



Minutes

Waste Diversion Committee

October 2, 2019

9:00 am

Council Chamber

<p>Members</p> <p>Regional Councillor Jack Heath Councillor Reid McAlpine Regional Councillor Joe Li Valerie Burke</p> <p>Guests</p> <p>Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton Regional Councillor Jim Jones Karl Lyew, MEAC Representative</p> <p>Regrets</p> <p>Regional Councillor Joe Li Councillor Khalid Usman</p>	<p>Staff</p> <p>Phoebe Fu, Director of Asset Management Claudia Marsales, Senior Manager, Waste and Environmental Management Michael DiPasquale, Supervisor, Waste Operations Kimberley Dunsmoor, Community Outreach Assistant Sara Tam, Manager of Business Planning & Innovation Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator</p>
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1. Call to Order

The Waste Diversion Committee convened at 9:13 AM with Regional Jack Heath in the Chair.

2. Approval of the Minutes

Moved by Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton
Seconded by Valerie Burke

That the Minutes of the August 1, 7, and 22, 2019, Waste Diversion Committee be approved as presented.

Carried

3. Blue Box Contamination

Claudia Marsales, Senior Manager, Waste and Environmental Management presented the next steps with respect to the Blue Box Contamination. Based on the presentation York Region provided at the August 22, 2019 Waste Diversion Committee meeting, waste & organic material in plastic bags was identified as a major contaminant in the recycling stream. Staff indicated that this contamination may be a result of collector error in the co-collection system. Staff recommended the following corrective actions to minimize blue box contamination:

1. Work with Miller Waste to ensure recycling and organics are not mixed on co-collection vehicles during curbside collection;
2. Launch a public education campaign to provide residents with tips to recycle properly and reduce contamination ;
3. Ensure improper set-outs are left at the curb with “OOPS” stickers to identify non-compliance issues and educate residents;
4. Providing residents with both a larger blue box and green bin .

Committee provided the following feedback:

- Consider adding a penalty in the Miller Waste Contract for not following the directions provided by the City;
- Require Miller let us know when they have casual or temporary workers collecting the waste;
- Add mandatory training requirements for workers collecting waste in Markham, which includes how to handle contaminated waste;
- Questioned if the City should continue its recycling program at parks when considering the amount of contamination;
- Need to educate residents on how to recycle in their own languages, and/or use more symbols to reduce the amount of contamination;
- Requested a tour of the both the transfer station and Materials Recovery Facility;
- Suggested that the City should listen to residents regarding wanting to use recycling bags to recycle;
- Discussed ramifications i.e. litter, complaints if enforcing hard stop with respect to collecting blue bags, as a next step;
- Suggest a letter be written to York Region encouraging them to come up with a solution with respect to the handling of the blue bag, for example having staff on the floor of the Materials Recovery Facility to open the bags, or investing in a bag breaker;
- Discussed the sampling methodology and sample size used by York Region to determine Markham’s contamination rate

It was noted the Markham’s annual recycling tonnage (23,289 MT) is the largest in York Region and that the total annual amount of “Blue Box material in bags” classified as contamination by York Region and

collected as part of Markham's program (2,189 MT) was nearly equal to the total annual amount of recycling collected by East Gwillimbury (2,197 MT) and King (2,364 MT).

Committee agreed to the following next steps:

1. Work with Miller Waste to ensure recycling and organics are not mixed on co-collection vehicles during curbside collection.
2. Launch a public education campaign to provide residents with tips to recycle properly and reduce contamination.
3. Ensure improper set-outs are left at the curb with "OOPS" stickers to identify non-compliance issues and to educate residents.
4. Provide residents with both a larger blue box and potentially a larger green bin.
5. Work with York Region to explore options with respect to the handling of the blue recycling bag.
6. Educate residents regarding waste management in the common languages spoken in Markham.
7. Arrange for a tour of the MRF and transfer station.
8. Report back to the Committee on waste collection at parks, including what the City is doing to wild proof the waste containers.

4. Review Draft Declaration and Recommend Next Steps

Committee reviewed the draft declaration calling for immediate action on single use plastic and litter. It suggested that staff present a visual display when the item is brought forward to the General Committee for discussion. Items not included under this declaration, such as cigarette butts, dog poop, candy wrappers, and balloons, will likely be tackled by the City as a next step.

The Markham Environmental Advisory Committee endorsed the declaration with minor amendments. A Committee Member suggested that the declaration also be presented to the Animal Care Committee at its October 17, 2019 meeting.

Committee agreed to present the declaration as a Notice of Motion at the October 7, 2019 General Committee. The motion will then be discussed at the October 21, 2019 General Committee. Regional Councillor Jack Heath agreed to forward the Notice of Motion. He also agreed to be the City's spokesperson on this matter.

The importance of being the first to make the declaration with respect to single use plastic was emphasized.

Moved by Councillor Reid McAlpine

Seconded by Regional Councillor Joe Li

That the Committee approve declaration on "Single Use Plastic" attached as "Appendix A".

Carried

5. Best of the Best 2 – Recycling Depots

Claudia Marsales presented "The Best of the Best 2" – Recycling Depot Upgrades. The upgrades include:

- Depot staff contracted out to The Recycle People;
- Sale of clear bags and clear privacy bags to start in 2020;
- Ban on curbside collection of packaging Styrofoam, require residents to drop-off at depots to start in 2020;
- Transition to reduce Fall/Winter Operating Hours scheduled to begin October 15th 2019.

Committee discussed the following with respect to the City's Recycling Depots:

- Suggested having the recycling depots open longer hours or consistent with retail hours and the advantages of having standard hours for the depots rather than adjusting the hours based on usage;
- Suggested that new Recycling Depots will be required in the future urban areas, and that they should be located in the residential area rather than in the industrial/ employment area;
- Accepting e-waste at the depots, noting the Milliken Recycling Depot could possibly be designated as the e-waste depot ;
- Transitioning out of accepting tires now that they can be recycled at various retail outlets, and due to amount of space they take at the depots.

Committee questioned the visitor tracking data of Markham's Recycling Depots:

- 1) Why is visitor traffic at the Milliken Depot decreasing?
- 2) Why Milliken Recycling Depot was not being utilized by residents as much as much as the other depots?

Committee also briefly discussed why Markham does not use recycling carts. Staff did not recommend this type of a program in Markham due to the high expense of collection and maintenance of the carts, and because it results in high contamination levels. At approximately \$100/cart, the expenditure would require 88,202 households to be provided carts.

6. New Business

Valerie Burke advised that she wrote an article for the "Neighbours of Old Thornhill" regarding Markham's recycling program. The article discussed some of the issues the City is currently experiencing with its recycling program to try and clear up some of the confusion.

7. Adjournment

Moved Councillor Reid McAlpine

Seconded by Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton

That the Waste Diversion Committee adjourn at 11:55 AM.

Carried

Appendix A

Markham Calls for a Sea Change:

Declaration for Immediate Action on Single-Use Plastics & Litter

WHEREAS all Canadians have the right to live in clean, healthy and resilient communities, free of litter and single-use plastic-related pollution; and

WHEREAS decades of over-consumption of single-use plastics have led to a global environmental crisis with millions of tonnes of single-use plastics annually polluting our communities and waterways; and

WHEREAS most litter found during Canadian shoreline clean-ups include single-use plastics such as plastic bottles and caps, beverage cups and lids, shopping bags, straws, stir sticks, cutlery and take-out containers; and

WHEREAS single-use plastics are problematic because they slowly breakdown in the environment and are consumed by wildlife and marine life with profoundly negative impacts to our food chain; and

WHEREAS the majority of single-use plastics originate from businesses such as retail stores, food premises such as restaurants and grocery stores, convenience shops, beer & liquor outlets, temporary event vendors, etc.; and

WHEREAS businesses that supply or offer single-use plastics do not account for the total life-cycle environmental costs of these items, such as litter clean-up and disposal, as well as their toxic impacts on humans, wildlife, marine life, waterways, lakes and oceans; and

WHEREAS the Canadian and Ontario governments have announced their intentions to address single-use plastics, but have taken no immediate concrete actions; and

WHEREAS local governments, like the City of Markham ("Markham"), have taken a leadership role to mitigate pollution with bold action on textiles, waste diversion, air quality, and pesticide reduction; and

WHEREAS Markham, its residents and innovative business leaders are committed to taking immediate action to reduce single-use plastics; and

WHEREAS the cost of inaction is dramatically greater than the cost of action, and as a community there is recognition that we are all in this together,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

Markham Council declares that, within three (3) months of the adoption of this declaration the following single-use plastics must not be used by businesses serving consumers within the City of Markham:

- a) **Plastic film retail shopping bags.** If a retail shopping bag is necessary, it would be permissible to substitute a non-plastic alternative to be provided on request. Charging a fee for such a product would also be permissible;
- b) **Plastic straws, plastic stir sticks and plastic drink stoppers and other similar products.** The exception would be for medical and accessibility purposes. If such products are necessary, it would be permissible to substitute a non-plastic alternative to be provided on request;
- c) **Plastic, plastic-coated, or polystyrene take-out containers and lids.** For example, coffee cups and restaurant take-home food containers. Non-plastic alternatives would be permitted;
- d) **Plastic six-pack rings or similar products, used for carrying pop, beer and other beverages and products.** Substituting them with non-plastic alternatives would be permitted.
- e) **Single-portion condiments and single-use plastic utensils.** They may be supplied to consumers on request.

This declaration applies all to retail stores, food premises such as restaurants and grocery stores, convenience shops, beer & liquor outlets, temporary event vendors, etc., across the City. Markham will monitor for non-compliance and use its enforcement powers to achieve compliance.

AND FURTHER THAT this declaration be forwarded to the Prime Minister, the Premiers and Ministers of the Environment in each of the provinces and territories, and other party leaders in the 14 jurisdictions, all municipalities in Canada and to FCM and all provincial and municipal associations and to all impacted Markham businesses.

Frank Scarpitti, Mayor

Don Hamilton, Deputy Mayor

Jack Heath, Regional Councillor
(Chair, Waste Diversion Committee)

Joe Li, Regional Councillor

Jim Jones, Regional Councillor

Keith Irish, Ward 1 Councillor

Alan Ho, Ward 2 Councillor

Reid McAlpine, Ward 3 Councillor

Karen Rea, Ward 4 Councillor

Andrew Keyes, Ward 5 Councillor

Amanda Collucci, Ward 6 Councillor

Khalid Usman, Ward 7 Councillor

Isa Lee, Ward 8 Councillor

Markham Calls for a Sea Change:

Declaration for Immediate Action on Single-Use Plastics & Litter

FACT SHEET

WHAT WE PRODUCE

- Globally, more than 8 billion tonnes of plastic has been produced. Nearly half of that plastic was made in the last 15 years.ⁱ
- In 2015, more than 381 million tonnes of plastic was produced worldwide. That's more plastic than the weight of the entire human population!ⁱⁱ
- Every minute, 1 million plastic bags are used globally. On average, these bags are used for just 12 to 15 minutes before being thrown away.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Canadians are some of the highest consumers of single use plastics, with 15 billion plastic bags used every year and 57 million plastic straws daily.^{iv}

WHAT WE THROW AWAY

- Approximately 60% of all plastic ever made is now in landfills or in the environment.^v
- Approximately 40% of the plastic produced each year is packaging, used once and thrown away.^{vi}
- Only nine per cent of the 3.2 million tonnes of plastic waste Canadians produce each year is recycled.^{vii}
- The top plastic items found during shoreline clean-ups across Canada include food wrappers, plastic bottles and caps, beverage cups and lids, shopping bags, straws, stir sticks, cutlery and take out containers^{viii}.

WHERE MOST OF IT ENDS UP

- An estimated 8 million tonnes of plastic ends up in our oceans each year^{ix} and 10,000 tonnes in the Great Lakes.^x
- The vast majority (89 per cent) of plastic waste found at the bottom of the ocean is single-use (think beverage bottles, food wrappers and plastic bags).^{xi}
- By 2050, it's estimated there will be more plastic in the ocean than fish, by weight.^{xii}

WHAT OTHER JURISDICTIONS ARE DOING

- The European Union has pledged to:
 - Ban [single-use](#) plastic items such as plastic cutlery (chopsticks, forks, knives and spoons), single-use plastic plates, plastic straws, cotton bud sticks made of plastic, oxo-degradable plastics and food containers and expanded polystyrene cups, and plastic balloon sticks by 2021
 - Member States are required to achieve a 90 percent collection target for plastic bottles by 2029 and 77 percent by 2025
 - Requirement for plastic bottles to contain at least 30 percent recycled content by 2030 and 25 percent recycled content by 2025.
 - Extending producer responsibility laws to litter and putting more pressure on manufacturers of tobacco filters, fishing gear and other common littered products to bear environmental responsibility.
 - All beverage containers up to 3 litres will be required to have tethered caps and lids.
- According to the United Nations, over 60 countries have introduced bans and levies to curb single-use plastic waste and many more at subnational levels. This includes many measures taken in Canada and the United States at both the local and state level of government.

ⁱ 10,000 Changes, *Plastic Facts and Stats*. www.10000changes.ca.

ⁱⁱ 10,000 Changes, *Plastic Facts and Stats*. www.10000changes.ca.

ⁱⁱⁱ 10,000 Changes, *Plastic Facts and Stats*. www.10000changes.ca.

^{iv} Government of Canada, *Canada to ban harmful single-use plastics and hold companies responsible for plastic waste* (10 June 2019).

^v 10,000 Changes, *Plastic Facts and Stats*. www.10000changes.ca.

^{vi} 10,000 Changes, *Plastic Facts and Stats*. www.10000changes.ca.

^{vii} 10,000 Changes, *Plastic Facts and Stats*. www.10000changes.ca.

^{viii} CBC, *Nestlé, Tim Hortons named Canada's top plastic polluters* (11 October 2018).

^{ix} J. R. Jambeck et al., *Plastic waste inputs from land into the ocean* (Science, 13 February 2015).

^x M. J. Hoffman and E. Hittinger, *Inventory and transport of plastic debris in the Laurentian Great Lakes* (Marine Pollution Bulletin, Vol 115, 15 February 2017).

^{xi} 10,000 Changes, *Plastic Facts and Stats*. www.10000changes.ca.

^{xii} World Economic Forum and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, *New Plastics Economy: Rethinking the future of plastics* (19 January 2016).