

STAFF REPORT: ENGINEERING & PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT



REPORT TO: Infrastructure & Recreation Committee
MEETING DATE: January 11, 2010
REPORT NO.: EPW.11.007
SUBJECT: Landfill Capacity
 Communications Plan
PREPARED BY: Jeffery Fletcher, Manager of Solid Waste
 and Environmental Initiatives

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report EPW.11.007, Landfill Capacity Communications Plan for their information.

B. Background

The existing capacity of The Blue Mountains Landfill is dwindling. At the current rate of deposition the Site will reach capacity in less than 2 years. In light of this Town Staff have been investigating both export and landfill expansion options. Life cycle analyses for various scenarios within both options are revealing that waste export and expansion are expensive undertakings.

As the Landfill Expansion project continues to progress a high level estimate of costs has emerged. Staff have identified in the 2011 Draft Budget that with an expansion of the landfill will place an additional burden on the annual tax levy for years. The project has been reviewing costs associated with waste export as a possible alternative scenario to expansion. A number of different export scenarios have been considered which vary in cost depending on the level and type of service provided by each scenario. Landfill closure itself is not without costs. A landfill cap will cost an estimated \$1,030,000 which would be amortized over 10 years. In any case, expansion or closure/export, Town Staff have identified in early estimates the need for an additional \$300,000 to \$600,000 per year on the tax base. These additional costs will be required to pay for the cost of mining and building a new engineered cell, or under an export scenario the additional costs will be needed to support final landfill capping, transfer of waste and disposal fees.

The Town needs to prepare and implement a communication strategy. Aside from the issue of increased taxes to pay for waste management needs, landfill proposals are typically controversial and arouse much opinion and emotion. Communicating the realities of the project and situation will be an important step in this process. It is important to remember and remind the public that this environmental screening process has been gathering public opinion and studying waste management options for 3 plus years.

The decision to look closely at expanding the existing landfill was identified through public consultations, industry experts and Provincial regulators as a preferred and achievable option. And further, the combination of mining and expansion of the existing Site will improve the environmental performance of the existing Site.

It is important to note that inexpensive landfill options are a relic – new and expanding landfills must be engineered which increases the upfront cost of creating new capacity. Added to the issue is the rapidly dwindling landfill capacity throughout all of Ontario.

The municipality will continue to promote diversion programs and develop new ones to reach waste diversion goals. The Town's efforts towards reducing waste have produced a diversion rate of 43% in 2009. However, with any waste management program there is always a residual percentage to landfill. It will be important to communicate that diversion efforts will play an important role in extending any new landfill capacity but recycling cannot be relied on alone to solve the waste management needs, but is an integrated part.

Often the public discourse surrounding landfill projects is the idea that an innovative inexpensive alternative ("black box solution") to landfill readily exists. Examples of operating, permitted, alternatives to landfilling do not exist in Ontario and for that matter most of the world. Ontario has one operational incinerator in the Region of Peel, which is mainly operating for the secure destruction of international airport waste. Incinerators require high volumes of waste and are always situated within large urban areas that produce an adequate amount of tonnage to justify the construction and operational expense.

A proponent of a mixed waste processing and composting plant has approached the Township of Southgate in Grey County to be a host municipality. However to date, no tangible progress has been made on the realization of this type of plant. In addition, the plant will still require landfill capacity for disposal of the 20% to 30% of residual waste produced. Also, the plant only processes "curbside" waste, the Town will continue to need a disposal option for a large portion of the local commercial and agricultural waste, and construction debris. Well into the foreseeable future a "black box" solution to waste disposal will not exist. This reality faces the Town and developing new capacity at the existing Site or sending the waste for disposal outside of the municipality are the only viable options at this time.

Staff and the Town's consultant are undertaking a lifecycle cost analysis on a number of different expansion and export options to give Council a full understanding of long term costs, required tipping rates, new policies and new diversion programs.

The Table 1 below is a timeline and description of how Staff will deliver a communications strategy related to the Landfill Expansion and related cost implications.

Key Communication Messages:

- Taxation implication starting in 2012
- Improvements to Landfill Site's environmental performance
- Risks of closing Site and exporting waste
- Benefits of having local waste disposal service and infrastructure

Table 1
Solid Waste Disposal Communications Strategy

Date	Activity	Description	Resources	Staff Resources	Cost
December 2010	Finalize financial data related to expansion and export	This background will form the message to the public	Budget Documents, recent studies (Compost Business Case), Golder's Draft ES document	Jeffery Fletcher, Darcy Chapman, Golder Staff	\$0.00
December 2010/January 2011	Create concepts for 2 page information piece for 2011 "wastewatcher"(ww)	Should include costs, service description, benefits,	Background data, wastewatcher guide	Jeffery Fletcher, Lisa Kidd, Reg Russwurm Golder Review	\$1,300 Printing portion \$65.00 Distribution portion
Early January 2011	Present information piece to Committee and Council	FYI report for January 11 th I&R Meeting	Background data	Jeffery Fletcher, Reg Russwurm	\$0.00
February 2011	Modify ww piece to include in a local newspaper advertisement	Same information as ww piece – for full page advertisement	ww piece and any new available numbers	Jeffery Fletcher, Lisa Kidd	\$2,000 EB and CH
January 2011	New Micro-website	Move existing information on Town Site to a dedicated micro site with new information and access to background information	Webpage www.thebluemountains.ca-solidwastesolution	Jeffery Fletcher Lisa Kidd Running Tide	\$?
February March 2011	Continue posting notice on Town ad page directing public to information on Micro-site	Use of graphic work previously developed with a scaled down message	Local newspapers	Jeffery Fletcher, Lisa Kidd	\$ 150 x 6 weeks = \$900
February/March 2011	Send out short e-blast directing public to micro-site	Create a info piece	E-Blast	Lisa Kidd, Jeffery Fletcher	??
February/March 2011	Send out twitter	Create info piece	Twitter text	Lisa Kidd, Jeffery Fletcher	\$0.00
February 2011	Escarpment Living Magazine Article	Write short article discussing waste expansion issue for Spring issue	Escarpment Living	Jeffery Fletcher, Lisa Kidd, Escarpment Staff	\$1,000
March 2011	Include small information piece in tax insert	Impact on 2012 taxation	Tax Insert	Jeffery Fletcher, Kris Kinsman,	\$0.00
February/March 2011	Radio and Local Cable interviews	Line-up interview with "chats" program and Rogers TV	Radio and Cable TV	Jeffery Fletcher Lisa Kidd	\$0.00
February/March 2011	Presentations and Discussion with local service groups	Prepare a short 20 min. presentation on the expansion issue for local groups	Rotary, Probus, Agricultural Advisory Committee, Other	Jeffery Fletcher	\$0.00
				Total	\$5,265.00

C. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan

This solid waste project addresses the Town Municipal infrastructure needs and addresses Strategic Action 2.5 “develop a waste management strategy to meet diversion targets and address landfill capacity”.

D. Environmental Impacts

None

E. Budget Impact

The \$5,265.00 related to communication identified in the above table is part of the existing Environmental Screening capital budget for 2011.

F. Attached

None

Respectfully submitted,

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Reg Russwurm

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