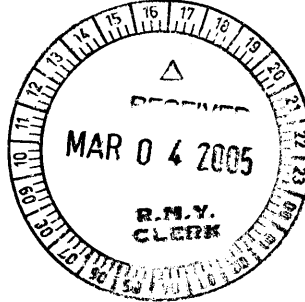


Town of Richmond Hill

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March 2, 2005

Denis Kelly, Regional Clerk
The Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge Street
P.O. Box 147
Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1



**REGION OF YORK
CLERK'S OFFICE**

FILE No. - 127

Dear Mr. Kelly:

Re: Household Organics Waste (green bin) Collection – Deferring Startup Until September 2006 at the Earliest

Richmond Hill Town Council, at its meeting on February 28, 2005, approved the following resolution:

- "a) That the startup of household organics (green bin) collection in Richmond Hill be deferred until September 2006 or later;
- b) That the Clerk send a copy of Waste Management Task Force Report No. 7 to the Region of York;
- c) That Staff report to Council before the end of 2005 (or sooner if circumstances change sufficiently to warrant earlier consideration) with a revised plan to implement household organics collection as well as the possibility of phasing-in three stream collection."

I am forwarding a copy of the report prepared by the Town of Richmond Hill's Engineering and Public Works Department for your reference. If you require further information please call Bruce Macgregor, Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works, at (905) 771-2527.

Sincerely,

Donna L. McLarty
Deputy Clerk

cc: B. Macgregor, Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works



Proud Communities in Bloom Participant

WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE

February 11, 2005

WMTF No. 7

Engineering and Public Works

Operations and Maintenance

SUBJECT: Household Organics Waste (green bin) Collection - deferring startup until September 2006 at the earliest

PURPOSE:

To recommend that Council defer the startup of household organics collection until at least May 2006.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a) That Council defer the startup of household organics (green bin) collection in Richmond Hill until at least May 2006;
- b) The Clerk send a copy of this report to the Region of York;
- c) That staff report to Council before the end of 2005 (or sooner if circumstances change sufficiently to warrant earlier consideration) with a revised plan to implement household organics collection.

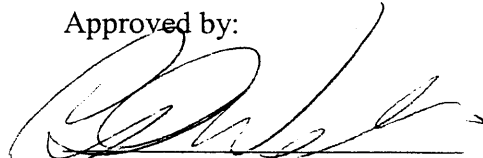
Contact: Bruce Macgregor, ext 3514

Submitted by:



Bruce Macgregor, P.Eng.
Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works

Approved by:



C. D. Weldon
Chief Administrative Officer

BACKGROUND:

In May 2004, staff reported on the expected implementation of 3-stream waste collection in York Region. In early 2004, the Region asked local municipalities to confirm intentions to commence collection of household organics in 2005. The Town of Richmond Hill responded by the May deadline advising of an intention to commence organics collection in July 2005. The commitment was, however, conditional upon receiving confirmation from the Region of York that collection vehicles could offload at a south area transfer station and assurances that processing capabilities would be available. This information was requested by no later than September 2004 so that an orderly change could be introduced across the Town. Responses were not received in September. In December 2004, Regional staff reported on the status of local municipal responses. The following recommendation was adopted by Regional Council on December 16, 2004:

- “1. *All local municipalities be advised to implement a source separated organic collection program no later than June 1, 2006 or on the renewal date of their respective collection contracts, [emphasis added] to ensure the Region is maximizing its diversion of Waste from landfill and minimizing the amount of Waste landfilled in Michigan.*
2. *The local municipalities pay all costs related to the collection of source separated organics, including the provision of collection containers, as it is their responsibility under the Municipal Act.*
3. *The Region continue to develop and implement its promotion and education plan for source separated organics as previously approved by Council in June 2004.*
4. *The local municipalities be informed the Bales Drive waste management facility will be operational on July 4, 2005 and that Halton Recycling is under contract with the Region to handle 60,000 tonnes per year of source separated organic waste until March 2009.”*

The Regional Council resolution offers an option not previously considered - namely, to defer organics collection for up to 4 years or until the term of the existing collection contract with Miller Waste Systems expires on (February 28, 2009).

Delays in construction (or contracting) of Regional processing facilities has already set back the originally expected implementation of household organics collection by 4 years

Although planned for several years, the separate collection and processing of household organics has suffered a number of setbacks and delays attributable, primarily, to delays in acquiring, designing and constructing the necessary Regional processing facilities. The type of waste processing to be made available to municipalities in York Region was confirmed in 2001. The Regional processing facilities that the Town currently relies upon are summarized in Table 1 along with those expected now to be in place by July 2005.

Table 1 - Regional processing facilities for waste collected in Richmond Hill

	Current - 2004	Available as of July 4, 2005
Garbage	Transferred into trailers at the Miller Waste Transfer Station on Rodick Road (Woodbine and Hwy 407) and hauled for disposal at one of three landfill sites under contract to York Region (one in Michigan and two in Ontario)	No change
Recycling	Delivered to Material Recycling Facility on the west side of Woodbine, south of Hwy 407 also owned by Miller Waste and contracted to the Region of York	Likely to offload at the same facility for bulk transfer to new Bales Road processing facility in East Gwillimbury (north of Davis Drive, east of Woodbine Ave.) - until transfer station is expanded in 2007
Organics	As of January 1, 2004 York Region entered into a 2-year contract (with option to extend to 5 years in annual increment) with Halton Waste for in-vessel composting at a facility in Newmarket (west side of Hwy 404, north of Mulock Drive) - formerly known as Canada Composting	Continued reliance on Halton Recycling Facility in Newmarket with bulk transfer at the Miller Waste facility in Markham; Region is also preparing contingency arrangements with another, Quebec-based private processor
Yard Waste	Until 2004, yard waste was hauled to a Miller facility (under contract to York Region) at Bloomington Road - west of Leslie. Region is receiving yard waste at the Halton recycling facility and transferring off site	Expect continued reliance of contractual relationship with Halton Recycling and contingent processing in Quebec
Appliances	Town's collection contractor disposes of appliance to local recyclers. Refrigerators (CFC's) are recovered as required as required by under EPact.	no change

At least 75% of the Region's population is concentrated in the urban communities of Markham, Vaughan and Richmond Hill. A new recycling processing facility is being constructed in East Gwillimbury. This should allow more efficient collection of commingled blue box materials (as opposed to the more labour intensive curbside sort) commencing in mid-2005. A Regional transfer station serving the south urban municipalities is not expected to open until 2007. In the meantime, improvisational plans are being coordinated to transfer recycling materials from the existing facility in Markham.

There have been logistical problems with the current organics facility located in York Region

In 2004, a Regional tender for yard waste processing was awarded to the same Newmarket-based plant that is expected to process household organics. The facility has been in existence for several years however, during that time, has faced challenges fulfilling the obligations in a Certificate of Approval issued by the Provincial Ministry of the Environment. In recent discussions with staff from the Town of Newmarket, it appears that traffic and odour concerns remain a problem. In the Fall of 2004, yard waste collection vehicles were queued for unexpected lengthy periods resulting in several days where not all yard waste was cleared from streets in the Town of Richmond Hill.

The Town entered in to a 10-year collection contract in 1999 with the expectation (based on Regional schedules at the time) of commencing organics collection in 2001

The current collection contract with Miller Waste Systems runs for a ten-year term, commencing on March 1, 1999. At the time it was tendered, the Region was preparing to initiate organics collection in 2001. Provisions were made to implement the change in either the second or third year of the contract. Delays in securing the required processing capabilities mean that the change could occur in year 7 of the contract (i.e. July 2005). This poses logistical concerns for the contractor and does not provide for competitive costing. Postponing the collection for up to 3 more years would reduce termination costs and permit a competitive tender for collection services.

The Province of Ontario is encouraging 60% municipal waste diversion by 2008 but has yet to enact legislation making it mandatory

The Province has, for several years, intimated an intention to require that municipalities divert 60% of wastes from landfill by 2008. Currently, the Town of Richmond Hill diverts only 25% of wastes through the blue box program, yard waste and appliance collection. Achieving the provincial goal will require the separation of organics.

The state of the provincial direction however, is unclear. The Province has not yet imposed this expectation through legislation. In the meantime, organics are not prohibited materials for the purposes of landfill in either Ontario or Michigan. A clear, legislated direction from the Province of Ontario would be useful as the additional costs of organics collection and processing are substantial and would only serve to extend the useful life of landfill facilities already approved.

In the meantime, it is expected that the expanded blue box content will help increase waste diversion towards 30%.

There is currently a public expectation that organics collection will start in 2005

The public has been subject to a number of media campaigns in recent years raising awareness of organics or "green bin" programs. The City of Toronto's initiatives began in 2002 and now cover the former municipalities of Etobicoke, Scarborough, East York, York and the old City of Toronto. York Region has been advising of the pending changes and has budgeted communications staff and funding for broader media efforts expected in 2005. It is now apparent, however, that with the sole exception of Markham, no other York Region municipality is expecting to collect household organics in 2005.

Based on prior Council decisions, the 2005 waste collection calendar includes some forewarning of a pending "green bin" program in Richmond Hill commencing in the second half of the year. To date, a target date of July 4, 2005 has been tentatively suggested. A six-month waste collection calendar (to the end of June 2005) was prepared in November 2004 and distributed to households in December 2004. A second calendar will have to be prepared in April and circulated in May or early June 2005. The calendar could be prepared to run for 12 months commencing in July - a period that may be more practical for delivery purposes in the future. As well, the calendar could focus more specifically on changes to the blue box program (more material) and easier practices for setting out blue box material for collection (commingled).

A grant application (COMRIF) filed to fund green bin containers will remain valid until 2009

Recently, staff recommended that Council consider applying for Federal/Provincial funding to offset the capital cost of the green bin program. Green bins are expected to cost \$1.2 million. Available funding could reduce the cost to a more reasonable \$400,000. Although the award of grant funding has not been confirmed, any funds awarded are required to be spent by 2009. The funding would therefore, not be lost if the project was delayed.

FINANCIAL/STAFFING/OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

The proposed 2005 waste collection budget could be reduced by approximately \$400,000 if organics collection were deferred to 2006 or later. This figure includes savings from deferring organics and a tentative provision for reduced curbside collection costs for blue box materials.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN:

The recommendations in this report meet the strategic plan goals of:

CONCLUSIONS:

Staff have reassessed a position considered earlier in 2004 and recommend that the separate collection of household organic waste be deferred until at least September 2006. The reasons for deferring the collections startup include:

1. The lack of a specific, legislated requirement to do so.
2. Additional costs necessary to collect organic wastes.
3. Higher costs attributable to making the change late in the term of the existing collection contract.
4. The fact that only one York Region municipality (Markham) is expecting to collect household organics in 2005.
5. Remaining uncertainty as to the ability of new Regional facilities to meet the operating demands of municipal waste collection in all circumstances.

