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INCREASING ACCESS TO WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICES THROUGH COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL CENTRES

The Solid Waste Management Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated December 16, 2008, from the Commissioner of Environmental Services.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Council receive for information an update on the schedule for expansion of the Community Environmental Centre network in York Region with the next steps being design and construction of the Richmond Hill Community Environmental Centre.
2. Staff be authorized to negotiate an extension of the land lease from the Town of Markham for the Markham Household Hazardous Waste Depot and undertake the process for determining the needs of residents and an appropriate facility by evaluating options in consultation with the Town.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the planning and implementation schedule for expansion of the Community Environmental Centre network in York Region. Additionally this report seeks authorization to initiate discussions with Markham to identify opportunities for expansion of the Markham Household Hazardous Waste Depot to meet the future needs of residents.

3. BACKGROUND

Establishment of a network of Community Environmental Centres is a key element of the Region's solid waste management infrastructure, as put forward in the Joint Waste Diversion Strategy and approved by Regional Council in Fall 2006 (Report No. 6 of the Solid Waste Management Committee).

Community Environmental Centres (CECs) will provide members of the public with a point of access to solid waste management services, conveniently located within the community to ensure that materials are dealt with in a manner consistent with an environmentally sound, integrated waste management hierarchy.

On March 24, 2005, the City of Vaughan issued a memo requesting that York Region provide a Community Environmental Centre in the City of Vaughan. Vaughan's request was supported by Council in Clause 3 of Report No. 5 of the Solid Waste Management Committee in September 2005. This facility is currently under construction with commencement of operation anticipated in Spring 2009.

On July 27, 2005, the Town of Richmond Hill also issued a memo requesting York Region to build a regionally-owned and operated Community Environmental Centre. Richmond Hill's request was supported by Council in Clause 3 of Report No. 5 of the Solid Waste Management Committee in September 2005. Planning and conceptual design of the Richmond Hill Community Environmental Centre has begun. Detailed design and tendering for construction are planned for 2009 and are included in the 2009 Capital Budget presented to Council on December 18, 2008.

On October 23, 2008, Regional Council adopted Clause 1 of Report No. 6 of the Solid Waste Management Committee authorizing Regional staff to initiate the retention of an engineering consultant to complete the detailed design and tender documents, and issuance of a tender for construction of improvements to York Region's Georgina Transfer Station based on Community Environmental Centre Principles.

York Region operates four public drop-off waste management facilities. These facilities are located in East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Markham, and Vaughan and receive various materials as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1
Acceptable Materials at York Region Public Drop-off Facilities

Acceptable Materials	East Gwillimbury Garfield Wright Blvd.	Georgina Warden Ave.	Markham Rodick Rd.	Vaughan Rutherford Rd.
HHW	✓	✓	✓	✓
Electronics	✓	✓	✓	✓
Scrap metal	✓	✓		
Metal appliances	✓	✓		
Cardboard, boxboard	✓	✓		
Blue box recyclables		✓		
Solid waste		✓		
Yard waste		✓		
Tires		✓		
Clean Fill		✓		

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The Region's Community Environmental Centres are intended to provide members of the public with conveniently located points of access to solid waste management services not available curbside. Periodically, residents require services to dispose of bulky recyclables or extra quantities of materials. A Regional network of CECs will facilitate the reuse, recycling and disposal of residential materials as well as small quantities of industrial, commercial and institutional materials.

The following sections outline the planning and implementation schedule set out for the CEC network from 2009 to 2018.

Incorporating the "one-stop" vision in the CEC network plan

Currently, service levels among all municipal and Regional depots vary across York Region. For example, a resident can drop off tires and garbage at the transfer station and Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) depot in Georgina, but cannot drop off the same items at the HHW depot in Markham. A network of CECs will fill existing service gaps and provide consistent access to waste management services throughout the Region as a supplement to curbside programs.

The vision of the CEC network is to provide a series of 'one-stop' locations for waste management services, based on the following principles:

- Easily accessible.
- Consistent program service delivery.
- Safe for users, staff and contractors.
- Convenient and supportive of a positive user experience.
- Reflective of the priorities of the 3R's waste management hierarchy.
- Flexible approach to design to suit the site and surrounding vicinity.
- Maintains an attractive aesthetic appearance.

Furthermore, in keeping with the core mission of providing a locally-based, environmentally beneficial public service, wherever possible the CEC network will include a conservation themed public education and information area. The public education and information area will include resource materials and displays dedicated to the topics of waste management, sustainable development and environmental conservation. Information related to local and Regional programs (i.e. Blue Box, Green Bin, Water for Tomorrow, etc.) will be available. The education and information areas may also be used during occasional on-site public promotional and awareness activities or events.

Lessons learned from development of the McCleary Court CEC in Vaughan

Site Location and Conditions

Locating a site for development was a significant challenge for the McCleary Court CEC in Vaughan. Siting any waste management facility is challenging, even one as clearly environmentally beneficial as the CEC. Site conditions can also invariably affect the design and layout of the CEC. For example, the McCleary Court CEC was located adjacent to a flood prone property. As a result, the proposed concept design of the facility was adjusted to accommodate this condition.

Public Consultation

Public consultation was an important component to the success of the McCleary Court CEC in Vaughan. York Region staff hosted public information sessions and held separate meetings with key stakeholders to ensure a clear understanding and facilitate acceptance. Through this process, it was demonstrated that the municipal needs and the needs of the surrounding residents and businesses necessitate flexibility in CEC site design.

Site Design through Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Initiative

One of the key messages received from the public was a strong emphasis on the importance of the aesthetics of the facility. Given the public's generally cautious view of waste management facilities, it proved to be very beneficial to incorporate attractive aesthetics into facility design. The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design approach to sustainable design was positively perceived as being consistent with the beneficial environmental mission of the CEC. Overall, the siting and design approach used for the McCleary Court CEC received positive feedback from the public which provides a solid basis on which to site and design for subsequent CECs.

Implementation Schedule for the CEC network from 2009 - 2018

The implementation schedule outlined in Table 2 was developed from the approved 2009 capital budget and projected outlook years from 2010 to 2018.

Table 2
Implementation Schedule for CEC Network

Name/Location	Date
McCleary Court CEC in Vaughan	Spring 2009 – Commence operation
Georgina Transfer Station Upgrade	2009 – Design and construction
Central CEC in Richmond Hill	2009 – Planning approvals and design
CEC #4	2013 – Commence planning and design
CEC #5	2016 – Commence planning and design
CECs #6 and #7	2018 – Commence planning and design

The City of Vaughan and Town of Richmond Hill previously requested that York Region build a CEC within their municipalities. The Region encourages other interested Municipalities to similarly request a CEC for their community, along with identification of a recommended or preferred site(s).

Currently, the Georgina Transfer Station is the Region's only operating facility offering a suite of waste management services similar to those intended for the CECs. The Georgina Transfer station is located in the north central part of the Region (*see Attachment 1*) and will be undergoing renovations during 2009 to upgrade the facility to be consistent with the principles established for a CEC.

Currently, three site locations have been established for CECs. As listed in Table 1, these three locations are in Georgina, Vaughan and Richmond Hill. Attachment 2 shows each of these CEC locations and the areas they are anticipated to service in York Region.

Locations for CECs #4 to #7 have not yet been established. Solid waste management staff are working with the Geomatics Branch to consider potential future CEC locations. Attachment 3 shows the three established CEC locations along with areas to consider for potential future CEC locations. CEC #7 is not mapped in Attachment 3 as it exceeds a 10 year planning horizon and is therefore subject to reassessment of need and location as the population projections and urban areas evolve. This preliminary analysis is based primarily on providing coverage within a 15 minute drive time based on previous attitudinal studies conducted by the Region.

Proceeding with development of CECs #4 to #7 will be subject to re-assessment of need and effective service coverage requirements based on response and usage of the first three facilities. Potential future CEC locations require further detailed analysis taking into account population densities, site availability and suitability, and consultation with local municipalities before any decision on a potential location can be made. The Region's preference is that the local municipality review the potential future site locations and request a CEC along with identification of a recommended or preferred site(s).

Commencement of operations at the McCleary Court CEC in 2009 will provide an opportunity for development of a better understanding of CEC client profile and demographics. Staff will conduct surveys of CEC customers and collect information to assess driving distances, travel times, material types/quantities and other data. Working with Geomatics Branch, analysis of this "real-world" information will provide a better picture of future needs and service optimization for the CECs. This will provide a sound basis for collaboration with the local municipalities and more in-depth consideration of their preferred site locations.

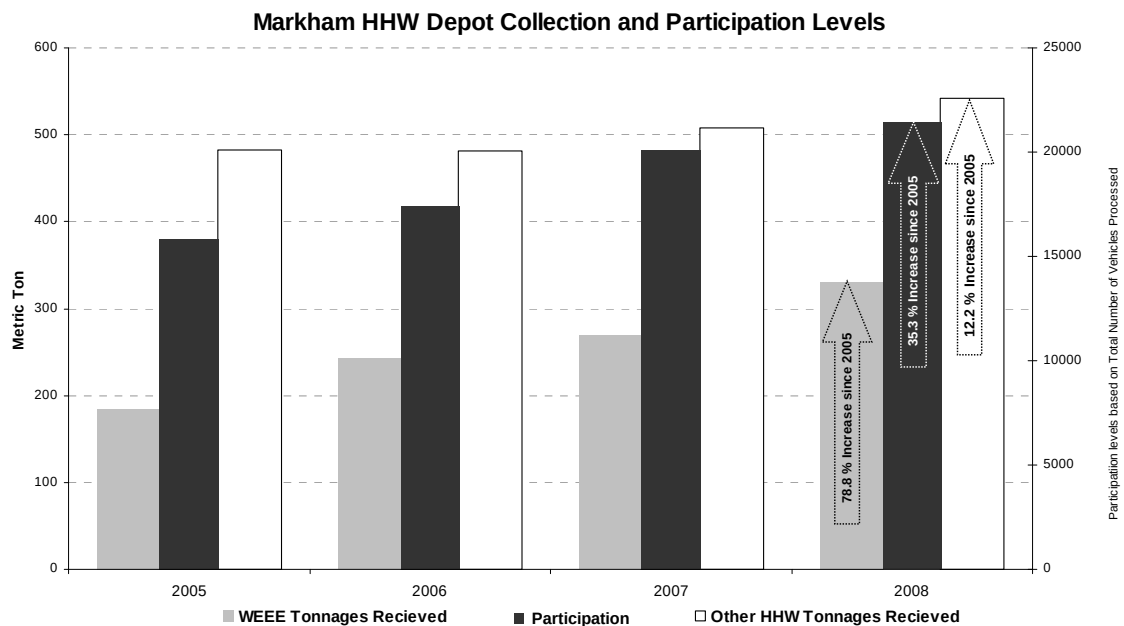
Changing status of the Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Facility in Markham creates a potential new opportunity

The Region has been operating the household hazardous waste depot in Markham on Rodick Road since September 1997. The property is leased from the Town of Markham. The current agreement includes an option to extend the lease for two additional one year terms at the same rental costs. This agreement, including the two extensions, expires in September 2010.

The end of the lease agreement in 2010 at the Rodick Road HHW depot creates a new opportunity to work with Markham to consider how best to address the future needs of the community in terms of HHW depot, or alternatively siting of a CEC in this area of the Region.

The Markham depot has experienced an increase in participation consistently since the outset of the program. Figure 1 presents the increase in tonnages collected at the Markham HHW depot and the increase in participation since 2005.

Figure 1



The physical size of the depot is no longer adequate to accommodate the number of vehicles and the volume of household hazardous waste and electronic waste collected there (see Attachment 4). A new stewardship program for waste electronics and electrical equipment (WEEE) has been approved by the province and will be implemented in spring 2009. As a result, the amount of electronic waste delivered to the Markham HHW depot is expected to significantly increase over the next five years and beyond. The site

is not adequate in size or layout to implement the new sorting and packaging requirements proposed in the new WEEE stewardship plan and is not large enough to consider accommodating a CEC.

Options to consider for the Markham HHW Depot

The Markham HHW Depot located on Rodick Road is too limited in size to consider expansion or modification to accommodate the increasing participation and tonnages of hazardous materials and electronic wastes received. The following two options will be considered by staff through consultation with the Town of Markham.

1. Relocate to a new location in Markham

Solid Waste Management is working with Property Services staff to identify options for a more suitable location to operate its expanded program. An extension of the existing land lease is required to provide sufficient time to find a more suitable location.

2. Incorporate HHW and electronics waste collection with future CEC

Figure 3 indicates that the south east area of York Region represents an under-serviced area which could potentially accommodate a CEC. Incorporating an HHW and electronics waste collection depot within a CEC is consistent with the vision set out for the CEC network. Again, extension of the existing land lease on a temporary basis would still likely be required to allow sufficient time for implementation of this option.

The CEC network across York Region will fill existing service gaps and provide improved access to waste management services throughout the Region as a supplement to existing curbside programs. The Markham HHW depot fulfills a portion of these services through its electronics and HHW collection. Through consultation with the Town of Markham, staff will initiate a process to determine the needs of residents and design an appropriate facility to provide waste management services that align with the goals of the Joint Waste Diversion Strategy for this area of the Region.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Information contained in this report does not have any direct financial implications. Financial implications of future CECs are subject to subsequent approval of capital and operating budgets specific to those projects. The implementation schedule shown for the planned CECs is as approved in the 2009 capital budget and projected in the outlook years from 2010 to 2018.

The McCleary Court CEC business plan estimates the operating cost at approximately \$100 - \$150/tonne. This estimated unit cost takes into consideration the facility operating costs such as utilities and maintenance, initial and ongoing advertising and publicity, the

awarded operation and haulage contract and the estimated tonnage projections of 9,000 tonnes per year. The information gained through the operation of the McCleary Court CEC commencing in 2009 will provide a better understanding of how the unit costs and tonnage estimates can then be more accurately projected on future CECs.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Waste management services provided through the future CEC network will supplement curbside services offered in each municipality. The CEC network will provide residents consistent and convenient access to the Region's waste management programs, and will support the recommendations of the Joint Waste Diversion Strategy.

7. CONCLUSION

Waste management services delivered through a network of CECs demonstrates the Region's commitment to the Joint Waste Diversion Strategy and provides options for those waste materials not easily managed through existing residential curbside programs. Establishment of a network of CECs across York Region will contribute to the Regions waste diversion objectives. By incorporating the 'one-stop' vision, residents across York Region will have consistent and convenient access to waste management programs in a manner consistent with an environmentally sound, integrated waste management hierarchy. Lessons learned through the McCleary Court CEC in Vaughan emphasize the importance of siting, consultation, as well as facility design and aesthetics in development of the CECs.

For more information on this report, please contact Laura McDowell, Director of Environmental Promotion and Protection at Ext. 5077.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The four attachments referred to in this clause are attached to this report.)