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BRIEFING FORM

SUBMITTED TO: Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee

MANAGER'S APPROVAL: **Gord Helm**

DATE OF MEETING: February 3, 2011

SUBJECT: Solid Waste Resources Update – S607
Recommendation Report to Council for First Reading

ORIGIN

To provide a brief update on the status of the S607 By-Law revision report scheduled for Council on February 8, 2011.

RECOMMENDATION/ DECISION REQUIRED (NONE REQUIRED IN THIS CASE
INFORMATION ONLY)

BACKGROUND

On December 8, 2010, SWRAC put a motion on the floor requesting staff develop a report on the following three recommended changes to by-law S600 (S607):

1. Reduce the bag limit from six (6) to four (4) bags every two weeks for residential collection and for all multi-unit complexes serviced by HRM;
2. To implement a “clear” bag policy for garbage to include one (1) “privacy” dark bag in the limit of four (4) garbage bags; and,
3. To have tenants of multi-unit complexes provided with counter top mini bins for organics collection as part of their fixed unit items.

ALTERNATIVES AND ASSOCIATED RISKS

One alternative that is included in the report is for the privacy bag to be either a standard size coloured bag included in the four (4) bag limit or to allow for a small grocery sized bag, coloured or opaque, nested in each of the four clear bags. This is to be debated by Council. This option is intended to provide flexibility in the program. However, there is a risk of it negatively impacting the implementation through confusion and/or abuse of the use of nested bags. Based on conversations with other municipalities that have implemented clear bag programs, the consensus is that the one standard sized privacy bag is the more manageable option of the two.

IMPACT/BENEFITS:

The report outlines the cost implications of the recommendations related to capital and operating cost savings to be achieved at the Otter Lake Waste facility, and the corresponding cost increases at the two compost plants and the Materials Recycling Facility (MRF). These estimates are based on tonnage estimates related to data from other jurisdictions resulting from the implementation of clear bag policies and bag limit reductions.

As a further incentive to properly source separate materials and organics from the garbage stream, it is also recommended that staff initiate the process to increase the tipping fee at Otter Lake on a regular annual basis consistent with the CPI. The tipping fee was increased to \$125.00/tonne last year following a ten year gap of increases. This will further support the declining tonnage going to Otter Lake in terms of ongoing operating costs.

COMMUNICATION ISSUES/OPPORTUNITIES:

If approved by Council, at First reading, HRM staff have developed and included in the report a communication and education plan for the implementation of the recommended changes.

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A

KEY STAFF CONTACT: (Contact information)

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