

**Belgravia Community Consultation on a Proposed Storm Tunnel
Held August 16, 2006 at Belgravia Community Hall**

CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Attendance: 12

Presenter: Wayne Pelz, Program Manager, Design and Construction, Drainage Services,
City of Edmonton

Presentation

Mr. Pelz opened his presentation by reminding meeting participants that initially the recommended route for the storm tunnel ran west from 114 Street below 71 Avenue and then northwest on 71A Avenue to the river at an existing outfall. He noted public concerns at February's consultation session with residents included the tunnel's proposed alignment, its impact on homes, ground stability, and reducing the risk of flooding in Belgravia.

Since February, additional engineering studies and risk and value assessments demonstrated that a tunnel route that goes around the community rather than through it would be feasible and as economical. Reducing the grade of the tunnel permitted an earlier obstacle – an existing sewer – to be overcome.

The new option would see the tunnel begin at 114 Street, running underneath 71 Avenue until the avenue turned north. The tunnel would leave the avenue at that point and continue underground until it emerged at the riverbank. The level, treeless ground conditions at that point offers construction advantages over running the tunnel to exit at an existing outfall, which was also considered as an option.

While this option would require the construction of a new outfall adjacent to pastureland east of the Whitemud Equine Centre, Mr. Pelz did not foresee any ownership or environmental issues in getting approval to do so. He cautioned, however, that discussions with these stakeholders are preliminary at this point.

Mr. Pelz said the City would like to move forward with the option of tunnelling on the southern edge of Belgravia, if it is agreeable to community residents and other stakeholders. It is hoped tunnel construction can begin in March, 2007 with completion in the late fall of 2008.

He noted that the storm tunnel would provide some indirect flood relief for Belgravia. Other future direct improvements to reduce flood risk in the neighbourhood include:

- Upgrade the storm sewer at 115 Street / 71 Ave. to help drain surface water faster and limit the amount of water that pools in low spots after a storm.
- Disconnect a catch basin that is inappropriately draining into a sanitary sewer line at 74 Avenue / lane east of 118A St., and connect it to a nearby storm sewer line.

- Increase the size of a sanitary sewer line at 71A Avenue to eliminate a bottleneck and increase flow capacity.

These projects are part of a \$140M flood prevention improvement package that was recently approved by City Council. Scheduling of when various projects will be done is still being finalized. However, those projects considered of critical importance and that provide the greatest relief to the most residents will be done first. The storm tunnel, which provides flood relief to a number of neighbourhoods, is one of those priority projects.

Mr. Pelz noted that some planned storm system changes in Belgravia would be ineffective without the storm tunnel so they would likely not occur until after the storm tunnel is operational.

Input and feedback from residents

Residents supported the new recommended alignment and had very few questions. They were eager to see flood relief for their community as soon as possible and encouraged Drainage Services to fix isolated problems such as the incorrectly connected catchbasin right away.

Next Steps

Drainage Services will move to preliminary and detailed design of the new alignment and obtain necessary stakeholder and regulatory approvals. If all goes well, construction will likely begin in March 2007. Interested individuals will receive updates on the project's process through direct mail (for those who attended the consultation sessions) and the community league. Any comments, suggestions or concerns can be forwarded to Wayne Pelz at wayne.pelz@edmonton.ca or by calling 496-5535.