



# Committee Report

<b>To:</b>	Warden Hicks and Members of Grey County Council
<b>Committee Date:</b>	February 25, 2021
<b>Subject / Report No:</b>	CAOR-CW-05-21
<b>Title:</b>	County Wide Waste Management Study
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<b>Reviewed by:</b>	
<b>Lower Tier(s) Affected:</b>	
<b>Status:</b>	Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution CW46-21; For further direction see Resolution CW47-21 as a result of a notice of motion;

## Recommendation

1. **That Report CAOR-CW-05 -21 County Wide Waste Management Study be received; and**
2. **That Council direct staff regarding next steps.**

## Executive Summary

Member municipalities have requested that Grey County consider the merits of implementing a solid waste management program at the County level. In order to have a fully informed discussion about the benefits and drawbacks of such a system, a robust feasibility study should be undertaken. This report outlines the information that could be expected from such a study as well as an estimate of the time and costs to complete it.

## Background and Discussion

Residential waste management and recycling services are mandated by the province but are carried out by local municipalities. Each municipality develops its own waste management program which could include: curbside collection, depot drop-off, pay-as-you-throw or any combination of these elements for solid waste and may include organic recycling, as long as the program is in compliance with the requirements of the Environmental Protection Act.

Industrial, commercial, and institutional businesses are individually responsible for complying with waste related regulations and their compliance is determined by their size.

Increasingly municipalities and companies are looking for more sustainable and resilient solutions to managing their solid waste. Each of Grey County's member municipalities have their own waste management infrastructure, operations, and agreements. In October 2020, the Municipality of Meaford passed a resolution in favour of the County considering taking on responsibility. This was circulated to all member municipalities. The Councils of Owen Sound and Hanover supported Meaford's resolution and the Town of the Blue Mountains opposed the resolution. Correspondence from the other municipalities was not received.

The province is changing regulations in response to climate and environmental concerns and this will impact strategies for proper waste management systems in the future. These include transitioning blue box programs to producer responsibility by 2025 so that businesses that are producers of product and/or packaging must take physical and/or financial responsibility for the wastes that their products and/or packaging create, setting new waste diversion from landfill targets and creating the Food and Organics Waste Policy Statement

Examining alternate service delivery options and analyzing economics and financing to develop creative and sustainable systems would align with the County Official Plan and the goal of the County's draft climate change action plan to reduce GHG emissions.

## County Official Plan

### **8.10 Managing Our Waste**

Dealing with the waste and garbage that we generate is always a challenge. By reusing and recycling our 'waste' we have been able to divert much of it from landfills. Some municipalities within Grey *County* have active landfill sites for waste. Other municipalities no longer have an active landfill site and their waste is trucked outside of Grey *County*. How we manage our waste in the future is an important consideration.

- 1) The *County* of Grey supports waste reduction as the best response to managing waste and will encourage all reasonable efforts to reduce and eliminate the production of unnecessary waste.
- 2) The local municipalities currently own and manage the waste management facilities and operations within the *County*. Appendix A of the *County* Official Plan shows the location of open landfill sites as well as the location of known closed and abandoned sites.
- 3) The *County* encourages local municipalities to promote mandatory waste diversion programs to reduce the amount of waste to be disposed of through landfill. Recycling, waste reduction, waste transfer stations, and similar waste management facilities may be permitted in addition to waste disposal activities.
- 4) In addition to waste diversion, the *County* encourages strategies that would reduce potential waste (e.g. packaging and advertising materials) from entering households and places of business. The *County* supports a greater emphasis on maximizing value from waste and working towards a circular economy in which materials are never discarded, but reused or recycled into new products and reintegrated into the market. The reduction, reuse, and recycling of waste are all encouraged to extend the life of landfill sites.

5) Local municipalities are encouraged to consider new waste management technologies to deal with waste management including increased reduction of waste, reuse of waste, recycling of waste including Styrofoam, green box programs for composting or biodegrading of organic waste, handling sludge, and recycling film plastics.

6) Private commercial waste management facilities are to be located on lands designated and zoned for such purposes. An amendment to this Plan and the local official plan is required prior to the establishment of new private commercial waste management facilities or the expansion of existing facilities.

7) Any proposal for a new waste management facility or for the expansion of an existing facility must be consistent with the principles, objectives and policies of this Plan and must comply, where applicable, with the provisions of the Environmental Assessment Act, the *Environmental Protection Act*, and any other applicable legislation and/or regulations.

8) The *County* and local municipalities will consider implementing the Food and Organic Waste Policy Statement issued under the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016. This includes considering the *development* and implementation of education programs aimed at preventing food waste with focus of the education program reaching consumers through information that will assist in preventing and reducing food waste.

9) With respect to food waste, ways of achieving options to disposal will be encouraged in the following order of priority:

- Source reduction;
- Diversion to food banks, soup kitchens, and shelters;
- Diversion to animal feed;
- Use for fuel conversion and energy recovery;
- Composting;

### Completing the Feasibility Assessment

County staff do not have expertise in the operation or assessment of waste management services. Completing a comprehensive feasibility study would require doing an RFP to secure the services of a competent consulting firm, with team members experienced with assessing finance, operations, environmental impacts, technology, etc.

### Scope of Work

The proposed RFP would seek proposals to assess and provide recommendations on the following factors:

- A comparison of existing waste management operations, policies and procedures, system performance, contracts, landfill capacity, value of infrastructure across the nine-member municipalities.
- Consideration of regulatory, environmental, economic and social factors and how these will impact the waste management system of the future.
- Feedback from public engagement.
- Options for providing some or all waste management services and infrastructure at the county level, supported with life cycle costing over a 30-year period and having regard for:
  - ✓ Quality of service to the public including short- and long-term disposal options that are appropriate to both urban and rural contexts
  - ✓ Cost savings (capital, annual operating and maintenance)
  - ✓ Alignment, and integration
  - ✓ Improved waste diversion/reduction and maximizing existing disposal capacity
  - ✓ Recycling and organics
- A financing plan that considers the current value of the assets each municipality would be bringing into any new system.

## Legal and Legislated Requirements

Section 189(1) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, requires that a “triple majority” be achieved in order for the County to assume waste management responsibilities on a County-wide basis as it is currently a lower-tier sphere of jurisdiction as outlined in Section 11 of The Municipal Act. A triple majority is a majority of lower tier councils, together representing a majority of electors in the County, along with and a majority of County Council.

## Related legislation

The policies, rules and regulations that guide Ontario’s resource recovery and waste reduction include:

- [Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016](#)
- [Waste Diversion Transition Act, 2016](#)
- [Environmental Protection Act](#)
- [Environmental Assessment Act](#)
- [Nutrient Management Act](#)
- [Food and Organic Waste Policy Statement](#)

The *Environmental Protection Act* addresses waste collection, disposal and environmental approvals, including:

- Landfill design standards under *Reg. 232*
- Standards for disposal sites, the management, tracking and disposal of hazardous and liquid industrial waste under *Reg. 347*
- Requirements for landfill gas collection under *Reg. 217*
- Requirements for municipal Blue Box programs under *O. Reg. 101/94*
- Requirements for IC&I sector to reduce waste and recover resource under '3Rs' regulations: *O. Reg. 102/94, O. Reg. 103/94* and *O. Reg. 104/94*
- Requirements for producers of pharmaceuticals and sharps to establish free collection locations across Ontario for pharmaceuticals and sharps they no longer need under *Reg. 298/12*
- Ontario Compost Quality Standards under *Reg. 347* and Guidelines for the Production of Compost

## Financial and Resource Implications

Completion of the feasibility study would require information and staff time from each of the member municipalities. A study of this magnitude would take 6 to 12 months to complete could cost in the neighborhood of \$250,000. This work was not included in the 2021 budget. Staff could investigate sources of grant funding. If no grant application is successful, the funds would be recommended to be funded from the Waste Management Reserve and the Strategic Plan Reserve.

## Relevant Consultation

- Internal Finance, Clerks, Planning
- External (list)