

Construction notice:

Columbia Street Watermain Improvements

City of Waterloo

Refer To:
T2025-219

File No:
165640446

Date:
May 12, 2026

Reference: Columbia Street Watermains, City of Waterloo, Region of Waterloo

Dear property owners/tenants, business owners and members of the community,

The Region of Waterloo, in partnership with the City of Waterloo, is completing improvements to local water infrastructure along Columbia Street from King Street North to West of Westmount Street (Old Post Road). The project includes construction of new watermain infrastructure, replacement of the existing system, and installation of new valves and related components to improve system reliability and resiliency.

Active transportation improvements will also be implemented, including new dedicated lanes separated from traffic using pinned curbs and marker posts. There will be no changes to the existing traffic lanes.

Timing

Construction will begin on or about May 25, 2026. Work will start at King Street and proceed west, following a staged construction sequence over three years between 2026 and 2028.

The phases are described below:

- Year 1 (2026) includes watermain and paving work along Columbia Street from King Street to approx. Philip Street.
- Year 2 (2027) includes watermain work and paving work from Philip Street to Old Post Road. Portions of active transport facilities will be completed in 2027
- Year 3 (2028) includes final paving related work from Philip Street to Old Post Road as well as completion of all remaining active transport upgrades

Closures (or lane reductions)

The project has been planned to minimize disruption and maintain access to properties throughout construction. Most watermain installation work will take place within Columbia Street using lane restrictions, with traffic maintained in both directions and shifted as required around the work zones. Intersections will remain open where possible; however, short-term closures, including weekend or overnight work, may be required to complete tie-ins. Advance notice and detour signage will be provided for all closures.

During the 2027 construction season, additional impacts are anticipated. These include a closure of the westbound lanes between Hagey Boulevard and Philip Street to accommodate the ION LRT crossing, with westbound traffic detoured and eastbound traffic maintained. An extended closure of the westbound lane is also expected at the Columbia Lake culvert crossing, west of Hagey Boulevard, for approximately two months. Additional short-term lane reductions and weekend intersection closures (e.g., at Hagey Boulevard, Phillip Street, and Albert Street) may also be required. Advance notice and signage will be provided in all cases.

Detours and transit

Detours and notice of detours will be provided in advance through project signage, website updates and social media in advance.

Emergency Services (Police, Fire, Paramedics) will be notified of the construction, closures and detours to minimize any disruptions to services.

Grand River Transit routes will be maintained where possible, with temporary stop disruptions communicated through www.grt.ca/detours.

Pedestrian access

Sidewalks will remain accessible throughout construction, with alternative crossings clearly signed during intersection work. Where cycling lanes are disrupted, cyclists will be directed to share the road with vehicles or ride single file, depending on available space.

At the ION LRT crossing, a temporary multi-use path will be constructed to detour cyclists where the rail corridor crosses Columbia Street, with cyclists required to dismount at the rail crossing.

Property and business access

All businesses in the construction area remain open and accessible during construction. Every effort will be made to maintain access to residential and business driveways in the construction area during working hours (7 a.m. to 7 p.m.). Please plan for some delays and travel carefully in the construction zone. We request that when driving or walking through and around the construction zone you follow and obey the construction traffic signage for your safety and for the safety of the workers.

Due to the nature of this work, local water service shutdowns will be required. We will notify you at least two days prior to any planned water service interruption. In the event of an unplanned interruption to water service, we will make every effort to restore supply by the end of the workday.

Pre-construction property assessment

Residents and businesses within the construction area will be contacted by Englobe, working on behalf of the contractor, T. Musselman Excavating Limited (TME), to complete a pre-construction condition survey at no cost. A separate letter will be provided in advance with additional details.

This survey documents the existing condition of the property, including any visible structural or cosmetic features on both the exterior and interior. If property owners or tenants believe that damage has occurred as a result of construction activities, the information collected through this survey will be used to assist in reviewing and resolving any concerns.

Waste collection changes

During construction, municipal waste collection will be maintained. Where access is restricted, residents may be asked to place carts at a designated nearby location with proper spacing for collection. Where carts need to be moved for collection, the Contractor will be responsible for facilitating this work and returning carts after pickup.

These arrangements apply to municipal waste collection only. Private waste collection will continue as normal.

Restoration and landscaping

If your driveway or landscaping is damaged by construction, we will replace/reinstate it to pre-construction condition. We will take care of any sod that is replaced for 60 days. After 60 days, all sod maintenance and watering become the responsibility of the property owner.

Dust, mud and vibration

You may notice slight vibrations from the contractor's equipment during construction. All efforts will be made to minimize adverse impacts from construction including dust, mud and vibration.

More information

Visit the project page for additional information: www.regionofwaterloo.ca/columbia-street

Contact Information

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