
Organics Program Update

Recommendation

That the report of the A/General Manager, Corporate Performance Department, dated August 13, 2018, be received as information.

Topic and Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide City Council with background information on organics program design considerations and an update on the development of organics processing capacity.

Report Highlights

1. The Administration began research on organics program design and processing, including an analysis of different processing options in 2014. A Request for Information (RFI) was released earlier this year to gain an understanding of industry capacity and interest to provide services related to the collection and processing of organics for a city-wide (mandatory) curbside residential organics program. Eleven responses were received.
2. As reported in June, the Administration is preparing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for an organics processor to manage materials from a future year-round, city-wide (mandatory) curbside residential organics program. The RFP will be released as soon as possible.
3. Administration has engaged a fairness monitor to oversee the organics processing procurement process.

Strategic Goals

The information in this report supports the four-year priorities to promote and facilitate city-wide composting and recycling, along with the long-term strategy to eliminate the need for a new landfill under the Strategic Goal of Environmental Leadership.

Background

City Council, at its meeting held on June 25, 2018, considered the Recommended Changes to Waste Management in Saskatoon report, and resolved, in part,

- “2. That an organics program be developed for year round curbside residential organics collection, utilizing a single green cart for co-mingled food and yard waste;”

The report also stated that the Administration intends to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) in summer 2018 to establish the organics processing capacity required by a city-wide program.

Report

Organics Program Consultant Report

In 2014, the Administration engaged a consultant with significant experience with municipal organics programs across Canada to provide several reports on organics program design, including an analysis of different processing options. The analysis included shortlisting 24 possible program/processing combinations and using these scenarios in modelling to estimate things such as waste diversion, capital cost, operating cost, life-cycle cost per tonne, and non-monetary values such as public perception, greenhouse gas reduction, health risks and odour mitigation. Attachment 1, Organics Program Design and RFI Findings provides a summary of organics program design features incorporating information provided by the consultant.

Organics Collections and Processing Request for Information

In February 2018, the Administration released an RFI to allow industry to provide voluntary, non-binding feedback and cost information related to the collection and processing of organics for a city-wide curbside residential organics program. Eleven responses were received and the information provided is included in Attachment 1. Generally speaking, the information received from industry was in line with information gathered by the consultant in 2014 and other research by the Administration. The responses provide a good indication of industry capacity and interest to provide services for the program. Utilizing information gathered through the RFI will help ensure the program design is cost-effective.

Organics Processing RFP

The Administration is preparing an RFP for an organics processor to manage the materials from a city-wide (mandatory) curbside residential organics program assuming the City will provide the collections service. Attachment 2, Organics Processing RFP Summary of Terms, summarizes some of the key planned components of the RFP. The Administration has also proceeded with the engagement of a fairness monitor to oversee the procurement process for this service.

Public and/or Stakeholder Involvement

In addition to the Changes to Waste Management in Saskatoon – Engagement Results report that went to City Council on June 25, 2018, companies interested in providing services to the City to support the implementation of the city-wide (mandatory) curbside residential organics program were engaged through an RFI. Eleven companies responded and nine provided full or partial information about their capacity and interest to collect and/or process organic materials.

Communication Plan

The comprehensive changes to curbside waste management programs will require extensive communications and education. These will be developed through the next phases of planning and implementation, with reports and updates provided to the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services. On-going communications, including social media posts, Public Service Announcements, and media outreach will be used throughout planning and implementation.

Policy Implications

There are policy implications associated with developing a new organics program and waste utility including changes to the Waste Bylaw. These implications will be outlined in future reports in collaboration with the Office of the City Solicitor.

Environmental Implications

Diverting organic waste from the landfill offers several environmental benefits in terms of land, air, and water quality. Through the use of compost as a soil amendment in gardens or landscapes, nutrients that would normally be locked up in a landfill are recycled into the ecosystem where they are available to plants. Compost added to soils also improves moisture retention properties so rainfall run-off is reduced. Organic material that is buried in a landfill environment can contribute to leachate generation as well as produce methane, some of which is released into the atmosphere. Methane is a significant contributor to climate change as it is 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas. The Organics Program will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 6,000 to 9,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents by reducing the methane generated by organics when landfilled. Diverting organic materials from the landfill also conserves landfill airspace and ultimately extends the life of the landfill. By increasing organics diversion to 26,000 tonnes, the waste diversion rate is expected to rise from 22.8% to 32.5%.

Other Considerations/Implications

There are no Financial, Privacy or CPTED implications or considerations.

Due Date for Follow-up and/or Project Completion

Release of the RFP will occur as soon as possible. It is expected that the Organics Processing RFP will not have closed before the September 2018 Council meeting. This means that cost implications reported in September will continue to be high-level estimates and that amendments to the RFP can be issued should City Council desire changes to any of the RFP terms or program parameters discussed in this or the upcoming September reports.

Specific to the curbside residential sector, the Administration will continue to provide regular updates through reports to the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services:

- September 2018 reports will address:
 - Recommendations related to utility and property tax funding for future waste management services.
 - Affordability and ability-to-pay considerations.
 - Green Cart Program details and associated implementation plan.
 - Budget request to support implementation of the Green Cart Program and Garbage Utility.
- November 2018 report on Business Plan and Budget implications
- 2019 reports will address:
 - Collection service locations and parking on collection days.

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- Special services considerations (small properties, bulky items, accessibility).

Related reporting will also be provided:

- September 2018
 - Multi-Unit organics program engagement results
 - Launch of engagement with Industrial Commercial Institutional (ICI) sector
- 2019 reports on complementary programs (i.e. multi-unit, ICI, Recovery Park operations and construction update, community recycling depots, etc.).

The Administration does not anticipate making changes to the current operation of City owned compost depots for 2019. Administration will report back to Council in 2019 on any recommended changes to compost depot operations and implications anticipated as a result of a city-wide organics program.

Public Notice

Public Notice pursuant to Section 3 of Policy No. C01-021, Public Notice Policy, is not required.

Attachments

1. Organics Program Design and RFI Findings
2. Organics Processing RFP Summary of Terms

Report Approval

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