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MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE PUBLIC AND CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARDS FOR RECYCLABLE MATERIALS PROCESSING

The Environmental Services Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated April 29, 2010, from the Commissioner of Environmental Services.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. Regional Council authorize a five year extension to the Memoranda of Understanding with the York Region District School Board and the York Catholic District School Board (collectively, the “Boards”) for delivery of recyclable materials to York Region’s Waste Management Centre in the Town of East Gwillimbury, expiring June 30, 2015.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide details of the current partnership between the Region and the York Region School Boards and recommend updating and extending the existing Memoranda of Understanding for an additional 5 year term, expiring June 30, 2015.

3. BACKGROUND

Regional Council at its meeting on November 17, 2005, adopted Clause No. 2 in Report No. 7 of the Solid Waste Management Committee titled “School Board Recycling”. In this report, it was recommended that Memoranda of Understanding be signed with the Boards to have their recyclable materials delivered to the Region’s Waste Management Centre. A Memorandum of Understanding was established with each Board on similar terms, each expiring on June 30, 2010.

The Memoranda of Understanding provide for the Region to permit the Boards to deliver blue box material free of charge. In return, the Region is permitted to advertise its recycling program within school newsletters and other school board publications subject to Board approval.

The Memoranda contributes to the Region's Sustainability Strategy by raising student awareness and ensuring school waste diversion programs align with York Region's waste management priorities.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

School Boards adopt single stream recycling program

Since the implementation of the program, both the Public and Catholic School Boards have adopted a single stream blue box recycling program to ensure that their materials would be acceptable at our facility. These recycling programs are essentially identical to the curbside collection program in terms of acceptable materials with one minor exception. The Catholic School Board has a long established separate paper collection program. Paper products collected under this program are managed separately from container products and are not sent to the Region for processing. However, based on recent composition data, blue box material sent from the Catholic Board is very similar to that of the Public Board and from the curbside collection program including paper content.

Region processes approximately 1,400 tonnes annually

When the original Memoranda of Understanding were established, it was estimated that that the Boards would deliver, via direct haul, approximately 150 tonnes of recyclable materials annually. However, as was seen with curbside collection when the single stream program came into effect in July 2005, actual quantities delivered exceed original projections. Although the quantity of recyclable materials delivered exceeds original estimate, it is quite manageable as it represents less than 2% of the annual tonnage managed at the Material Recovery Facility (MRF).

A summary of the quantity of recyclable materials sent to the Region for processing since the start of the program in 2006 is shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Blue Box Tonnes Delivered

	2006	2007	2008	2009
YRDSB	1,075	1,050	1,110	990
YCDSB	-	-	240	380
Totals	1,075	1,050	1,350	1,370

As can be seen from Table 1, blue box quantities have remained fairly consistent over the last two years.

School Board Tonnages do not count towards WDO diversion rate

Even though the Region receives, processes and diverts recyclable materials from the Boards, these tonnes do not count towards increasing the Region's Waste Diversion Ontario annual diversion rate. The reason is that the Boards are considered part of the Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (ICI) sector and the annual data call requires that all tonnes received from the ICI sector be subtracted from the residential diversion rate calculations.

Regular communication increases performance and quality

As with every waste management program, there are inevitably issues that require attention and management. In the initial months of the program, several challenges were identified including recyclable material quality, compaction and communication. During the course of the existing program, the Region and the Boards implemented several measures to correct those challenges.

The recyclable material quality and compaction issues have significantly improved and reduced throughout the term of the current Memoranda of Understanding. Since the Region has influence over the material quality and over-compaction through the existence of the Memoranda of Understanding, these issues have been effectively addressed. As well, communication plans have been implemented which ensure that promotional and educational materials are in place within the schools and that when issues do require attention, the respective Board and Regional staff take action.

There is an ongoing and continued effort to improve this program, as the objective is to ensure the material quality is acceptable and that students become more active and aware of the importance of waste management programs in the Region.

Collaborative efforts produce shared benefits

From the Region's perspective, the program linkage with the Boards will increase the overall education and awareness of recycling among students by allowing them to recycle the same items at school that they recycle at home. It is expected that this program continuity, over both the short and long term, will result in increased participation and overall waste diversion in the residential program.

From the Boards perspective, providing a consistent message to students (the same as they receive at home) should result in increased participation and waste diversion. As the Boards are part of the ICI sector, they are mandated by Provincial regulations to implement recycling programs and prepare waste reduction work plans to increase waste diversion.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

While under the terms of the Memoranda of Understanding, the Region will accept the Board's recyclable material at no charge, the Region will incur costs from the operating contractor at the Material Recovery Facility. Additionally, the Region will retain all of the revenue from the sale of the recyclable material delivered by the Boards.

Table 2
Summary of Processing and Net Revenue Costs

	2006	2007	2008	2009	To Date (2006-2009)
Inbound Tonnes	1,075	1,050	1,350	1,370	4,845
Processing Costs	\$67,000	\$65,000	\$85,100	\$87,700	\$304,800
Net Revenue	\$85,700	\$114,300	\$136,700	\$81,600	\$418,300
Net Per Tonne	\$17	\$47	\$38	(\$4)	\$23

1 Processing Costs include the per tonne processing fee and administration fee as paid to the MRF operating contractor

2 Net Revenue is based on reducing the inbound tonnes by an annual average contamination rate of 10% then multiplying this by 95% of the annual gross revenue from the sale of recyclable materials

The preceding table presents the financial performance of the program over the past few years. Using conservative estimates for blue box processing costs and "basket of goods" revenue from the sale of the recyclable materials, over the next five years of an extended term it is expected that the program will be revenue neutral to slightly positive.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

While some of the local municipalities currently collect recyclables from some Public and Catholic schools as part of their residential collection program, a significant portion of material received from the Boards to the Region is done under separate collection contracts administered by the Boards. Staff have determined that approximately 87% of all school age children will be serviced by recycling programs covered under these memoranda. Staff will discuss opportunities with local municipalities to further expand recycling programs to private schools. It is anticipated that there will be no impact on the collection of recyclables by local municipalities.

7. CONCLUSION

It is recommended that the Region update, as appropriate, and extend the terms of the Memoranda of Understanding with the Boards for an additional five year term to expire June 30, 2015, so that the Boards can continue to deliver recyclable material to the Region's Waste Management Centre and promote the importance of recycling to students across the Region.

For more information on this report, please contact Laura McDowell, Director, Environmental Promotion and Protection at (905) 830-4444 Ext 5077.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.