



Regina City Council Delegation – Monday, February 27, 2017

RE: Waste Plan Regina 2015/16 Update

Good evening ladies and gentlemen, my name is Chad Novak, and I am here representing the Saskatchewan Taxpayers Advocacy Group, which is a grassroots organization proudly standing up for the rights of individual taxpayers. I am here to address the item that is recommended to be removed from the outstanding list, that being the 2015/16 Update for the Waste Plan Regina.

I've spoken on this issue previously, and I've also monitored a lot of the online discussions that occur around this topic – specifically when questionable actions of the City take place. Like, for example, the recent revelation at Christmas time that the City of Regina would not accept certain types of Christmas Wrapping Paper. What transpired during that short time frame was the revelation that the Regina Residential Recycling Program is more about profits than it is the environment. This became quite obvious when the comment was made by Emterra that while it *could* recycle regular wrapping paper, it is lower quality and would not bring in as much money for the company or the city, which gets a share of the profit (See Appendix A). This was then contradicted by the City (See Appendix B) suggesting that these materials simply were simply “not recyclable” – which is concerning as it demonstrates a clear effort by the City of Regina to sway citizens opinions from the truth, which was graciously explained by Emterra. The fact of the matter is, these items **are** recyclable, it's just that Emterra, and in turn the City of Regina, wouldn't realize a reasonable profit – or possibly even experience a loss – by recycling the material. This is further supported by the fact that many of the items that we currently reject are actually recycled by many other cities (See Appendix C), and is included in the list of industry accepted recyclable materials in material the world over.

So, what first needs to happen is turning our attention away from the potential profit of a fully-recyclable item. Once we do that, then we can realistically expect to see our diversion rates increase. After all, the City of Regina realizes such a minimal return from Emterra for profit-sharing (Average \$150,000 [approx. 2.5%] – see Appendix D), it's almost meaningless to look to refuse certain items because of their profitability. I can guarantee when you go to residents and tell them they can recycle any material included in a generally accepted recycling list – not just the items that turn a tidy profit – you will realize a significant jump in your diversion rates. Not just because it's going to make things a lot less confusing for residents, but also because you are actually diverting a lot of material that is currently going to the landfill now, simply because it's been determined it doesn't make enough money. The environment needs to be the #1 driver here – period.

It's been suggested that it's actually Emterra who is the one deciding what material gets recycled, but I've since found that couldn't be further from the truth. In fact, it's right there in black and white in the legally binding contract with Emterra that they "shall receive all collected materials regardless of the level of contaminants" (See #36 in Appendix E). Further, that "it will be the operator's responsibility, at it's sole cost, risk and expense to dispose of all contaminants." This confirms that Emterra must accept and process every single item that residents put in the blue bins, regardless of whether or not it can be recycled, let alone it's profitability. With regards to what Emterra must contractually process, it is clearly stated that they "must accept and process any and all of the designated materials received." (See #43 in Appendix F) As you will see in Appendix G, there is no differentiation of certain types of materials that the City of Regina has since designated as "non-recyclable" (or "non-profitable").

What I'm saying here is essentially, the City has the ability to enforce this contract, and Emterra is legally bound to accept and process all materials that the City tells its residents to include in their Blue Bins. What residents deserve an answer to is this: Will the City step up to the plate and encourage residents to include any and all recyclable material (according to standard practice in many other jurisdictions, and as accepted by industry standards) in their Blue Bins, regardless of profitability? If not, can they please explain why? It should not be residents' concern as to whether or not it costs Emterra more money to process certain materials, as that is something that Emterra ought to – and most likely did – take into consideration when negotiating the contract in the first place.

What you really need to come to terms with is that, until the City makes meaningful changes to our curbside recycling program (by increasing what is accepted), it's going to be that much more difficult to increase that rate by any meaningful amount. Instead of coming back to residents in 2020 and saying "sorry, we tried", why not proactively do something now to meaningfully increase that diversion rate?

Thank you for your time this evening, and I will gladly answer any questions you may have.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION *(Subject to inclusion based on time and questions by Council):*

The City of Regina continues to realize significant surpluses at the Regina Landfill of \$15 Million or more. The actual cost of processing our recycling – aside from the collection of it which is a subject for another day – is only \$1.5 Million (See Appendix H). Why are we not funding this program entirely from the continued surplus at the Regina Landfill, as the two would seem to be intrinsically linked.

Also, the City of Regina now realizes additional revenue of approximately \$775,000 from the Multi-Material Stewardship Western (MMSW) program, which is over and above what was originally considered in 2013 when introducing the curbside recycling program. The MMSW program is specifically intended to cover "up to 75% of the net costs for a municipality to operate a recycling program for waster paper and packaging." Why, then, are residents not realizing a reduction in their recycling fees as a result of this new funding source, which is expected to last for the foreseeable future? Also,

considering the goal of the MMSW program, it would directly contradict the intention of the program if we are not actually using that money to offset the operating costs of our recycling program, which is evident in Appendix I where it speaks to exactly what this money will be used for (taken directly from this 2015/16 Waste Plan Regina Update). For the City to use this money for further public outreach is effectively a slap in the face to that industry.

An added cost savings that can be realized down the road is implementing offset biweekly collection, so that we aren't doubling down on the environmental footprint that is caused by the dual collection system as it exists today. (Loraas is contracted out to collect recycling biweekly and in-house staff collect garbage weekly) This would not only improve our environmental impact (which is consistent with the public feedback in Appendix J – also taken directly from this 2015/16 Update), but it would result in significant cost savings, furthering the call for eliminating the separate fee for curbside recycling.

While residents are being lead to believe that our diversion rate is steadily increasing, the statistics in your own report suggest otherwise, going from 16% in 2009 when the Waste Plan Regina report was released, to only 20% in 2016 (See Appendix K), or a 4% increase in seven years. Obviously, there are a few ways to impact that rate, including reducing our waste and increasing that which we recycle, but at the end of the day, the numbers are pretty consistent over the three years in this update, with the total tonnage of recycling actually decreasing over the years included in this report. It should be noted that in the 2009 Waste Plan Regina, there is no suggestion that anything beyond 40% could be attained without additional improvements (See Appendix M), so is the lofty goal of 65% by 2020 truly realistic, or are we just setting ourselves up for yet more failure?

Interestingly, our garbage has reduced over this time by over 6,000 tonnes, without any corresponding increases in recycling or other programs, pointing to the fact that people are possibly consuming less? As well, considering that only 14% of what residents toss in the garbage bins ought to have been thrown in the blue bins (See Appendix L – again taken directly from this 2015/16 Update), it is not the fault of residents not knowing what to and what not to recycle – which goes against the idea that more public education is necessary. Contrary to what is planned, it is obvious that further public education is NOT required nor is it the solution – spending money on this kind of campaign is both wasteful and meaningless as it is clear that residents do fully understand and support a properly run recycling program.

Appendix A

Regina stops recycling Christmas wrapping paper

Saskatoon residents can continue to recycle used gift wrap

[CBC News](#) Posted: Dec 13, 2016 1:42 PM CT Last Updated: Dec 13, 2016 1:42 PM CT

After you unwrap your gifts this holiday season, the City of Regina does not want to see your crumpled leftover paper in its recycling bins.

The municipality announced that holiday gift wrap is not longer recyclable in its blue bin program. That means paper adorned with foil and glitter, and stuck with adhesive.

Lisa Legault, the director of solid waste for the City of Regina, said the change was made in partnership with the city's contracted recycling company, Emterra.

The company says while it could recycle regular wrapping paper, it is lower quality and would not bring in as much money for the company or the city, which gets a share of the profit.

"As the expert in marketing [recycled material] for the city," said Emterra's general manager Tim Teeple, "it's our responsibility to advise the city to ensure that they are getting the best possible return on their commodity."

Appendix B

The presents might be wrapped under the tree with care, but there's less than a couple weeks until people will be tearing into them and leaving quite the mess.

And not much of it can be recycled, including certain types of wrapping paper and gift wrap.

The City of Regina says regular wrapping paper can be recycled, but shiny metallic gift wrap will not be accepted. It says many types of wrapping paper contain the laminates or shiny adhesives that bind glitter and such to the paper that makes these products unacceptable for recycling.

"Even though a small percentage of it may contain unrecyclable material, the entire bale becomes valued at the lower value," Lisa Legault, director of solid waste with the City of Regina, said.

<http://cjme.com/article/1036742/green-christmas-no-wrapping-paper-recycling-regina>

Appendix C

Regina's recycling rejections

(As compared to Vancouver, Kelowna, Calgary, Edmonton, Saskatoon and Winnipeg)

Plastic bags. Accepted at recycling depots in Vancouver and Kelowna. Accepted in curbside blue bins in Calgary, Edmonton and Saskatoon.

Plastic wrap. Accepted in blue bins in Calgary and Saskatoon. Crown Shred also accepts plastic wrap.

Ziploc bags. OK in Calgary, Edmonton and Saskatoon.

Disposable cups. A no-go in Edmonton and Winnipeg, but accepted in the other four cities.

Styrofoam. Accepted at depots in Vancouver and Kelowna. Crown Shred accepts Styrofoam by dropoff, for a fee. In Edmonton, Styrofoam is pulled from the waste stream to make ethanol at the Waste to Biofuels and Chemicals Facility.

One-time-use coffee pods. Recyclable in Vancouver and Kelowna.

Paper towel. Not recyclable, but compostable in cities with compost carts — Vancouver, Kelowna, Calgary and Saskatoon.

Appendix D

Residential Recycling Revenue

Revenue from the residential recycling program is generated from the user fee as well as a share of the revenue from the sale of recyclable materials.

Based on past growth, the number of households is estimated to increase two per cent annually. As well, the City continues to receive a 25 per cent share of the revenue from the sale of recyclable materials (Table 1).

Table 1 – Recycling Program Revenues

	2015	2016	2017
Recycling Household fee:			
Rate per Household	91.25	91.25	91.25
Total Services	63,884	65,138	66,418
Total Recycling Revenue	5,829,455	5,943,885	6,060,604
Total Revenue Sharing	151,402	152,159	152,920
Total Recycling Program Revenues	5,980,857	6,096,044	6,213,524

Appendix E

Sorting of Collected Material

32. Following the receipt of the Collected Materials pursuant to section 29 herein, the Operator shall sort the Collected Material at the MRF or temporarily at a remote material recovery facility in accordance with the process outlined in the Proposal
33. The Operator acknowledges and agrees that even though Carts will be used for collecting most Designated Materials, some Collected Material may come in Bags and some may come in unsolicited plastic bags. As part of the Services, the Operator shall open all Bags and unsolicited translucent plastic bags and sort the Collected Material contained therein regardless of whether such bag is open or tied, shut or sealed.
34. The Operator's trained employees shall inspect the Collected Material in the Tipping Area.

Contamination

35. The Operator acknowledges and agrees the Collected Materials will contain Contaminants, some of which may be hazardous, and that the City makes no representations or warranties as to the tonnage of Collected Materials or to the percentage of Contaminants that may be contained in the Collected Materials.
36. The Operator shall receive all Collected Materials regardless of the levels of Contaminants and process all Collected Materials in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Agreement.
37. It will be the Operator's responsibility, at its sole cost, risk and expense to dispose of all Contaminants, including any hazardous materials contained in the Contaminants in accordance with Applicable Law.
38. In addition to the indemnity in sections 225 to 228 herein, the Operator agrees to indemnify and save the City harmless from any risk, loss, or Claim of any kind arising out of the Operator's contact with the Collected Materials and any Contaminants contained therein.

Appendix F

Processing Designated Material into Marketable Material

43. The Operator acknowledges and agrees that following the completion of the sorting of the Collected Materials as specified in sections 32 to 33 herein, the MRF shall be capable of processing any and all of the Designated Materials received throughout the Term and any renewals thereof into Marketable Material regardless of the tonnage, composition or condition of such Designated Materials.
44. The Operator represents, warrants and covenants that when it is processing the Designated Material into the Marketable Material that the Operator shall:
 - (a) use and ensure that the Operator's Equipment is capable of producing a variety of Marketable Material in order to respond to market demands and to optimize revenue;
 - (b) operate the MRF and all of the Operator's Equipment such that the Operator achieves or exceeds the Required Recovery Rate;
 - (c) operate the MRF and all of the Operator's Equipment such that the Operator is capable of processing all tonnages and compositions of Designated Materials that may be received from time to time at no additional cost to the City, the Operator acknowledging and agreeing that the tonnage and composition of Designated Materials will fluctuate over the Term and that the City is not representing, warranting or guaranteeing the tonnage or composition of Designated Materials that may be received by the Operator;
 - (d) perform the Services in such a manner that accommodates the Recycling Collection Schedule, as may be amended from time to time;
 - (e) ensure the total throughput capacity for the MRF is as stated in the Proposal; and
 - (f) process the Designated Materials in an environmentally and ethically responsible way.
45. In the event the Operator's MRF is unable to process all of the Collected Material and it is necessary for the Operator to transport the Collected Materials to a remote material recovery facility for performance of the Services, then such circumstance shall be deemed a Non-Performance and dealt with in accordance with sections 236 and 237 herein.

Appendix G

- (p) **Collected Materials** collectively means Designated Materials and Contaminants that are collected as part of the Co-Mingled Recycling Collection Program.
- (w) **Contaminants** shall mean any materials that are not Designated Materials that are collected as part of the Collected Materials.
- (bb) **Designated Materials** means Paper, Glass, Tin, UCB, Polycoat Containers, PET Plastic, CHDPE Plastic, NHDPE Plastic, HDPE Plastic, and Aseptic Containers as at the commencement of the Agreement, and such other materials that may be designated by the City from time to time.
- (qq) **Marketable Materials** means the end products produced by the Operator from processing the Designated Materials at the MRF or such other facility as may be required.

Appendix H

Residential Recycling Costs

Table 2 outlines the expected expenditures to deliver the residential curbside recycling service over the next two-year period (2016-2017). The cost breakdown is consistent with the analysis when the fee was first established in 2013. No new costs have been added.

Table 2 – Recycling Costs

	2015	2016	2017
Recycling Costs:			
Collection	2,655,778	2,762,069	2,872,633
Processing	1,544,707	1,567,955	1,591,552
Administration	957,595	988,077	1,018,751
Promotion	200,000	200,000	200,000
Cart Repurchase	45,000	45,000	45,000
Total Recycling Costs	5,403,080	5,563,100	5,727,936

Note: This table excludes potential costs associated with Program Risk

Appendix I

MMSW Funding for Recycling

Multi-Material Stewardship Western's (MMSW) Waste Packaging and Paper Stewardship Plan officially launched on January 1, 2016. This program provides funding to municipalities and First Nations partners to support recycling services similar to other provincial stewardship programs. Funding comes from a fee structure representing the volume of packaging and paper products businesses generate that end up in residential waste. The City is required to pay fees under this program for the paper products distributed such as our information brochures, leisure guides, tax and utility bills.

The City received \$11.75 per household in 2016. Funding will support public education and outreach through school outreach, community events and media campaigns. As well, funding will allow the City to achieve greater oversight of recycling service providers, ensuring their processes contribute positively to the City's 65 per cent diversion target.

Appendix J

Key highlights:

96% of respondents agree that it is important to reduce the amount of household waste going to the landfill.

91% of respondents agree that the City of Regina has a responsibility to help residents reduce the amount of waste going to the landfill.

96% of respondents say it is important that the City should offer waste services that provide convenient options for residents.

93% of respondents say it is important that Regina should offer waste services that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Appendix K

	2014	2015	2016
City Program Diversion	18%	18%	20%
(Reported in tonnes)			
Blue Cart	9,012	7,914	8,074
Big Blue Bin	1,383	1,069	868
Leaf & Yard Depots	228	312	411
Household Hazardous Waste	55	54	91
Treecycle	78	76	44
Diversion at the landfill	4,446	4,422	6,293
Total Diversion	15,201	13,843	15,781
Garbage	69,794	64,601	63,439

Appendix L

What's in our Brown Cart Garbage?

The City launched a study to learn what material was being placed in garbage and recycling carts each week. Four studies – winter, spring, summer and fall – were conducted in 2016.

The waste study revealed that, on average, 14 per cent of what is rolled out in garbage carts each week can be recycled through the Blue Cart Program. The majority of recyclable material that ends up in the garbage is paper.

Organic material, such as yard and kitchen waste, makes up 57 per cent of what residents roll out to the curb each week. This material provides the greatest opportunity for future waste diversion.

Information from this study is used to inform future services and identify education and outreach opportunities.

Appendix M

Residential Service Level Options

Current Plus

Service Options:

Curbside Garbage & Landfill
Active promotion of Backyard composting
Expanded Recycling Depots Leaf & Yard Waste Depots
Christmas Tree Collection & Processing
Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) events

Supporting Mechanisms:

Promotion & Education
Goods Exchange Events
Customer Reward Program
Voluntary Grasscycling

Current Plus:

Potential diversion – 16% to 20% (current 16% diversion)
Cost - \$120 to \$140 /hhld/year (current \$110 /hhld/year)

Enhanced

Service Options:

Curbside Garbage & Landfill
Active Promotion of Backyard Composting
Single Family Curbside Recycling
Multi-Family Recycling
Curbside Seasonal Leaf & Yard (+ Christmas Tree) collection
Permanent HHW Facility (less frequent operation)
Curbside Bulky/White Goods Collection

Supporting Mechanisms:

Promotion & Education
Goods Exchange Events
Customer Reward Program
Grass Ban
Green Procurement Education
Outreach Program
User Pay for Garbage

Enhanced

Potential Diversion – 30% to 40%
Cost - \$220 to \$240 /hhld/year*

Comprehensive

Service Options:

Curbside Garbage & Landfill
Single Family Curbside Recycling
Multi-Family Recycling
Curbside Biweekly Leaf & Yard (+ Christmas Tree) collection
Curbside Food Waste Collection
Permanent HHW Facility (more frequent operation)
Curbside Bulky/White Goods Collection

Supporting Mechanisms:

Promotion & Education
Goods Exchange Events
Customer Reward Program
Grass Ban
Green Procurement Education
Outreach Program
User Pay for Garbage
Reduced Frequency of Garbage collection
Mandatory Recycling

Comprehensive

Potential Diversion – 50% to 65%
Cost - \$280 to \$320/hhld/year*