

**Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee
March 7, 2013**

TO: Chair and Members of Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed

Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: February 26, 2013

SUBJECT: Waste Strategy Public Consultation Process

ORIGIN

- Regional Council Session February 5, 2013 , Item 12.2.1 Solid Waste Strategy Review
- Motion: Direct the CAO to report to the Environmental and Sustainability Standing Committee (ESSC) the recommendation for the design of a public consultation exercise.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

HRM Charter, Part XIII, Solid-Waste Resource Management

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that ESSC endorse the plan and recommend that Regional Council approve the engagement plan as outlined in the discussion section of this report.

BACKGROUND

On February 5, 2013, Halifax Regional Council approved the distribution of the Stantec Consulting Ltd. Solid Waste Resource Strategy Review Report, January 2013. The report identified options and recommendations to evolve HRM's Integrated Solid Waste Resource Management system to reflect the source separation successes achieved to date, the evolving nature of HRM's waste streams and technological advances of the waste industry since the strategy was implemented in 1997.

Regional Council's adoption in principle of the Community Stakeholders Committee (CSC) "Integrated Solid Waste Resource Strategy," 1995, followed an extensive public process. Community consultation continues to be an important component of the ongoing strategy review by collecting critical feedback for Regional Council to consider in the evolution of the Solid Waste Strategy.

Regional Council's commitment to public consultation is found in HRM's Community Engagement (CE) Strategy, approved in December 2008, which recognizes the need for a process, tools and tactics designed to seek input from stakeholders following HRM's Principles of Community Engagement.

1. Citizen participation is recognized as an asset. It is valued and encouraged;
2. The purpose and the process are clear to all participants;
3. Everyone potentially affected by the process has an opportunity to become involved;
4. Barriers to access are recognized and overcome to ensure diverse, inclusive and balanced participation;
5. The process is respectful, fair, effective and transparent;
6. Communication is clear, timely and effective;
7. Public involvement is adequately resourced;
8. Participants are informed of outcomes of community engagement;
9. The public has an opportunity to provide feedback at the various stages of the process; and,
10. Community engagement will be evaluated and improved.

On February 5, 2013, Regional Council also directed staff to report back to the Environmental Sustainability Standing Committee (ESSC) with the plan for public consultation on the Stantec Report options and recommendations, starting immediately with the Community Monitoring Committee (CMC) and the operator of the Otter Lake landfill and progressing through broad public engagement with HRM citizens and stakeholders.

DISCUSSION

A critical next step in determining options on how to evolve the integrated solid waste resource system is the requirement for a decision around the status of the Otter Lake landfill site. The Stantec report outlines a number of recommendations for changing the operating model and

extending the life of the site. Council has directed staff to undertake consultation on these options and recommendations, with an initial focus on providing the necessary information to help Regional Council determine the future for Otter Lake and the facilities operating model. Stantec has indicated that operating model changes could enhance the environmental, operational and economic efficiency of HRM’s integrated waste resource management system while maintaining or enhancing the objectives set out in the CSC 1995 strategy. This fundamental decision is critical because the other system component options and recommendations are intrinsically linked to a decision on the future of the Otter Lake site.

Therefore, the primary purpose of this public engagement consultation is to provide Regional Council with the necessary community and stakeholder feedback to determine the future intentions for the Otter Lake site.

This consultation will be conducted in three components:

1. Consultation with the CMC to gather existing opinions on the options as outlined in the report in order to identify conflicts or issues through feedback to Regional Council;
2. Gather informed and considered options from industry stakeholders in terms of the implications and opportunities represented by the options and recommendations outlined in the report; and,
3. Creating opportunities for the public and other stakeholders to talk to each other and to HRM about the options and recommendations as outlined in the report.

This multi-faceted engagement process is intended to enable Regional Council to make a direct decision on the future intentions for the Otter Lake site.

The general framework for the Community Engagement program will be sub-divided into three parts.

Integrated Solid Waste Resource Management System Consultation Process			
Stakeholder Group	Consultation Purpose	Consultation Process	Desired Outcomes
Community Monitoring Committee	1. Engage CMC in a workshop to jointly review key technical aspects of the report, and gather specific CMC feedback on report recommendations to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close the Front End 	Third-party moderated discussions between CMC, HRM and Stantec personnel to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather feedback for Regional Council’s consideration when it decides the future 	Initial feedback is compiled/analyzed and incorporated into the recommendation report to ESSC and Regional Council in July-August 2013.

	<p>Processor and Waste Stabilization Facility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the life of the Otter Lake landfill site through vertical cell expansion • Modify the NS landfill liner specification • Create a centralized waste resource campus 	<p>intentions for the Otter Lake site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss opportunities for joint engagement activities with the local communities and stakeholders 	
Public	<p>Engage all citizens to gather feedback on the Stantec report and on ways to increase reuse/reduce behaviours and identify new measures to make enhancing diversion simpler and more efficient.</p>	<p>Host third-party facilitated community open house sessions in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local community with joint participation from CMC • Regional locations that offer reasonable opportunity for interested residents to participate 	<p>Feedback on the report and on potential outcomes of evolving the solid waste system is compiled/ analyzed and incorporated into the recommendation report to ESSC and Regional Council in July-August 2013</p>
Online Forum	<p>Engage a wide spectrum of HRM citizens to gather feedback on the report and to seed virtual discussions about what citizens are willing to do to achieve the</p>	<p>Launch online engagement tool (e.g. Bang the Table) that incorporates moderated forums, surveys, story gathering and Q&A tools to share information within the</p>	<p>A summary of community engagement activities and responses to all public input is completed and shared with ESSC/Regional Council and the public as part of the recommendation report</p>

	<p>necessary diversion of organics and recyclables currently going into the landfill.</p>	<p>Stantec report; solicit and share participants' views on the long term future of the overall waste management system in HRM including the potential for a campus.</p>	<p>in July-August 2013. HRM's commitment to evolving the solid waste resource system is affirmed, and a plan to increase education and participation in diversion strategies is approved and implemented.</p>
<p>Waste Industry Stakeholders</p>	<p>Engage contracted and industry partners to gather feedback on the Stantec report and to identify challenges and opportunities between the current dissipated facility systems verses a waste campus environment. Explore issues related to proposed infrastructure development model in relation to capacity and regulatory compliance requirements and the potential development of independent ICI processing capacity.</p>	<p>Host an industry brain storming and idea exchange session to gather feedback on the report and develop more detailed analysis requirements and implications of evolving the system to meet program objectives.</p>	<p>Feedback is compiled/analyzed and incorporated into the recommendation report to ESSC and Regional Council in July-August 2013 outlining:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any changes in existing operations or new initiatives needed to increase diversion • Implications of the required future state of composting facilities to meet future provincial regulations • Preliminary business case data on the options related to development of future infrastructure to meet near to mid-term capacity requirements • Factors for

			considering either status quo or a centralized campus model for the future state of the Otter Lake site
ICI stakeholders	Engage ICI sectors in order to gather feedback on the Stantec report and to identify opportunities to improve diversion and enhance program guidelines compliance.	Host a targeted forum for ICI sectors to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather feedback on the report • Identify what issues are preventing enhanced ICI source separation • Achieve increases to diversion of organics and recyclables. 	Feedback is compiled/analyzed and incorporated into the recommendation report to ESCC and Regional Council in July-August 2013. Diversion remains the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for the solid waste program. The report outlines options and recommendations on maintaining strategy outcome objectives through updated program initiatives targeted at specific sector constraints.

Ongoing interactive engagement opportunities are proposed on a go forward basis in the form of a community “conversation” designed to inform and engage discussion of program options as identified in the Stantec report, as well as other suggestions that may come forward during community sessions. Community engagement can also be used to affirm or possibly refine the original Solid Waste Strategy Principles upon which the current system is based.

Sessions will be facilitated by staff and contracted consultants. Consultant services are to include personnel to assist in the design and implementation of communication mechanisms, and facilitate and manage the interactive engagement sessions.

Facilitators will be responsible for planning engagement events including logistics, materials, promotion, presentation and reporting on feedback. Consultant support will assist in analyzing public and stakeholder input, collating and developing written results and summaries of the engagement process and measuring results. Consultant support services will be secured through directed consulting service contracts.

HRM staff will be involved in the engagement program to develop promotional and communication tools, manage media and public relations, and develop content for the program website, Twitter, online surveys, and Facebook mechanisms. Based on environmental mapping, staff will also compile stakeholder lists, existing system data and relevant reports to be shared with the public as part of the engagement conversation.

The 8-12 week period of public consultation will include targeted, café style open house meetings as well as facilitated stakeholder focus group sessions. Broad and sustained online community engagement activities will support consultation goals by using diverse ways to share, listen and learn from many residents and communities across HRM. Participants will engage moderated forums, interactive Q&A's, surveys and quick polls to identify and share interests and concerns.

The public consultation process will be comprehensive and inclusive, and will feature focus group sessions with key community and industry stakeholder groups including:

- CMC
- Otter Lake landfill operators
- Other associations (the Investment Property Owners Association of Nova Scotia (IPOANS), Canadian Restaurant and Food Services Association (CFRA), Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia)
- Waste/Resource facility operators
- Commercial and contracted waste haulers

A stakeholder list will be formulated from the data used in recent HRM CE activities including RP+5 and Regional Planning. Print, broadcast and online promotion of all engagement events and initiatives will be placed in mainstream and community-based media outlets well in advance of scheduled dates.

A summary of community engagement activities and responses to all public input will be completed and shared with the public as part of the recommendation report to ESSC/Regional Council in July-August 2013.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Consultant Services will be funded through Solid Waste Resources budget account R333-6303 (Communication and Education, Consulting Fees). Venue bookings, supporting print, visual, advertising, and communication materials will be funded through Solid Waste Resources budget account R333-6916 (Communication and Education, Public Education).

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This report outlines the community engagement process being advanced for the Solid Waste Resource Management System Review.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Environmental implications of evolution of the Solid Waste Management Strategy are being considered as part of the conversation in the public engagement process.

ALTERNATIVES

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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