



organizations, such as the Investment Property Owners Association of Nova Scotia (IPOANS), to encourage greater participation from the business sector stakeholders.

The following key messages came from the town hall sessions:

- **HRM is breaking its promise to leave the Otter Lake site in 2024 after 25 years. Make no changes at Otter Lake.**
  - There currently is no defined date to vacate the site in any document, Council report or the contract with the operator or the CMC agreement. The existing contract with the operator, the only document that cites a time frame, refers to “9 cells or 25 years, whichever comes first” as the duration for the operating agreement. However, the contract is not close ended and remains open in terms of what happens after the 9 cells are constructed, which is supported by 2006 Regional Plan, Policy SU-22.
- **HRM is taking away environmental protections to save money and breaking its promise to keep the protections in place.**
  - Regional Council continues to maintain its commitment to environmental and community protection throughout the Solid Waste Strategy Review process and any future recommendations will reflect this mandate.
- **Keep the FEP/WSF. Closing the FEP/WSF will turn Otter Lake into a ‘Sackville dump’.**
  - As previously discussed in Regional Council, any changes to solid waste processing at the Otter Lake site will not create the environmental and social challenges that the Sackville landfill experienced given the improvements in landfill liner specifications, source separation, waste stream changes and current/future activities of the landfill operator, all which provide the environmental and community protections expected in the agreement with the nearby communities.
- **HRM did not complete an Environmental Assessment to site the landfill at Otter Lake, because it promised to use the FEP/WSF to protect the site. The site is unsafe because it is on fractured bedrock and close to a water way.**
  - The Provincial regulations and legislation do not require an Environmental Assessment for siting a landfill. Geological surveys completed at the time of siting indicated that the site is safe for landfill operations; 15 years of monitoring confirms the initial assessment that the site and associated operations are safe for the rivers and water courses in the area. Closing the FEP/WSF has no bearing on environmental and water protection. The environmental in-ground and water course protection comes from the liner, not the FEP/WSF. No other provincially regulated, monitored and permitted landfill in Nova Scotia requires an FEP/WSF to protect the environment or any water sources.

To date, HRM provided responses to more than 100 questions from the various community engagement events, all of which can be viewed at [www.shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/solid-waste-management](http://www.shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/solid-waste-management). Event overviews and key themes are also available for all Phase I sessions.

The following additional messages came from the public engagement sessions and are generating additional system performance analysis:

- Maintain the strategy objective and commitment of environmental and community protection through increased efforts for source separation and diversion from landfill;
- Find new ways to improve source separation and increase diversion from Otter Lake, such as clear bags and lower bag limits;
- Explore changes to policies and programs for sectors not effectively source separating, such as high rise apartments and commercial properties and businesses; and
- Evolve system policies to increase accountability and compliance for those who are not effectively source separating

## **DISCUSSION**

With Phase I community engagement activities complete, NATIONAL Public Relations focused next on making the sessions more interactive for Phase II to encourage residents and members of the business and commercial sectors to participate in small groups that examined specific issues and options to improve the solid waste program outcomes.

Phase II sessions commenced on October 16, 2013 with six more public sessions (four community events and two industry/commercial events). Phase II sessions, which will be complete on October 24, are designed to identify program and policy change options and initiatives to improve diversion and source separation. This approach intends to identify ways to improve outcomes by implementing options oriented to the specific circumstances of a given sector (e.g. restaurant or retail) rather than adapting the entire system to address a specific issue. This focus is consistent Regional Council's direction to evolve the overall system to achieve the original strategy objectives.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Community Engagement expenses are available from the operating account R333-6916, Communication & Education. The budget availability has been confirmed by Finance.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The community engagement (CE) program is compliant with HRM's Engagement Strategy. The program is designed to promote and facilitate broad citizen and stakeholder participation in a process that will provide the necessary information to help Regional Council determine options to evolve the solid waste program.

The CE program evolved through public meetings of the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee and Regional Council. On various occasions, the program adapted to specific concerns of the Community Monitoring Committee, which has been regularly and directly engaged by NATIONAL Public Relations to ensure a mutual understanding with a key representative of the BLTPR communities.

The program was purpose-built to identify and engage specific and broad audiences who have diverse interests in the outcomes of the community engagement activities and the decisions they will affect. Online engagement tools are deployed and regularly monitored to ensure those who cannot or would not attend engagement events have every opportunity to:

- review the presentations, background information, and consultants' reports
- review reports to Regional Council and committees
- review comments, questions and responses from both the events and online participants, and
- ask questions or post comments on all of the above

Given the scope and duration of the CE program, HRM retained NATIONAL Public Relations to design, conduct, and collect all feedback from the program into a comprehensive CE report that will form part of staff's final report to Regional Council. The program continues to be promoted and supported through traditional print/broadcast media and diverse social media channels.

All feedback and associated responses will continue to be shared with CE program participants and the public at large through Council reports and updates on the online engagement hub.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix A - Graphic from National – Phase One Session's Harvest

Appendix B - Statistics from Phase one engagement

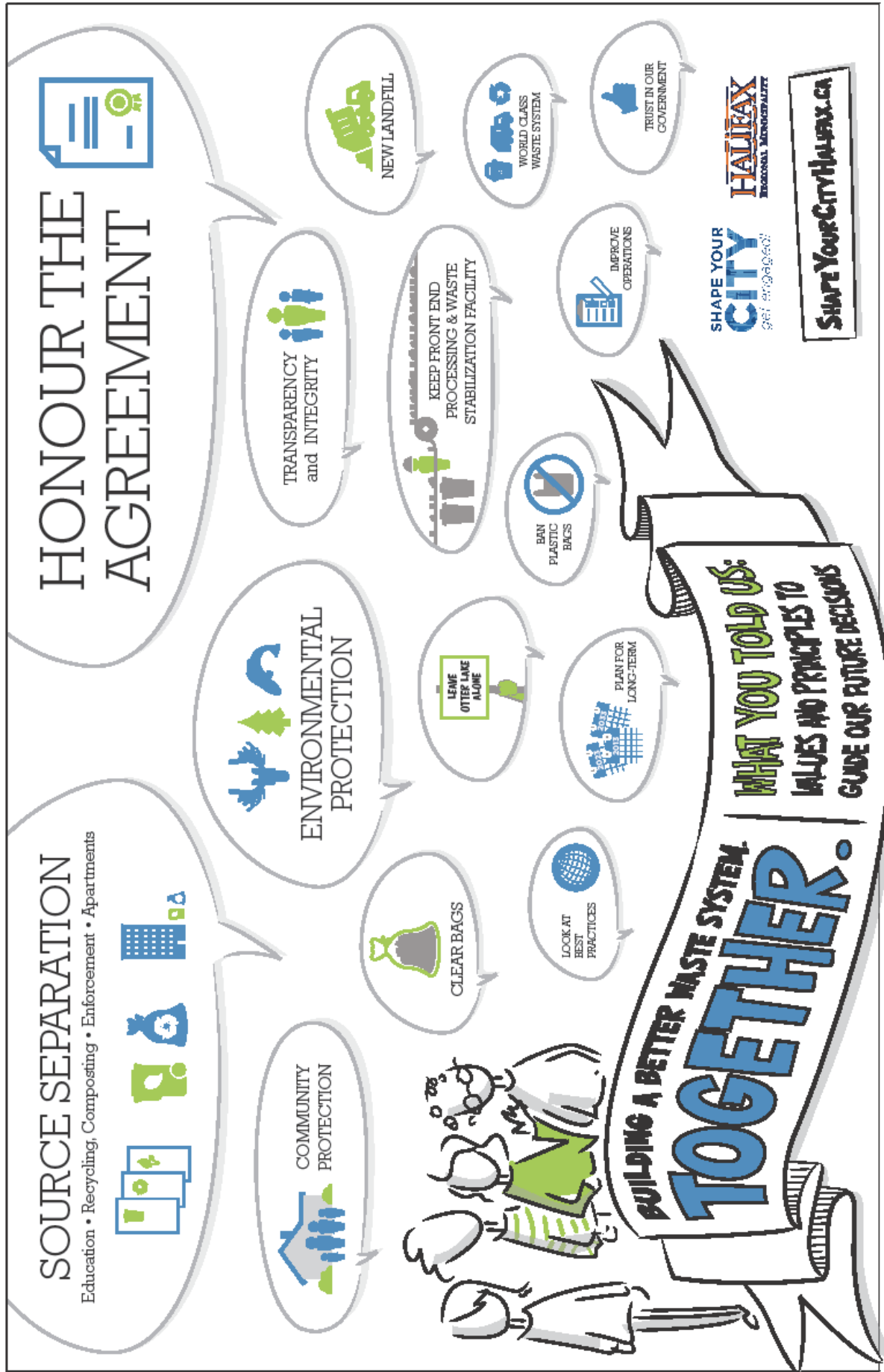
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A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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## Appendix B

OCTOBER 9, 2013

ENGAGEMENT FIGURES TO DATE

### Portal – Solid Waste Strategy Review:

Visits:	3,228
Unique visitors:	1,620
Visitors coming from:	1) Halifax.ca, 2) Facebook, 3) Twitter
Registered users:	160
Survey responses:	150/142/13 (~10% of visitors)
Forum posts:	28
Q&A's:	9 public, 5 private
Document downloads:	850 (mostly overview CoW presentation & reports)
Video views:	4,800 (4,100 from YouTube advertising)
Facebook promoted post:	18 clicks each, for 2 promoted posts

### In-Person:

Estimated total participants:	625
Town hall meetings –	400
Dartmouth/Cole Harbour –	40
Bedford –	60
Halifax –	90
Eastern Shore –	35
Waste industry stakeholders –	17
ICI stakeholders –	2

Comment cards: 220

### From In-Person Harvest:

**Community protection**  
World class system

**Honour the agreement**  
Look at best practices      Trust in our government

**Source separation (education, enforcement)**  
Clear bags

**Leave Otter Lake Alone**      Ban plastic bags      New landfill      Improve operations  
Plan for the long-term

**Transparency and integrity**

**Environmental protection**

**Keep Front End Processing & Waste Stabilization**