

June 7, 2018

To: Members
Public Works and Infrastructure Committee

Re: Waste Plan Regina – 2017 Update

RECOMMENDATION

That this report be forwarded to the June 25, 2018 City Council meeting for information.

CONCLUSION

Since the implementation of Waste Plan Regina (WPR), Regina residents have reduced the total amount of waste they generate each year. The amount of garbage disposed of at the landfill has decreased by 15 per cent since 2012. In 2017, residents diverted 18 per cent of residential waste from the landfill through services provided by the City of Regina (City), such as the Blue Cart Recycling Program, landfill diversion and recycling depots.

The City continues to educate and engage residents at schools, leisure centres, libraries and other venues to help communicate proper sorting of recyclable materials and to encourage waste reduction. The Administration is using feedback gathered from public engagement initiatives and data collected during curbside waste studies to assess current programming and potentially right-size the level of service provided to residents.

This report summarizes the 2017 operating results and achievements, as well as outlines initiatives planned for development in 2018. These initiatives focus on WPR's residential services as well as further enhancing public space recycling opportunities. Waste Plan Regina - 2017 Update is included as Appendix A.

BACKGROUND

Waste Plan Regina provides direction for the City's solid waste programs and services for both residential and non-residential sectors. In 2011, City Council approved *CR10-147 Waste Plan Regina Implementation Plan*, which recommended implementing the Enhanced Residential Service Level Option for the residential sector. It set a diversion goal of 65 per cent by 2020. Council also adopted the Extended Services Level for the non-residential sectors.

Since adopting the Enhanced Residential Service Level Option in WPR, the City has implemented a number of programs. In 2013, single-family homes began receiving curbside recycling service followed by a mandatory multi-family recycling program in 2015. The City began offering periodic diversion depots to provide residents a disposal option for yard waste, Christmas trees and household hazardous waste. The "Recycle the Right Stuff" campaign and public outreach programs were implemented to educate and engage residents on proper sorting.

In 2015, Administration responded to a City Council motion MN14-3, with a report that included an annual update on WPR initiatives. It was resolved that, every year, the Public Works & Infrastructure Committee would receive a report on WPR's annual initiatives, results and future plans. This report serves as the annual update for 2017.

DISCUSSION

2017 Results

In 2017, Regina residents generated the least amount of waste since the adoption of WPR. The total tonnes of waste collected through the residential garbage and diversion programs decreased by 3,448 tonnes. The decrease in total waste tonnage can be linked to a number of factors including waste reduction efforts, the downturn in the economy impacting purchasing behaviours and the trend towards the use of lighter packaging by manufacturers. Waste reduction efforts were supported in 2017 by increased education encouraging residents to sort waste properly and reduce the use of single use items.

The diversion rate for 2017 was 18 per cent, compared to 20 per cent in 2016. The most significant factor contributing to the decrease in the diversion rate at 1.6 per cent was lower volumes of demolition material diverted at the landfill. The cancellation of the Leaf & Yard Waste and Household Hazardous Waste Depots impacted the diversion rate to a lesser degree.

Recycling cart observations indicated that on average, recycling carts were set out for collection 74 per cent of the time (19 out of 26 collection days per year) and were 81 per cent full. This data shows that the recycling program is operating at a capacity that serves most residents.

Garbage cart observations indicated that carts were set out at an average rate of 80 per cent and were 69 per cent full on collection day. Historically, the volume of residential garbage decreases by 30 per cent in the winter months as there is no yard waste. This data shows that there is capacity to adjust the garbage collection frequency during the winter. Collection frequency is being considered in the Biweekly Curbside Garbage Collection – Pilot Project Results report.

In 2017, the City continued to study residential waste behaviours. The amount of unacceptable materials collected in the recycling cart increased by one per cent in 2017 to 12 per cent. The one per cent increase was organic material such as leaf and yard waste, which may be a result of the cancellation of the Leaf & Yard Waste Depots. In the garbage cart, the amount of recyclable materials decreased by two per cent resulting from the ongoing public education campaigns. However, there was a one per cent increase in hazardous waste which may be attributed to the Household Hazardous Waste Depot cancellation.

To reinforce proper disposal habits, the City actively promoted the Waste Wizard search tool to find appropriate disposal options, resulting in a 40 per cent increase in items searched over previous years. A waste education video series was also launched to educate residents on cart placement, proper sorting and using the landfill. The videos were a huge success and were viewed approximately 77,800 times.

In 2017, Administration made efforts in diverting non-residential waste from public spaces. A pilot project was initiated in City-owned facilities to form the basis of recommendations to City Council on a diversion program for the non-residential waste sector. Administration also introduced bottle baskets in Victoria Park, in front of City Hall and along Scarth Street and 13th Avenue, to allow residents the opportunity to recycle beverage containers in public spaces.

The Landfill Gas to Energy Facility began operations in 2017 to convert landfill gas to electricity at the Fleet Street Landfill (Landfill). The City produced 4,323.06 megawatts of electricity that was sold to SaskPower resulting in \$393,000 in revenue. Operational efficiencies at the Landfill resulting from an airspace efficiency audit have increased Landfill space by 20 per cent. The estimated life remaining in the Landfill is 28 years based on current programming. Additional diversion services could further extend the life of the Landfill.

Waste Plan Regina Initiatives

Over the next five years, Administration will continue the roll out of WPR's Enhanced Residential Services and further enhance public space recycling opportunities. Waste composition studies have revealed that on average, organic (kitchen and yard) waste makes up 50 per cent of waste in garbage carts. Administration is preparing a report to be brought forward with options to divert organic waste from residential properties, which will increase the City's waste diversion rate.

Initiatives in 2018 include:

- Bring forward a Curbside Waste Services Funding Policy
- Provide a recommendation for a permanent organic waste service
- Continue to operate interim Leaf & Yard and Household Hazardous Waste Depots
- Continue the recycling pilot project for City-owned and operated facilities
- Continue education and outreach programming
- Continue monitoring and evaluating diversion programming

Administration will work with communities in the surrounding area to explore regional opportunities to increase diversion and reduce the volume of waste sent to the landfill.

The Waste management industry is continually changing. Administration will keep an eye on upcoming changes, both locally and internationally, to inform program decisions. Provincially, the Ministry of Environment is developing a Solid Waste Management Strategy that will shape long-term waste management in Saskatchewan. This will provide direction for the future of waste management in Regina. China, North America's primary importer of recyclable material, imposed new legislation on recyclable paper which impacts the City's recycling program. Going forward, the City will continue to monitor market developments and implications to programming.

RECOMMENDATION IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

None with respect to this report.

Environmental Implications

The City's waste diversion programs are part of the integrated solid waste management plan for the collection and disposal of waste, which ensures protection of the natural environment by following provincial regulation and best practices.

Policy and/or Strategic Implications

Waste Plan Regina aligns with *Design Regina: The Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2013-48* (OCP). The continued implementation of WPR directly contributes to the OCP priorities, specifically:

- *Section D4, Goal 4 – Conservation and Environment, “Design infrastructure that conserves resources and minimizes impacts on the environment.”*

Continued implementation of WPR contributes to achieving the OCP's Community Priorities by encouraging the City to embrace leading practices for waste management, which optimize the use of the Landfill.

Other Implications

None with respect to this report.

Accessibility Implications

None with respect to this report.

COMMUNICATION

Public awareness and education campaigns focused on the City's solid waste programs and waste diversion will continue in 2018 and 2019. The Waste Plan Regina - 2017 Update will be posted on Regina.ca.

DELEGATED AUTHORITY

The recommendation contained in this report is within the delegated authority of the Public Works & Infrastructure Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lisa Legault".

Lisa Legault, Director
Solid Waste

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen Gasmu".

Karen Gasmu, Executive Director
Transportation & Utilities

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JA/WS/pw