder letter to all participants of the program to help ensure that regular maintenance is undertaken.

Downspout Disconnection Pilot Program
As part of 3P staff undertook a Downspout Disconnection Pilot Program in targeted areas throughout the lower east end of Hamilton. Communities that have large
combined sewer systems, such as Hamilton, may have opportunities to reduce the potential for sewer surcharge by eliminating or re-directing rain water flows from building roof tops and downspouts and thus removing them from the collection system. Most rainwater still finds its way to the sewer system, however disconnecting may reduce peak flows by creating a longer path for storm water to travel. While the concept is straightforward there are a number of factors that can influence whether or not disconnection actually produces a benefit for the property owner. Additionally, ensuring that re-directed flows are not creating a new problem downstream for adjoining properties is critical for any ongoing program that may be promoted by the City.

Beginning in October of 2009 Urban Environmental Management Incorporated (UEM) working with Green Venture (GV) of Hamilton undertook a Downspout Disconnection Pilot Program on behalf of the City. As part of this pilot, UEM staff identified 4,250 candidate properties in Wards 3 and 4 of which 1,887 properties were directly contacted to offer an assessment of their downspouts. UEM staff undertook an assessment of approximately 400 properties who had agreed to participate in the program and recommended approximately 237 properties for full or partial disconnection. The balance of candidate properties were contacted by UEM to advise them that, for various reasons, they were found to be ineligible to have their downspouts disconnected and to explain the reasons why. WWW staff are currently conducting a follow up survey of program participants to determine attitudes respecting the program and identify potential future enhancements.

Of all property owners contacted directly for this program more than half indicated that they had already disconnected their downspouts previously.

Downspout disconnection programs have the potential to be an effective tool at the lot level to assist in removing direct flows to combined sewer systems and reducing the potential for basement flooding due to sewer surcharge. The experience in Hamilton during the pilot program suggests however that the benefit of such a program is very difficult to quantify and the risks associated with incorrectly undertaking these changes have the potential to be significant. Additionally, the ease with which these changes can be made or altered creates a situation where an individual improvement may not be long lasting. Ensuring that property owners correctly undertake these changes as part of a City sponsored program creates a resource intense program and should City Council desire to continue with a more supportive program the addition of FTEs would be required.

Staff recommend a program that would be included as part of 3P and see the provision of literature to contractors and property owners to assist them in correctly assessing and disconnecting their downspouts. Grants would be available for these activities and would be part of the overall $2,000 grant available under 3P. This approach will not require additional FTE’s. Grant values for downspout disconnection and capping are identified in the proposed program changes set out in Appendix “A” to this report.
Outreach and Communication

The intent of 3P is to provide guidance and financial assistance to property owners who desire to proactively protect their homes from future basement flooding due to sewer surcharge in a focused and strategic manner. In order to ensure that property owners adversely affected by basement flooding became aware of 3P WWW staff undertook a number of outreach activities through the fall of 2009 and 2010. A combination of correspondence, advertising and media interviews were undertaken to ensure awareness of the program existence.

WWW staff conducted a program of prioritized outreach beginning with direct mailings to those individual properties owners who had received compassionate grants as a result of basement flooding during 2009. Staff expect that by mid March, 2011 all compassionate grant recipients from the twelve storm events for which the program was enacted will have received three direct mailings to advise them of the existence of the program.

On September 28, 2010 Hamilton experienced a severe storm that produced basement flooding in a number of localized areas of the City. In response to this Council enacted the compassionate grant program for property owners adversely affected by this event. As grants are approved for these property owners WWW staff will follow up with the same regime of outreach as described earlier in this report.

The aforementioned groups of properties have or will receive correspondence from the City to ensure that they were made aware of the existence of 3P. This exhaustive effort of outreach is conducted to ensure that property owners were fairly advised of the existence of 3P in the event that Council chooses to deny enactment of the compassionate grant program for repeat recipients in future.

Loan Program

On October 28, 2009 City Council approved a loan program as per report FCS09100/PW09082(a) which makes available an interest bearing loan of $2,000 for eligible property owners to assist in covering costs above and beyond the $2,000 grant value. To date three loans have been approved. It is expected that the opening up the program to all residents based on the new grant format may increase loan activity.

The table below summarizes the compassionate grant program related to severe weather on a number of occasions as enacted by City Council since 2005.
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Values: Honesty, Accountability, Innovation, Leadership, Respect, Excellence, Teamwork

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### Compassionate Grant Payments for Heavy Rain Events

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<th>Event Date</th>
<th>Event Type</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Total Liability Claims</th>
<th>Grant Apps Requested</th>
<th>Approved Grants</th>
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<td>26-Jul-05</td>
<td>Heavy Rain</td>
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### ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

**Eligibility**

As per Appendix “A” to this report, staff are recommending that all owners of a residential owner-occupied property be eligible for 3P according to the proposed grant structure regardless of whether or not they have flooded previously. An alternative to this is the current eligibility requirement for property owners to have experienced a flooding event which staff are not recommending as it is a reactive method of dealing with flooding issues and may be viewed as discriminating against property owners endeavouring to proactively prevent future flooding.

An exception to the bonusing provisions contained in Section 106 of the Municipal Act, 2001, is for a municipality to prepare and adopt a community improvement plan pursuant to Section 28 of the Planning Act. In doing so, a municipality is entitled to make grants or loans, in conformity with the community improvement plan, to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of lands and buildings within the community improvement project area, and to any person to whom such an owner or tenant has assigned the right to receive a grant or loan, to pay for the whole or any part of the eligible costs of the community improvement plan. As the development and adoption of a community improvement plan and associated project area is a rigorous process involving the City’s Official Plan and public consultation, it is recommended that this alternative only be investigated further should Council wish to consider expanding the program to include residential rental properties.
Recommendation (b) supports a desire to make available the protective plumbing grant program to residential rental properties and thereby offering a level of protection to tenants who have or may potentially experience basement flooding.

**Grant Structure**

As set out in Appendix “A” to this report, staff recommend a revised grant structure to ensure that both property owners and the City receive greater benefit from the grants being provided through 3P. An alternative to this is to continue with the grant structure as is however, appears to discriminate against those who wish to be proactive.

An alternative to both the current practice and that recommended in Appendix “A” is to approve a schedule that provides grants equal to a pre-determined percentage of expenses claimed for all residential property owners. For example property owners would receive 50% of all eligible expenses submitted to a grant maximum of $2,000. This may not provide the same benefit as the format recommended in Appendix “A” and is therefore not being recommended at this time.

**Sewer Laterals**

Currently repairs to the portion of a sewer lateral which exists on private property is an eligible expense for 3P. Home owners may apply for a grant under the City’s Sewer Lateral Management Program (SLMP) if the problems are caused by roots from a City tree. Although sewer lateral repairs conducted on a large scale throughout the system are believed to have a beneficial impact system wide staff believe the intent of 3P is for more discrete, lot level impacts. It is recommended that sewer lateral repairs no longer be an eligible expense under 3P.

An alternative to both the existing program and that which is proposed in Appendix “A” would be to limit the amount of the grant that can be applied to these repairs. This is not recommended as these activities alone do not yield the benefit originally envisioned at the outset of the program.

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**CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN**


**Financial Sustainability**

- Encouraging and helping homeowners improve their properties will benefit the homeowners and the local economy. Setting per item limits on grant funds will also help ensure homeowners get better value for their money.

**Environmental Stewardship**

- The load on the City’s sanitary sewers will also be reduced, thereby helping to reduce the number and size of direct discharges into the lake/harbour.

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Vision: To be the best place in Canada to raise a child, promote innovation, engage citizens and provide diverse economic opportunities.

Values: Honesty, Accountability, Innovation, Leadership, Respect, Excellence, Teamwork
Healthy Community

• These program changes will make the Protective Plumbing Program more accessible to residents and will help empower homeowners to be informed about their home’s drainage system and make improvements to their properties that will help reduce sewer back-ups and other types of basement flooding.

By reducing the number of sewer back ups and diverting storm runoff out of the sanitary sewer system, the potential for risk to health due to bacteria and mould in resident’s basements.

APPENDICES / SCHEDULES

Appendix “A” - Residential Protective Plumbing Program (3P) Guidelines.
1. Purpose

1.1. The following provides details relating to the eligibility for program participation, scope of eligible works, grant values, application process and other requirements related to the residential protective plumbing program (3P).

2. Eligibility

2.1. Only residential properties connected to the City of Hamilton wastewater collection/combined sewer system that are owner-occupied are eligible for the program. Rental residential properties are not eligible for the program.

2.2. Only the registered owner of the property shall be eligible for the grant and must be the registered owner-occupant at both the time the works were completed and at the time of application for reimbursement.

3. Scope of Eligible Works

3.1. Works which are eligible for the grant under this program are limited to the following:

3.2. Assessment of the building’s drainage system including a closed circuit television (CCTV) inspection;

3.3. Installation of an approved backwater valve;

3.4. Installation of a new sump pit and pump when installed in conjunction with an approved backwater valve (replacement of existing sump pumps are not eligible);

3.5. Disconnection of downspouts

4. Grant Values

4.1. Residential property owners will be eligible, upon approval from the City, for a single grant up to a maximum of $2,000 for eligible works. This grant may be used towards one or all of the eligible works, subject to the maximums listed in Table “A” below.

4.2. Where the downspouts are being disconnected by the homeowner only the materials (no labour) will be eligible for the grant subject to limits listed in Table A.
4.3. When a contractor is undertaking eligible works on their own property for which they are the owner occupant only the materials (no labour) will be eligible for the grant subject to the limits listed in Table A.

**TABLE A - Properties Described in 4.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible work</th>
<th>Percentage covered</th>
<th>Maximum amount of the grant that can be applied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inspection including closed circuit television inspection (CCTV)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installation of an approved backwater valve</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installation of a NEW sump pump and pit when done in conjunction with an approved backwater valve</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downspout disconnection</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$40 per downspout to a maximum of $200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total grant amount shall not exceed $2,000

5. **Application**

5.1. To be eligible for the program an application must be submitted to the City and approved PRIOR to the provision of any grants. Property owners shall not assume they are approved for the $2,000 grant prior to confirmation from the City.

5.2. All documentation must be originals (no photocopies) and signed by the registered owner of the subject property.

5.3. To be eligible for the grant, an assessment must be completed by a licensed contractor qualified to do the work and signed off by both the property owner and contractor prior to the work being completed. The assessment must be in a form specified by the General Manager of Public Works.
5.4. A copy of the CCTV inspection (DVD) must accompany the application for reimbursement.

5.5. One or all of works identified in the assessment must be completed on the sanitary or combined drainage system prior to issuance of the grant or loan.

5.6. With the exception of downspout disconnections all eligible works must be completed by a contractor licensed in the City of Hamilton for the subject works with the contractor’s license number provided on the receipts.

5.7. The contractor’s invoice must be itemized in format acceptable to the General Manager of Public Works.

5.8. The grants are issued on a per property basis. No more than one grant will be issued per property.

6. **Other Requirements/Specifications:**

6.1. Sewer lateral repairs are not eligible under this program.

6.2. An assessment subject to the specifications of the General Manager of Public Works shall include as a minimum:
   a. A CCTV inspection, identification of any upstream connections to the drainage system
   b. Assessment of potential for downspout disconnection
   c. Written recommendations
   d. Documented risks associated with the recommended works
   e. Sign offs by both the contractor and property owner

6.3. The purpose of the CCTV inspection of the building drainage system is to identify all sources of drainage into the system, and to determine the best location for the installation of the backwater valve and/or sump pump, as well as to identify any potential adverse impacts of the installation of a backwater valve and/or sump pump.

6.4. A sump pump and pit will only qualify for reimbursement if installed in conjunction with an approved backwater valve and if it is a new installation. Replacement pumps and/or pits are not eligible.
6.5. Installation of backwater valves must be compliant with the Ontario Building Code and in a manner acceptable to the General Manager of Public Works.

6.6. Building permits expenses will only be reimbursed when one is required for the works being completed and it is associated with the installation of a backwater valve.

6.7. Downspout disconnection must be completed in a manner that does not create a potential or real hazard, create an adverse condition for the subject or adjoining properties or a health and safety hazard for the public.

6.8. The General Manager of Public Works may at their discretion require additional inspection and or such other alterations to ensure that works undertaken are acceptable for reimbursement under the program.

6.9. Program availability continues to be subject to funding as determined by Hamilton City Council and may be discontinued at any time without notice.