



Date: August 11, 2025

To: Mayor and Council

Author: Shaun Martinho, Director of Public Operations

RE: Ruthven Sanitary System Capacity Update

RECOMMENDED ACTION

That Council **approve** By-law 46-2025, being a By-law to amend By-law 24-2025, passed to establish Interim Control on Lands within the Corporation of the Town of Kingsville, to remove restrictions and rescind prohibitions on the issuance of building permits on residential and industrial buildings, except for any requiring new plans of subdivision;

And that Council **directs** Administration to continue restricting the issuance of building permits for new residential or industrial plans of subdivision, or new agricultural or greenhouse operations, to prevent additional discharge into the Ruthven Sanitary Sewer System.

BACKGROUND

In early 2025, Administration completed an investigation that revealed the sanitary sewer system and pump station in Ruthven are operating beyond their current design capacity. In response to these findings, Dillon Consulting Inc. (Dillon) was hired to conduct a comprehensive review of all system parameters and to report on options for improving capacity. While potential solutions are being explored and implemented, the report submitted by Dillon strongly recommends that any future development in Ruthven requiring sanitary services be temporarily halted. Consequently, Council approved By-law 24-2025, being a By-law to establish Interim Control on lands within the Corporation of the Town of Kingsville, which prohibits the issuance of any new building permits that would result in additional discharge into the Ruthven sanitary sewer system.

DISCUSSION

One of the recommendations in the Dillon report and included in the approved By-law was that Administration take immediate steps to reduce flow rates and to improve pump station capacity in Ruthven. To date, the following improvements have been made:

Pump Station Capacity Improvements

- An oversized pump was rented and installed in the pump station. Testing has revealed that it has resulted in a 25% increase in performance, with flow rates increasing from 32 L/s to 40 L/s.
- A large, specialized pump, previously installed at the pump station, achieved flow rates of 59 L/s. We have also rented this pump to be used as a backup to the primary pumps.
- A contingency plan has been implemented for extreme weather events. A pump truck company has been contracted to remain on standby with a contingent of fleet that can be dispatched to the pump station quickly in the event of an emergency.

Flow Reduction

On May 5, 2025, Council passed By-law 28-2025, which regulates the connection to and discharge into Kingsville's Sanitary Sewer System by greenhouses and greenhouse premises. Under the By-law, connected greenhouses are required to obtain a discharge permit and comply with conditions designed to reduce their discharge into the sanitary sewers.

So far, representatives from all connected greenhouses have attended meetings to discuss compliance with By-law 28-2025 and have been granted temporary permits while they work on reducing their discharge into the system.

During the initial meetings, some greenhouse operators expressed interest in receiving billing data from the new wastewater meters before making significant investments. To date, we have installed six (6) meters, with an additional twelve (12) expected to arrive this week. The data obtained from the installed meters is promising and will assist both the Town and greenhouse operators in making informed decisions to reduce peak flows.

The initial temporary permits will begin to expire on August 20, 2025. Notices to schedule follow-up meetings to outline progress will be sent to representatives of the greenhouses thirty (30) days before each meeting. According to By-law 28-2025, if greenhouse operators cannot demonstrate proposed improvement in reducing their discharge, they will receive a disconnection notice.

Next Steps

In partnership with Ontario Clean Water Agency, work is underway to install pressure sustaining valves to improve performance of the sanitary force main associated with the Ruthven Pump Station. In addition, Dillion Consulting Inc has been retained to design permanent modifications to the pump station to increase its total rated capacity.

Given the steps taken to immediately improve pump station capacity and the contingencies put in place in case of an emergency, Administration recommends amending By-law 24-2005 by removing provisions that prohibit residential and industrial development in existing plans of subdivision.

It is important to note that this exemption is being recommended solely due to the temporary measures being implemented. The Ruthven sanitary sewer system is still overcapacity, and there remains a risk that the system could be overwhelmed during extreme weather events. Finding permanent solutions to increase capacity at the pump station and to reduce flows is a high priority and must be accomplished before fully rescinding Interim Control By-law 24-2025.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Temporary Measures:

A large 45 hp pump was rented and installed at the pump station for \$7,500 per month. Additionally, a submersible hydraulic backup pump was rented for \$17,750.50 per month. These measures will remain in place until permanent upgrades to the pump station are completed. The ongoing monthly rental costs have been incorporated into the capital budget for permanent improvements at the pump station.

Permanent Capital Improvements:

As of now, Council has approved a total of \$330,000 for the purchase and installation of Pressure Sustaining Valves. These valves are intended to improve flow rates in the sanitary force main linked to the Ruthven Pump Station. Additionally, \$1.3 million has been approved for upgrades to the pump station, which will increase its overall rated capacity.

CONSULTATIONS

Senior Management Team

PREPARED BY:



Shaun Martinho, HBSc., MBA
Director of Public Operations

REVIEWED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Norton', written in a cursive style.

John Norton
Chief Administrative Officer