

Report to Council

Re: Discretionary Sewage System
Maintenance Inspection Program
Building Department-2025-02
From: Don Helleman
Date: May 6, 2025

Recommendation:

That the report Building Department-2025-02, dated May 6, 2025 regarding the Discretionary Sewage System Maintenance Inspection Program (DDSMIP) be received and that Council direct Staff on the following matters:

- Which Schedules are to be included in the program
- Confirmation of a voluntary inspection program as detailed below
- The duration of the program (inspection cycle)
- The implementation of an educational program funded by the levy

Overview:

During the December 3, 2024, Regular Council Meeting, Council passed Resolution 426-2024 which authorized revisions to the areas affected by the DSSMIP, such as high-risk waterfront and high-density areas, as well as a voluntary inspection service for the remainder of the Township's properties. Additionally, the Resolution requested staff report back on a user fee associated with inspections and an educational program to be funded through the general levy.

Resolution Number 426-2024

Moved by: Councillor Vervoort

Seconded by: Councillor Johnston

That the report, dated December 3, 2024, regarding the Discretionary Sewage System Maintenance Inspection Program (DSSMIP) be received and;

That the Discretionary Sewage System Maintenance Inspection Program be limited to high-risk waterfront and high-density areas, with a voluntary service option available for the remainder of the Township. Further, that staff be directed to prepare a report on implementing a user fee system and include funding for an education program as part of the general levy.

Councillor Vervoort requested a recorded vote. The roll was called by the Clerk and the vote was as follows:

Councillor Johnston – Aye

Councillor Vervoort – Aye

Councillor Watt – No

Deputy Mayor Nelson – No

Mayor Watson – Aye

For the Motion – 3, Against the Motion – 2

Carried

1. INSPECTION AREAS

Staff is requesting that Council identify, by Schedule designation, which areas are to be included in the DSSMIP. Appendix 1 is an overview of the identified areas for the entire Township. The associated Schedules (A – Q) are specific area maps. The maps coincide with the tables below and identify the general area by name, as well as the number of properties that will be included in the program if selected.

High-risk waterfront: Using MPAC and County GIS data, staff have created five zones (attached as Schedule A – E) that capture the shoreline properties abutting Township identified Waterbodies (as defined in the Township's Zoning By-law). The high-risk waterfront areas are as follows:

Schedule	Area	Effectuated properties
A	Highway 28	58
B	Youngs Point	68
C	West Stoney	325
D	Middle Stoney	446
E	East Stony	241

High-density areas: Using County of Peterborough Official Plan mapping and County GIS data, staff have identified six areas (attached as Schedule F – K) that we believe capture the properties intended by Council. The high-density zones are as follows:

Schedule	Area	Effectuated properties
F	Donwood	411
G	Douro	40
H	Warsaw	174
I	Halls Glen	21
J	Cottesloe	13
K	Centre Dummer	21

Additional areas for consideration: The Building Department believes Schedules A – K have captured the zones Council intended to be included in the DSSMIP. The department is unsure if the following areas were intended to be included in the program and is seeking clarification on the following areas:

Schedule	Area	Effected properties
L	Ouse River	48
M	Indian River N (north)	48
N	Indian River S (south)	32
O	Otonabee River	14
P	Douro Eighth	23
Q	Lonsberry/Caves	44

2. VOLUNTARY INSPECTION PROGRAM

Staff is seeking confirmation from Council that a voluntary sewage system maintenance inspection program is to be administered through the Building Department. The Building Department proposes the participant's request for this service be submitted in the same manner building permit submissions are received, and that; the fee structure for this program be the same as the DSSMIP fees.

A voluntary inspection program is feasible. However, staff feel it is important to highlight that there are private sector, locally operated companies that complete this type of work. Council may wish to consider the challenges of competing with local business and the increased risk being absorbed by the Township.

3. PROGRAM FEES

Council provided direction to staff to report back on a user fee associated with the DSSMIP. The following is the anticipated fee structure that will be proposed when a revised Building By-law is brought forward to capture any of the proposed changes to the current DSSMIP.

Fee Type	Description	Fee
Type 1	- the property owner has completed the questionnaire on time, and the lids to the septic system are exposed for inspection	\$ 235.00
Type 2	The Type 2 fee is in addition to the Type 1 Fee - the property owner fails to complete the questionnaire, or they do not uncover the lids by the date of the inspection - a second inspection/site visit is required	\$ 225.00
Report Review	- 3 rd party inspection report review	\$ 50.00
Action Letter	- a letter detailing that remedial action is required	\$ 50.00

The above fees were calculated based on fully funding the program through user fees. The fee calculation has considered the costs for completing the inspection and the administration costs of the program. For the program to continue to be fully funded moving forward the fees will need to keep up with inflation and therefore it is recommended to index the fees based on annual Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Fee Comparisons

After staff calculated the above fees, a comparison to nearby municipalities was completed to ensure the fees are in line:

- Trent Lakes is the only other Township within the County of Peterborough who has completed sewage system maintenance inspections under the discretionary program. The inspections were completed by Peterborough Public Health (PPH) and they billed the municipality \$325.00 dollars per inspection.

In Haliburton County there are four Municipalities that have administered the Discretionary Sewage System Maintenance Inspection Program. Fees ranged from \$180.00-\$250.00. At one point all Municipalities operated on a user fee. Currently two of the municipalities have since paused/cancelled the program. Another Municipality has waived the user fee however they are not completing inspections of the tanks (not lifting lids).

4. INSPECTION CYCLE

Staff is seeking Council direction on how frequently properties are to be inspected under the DSSMIP. The building department recommends a 10-year inspection cycle for the program, and that the quantity of properties being inspected are relatively equally spread out over that timeline. This approach will allow the Department to work plan for the annual demands of the program.

5. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Council has requested that Staff report back on an educational program pertaining to sewage systems for Township residents and the associated costs. The Building Department recommends having a one-page sewage system owners resource pamphlet created for mailout. The pamphlet would be mailed out to property owners where data indicates there is an existing sewage system or where sanitary sewage is being created. The pamphlet would be digitized and added to the Township website. The anticipated cost for this program is between eight to ten thousand dollars.

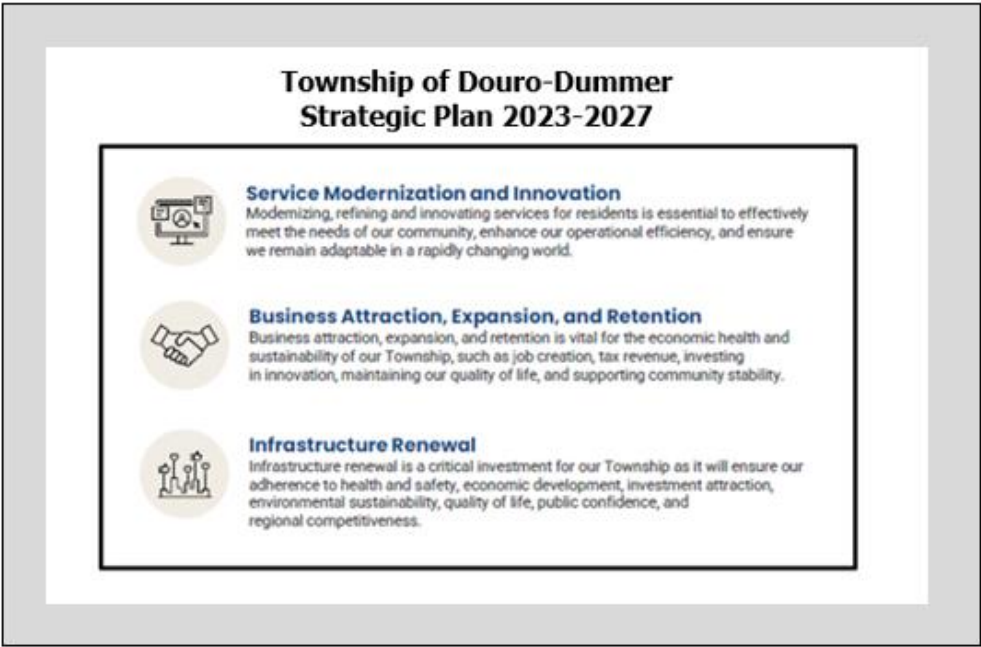
Conclusion:

Once Staff receive the requested direction from Council on the DSSMIP, a draft Building By-law will be brought forward at a public meeting to finalize the chosen areas and fees associated with the Program.

Financial Impact:

The user fees outlined above would represent a fully funded program and therefore there would be no impact to the levy.

The costs associated with the educational program need to be transferred from the Working Fund reserve if completed in 2025. If the program were to begin in 2026 then the costs would be included in the budget.



Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Discretionary Sewage System Maintenance Inspection Program - 2025 - Building Department-2025-02.docx
Attachments:	- Appendix and Schedules.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Apr 30, 2025

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

Todd Davis

No Signature found

Paul Creamer