

County of Frontenac
Official Plan Amendment #3: Communal Servicing
Draft Text for the Public Meeting on October 4, 2023

4.2.1.4.2 Communal Servicing

Communal services are systems that provide water and wastewater treatment to clusters of residences or businesses. They can be a less expensive alternative to centralized municipal services and a more environmentally friendly alternative to private on-site services. However, perceived obstacles have slowed the implementation of communal services in many jurisdictions. A key benefit of communal services is that they represent alternative water and wastewater servicing approaches that can provide the County and Townships with the innovative technology and flexibility to accommodate growth and achieve planning, environmental, and economic objectives.

Frontenac County has completed a Communal Servicing Study to demonstrate that the perceived obstacles - engineering, financial, risk management, planning - are just that, and to equip Frontenac with the tools necessary to enable redevelopment and new development on communal services. Communal water and wastewater servicing (also known as decentralized servicing) offers the potential to allow for new development and infill across the County, including on village and hamlet main streets, addressing some of the challenges associated with centralized municipal services and with private on-site services. Most importantly, communal servicing has the potential to support more compact, land-efficient development than is possible with private servicing, at a lower cost than is possible with centralized municipal services, and enable the revitalization of Frontenac's communities.

The Communal Servicing Study demonstrated that development on communal services has many potential benefits for Frontenac and rural development.

For the Frontenac region, communal servicing enables:

- Increased development potential and growing the tax base;
- More water-sensitive design and other approaches to meet sustainability objectives;
- A broader range of housing types and commercial development to allow for complete communities;
- Reduced municipal service delivery costs to residents (e.g. garbage collection, snow removal); and
- A new approach to managing financial risk.

For builders, communal servicing allows for more:

- Flexibility to address different market segments;
- Feasible servicing approaches for developments in hard-to-service areas; and
- Guidance and certainty on servicing.

Citizens that reside in a neighbourhood with communal services can:

- Have stable and continual safe operation in their water and wastewater treatment systems;
- Have a wider choice of housing options, allowing for aging in place; and
- Recognize that water resources are being appropriately stewarded.

Frontenac has created a Municipal Services Corporation (MSC) under the Ontario Municipal Act, with the County and four Townships as shareholders. The MSC allows for the operation of a public utility that will manage and operate all future development on communal services. Frontenac County is the first regional jurisdiction in Ontario that has created a utility to develop a singular approach to supporting new development on communal services.

4.2.1.4.2.1 Policies

- a. The County supports new development on communal services across the entire region, with the Municipal Service Corporation assuming and maintaining new water and wastewater services.
- b. New residential subdivision proposals in settlement areas identified in the Township Official Plans shall be created on communal services, wherever feasible, to achieve a density that is compatible.
- c. Communal services may also be considered by the Townships to service parts or the whole of existing villages, including main street improvements.
- d. Communal services shall be the primary servicing method for new large scale commercial development and industrial/business parks.
- e. Township Official Plans shall include policies to support the use and location of communal services, including:
 - 1) Specific settlement areas where communal services shall be required;
 - 2) How communal services can be used to create new forms of housing in settlement areas, and the requirement for different forms of housing (e.g., apartments, townhouses, tiny homes, mixed use development, etc.), including policies about the scale and density of development;

- 3) Rural areas, with policies that establish criteria for the type and maximum density of rural residential development;
- 4) Waterfront development or redevelopment, including policies about the scale and density of development; and
- 5) The studies and plans required to demonstrate that communal servicing for a proposed project is appropriate and will have no negative impacts.