

Adopted by Council at its meeting held February 1, 2016 [CR72/2016]

/AC

Windsor, Ontario February 1, 2016

REPORT NO. 338 of the
ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC SAFETY
STANDING COMMITTEE
of its meeting held January 20, 2016

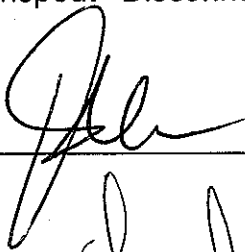
Present: Councillor Fred Francis
Councillor Chris Holt
Councillor Bill Marra (Chair)
Councillor Hilary Payne
Councillor Paul Borrelli

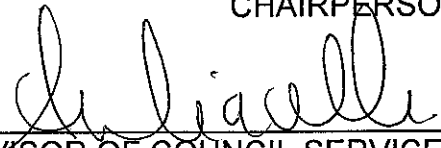
That the following recommendations of the Environment, Transportation and Public Safety Standing Committee **BE APPROVED**:

Moved by Councillor Holt, seconded by Councillor Payne,
That the report of the City Engineer dated December 8, 2015 entitled
"Response to CQ61-2015 – Downspout Disconnection Program" **BE
RECEIVED** for information.
Carried.

S 65/2015 SW2015

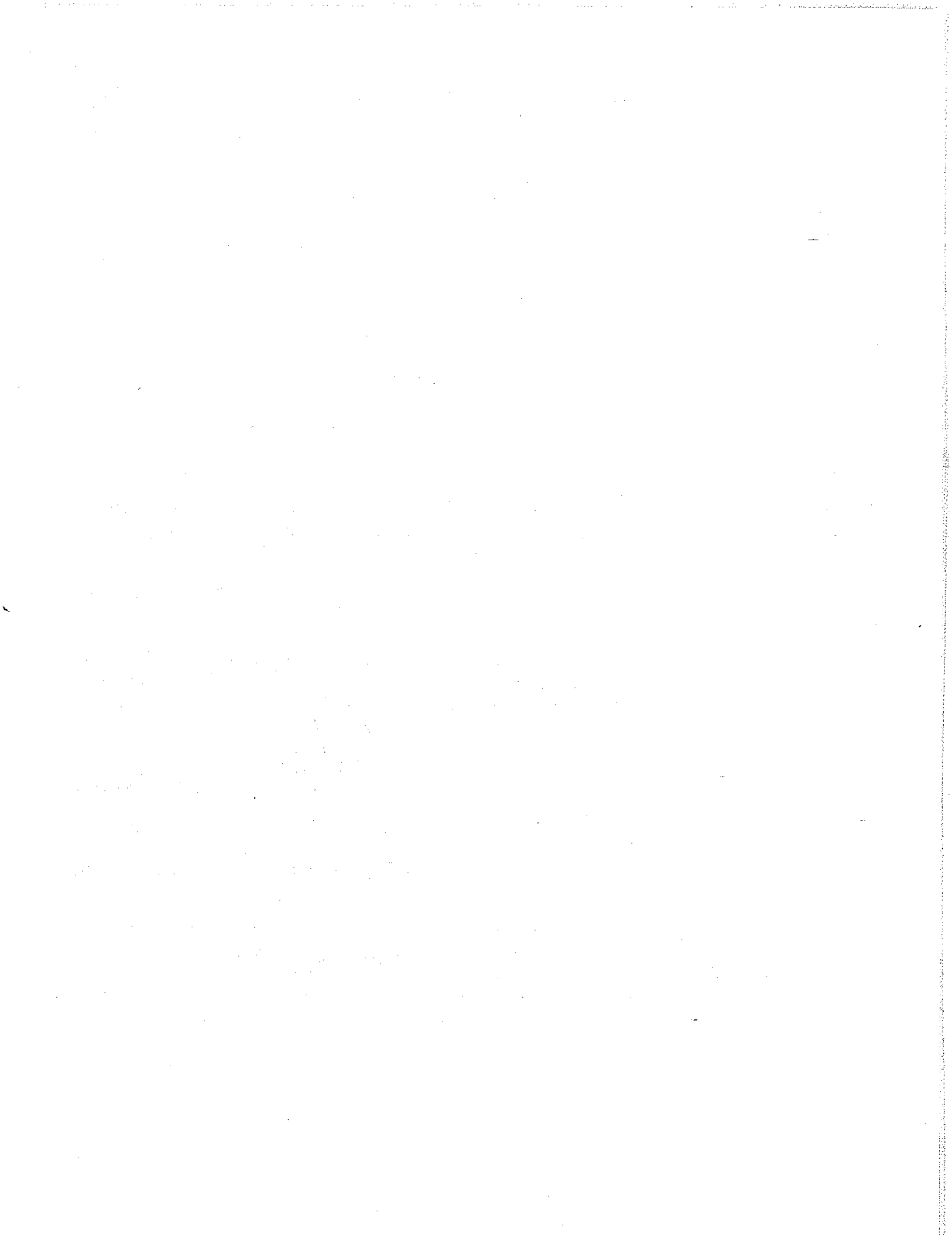
Clerk's Note: The report of the City Engineer dated December 8, 2015 entitled
"Response to CQ61-2015 – Downspout Disconnection Program" is
attached as background information.



CHAIRPERSON


SUPERVISOR OF COUNCIL SERVICES

NOTIFICATION:	
NAME	CONTACT INFORMATION



MISSION STATEMENT

"Our City is built on relationships – between citizens and their government, businesses and public institutions, city and region – all interconnected, mutually supportive, and focused on the brightest future we can create together"

REPORT #: S 65/2015	Report Date: 12/8/2015
Author's Contact: Sergio Colucci Engineer II 519-255-6257 ext. 6336 (PW 5075)	Date to Council: December 23, 2015
	Clerk's File #: SW2015

To: Mayor and Members of City Council

Subject: Response to CQ61-2015 – Downspout Disconnection Program

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report on CQ61-2015 **BE RECEIVED** by Committee for information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: N/A

BACKGROUND:

The following Council Question was raised at the September 21, 2015 meeting of City Council:

CQ61-2015: Asks that administration report back to Council outlining the pros and cons of moving from a voluntary downspout disconnection program to a mandatory one.

The practice of disconnecting downspouts is a simple and inexpensive method of reducing the amount of storm water entering the sewer system during a rainstorm. In addition to the direct benefit of reducing the load on the sewer system and a proportionate reduction in the risk of basement flooding, indirect benefits include reduced water to the sewage treatment plants and reduction in treatment costs, as well as the environmental benefit of ground water recharge.

The City began its voluntary City-wide Downspout Disconnection Program in January 2012. The program is currently free of charge, voluntary, and open to all residential

homes interested in disconnecting their downspout(s). An information package on the benefits of disconnection and the process of having the work done is sent to homeowners. Homeowners are encouraged to call 311 to register for the program. A combination of City staff and hired contractors perform the disconnection work. All costs to perform the work are absorbed by the City (Project ID 7069013).

Since 2012, we have received an average of 1500 calls per year requesting to register for the downspout disconnection program. Of these 1500 calls, we are able to disconnect approx. 55% of those registrants. Attached is a map showing the areas of the City that we have targeted as of October 2015 and the location of all the disconnections completed under the program since 2012.

DISCUSSION:

Currently, two locations within the City are designated as mandatory disconnection areas. This is only implemented as sewer rehabilitation is undertaken due to strong resistance from homeowners.

Once contacted by the resident, each home is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In some instances, disconnection is not possible due to flat terrain of the area, proximity of adjacent homes or the disconnection would cause tripping hazards for the homeowners. On a typical mail out, participation by homeowners averages between 8-10% of the residents notified.

Benefits to Mandatory Disconnection

- Decrease in basement flooding
- Decrease in sewage treatment costs
- Extra capacity in existing sewers (i.e. reduced need to build storm relief sewers)
- Environmental benefit of ground water recharge
- Cost-effective method to deal with basement flooding

Negatives to Mandatory Disconnection

- Increase in surface flooding complaints (311, Building Department impacts)
- Possible flooding of adjacent properties
- Resident resistance to entering onto their private property
- Additional staffing requirement to administer program
- Additional cost to administer the program

Currently, the Building Department investigates on average 235 surface flooding complaints a year; most of the complaints are a result of property owners complaining about their neighbours not managing their storm water discharge from roof downspouts. Mandatory downspout disconnection will increase the amount of downspout discharge

onto the ground; as a result, the increased complaints will put pressures on response times to all complaints investigated by the Building Department. A mandatory program would also divert Operations and Engineering resources from other activities to properly administer the program.

The Downspout Disconnection Program is currently voluntary and the expenditures related to disconnections are charged to the Capital budget. Should Council wish to implement a mandatory program, it would need to discuss increasing the Capital Budget to handle the anticipated increase in disconnections. In addition, Council should confirm whether or not these costs should continue to be paid by the City or transferred to the property owner (full or partial).

Administration believes that the program, in its current voluntary state, is effective, however, an increase in disconnections could be achieved through a more aggressive approach to promoting the voluntary program. This could be achieved by promoting the free program through local activity guides, newspapers, and social media outlets.

Administration will review the effectiveness of the program every 2 to 3 years to track progress and identify strengths and weaknesses.

The current voluntary Downspout Disconnection Program is part of a larger, more comprehensive program of measures to mitigate basement flooding. These include:

- CCTV of sewers;
- Smoke testing;
- Small sewer repair;
- Cyclical sewer cleaning;
- PDC Replacement Program;
- Backwater valve and sump pump subsidy;
- Street Sweeping;
- Flow Monitoring and hydraulic modeling; and
- Updating IDF design curve.

RISK ANALYSIS:

The current voluntary Downspout Disconnection Program is an effective, inexpensive tool to help mitigate basement flooding with very little risk. While a mandatory disconnection program would have tangible technical benefits, the implementation and public resistance would be a significant challenge.

FINANCIAL MATTERS:

Expenditures related to the disconnection of downspouts are made as a charge to the Capital budget (7069013). The cost of a single disconnection, excluding administrative costs, generally ranges from \$300-\$500, depending on site conditions. This cost may escalate if redirection of eaves troughs is required. As of October, 2015, we have spent \$1,120,437 with a total allocation of \$ 3,056,393.

CONSULTATIONS:

Dwayne Dawson, Executive Director of Operations
Mike Gertsakis, Supervisor of Inspection Services
Wes Hicks, Senior Manager, Infrastructure and Geomatics/Deputy City Engineer
Andrew Lewis, Research Analyst Coordinator
Mike Mazza, Maintenance Supervisor
Phong Nguy, Manager of Contracts, Field Services & Maintenance
Rob Slater, Executive Initiatives Coordinator
Rob Vani, Manager of Inspections (West), Planning and Building Services

CONCLUSION:

The Downspout Disconnection Program is an effective tool in helping to mitigate basement flooding. Administration recommends an increase in the promotional activities of the current downspout disconnection program to encourage further interest and increased disconnections. Administration does not recommend mandatory disconnection at this time.

PLANNING ACT MATTERS: N/A

APPENDICES:

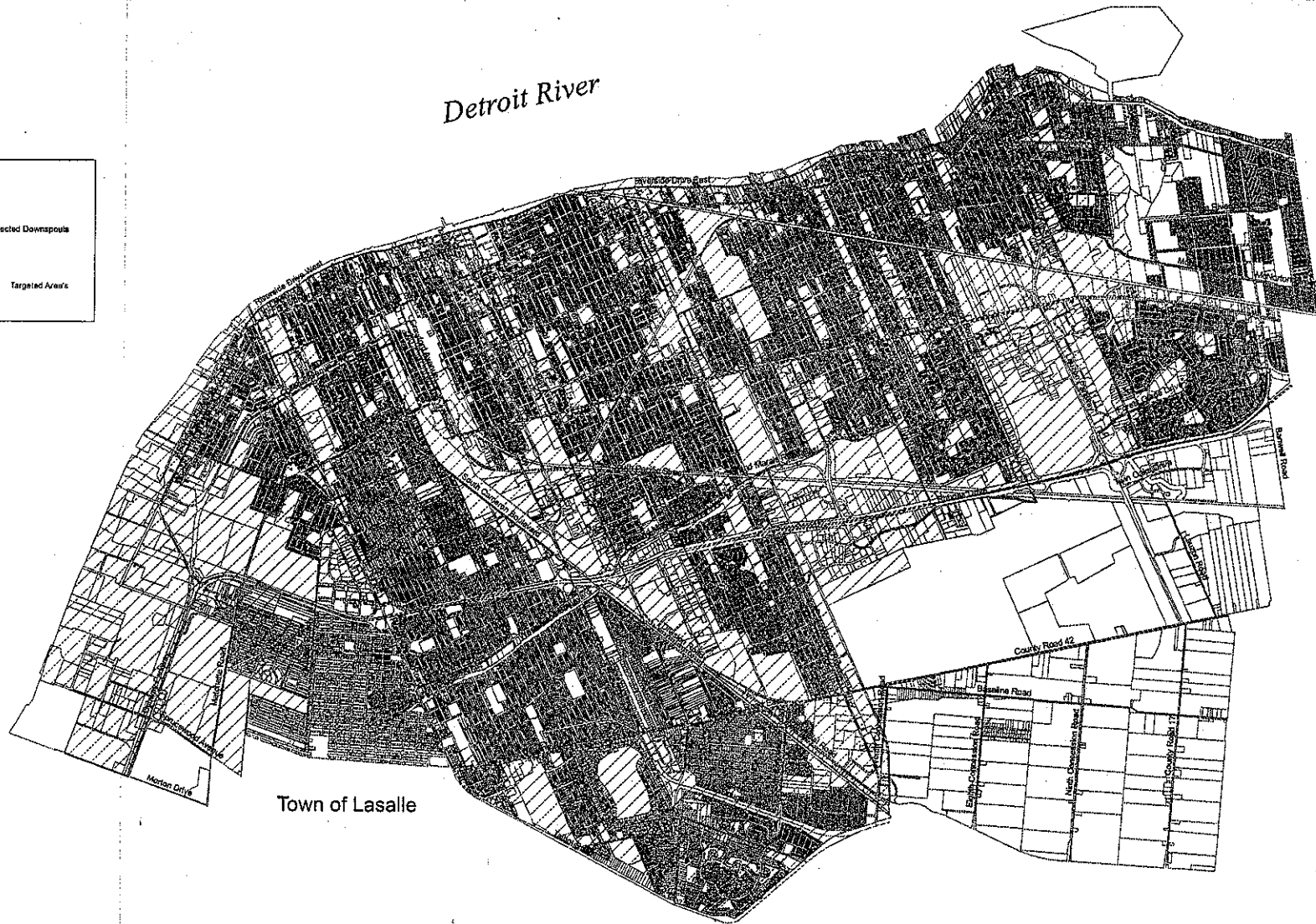
1. Downspout Disconnection Map

City of Windsor - Downspout Disconnection Program



Legend

- ★ Disconnected Downspouts
- ▨ Targeted Areas



Town of Lakeshore

Town of Lasalle



Created by Engineering - Development & Geomatics

0 500 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Meters

October, 2015
E-161

