

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy	Water and Wastewater Servicing Allocation Policy
Category	Corporate
Authority	Infrastructure, Development and Environment
Related Policies	N/A
Approved By	Approval pending
Effective Date	Friday, February-27-2026
Revision Date	Click here to enter a date

Policy Statement

- City of Guelph water and wastewater servicing capacity is finite and subject to unforeseen change based on systemic factors and externalities. This Policy establishes a framework for the allocation and reservation of water and wastewater servicing capacity through the City’s Planning Application and building permit review and approval process.
- The Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) approves new water supply capacity, wastewater treatment capacity, and safety-based design guidelines and standards of the City’s treatment plants, linear water and wastewater systems capital and related operational requirements through the provision of service.
- This Policy and its implementation shall be in accordance with MECP approvals, guidelines and standards.
- Except as expressly provided in this Policy, completion of a formal capacity check or informal capacity check and respective outcomes reflect the City’s ability to service the proposal at a current place and time and does not guarantee or approve servicing.

Purpose

This Water and Wastewater Servicing Allocation Policy (the Policy) establishes a framework for the allocation of water and wastewater servicing capacity through the City of Guelph’s building permit application and approval process, as well as planning application and approval process, to support residential and industrial, commercial, and institutional (IC&I) development that promotes sustainable growth and prosperity for the city.

Definitions

"City" means The Corporation of the City of Guelph, City as owner of the City of Guelph Water and Wastewater Systems;

"Formal Capacity Check" means the water and wastewater servicing availability assessment of plant and linear servicing capacity requested for a property in support of pre-consultation or a formal Planning Application or building permit or post-secondary institution construction project;

"City Council" means the municipal council of the City of Guelph with decision-making authority over the City of Guelph Water and Wastewater Systems;

"City of Guelph Water and Wastewater System" means the municipally-owned water and wastewater treatment plants and linear infrastructure systems;

"Community Economic Development Investment Proposal" means a competitive Provincial, Federal or local process through which City competes with other jurisdictions for new local industrial business investment;

"Deputy CAO, Infrastructure, Development and Environment" means the individual who holds the position of Deputy Chief Administrative officer of Infrastructure, Development and Environment or any individual holding any successor position with responsibility for similar matters;

"General Manager of Economic Development and Tourism" means the individual who holds the position of General Manager of Economic Development and Tourism of the Infrastructure, Development and Environment Department or designate, or any individual holding any successor position with responsibility for similar matters;

"General Manager of Engineering and Transportation Services" means the individual who holds the position of City Engineer/General Manager of Engineering and Transportation Services of the Infrastructure, Development and Environment Department or designate, or any individual holding any successor position with responsibility for similar matters;

"General Manager of Environmental Services" means the individual who holds the position of General Manager of Environmental Services of the Infrastructure, Development and Environment Department or designate, or any individual holding any successor position with responsibility for similar matters;

"General Manager of Planning and Building Services" means the individual who holds the position of Chief Planner/General Manager of Planning and Building Services of the Infrastructure, Development and Environment Department or designate, or any individual holding any successor position with responsibility for similar matters;

“Informal Capacity Check” means an ad hoc water and/or wastewater servicing availability assessment of plant and linear servicing capacity requested for a property in the absence of pre-consultation, formal Planning Application, or building permit or Post-Secondary Institution construction project;

“Planning Act” means the *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13, as amended;

“Planning Application” means an application to the City or Committee of Adjustment for consent, variance, Official Plan amendment, Zoning By-law amendment, draft plan of subdivision, site plan, community planning permit;

“Post Secondary Institution” means the post-secondary institutions to which Section 62.0.2(1) of the Planning Act applies, as specified in Section 62.0.2(2) of the Planning Act;

“Proponent” means a property owner or authorized agent acting on behalf of a property owner;

“Servicing Allocation” means an arrangement to have specified servicing capacity allocated and reserved for a proposed development for a specified period in accordance with this Policy;

“Substantial Performance” shall be determined through calculation of substantial performance as defined in the *Construction Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. C.30, as amended;

“Water Supply Plant Capacity” means the amount of available unallocated water supply capacity in the City’s water supply plants as defined in the City’s water plant capacity tracking model;

“Wastewater Treatment Plant Capacity” means the amount of available unallocated wastewater treatment capacity in the City’s Water Resource Recovery Center as defined in the City’s wastewater plant capacity tracking model.

Delegated Authority

1. City Council has decision-making authority over the City of Guelph Water and Wastewater System and water and wastewater capacity allocation and related investments.
2. Council has delegated the authority to allocate and reserve water and/or wastewater capacity, and to approve extensions to reservation periods, to the Deputy CAO, Infrastructure, Development and Environment, or designate.
3. The Deputy CAO, Infrastructure Development and Environment has designated the General Manager of Planning and Building Services to administer this Policy.
4. Should the Proponent disagree with a decision of the General Manager of Planning and Building Services under this Policy, the Proponent may submit a written appeal to the Deputy CAO, Infrastructure, Development and Environment for consideration.

5. If a Proponent has appealed a decision of the General Manager of Planning and Building Services not to extend a reservation period, the Servicing Allocation that is the subject of the appeal will continue to be reserved until the appeal is finally resolved by decision of the Deputy CAO, Infrastructure, Development and Environment issued in writing to the Proponent.
6. In accordance with section 86.1(3) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, decisions of the Deputy CAO, Infrastructure, Development and Environment are final.

General Policy Terms

7. Proponents seeking Servicing Allocation are required to complete Formal Capacity Checks of all servicing systems to confirm and hold necessary servicing for development needs for their planned project and to ensure required servicing needs are represented in the City's allocation tracking models.
8. Proponents completing pre-consultation for a Planning Application or requesting new or increased servicing to lands shall submit a Planning Application or building permit application to the City, identifying their servicing requirements, and requesting that the City complete a Formal Capacity Check.
9. Proponents may also request Informal Capacity Checks of Engineering and Transportation Services outside of the building permit or Planning Application processes.
10. Upon receipt of a request for Formal Capacity Check or Informal Capacity Check, and payment of applicable fees and charges, City staff will perform the Formal Capacity Check or Informal Capacity Check and provide the Proponent with outcomes of the servicing availability assessment.
11. Capacity checks shall assess the following:
 - a. Availability of existing Water Supply Plant Capacity and/or Wastewater Treatment Plant Capacity, for the specific service area; and/or
 - b. Availability of current linear water and wastewater systems to support the proposed development.
12. Following completion of a Formal Capacity Check for a site plan, draft plan of subdivision, community planning permit or building permit, and confirmation of sufficient servicing capacity in both the plants and linear systems as determined by the City and confirmed to the Proponent in writing, the Servicing Allocation will be reserved by the Planning Application or building permit file number in the City's allocation tracking models for a reservation period the lesser of:
 - a. 4 years (48 months) from the date of completion of the Formal Capacity Check and confirmation of servicing capacity, in writing from the City to the Proponent; and
 - b. 3 years (36 months) from the date of full execution of Site Plan Control Agreement or Subdivision Agreement or date of issuance of community planning permit or building permit.

- 13.If a Formal Capacity Check is requested by a Proponent for a single servicing system, such as water linear system only or wastewater linear system only, the capacity assessment will be limited to that system and any resulting Servicing Allocation will also be limited to that system and recorded in the City's allocation tracking models.
- 14.Completion of an Informal Capacity Check and respective outcomes reflect the City's ability to service a property at the current place and time and based information provided by the Proponent and does not allocate, reserve, guarantee or approve servicing for the property, proposed development, or any other land use into the future.
- 15.Water and Wastewater Servicing capacity is allocated on a "First Come First Served" basis based on date of Formal Capacity Check completion and servicing availability confirmation by the City in writing to the Proponent.
- 16.Servicing Allocation is specific to Planning Application or building permit and property, and recorded by City file number, and is non-transferable between properties/persons/corporations.
- 17.Servicing Allocation for community planning permits and site plans shall be defined in conditions of applicable permit or agreements and be subject to a lapsing period of 3 years (36 months) from the date of full execution of the applicable agreement, within which the Proponent is required to reach Substantial Performance of the on-site servicing for the site plan block. Failure to meet this milestone within the lapsing period will result in lapsing of Servicing Allocation.
- 18.Servicing Allocation for plans of subdivisions shall be defined in conditions of Draft Plan of Subdivision approval and be subject to a lapsing period of 3 years (36 months) from the date of full execution of the subdivision agreement within which the Proponent is required to reach Substantial Performance of on-site servicing. Failure to meet this milestone within the lapsing period will result in lapsing of Servicing Allocation.
- 19.** Servicing Allocations for building permits not associated with another Planning Application shall be defined by the City in writing to the Proponent and be subject to a lapsing period of 3 years (36 months) from the date of permit issuance, within which the Proponent is required to reach Substantial Performance of on-site servicing. Failure to meet this milestone within the lapsing period will result in lapsing of Servicing Allocation.

Economic Development New Community Investment Capacity Checks

- 20.The General Manager of Economic Development and Tourism may request the completion of an Informal Capacity Check or Formal Capacity Check for lands to support a Community Economic Development Investment Proposal, to evaluate and confirm the servicing capacity in both the plants and linear systems needed for investment proposals.
- 21.If a Formal Capacity Check completed in support of Community Economic Development Investment Proposals confirms servicing availability, the

General Manager of Economic Development and Tourism may request that Servicing Allocation be held until the business investment is secured to a maximum term of 12 months from the date of Formal Capacity Check completion and confirmation of servicing availability.

Post-Secondary Institutions

22. Post-Secondary Institutions which do not have a legal requirement to obtain site plan approval by the City for development on post-secondary lands are required to conduct Formal Capacity Checks under this Policy to confirm available servicing requirements for planned construction projects in order to reserve Servicing Allocation.
23. The submission of building permit applications, or issuance of a building permit, for a proposed Post-Secondary development alone does not ensure or guarantee the availability or the approval of servicing capacity for the proposal except in accordance with this Policy.

Use it or Lose it

24. Servicing Allocation shall expire in accordance with the lapsing provisions specified in the applicable permit or agreement conditions.
25. The General Manager of Planning and Building Services shall provide notice to the Proponent of Servicing Allocations which are at the risk of lapsing, not less than 6 months before the date of expiry of the Servicing Allocation.
26. Should the Servicing Allocation expire, capacity will no longer be allocated and the Proponent would be required to re-apply in accordance with this Policy. Once a Servicing Allocation has expired, the General Manager of Planning and Building Services, shall, in whole or in part, release the capacity and may reallocate servicing capacity to another application.

Capacity Allocation Extension Requests

27. Proponents may request of the General Manager of Planning and Building Services an extension to the lapsing date of Servicing Allocation, up to 60 days in advance of the lapsing date, should construction activities commence and require more time to reach Substantial Performance.
28. The General Manager of Planning and Building Services will evaluate all extension requests received up to and including 60 days in advance of the lapsing date consistent with the following criteria:
 - a. Demonstration of firm commitments and feasibility of application to complete construction.
 - b. Extent of new community housing advanced by the proposal
 - c. Job creation coming from investment
 - d. Alignment of application with City's strategic growth objectives/nodes
 - e. Conformity to the goals and objectives of the City's Official Plan.

29. The General Manager of Planning and Building Services will provide their extension decision in writing to the Proponent.

Monitoring and Reporting

30. Environmental Services staff shall monitor plant capacity in water supply and wastewater treatment by individual water supply and wastewater treatment processes.
31. The available servicing capacity shall be reported on an annual basis to City Council as part of the annual Growth Management and Affordable Housing Monitoring Report.
32. Notice will also be provided by the General Manager of Environmental Services to City Council should water supply or wastewater treatment unallocated plant servicing capacity come to reach 10% or less of total water or wastewater rated treatment capacity for these respective processes.

Policy Administration

33. The General Manager of Engineering and Transportation Services, or approved designate, shall be responsible for maintaining the City's water and wastewater system linear servicing models and conducting Formal Capacity Checks and Informal Capacity Checks upon request.
34. The General Manager of Environmental Services, or approved designate, shall be responsible for maintaining the City's water and wastewater plant capacity tracking models and conducting Formal Capacity Checks and Informal Capacity Checks upon request.
35. The City may implement fees to recover costs associated with applications for Formal Capacity Checks and Informal Capacity Checks.
36. Proponents shall pay applicable costs at the time of application for Formal Capacity Check and Informal Capacity Check as stated in the City's Fees and Charges By-law
37. This Policy shall be reviewed, at a minimum once every five (5) years as best practice, or more frequently if changes are required at the discretion of the General Manager of Planning and Building Services.