

For Immediate Release

## **New Study Shows Major Investment Needed in Water and Sewer Infrastructure**

Cambridge, Ontario. December 4, 2009...Cambridge City Council will receive a report on Monday regarding the City's water and sewer operations that will point to a need for investment in the infrastructure. For the first time ever, staff has undertaken an independent study to look at the design of rate structures to ensure the model still works for the community.

"Costs for water and wastewater services have targeted the short term needs and have inadequately addressed long term sustainability needs for infrastructure replacement," says Ed Kovacs, Commissioner of Transportation and Public Works. "There is a significant amount of infrastructure that is now overdue for replacement."

In the past, rates were based on historical trends and future growth forecasts which the study shows is outdated. Currently, over two-thirds of the water and wastewater budget goes to the Region of Waterloo for treatment and supply services.

The report estimates that the backlog of infrastructure upgrades is over \$71.8 million dollars with the lion's share needed for water infrastructure. The new recommendation is to raise water and sewer rates on average about 7.3 percent beginning in February 2010. For typical residential customer, this represents about 9 cents per day. "What the rate adjustment means is that the City can address the immediate needs of the system and look to long-term solutions to deliver the services our community needs," Kovacs says.

The study provides a balance between affordability, fairness, conservation and improving revenue stability to ensure the system investments that are critically needed are made in the most efficient way. There will be public meeting on Monday December 7<sup>th</sup> which will include a presentation on the report and an opportunity for residents to learn more about the process.

"While some of the benefits are long-term, targeted investment improves water quality, enhances fire protection, increases road safety and secures the supply of water and sewer reliability," says Kovacs. "Our ultimate objective is to ensure that we maintain our water and wastewater infrastructure in a sustainable manner that ensures the delivery of safe, potable water for present and future generations in the most cost effective manner."

The City of Cambridge is one of the fastest growing areas in the country. It is strategically located astride highway 401 in Southwestern Ontario, part of Canada's Technology Triangle. In 2009, the population reached over 126,000 people. With a multicultural mix and a strong foundation of support services, Cambridge has a diverse economic base with leading industries in manufacturing, automotive, high technology, pharmaceutical, business and financial services and hospitality/retail. The Corporation of the City of Cambridge is an employer with a work environment that offers the opportunity to provide service to the community through creativity and innovation, and with opportunities for career growth and advancement.

For more information on the area or the corporation visit [www.cambridge.ca](http://www.cambridge.ca)

The City of Cambridge press room is located at

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