



REPORT TO General Committee- Community Services & Environment

TO: Mayor and Members of Council

FROM: Peter Loukes P. Eng., Director Operations

PREPARED BY: Claudia Marsales, Manager Waste Management

DATE OF MEETING: March 6, 2006

SUBJECT: Updated Regional Waste Diversion Strategy

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the report titled "Updated Regional Waste Diversion Strategy" be received;

AND THAT the Region be informed that Markham will participate in the development of a Regional waste diversion strategy;

AND THAT Markham Council be provided the opportunity to review and comment on the contents of the strategy prior to its finalization.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to respond to the Region's request for the Local Municipalities to support and participate in the development of a Regional waste diversion strategy.

BACKGROUND

In April of 2005, the Region initiated a joint Environmental Assessment (EA) Study with Durham Region to develop a long-term solution for the disposal of waste residuals. One of the underlying study assumptions is the expectation that both Regions will achieve a diversion rate of at least 60% and possibly 75% over the next thirty years.

The Regional diversion rate is a combined diversion rate which includes the diversion rates of the nine Local Municipalities. While the Region's diversion target was to achieve 50% diversion by the year 2000, the actual 2005 diversion rate sits at 34% (up from 24%) due to the expanded blue box program and the introduction of organics collection in Markham.

During the Regions' 2006 budget process, regional staff were requested to prepare a revised waste diversion strategy by the summer of 2006. Because waste management service delivery is

a two tier function, the development of a revised regional waste diversion strategy requires the participation and agreement between the Region and the Local Municipalities.

Key Diversion Activities Identified at 2004 Workshop

In November of 2004, Regional Council held a special workshop to discuss waste management issues, current waste diversion efforts, possible paths to increase the diversion rates, cost implications and the role of the Region and Local Municipalities in implementing the various options. Table #1 below summarizes the options discussed.

Table #1
Waste Diversion Options
Identified at the November
2004 Regional Workshop

Options:
Source Separated Organics
Construction & Demolition Waste Recycling
Bag Limits and User Pay
Dongara Proposal (pelletizing project)
Increased Yard Waste Collection
Enhanced Promotion & Education
Diversion/Disposal Bans
Expanded Electronics Recycling
Textiles Recycling
Expanded Blue Box
Community Environmental Centres

Implementation of these options may have the potential to divert 70% of the available waste.

Several of the Local Municipalities are progressing on a number of the options identified. There are, however, significant cost implications associated with the implementation of these options. Development of a strategy to identify and prioritize these and other options, with appropriate implementation dates, is therefore recommended.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Participation in the review process has no financial implications to the Town.


The Region has included \$35,000 in the 2006 Regional Solid Waste budget and retained Lura Consulting to assist staff in the facilitation and strategy development.

CONCLUSION:


Markham has set an aggressive diversion target of 70% with its Mission Green program and has achieved success despite significant population growth. Markham's current diversion rate of 65% is one of the highest in both the Region and Ontario.

In 2006, Markham will expand its diversion programs to multi-residential units and municipal facilities. This expansion should help Markham reach its 70% waste diversion target in 2006.

Staff will work with the Region and the Local Municipalities to develop a revised waste diversion strategy. Council will be provided the opportunity to review and comment on the contents of the strategy prior to its finalization.



Peter Loukes, P.Eng.
Director, Operations



Jim Sales
Commissioner of Community and Fire Services