

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE NOVEMBER 18, 2002

YORK REGION'S ROLE IN WASTE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL SERVICES

Recommendation

Mayor Di Biase recommends:

1. That staff be directed to take part in the review of waste management service level consolidation and governance review proposed by the Region of York;
2. That staff review the Region's report entitled "Waste Collection Responsibility Review" (November 13, 2002, Solid Waste Management Committee), concerning waste collection responsibilities, and report back to a future Committee of the Whole meeting on the potential implications for the City of Vaughan;
3. That the Region of York, which has the legislative responsibility for waste disposal, absorb all costs related to: the haulage of waste from the Region's transfer facility to the disposal site; the disposal of waste; the processing of recyclables; the processing of household organic materials; the processing of leaf and yard waste materials; and, that the City no longer be charged for these services or receive revenues from the sale of these materials; and,
4. This report be forwarded to the Regional Clerk and the Commissioner of Transportation and Works, and to other municipalities in the Regional Municipality of York.

Purpose

To request staff to review the Region's report, titled "Waste Collection Responsibility Review", dated November 13, 2002, and determine its implications for the City of Vaughan, to direct staff to participate in such a review, and to request Council to support the concept of the Region assuming all costs related to waste transfer and disposal, processing of household organics, processing of leaf and yard waste materials, and processing of recyclable materials.

Background - Analysis and Options

1. Waste Collection

At the November 13, 2002 Solid Waste Management Committee, Region staff put forward a report requesting that the nine area municipalities within the Region, take part in a waste management service level consolidation and governance review, which is to be completed by March of 2003. This was approved by the Committee and will be proceeding to the November 21, 2002 Regional Council meeting for ratification.

The report is partially the result of two individual requests made by the Town of Newmarket and the Town of Aurora, for the Region of York to assume part or all of their waste management responsibilities and costs. In May of this year, the Town of Newmarket, formally asked the Region to:

"...assume responsibility for Waste Management including waste collection in a manner which meets the waste collection service levels desired by the Area Municipalities; the collection service level costs to be area-rated by the Region as a Regional charge-back to the Area Municipalities, as in the Regional Municipality of Halton."

In September of this year, the Town of Aurora also requested the Region to: *"...assume responsibility for all waste collection activities in the Town of Aurora, including the cost thereof."*

These requests were in no doubt a result of the increased costs that the municipalities are facing as a result of the Region's new 3 stream processing program, and the closure of the Keele Valley Landfill site. As a result of these requests by Newmarket and Aurora, Region staff were requested to report further on the issues surrounding collection and governance, which they have done through the November 13th report.

Currently, the area municipalities are responsible for collection, and the Region is responsible for disposal and processing. The issues surrounding collection are varied and complex. Each municipality has different levels of service, different contractors, and operates programs tailored to their residents. Therefore, the local municipalities are being asked for their co-operation in studying the issue so that a complete analysis of the implications and costs of transferring collection responsibilities to the Region can be completed. As such, it is important for staff to take part in these discussions, and report back on these issues to a future Committee of the Whole meeting.

2. Waste Disposal and Processing Costs

At the November 2002 Solid Waste Management Committee, the following motion was made by Richmond Hill Mayor William Bell, and subsequently approved by Committee:

"That beginning January 1, 2003, York Region, which has the legislative responsibility for waste disposal, will absorb all costs related to waste disposal and recycling and that the local municipalities will no longer be charged costs for waste disposal, recycling, or receive rebates."

Although Mayor Bell's motion mentions waste disposal and recycling, it does not specifically mention the costs associated with the transfer of waste, household organics processing, or leaf and yard waste processing costs. These have significant costs associated with them, which should also be absorbed by the Region.

If Regional Council agrees to absorb the costs for waste transfer and disposal, leaf and yard waste processing, and recycling processing, the City would be able to reduce its Operating Budget by an estimated \$4.64 million in 2003. This value of \$4.64 million assumes that the "rebates" mentioned in Mayor Bell's motion refers to revenues received from the sale of the blue box materials. For 2003, it has been estimated that the City's revenues from the sale of blue box materials would be almost \$0.6 million. If the Region assumed the above noted costs, the City would still be responsible for the costs of all collection services.

Conclusion

Due to the complexities of the issues surrounding waste collection, staff are requested to review the Region's report, take part in the proposed review of service levels and governance, and report back to a future Committee of the Whole.

The motion made at the Region's Solid Waste Management Committee by Richmond Hill Mayor William Bell, would make the level of government with the legislative responsibility for waste disposal, be responsible for the costs of such activities also. The assumption of all waste disposal and processing costs by the Region would reduce the financial impact that the new 3 stream program, and the closing of the Keele Valley Landfill site, will have on the local tax levy. As such, it is recommended that Council support the concept of the Region absorbing those costs, with the understanding that that the City no longer be charged for these services or receive revenues from the sale of the blue box or compost materials.

Attachments

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Respectfully submitted,

Mayor Michael Di Biase