



Waste Diversion Committee

August 7, 2019

Council Chambers

9:00 AM

Members Regional Councillor Jack Heath, Chair Regional Councillor Joe Li Councillor Reid McAlpine Councillor Khalid Usman Guests Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton Valerie Burke Regrets Karl Lyew, MEAC Representative	Staff Claudia Marsales, Senior Manager, Waste and Environmental Management Sara Tam, Manager, Business Planning & Innovation Juliana Aparicio, Diversion Programs Technician Angela Perry, Waste Operations Assistant Michael DiPasquale, Supervisor, Waste Operations Holena Newton, Water Conservation Specialist Irene Weiss, Assistant to the Director of Environmental Services Kimberley Dunsmoor, Community Outreach Assistant Christopher Alexander, Supervisor of Licensing & Standards Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator
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1. Call to Order

The Waste Diversion Committee convened at 9:10 am with Regional Councillor Jack Heath in the Chair.

2. Review of the “Best of the Best 2” Initiatives

Committee indicated that cart tippers for new collection vehicles should be considered for green bin collection in the new waste management contract.

In response to a Committee inquiry, an update on the status of having an Automated Vacuum Collection (AVAC) system in Markham was provided. Markham District Energy will not be proceeding with installing an AVAC system in the City. The main challenges to date have been funding the system and finding an appropriate location/development for the system. The CAO continues to work with Planning

staff to determine an appropriate location for the system. It was requested that a presentation be provided to the Committee on the work staff have done to date with respect to having an AVAC system in Markham.

Claudia Marsales, Senior Manager, Waste and Environmental Management advised that the Province announced its new Blue Box Program. The blue box recycling system is to be taken over by the Stewards, which includes both the processing and collection of recycling. This will be implemented over a six-year transition period. The items accepted in the blue box will be uniform across Ontario. The Stewards are supportive of the change. The model will be similar to the British Columbia “Recycle BC” model.

Committee suggested that this could be a step backwards for municipalities with established recycling programs. Advocating the City’s needs during the development of the program will be important. The Committee requested that this be added to a future meeting agenda. Staff will bring a report to GC in September.

3. Plastics Workshop

Claudia Marsales advised that both the Federal and Provincial governments are considering the development of a plastics strategy. There are no details yet on their programs, but according to polls, the public is ready for a program to reduce single-use plastics. To date, the European Union has been the most proactive in implementing a plastics strategy. Committee reviewed the European Union and Prince Edward Island (PEI) plastics strategies.

Committee provided the following feedback:

- Suggested that Candy and Cigarette companies should pay for the management of the litter they produce;
- Suggested that the PEI program has too many exemptions;
- Questioned if biodegradable plastics are really compostable;
- Questioned what corporations do with the bag fee;
- Suggested that the public needs to be educated on why the City needs a plastics strategy and why it is relevant here in Ontario; and
- Suggested that the City will need to approach its plastics strategy strategically.

Christopher Alexander, Supervisor of Licensing & Standards, reported that staff are looking into how it can regulate single-use plastics using Markham business licensing and bylaw powers. Prohibiting the use of single-use plastics through the licensing of food establishments and grocery stores appears to be a viable tactic. However, the City does not licence all businesses that provide plastic bags. Proceeding in this direction may encourage other municipalities to follow suit.

Committee reviewed the list of potential plastics that Markham could ban, and supported the following:

1. Banning balloons at City facilities and events and making a declaration – September or October 2019, as follows:

- “Markham is striving to be single-use plastics free by X date”;
 - Suggested that banning of balloon release at City facilities and events be included in the declaration;
 - Noted that balloons were prohibited at both the 2019 Canada Day and the Markham-Milliken Children's Festival 2019 events.
2. **Phase 1** - Banning select single-use plastics on a specified date not too long in the future (possibly one year from the date of the declaration), which may include:
- Plastic retail bags;
 - Polystyrene foam cups and take-out food containers;
 - Plastic takeout food containers (possibly combine all food containers under one point);
 - Plastic straws;
 - Disposable hot and cold drink cups (undecided);
 - Six ring plastic drink holder (undecided).

Program should have:

- Measurable targets, which may be completed prior to starting Phase 2.

Phase 2 - Banning additional single use plastics, which may include:

- Disposable razors;
- Flushable and wipes;
- Plastic toothbrushes;
- Female hygiene products that contain plastic;
- Plastic straps for boxes.

Program should have:

- Measurable targets.

3. Educate the public on the use of other types of single-use plastics with the focus on changing behaviour (should occur during all Phases). Other types of plastics may include:
- Disposable razors;
 - Plastic toothbrushes;
 - Flushable and wipes;
 - Female hygiene products that contain plastic; and
 - Plastic straps for boxes.

Committee provided the following feedback on the proposed strategy:

- Suggested asking a fast food company to be the champion of the change (possibly A&W);
- Asked how the City can ensure the food containers are being recycled at fast food establishments;
- Suggested the City consider eliminating all plastics straws and provide suitable alternative upon request;
- Did not support a long, comprehensive public consultation process;

- Suggested there should be funds in the budget to cover Markham's own plastics strategy; and
- Suggested the strategy should not be too extreme, but noted that some risks should be tolerated.

Staff advised that the City will need to clarify how the use of single-use paper products is more sustainable than single-use plastics products when presenting its strategy.

Councillor Khalid Usman reported that staff will be discussing with Tim Hortons the possibility of using paper straws at this year's Markham-Milliken Children's Festival 2019, but this may not be possible due to existing contractual obligations.

Moved by Councillor Reid McAlpine

Seconded by Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton

That the Waste Diversion Committee receive the presentation.

Carried

Commissioner Brenda Librecz is reaching out to York Region regarding attending a future Waste Diversion Committee meeting.

4. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Waste Diversion Committee will be held on August 22, 2019 from 9:00 AM to 11:00 PM.

5. Adjournment

The Waste Diversion Committee adjourned at 12:13 PM.