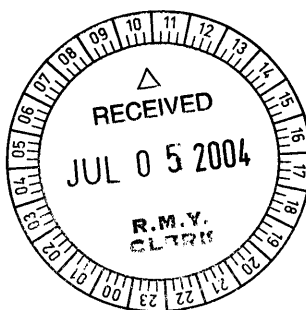


June 24, 2004

Mr. Denis Kelly
Regional Clerk
The Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1



REGION OF YORK
CLERK'S OFFICE
FILE No. - P27

RE: **ELIMINATION OF PLASTIC BAGS FOR LEAF AND
YARD MATERIAL COLLECTION (5.1)**

Dear Mr. Kelly:

This will confirm that at the meeting of Council held on June 22, 2004, Clause 8 of Report No. 35, was approved as follows:

"That the staff report entitled "Elimination of Plastic Bags for Leaf and Yard Material Collection" be received;

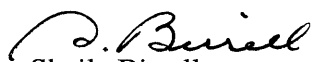
And that the Town amend its Waste Management By-law 32-95 to delete plastic bags as an approved container for residential leaf and yard material effective January 1, 2005;

And that a multi-year communication, education, and enforcement program be implemented at an estimated cost of \$10,000 in 2004 to be absorbed into the 2004 Waste Management Operating Budget and \$65,000 in 2005 to be included in the 2005 Waste Management Capital and Operating Budgets;

And that the Region of York be requested to provide 50% of the cost of Markham's communication and education costs estimated at \$5,000 in 2004 and \$32,500 in 2005;

And that staff investigate and report back to Council on the cost and benefits of offering a weekly collection service for leaf and yard material during the months of May, June, October and November in 2005."

Yours sincerely,



Sheila Birrell
Town Clerk

Copy to: Stan Bertoia, General Manager, Construction & Utilities
Claudia Marsales, Manager, Waste Management
Barb Cribbett, Treasurer



**REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

41

TO: Mayor and Members of Council

FROM: Stan Bertoia, P. Eng., General Manager Construction and Utilities

PREPARED BY: Claudia Marsales, Manager Waste Management

DATE OF MEETING: June 7, 2004

SUBJECT: Elimination of Plastic Bags for Leaf and Yard Material Collection

RECOMMENDATIONS:

THAT the Report entitled "Elimination of Plastic Bags for Leaf and Yard Material Collection" be received;

AND THAT the Town amend its Waste Management By-Law 32-95 to delete plastic bags as an approved container for residential leaf and yard material effective January 1, 2005;

AND THAT a multi year communication, education, and enforcement program be implemented at a estimated cost of \$10,000 in 2004 to be absorbed into the 2004 Waste Management Operating Budget and \$65,000 in 2005 to be included in the 2005 Waste Management Capital and Operating Budgets;

AND THAT the Region of York be requested to provide 50% of the cost of Markham's communication and education costs estimated at \$5,000 in 2004 and \$32,500 in 2005;

AND THAT staff investigate and report back to Council on the cost and benefits of offering a weekly collection service for leaf and yard material during the months of May, June, October and November in 2005.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to outline a program to eliminate the use of plastic bags for leaf and yard material as requested by Markham Council and the Region of York.

BACKGROUND:

Markham's current Waste Management By-Law permits residents to set out leaf and yard material in a variety of containers: clear plastic bags, bushel baskets, open tapered containers or

tied in bundles. Since 2000, residents have had the option of using "kraft" paper bags that are readily available in local stores.

In June 2002, Markham Council received a staff report addressing the costs and benefits of eliminating the acceptance of plastic bags for leaf and yard material. Council decided to continue with the status quo and requested a further report on the issue.

Region changes processing contractor

Many compost facilities prefer material to be delivered loose or in paper bags that will break down during the composting process. Leaf and yard material in plastic bags needs to be de-bagged, adding to the processing cost. In addition, bits of plastic may be left in the finished compost; reducing its marketability. Miller Waste had been debagging the municipal leaf and yard material at their Bloomington Composting Facility in Richmond Hill.

On January 22, 2004, Regional Council approved staff Report No. 2 to the Solid Waste Management Committee and accepted the proposal from Halton Recycling Ltd. (HRL) to receive and process leaf and yard material at their Newmarket facility effective April 1, 2004. The Region's report indicates that the HRL proposal would save the Region \$10.00 per tonne or \$200,000 per year if the de-bagging step was eliminated. At that meeting, Regional Council passed the following resolution:

"Council request the nine local municipalities to commit ... to eliminate the collection of yard waste in plastic bags upon renewal and/or extension of their associated collection contracts for implementation January 1, 2005."

OPTIONS/DISCUSSION:

Residential yard material consists of leaves and plant clippings, which many residents store and place for collection in protective bags or containers. Plastic bags are a relatively inexpensive non reusable container.

Kraft paper bags are currently more expensive to purchase than plastic bags. Table #1 compares the cost of paper and plastic bags and extrapolates the cost to Markham residents to purchase paper rather than plastic bags.

Table #1
Cost Comparison-Plastic vs Paper Bags

Plastic Bags 10 Bags per year \$0.25 - \$0.46 each**	Paper Bags 10 Bags per year \$0.55 - \$1.09 each**
\$2.50/hhld/yr - \$4.60/hhld/yr	\$5.50/hhld/yr - \$10.90/hhld/yr
\$175,000/yr - \$322,000/yr*	\$385,000/yr - \$763,000/yr*

* based on 70,000 households consuming 10 leaf and yard material bags per year

** based on a 2004 pricing survey conducted by staff of yard material bags on sale in Markham retail outlets

An Effective Communication and Enforcement Program will be required

Municipalities that have eliminated plastic bags for leaf and yard material and tracked their tonnages have experienced an increase in waste generation. An effective communication and education program is needed to prevent this from happening.

In addition, Markham may have to increase enforcement to ensure that leaf and yard material is not being placed with the residue. The Region banned leaf and yard material from the garbage stream on June 12, 2003, to comply with the State of Michigan's leaf and yard material ban. The Region of York ships Markham's garbage for disposal in the State of Michigan where the state's National Resources and Environmental Protection Act has banned the landfilling of leaf and yard material since 1995. Under this legislation, Michigan can refuse to accept any garbage shipments that contain leaf and yard material. All rejected shipments are rerouted at additional cost.

The proposed communication program would be launched in the fall of 2004 to provide residents with sufficient time to deplete their existing stock of plastic bags. Communication media would include the waste management newsletter, posters, the back page of the Recreation and Culture Guide, and information posted to the Town's web page and the local newspapers.

Starting in the winter of 2005, a Town wide campaign would be launched to inform residents that plastic bags will not be accepted effective April 1, 2005. Table #2 outlines the estimated cost of the proposed program.

Table #2
Cost Breakdown of Proposed
Communication and Enforcement Program

Program Component	Estimated Annual Cost 2004	Estimated Annual Cost 2005
Design, production and distribution of brochures, posters, back page of Recreation and Culture Guide, notices on Markham Page, inclusion in annual Waste Management Package, information for web page, paid advertising Hot line	\$4,000	\$35,000 (\$.50 per hh)
Enforcement Sticker design and production		\$5,000
Ads in local newspapers	\$1,000	\$5,000
Staff time - education	\$5,000	\$ 5,000
Staff time - enforcement		\$15,000
TOTAL	\$10,000	\$65,000

Proposed enforcement measures would include by-law notice reminders served to households with yard material set out in plastic bags and enforcement stickers affixed to yard material or residue containing yard material placed out for collection in plastic bags.

Staff estimates the cost to develop and implement the full communication and education program at approximately \$75,000 over two years; \$10,000 in 2004 and \$65,000 in 2005.

Regional Contribution to Markham's Program

Eliminating plastic bags for the collection of leaf and yard material will result in increased costs to the Town and its residents in 2004 and 2005.

In Report No. 2 of the Solid Waste Management Committee meeting of January 14, 2002, Regional staff proposed to offer assistance to the local municipalities for the development of promotion and education programs for the elimination of plastic bags. As such, the Region should be requested to provide assistance equal to 50% of the Town's communication and education costs for introducing the change.

Level of service increase may be needed during peak months

To prevent leaf and yard material from being disposed of as garbage, the Town may have to increase the leaf and yard material collection service to weekly collection in the peak generating months of April, May, June, October, and November, and bi-weekly during July, August, and September.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The estimated cost to implement an effective communication and enforcement program, is approximately \$75,000 over two years; \$10,000 in 2004 and \$65,000 in 2005.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Eliminating plastic bags for the collection of leaf and yard material with an effective communication and enforcement plan will have positive impacts on the quality and marketability of the compost.

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

There are no accessibility considerations with this report.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

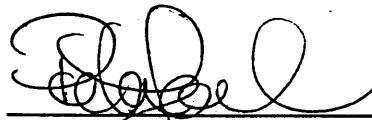
If approved, the Waste Management staff will work with the Legal Services Department to amend Waste Management By-Law 32-95, and the Corporate Communications Department to develop an effective communication program.

CONCLUSION:

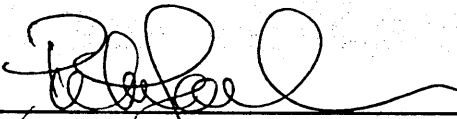
Elimination of plastic bags for leaf and yard material will result in lower processing costs, and a cleaner end compost product. An effective communication and education program is required to ensure Markham residents understand the new requirements and the reasons for the change. The Region has indicated a willingness to provide financial support to the area municipalities for the program change.



Stan Bertoia, P.Eng.
General Manager, Construction and
Utilities



Peter Loukes, P.Eng.
Director, Operations and Asset
Management



Jim Sales
Commissioner of Community and Fire
Services