



Town of George's Brook-Milton

Policy Regarding Connections to the Water System

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1. BACKGROUND & PURPOSE:

George's Brook-Milton was incorporated relatively recently, in May 2018. The community is small, and the population has contracted by about six per cent between the most recent population censuses to around 730 at the moment.

The Town inherited a deeply inadequate water system, and public buildings and spaces were in a state of significant disrepair.

Councillors' priorities have been to set up an effective administration, maintain and improve Water and Fire services, provide better-value waste collection services and stabilize and enhance community assets ... all while trying to ensure that the cost per household under the new Council remained comparable to the cost under the former Local Service District system.

As a result, Council has devised a policy to try to manage connections to the water system in an even-handed way and provide the most effective support where possible.

The intent of this Policy is to:

- a. Make the best use of taxpayers' funds and avoid overburdening residents with unnecessary taxes, fees and charges; and
- b. Allow Council to be transparent, making it clear when, how and why people and properties may connect to the community's water system.

2. GUIDELINES AND PRACTICES:

To this end, the following Policy shall be followed by Councillors.

(Where the word 'Town' is used, it means throughout 'the **Town Council**, the **Town Staff** and/or the **engineers, contractors and/or subcontractors authorized to represent the Town.**')

- a. All applications to connect to the water system of the Town of George's Brook-Milton shall be made in writing.
- b. Council reserves the right to charge a fee to process an application to connect to the water system of the Town of George's Brook-Milton.
- c. No connection may be made to the water system of the Town of George's Brook-Milton without Council's prior written permission.
- d. Council reserves the right to disconnect water supply to properties where written approval for connection has not been given, or where fees or taxes are in arrears.
- e. The Town will assess each individual installation on its details, but when putting in **planned, new infrastructure**, will generally aim to sustain the cost of installing the water service to each house, business and/or lot of land. This commonly involves installing a saddle and corporation stop, installing a service line to the boundary of the private property and installing a curb stop, box and rod just inside the marked or estimated property boundary.
- f. The cost of getting water from a Town-installed curb stop to the house or other building will not generally be sustained by the Town and will need to be paid by the resident, property owner or developer.
- g. Where a resident or developer wishes to install a water service, the Town will specify the materials (e.g., 'one-inch diameter Munipex water line'), conditions, standards and timing of the work *from the Town infrastructure right to and into the property (house, office, etc.) concerned*. The purpose of this is to ensure compatibility with the Town infrastructure (actual or planned) and to minimize inconvenience to other service users.
- h. With regards to *timing*, contractors and individuals are reminded that water systems work can be disruptive to local residents, labour costs more on weekends and holidays, and parts can be difficult to obtain over weekends and holidays if unexpected problems are encountered. Contractors and individuals undertaking planned (as compared with emergency) work on water systems are required to provide **ten working days' notice** of their start time and date. Contractors and individuals must not work at unsocial hours, and will not - unless specifically agreed with the Town Council - undertake work overnight, over weekends or public holidays, or start work on a Friday, or over a weekend or public holiday. If work is undertaken without prior notice or approval, and/or takes place at these times, Council reserves the right to charge a callout fee, and/or bill the contractor and/or individual for any costs incurred by the Town

(e.g., the full costs of labour, including any overtime pay and/or callout pay; special trips to obtain parts; etc.) and to not connect, or disconnect, the water supply to the property involved.

- i. The Town will specify the type of corporation stop, curb stop, waterline, water shut-off valve and pressure regulation valve to be installed, *whether or not they are installed on municipal or private property*. For items installed on private property, the Town still reserves the right to review and approve, or not approve, the work based on the advice of its authorized engineers and/or contractors or other qualified installers. The Town reserves the right to similarly specify any other criteria (e.g., the routing of water lines, additional insulation, etc.) necessary for a safe and durable installation. In the event that the Town does not approve an installation, it reserves the right to not connect the service line to the Town infrastructure, or to disconnect or shut off the service from Town infrastructure.
- j. To allow freedom of choice and avoid favouring one contractor over another, a resident or developer may select the contractor to install a water service line. HOWEVER, the Town will:
 - i. specify the standards and materials required for the connection, and
 - ii. reserves the right to decline a particular contractor where there are concerns about quality or delivery (including levels of insurance), and
 - iii. deny, withhold or disconnect water service if the required standards are not met.
- k. Where a business, developer or resident wishes to connect their property to a water main that is already installed (rather than being planned or in the process of being installed), the cost of that installation will be covered by them. If the water connection system is installed to standards acceptable to the Town, it will consider adopting that infrastructure up to and including the curb stop, but not beyond, and endeavouring to maintain and repair it as necessary thereafter. If the installation is not acceptable to the Town, it will not adopt the infrastructure or maintain it.
- l. The Town's responsibility for maintaining and repairing water service infrastructure ends with (but includes) the curb stop installed at the property boundary. Council recognizes, however, that people need water and that financial hardship may mean that they cannot afford to pay for essential repairs to water infrastructure between the curb stop and their house. Given the community's aged water system, durable upgrades (such as the replacement of a service line) are also often more desirable than cheap or DIY repairs to old pipes that will likely leak again. Leaking infrastructure on private property costs the Town and residents water, time and money and may jeopardize the overall water supply and even pose a health risk. Carrying out repairs and upgrades while Council has operators and equipment nearby (saving on float charges) can

therefore save everyone money. In seeking to maintain water service to an occupied residential property where the residents/owners are unable through hardship to pay outright for the necessary repairs or desired upgrades, Council reserves the right to commission and pay for the work and offer deferred or delayed payment or an instalment payment plan, with or without interest, *at its discretion*. In doing so, Council reserves the right to choose the contractor.

- m. The portions of the work carried out for the Council up to and including the curb stop for a given property will be itemised, recorded and billed by the contractors separately from that work carried out beyond the curb stop to the residence concerned *even where Council is, at least initially, paying for both*. Council will seek itemized invoices to evidence the separate works. The Council's *Code of Conduct* will be followed to ensure that no conflict of interest occurs in the application of this option.
- n. It is stressed that Council paying for repairs or upgrades and then re-charging a resident is reserved as an OPTION and that option is considered and exercised at Council's discretion through its process of Special and Regular Meetings of Council. In the event that a consumer does not wish to pay for the repairs to the system between the curb stop and their property, Council reserves the right to cut off the supply of water (to avoid loss of water, damage to property or the risk to people and property through contamination, flooding, freezing, slipping, electrocution and similar consequences of water leaks).
- o. Where a new water main is being installed, the Town MAY or MAY NOT pay the cost of providing service lines to the properties it passes, depending upon:
 - i. whether the work will disconnect their existing water services and
 - ii. the priority of the project/funding and
 - iii. the availability of funds.

EXAMPLE 1:

*When the community secured capital funding for a new water main along Trinity Drive ('Phase 1'), the priority was to get water from George's Brook as far into Milton as possible. Curb stops off the new main line were installed to the edges of the properties that it passed and their existing service lines connected to the new curb stops (i.e., at Town expense) ... **but only where the works disconnected their previous service**. Several other properties received their water via a submain that was left unaffected by the installation of the new main. New service lines and curb stops were installed from the new main to the edge of the*

properties it passed (to take advantage of the situation), but, because the installation did not affect their water supply - and the funding was to get water to parts of Milton where the supply was in jeopardy - these properties were not connected at Town expense to the new curb stops.

- p. Where a business, developer or resident wishes to re-route Town water infrastructure (e.g., relocate a watermain in order to build a house, etc.), the Town shall specify the standard of the work and materials, and the business, developer or resident is entirely responsible for the cost of the work.
- q. The Council reserves the right to set and charge a fee to switch curb stops on and off for seasonal isolation of properties or to allow repairs and maintenance to take place. These fees may vary, depending upon whether the shut-off is required inside or outside normal working hours.
- r. The Council reserves the right to postpone consideration of applications for water connections or services until an applicant is in good standing with Town taxes and fees.
- s. This policy may be publicized on Town media.

Morgan Ell. Mayor

Bruce Phillips Deputy Mayor

Paul Richards Town Clerk-Manager
R. P. RICHARDS

01 AUGUST 2023 Date