

## COUNCIL REPORT

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**Meeting Date:** April 19, 2021  
**Department:** Engineering & Public Works  
**Report No.:** EPW-2021-07  
**Submitted by:** Paul Zuberbuhler, CET, Manager of Environmental Services  
**Approved by:** Fred Tranquilli, Chief Administrative Officer  
**SUBJECT:** **Water Meter Program Status Update**

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**RECOMMENDATION: THAT: Council receive report EPW-2021-07 for information and, and further;**  
**THAT: Council approve the addition of a Manual Meter Reading Fee of \$75.00 per read for water accounts.**

**STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

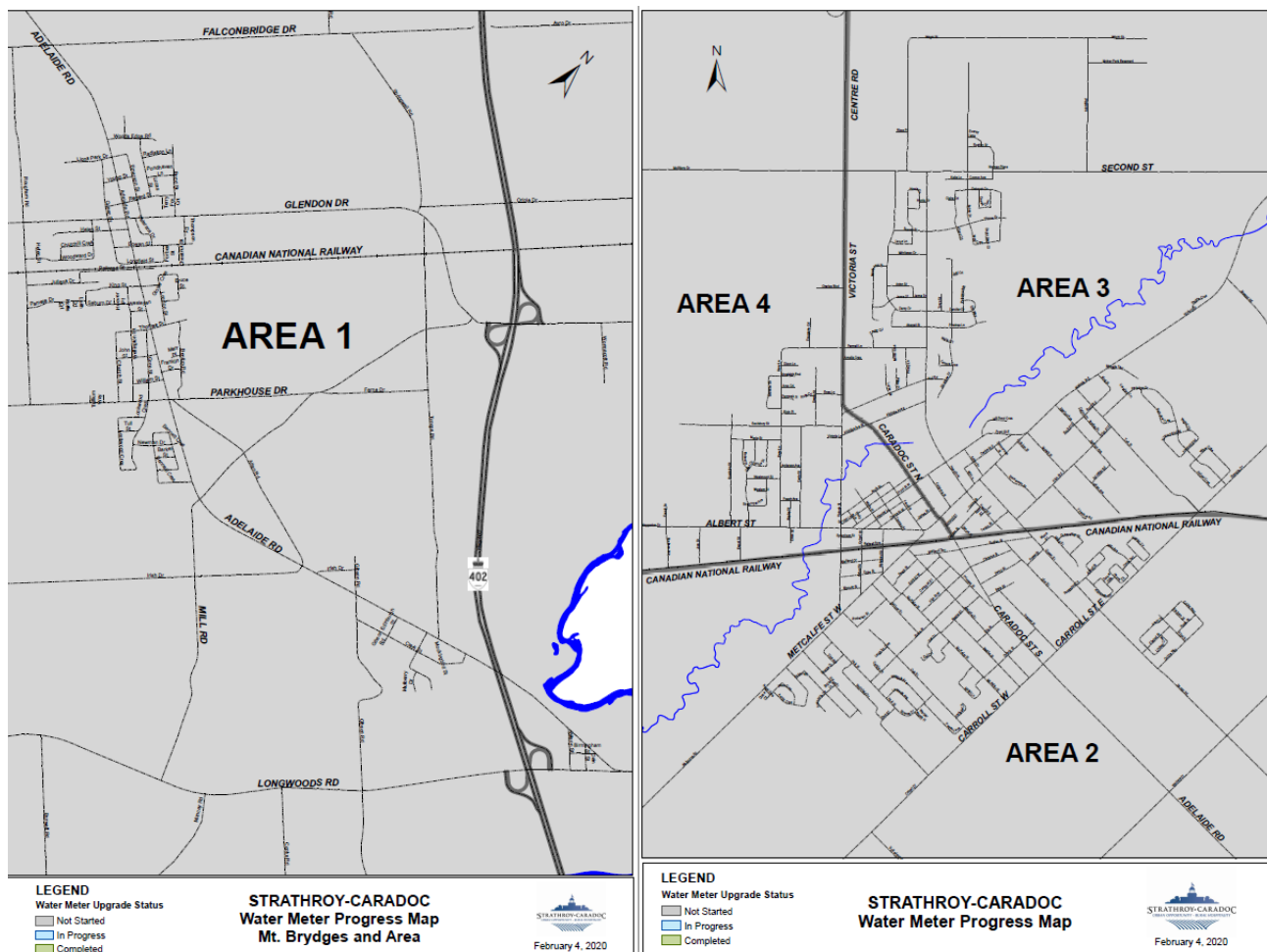
This matter is in accord with the following strategic priorities:

- Local Infrastructure – Households and businesses in Strathroy-Caradoc are supported by reliable, financially responsible and well-maintained infrastructure networks

**BACKGROUND:**

In December 2019, Council approved the award of the supply and installation of water meters including the installation of AMR transmitters to ICONIX Waterworks.

The Municipality was divided into four areas (see map below) for the launching of the Water Meter Replacement/Upgrade program. In August of 2020, the program started in Area 1. The project has been progressing steadily. In March 2021, the installations in area 4 (final area) commenced.



The project is anticipated to be substantially completed by the end of May 2021.

Under the contract with the Municipality ICONIX required to attempt a minimum of six customer contacts to schedule the meter replacement. Once these contacts have been completed ICONIX is not required to take further action. These contacts include:

- Introduction letter
- Trifold appointment notice brochure
- Attempted phone calls
- Door Hanger
- Reminder Letter
- Final Notice

The current water bylaw obligates Property Owners to provide access to the water meter for maintenance, repair and replacement. Failure to provide access can result in the water service being discontinued/shut off and fines applied.

#### COMMENTS:

We are quickly nearing the end of the project and still have many water meters that have not been replaced or upgraded. Some Property Owners have refused access to the water meter due to COVID,

while others have ignored ICONIX's attempted contacts. The table below summarizes the current status of the project.

Area	Installation Complete	+	Customer Refusals	+	Future Booked Appointments	/	Total Accounts provided to Iconix	=	Area Completion %
1	1283		97		7		1407		98.6%
2	1928		132		63		2336		90.9%
3	1597		145		126		2291		81.5%
4	405		13		268		1254		54.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5213</b>		<b>387</b>		<b>464</b>		<b>7288</b>		<b>83.2%</b>

Diameter Services (the project Consultant) has reviewed compliance programs that have been successful in similar projects to encourage participation. The two main approaches were to turn off the water at the property line and assess a fee or institute a manual read fee. The manual read fees ranged from \$75 to \$105.

The Municipality requires participation of all the Property Owners in the program for it to be successful in control over meter reading and billing functions, improved meter maintenance and enhanced customer service. With the current COVID conditions Property Owners may not want to have installers in their homes at this time. Therefore, it is recommended that the Municipality institute a manual read fee of \$75.00 per read to recover the cost of an individual being required to attend and read the meter. This fee would only be applied once all six contacts have been completed by ICONIX and an additional Compliance Notice has been sent by the Municipality allowing residents one final opportunity to participate.

In the future, should Property Owners choose not to participate in the program, the approach of turning off the water at the property line and applying fees/fines would be utilized.

#### **CONSULTATION:**

The preparation of this report and recommendation was completed in consultation with:

- Chief Administrative Officer
- Diameter Services

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no financial implications to the Municipality related to this report.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Water Meter Program Compliance Letter