

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE NOVEMBER 18, 2002**

**KEELE VALLEY PUBLIC DROP-OFF AND RECYCLING FACILITY**

**Recommendation**

The Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works recommends:

That Council advise the Region of York that it has no objection to the continued operation of the HHW and public waste drop-off areas at the City of Toronto's Keele Valley Landfill site for 2003, with the understanding that continued operation after 2003 would be dependant upon the City and Region coming to an agreement with respect to site improvements, landscaping details, and final land uses for the area.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the impact on Vaughan residents when the public Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) and waste drop-off facilities, located at the Keele Valley Landfill site, closes December 31, 2002, and to seek approval for their continued operation.

**Background - Analysis and Options**

As Council is aware, the City of Toronto's Keele Valley Landfill site and its public drop-off facilities, are scheduled to close on December 31, 2002. In response to the closure of the public Household Hazardous Waste and recycling drop-off facilities at the Keele Valley Landfill Site, there were several options put forth by Regional staff in their report to Council dated June 27, 2002. These options were as follows:

- Option 1: No replacement of the Keele Valley Landfill site facilities
- Option 2: Replace the Keele Valley HHW Depot Only
- Option 3: Replace all of Keele Valley Drop-off Facilities
- Option 4: Establish a residential drop off only at Keele Valley

Regional staff recommended Option 3. The report also stated, *"by adopting the recommendation in this report, Regional Council would not be committing to establishing the proposed facilities. It would be authorizing Regional staff to obtain more detailed information that is required to analyze the recommended option from a financial perspective"*.

However, Regional Council directed staff to *"explore first the possibility of the Region taking over and operating the Keele Valley public household hazardous waste and waste drop-off facilities and to pursue this option with the City of Vaughan"*.

The Region has since approached City of Vaughan staff requesting their assistance and input with respect to the continued use of the Keele Valley Landfill Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) depot and public drop-off facilities.

1. City of Toronto's Keele Valley Landfill Site Facilities

At the Keele Valley Landfill site, there is a public HHW depot, a public drop-off area for recyclable materials, a public drop-off area for compostable organics, and a public drop-off area for waste. Existing infrastructure on-site includes: a scale house; weigh scales; and, raised concrete bunkers.

Table 1, below, denotes the usage of the HHW depot and other public drop-off facilities at the Keele Valley Landfill site. Not surprisingly, Vaughan residents ranked as the number one user of these facilities.

**Table 1**  
**Public Drop off Facilities at the Keele Valley Landfill Site**  
**Usage by Residents in 2001**

Local Municipality Of Origin	HHW	DISPOSAL SOLID WASTE		RECYCLABLE MATERIALS		COMPOSTABLE YARD WASTE	
	Loads	Loads	Tonnes	Loads	Tonnes	Loads	Tonnes
Aurora	77	312	76	46	4	24	4
E. Gwillimbury	5	26	9	1	<1	0	0
Georgina	0	3	2	3	<1	0	0
King	287	1,016	205	233	24	265	42
Markham	78	451	122	62	8	125	39
Newmarket	23	232	58	28	4	16	3
Richmond Hill	1,142	2332	548	707	75	776	196
<b>VAUGHAN</b>	<b>1,236</b>	<b>5,565</b>	<b>1,367</b>	<b>1,820</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>2,340</b>	<b>735</b>
Whitchurch-Stouffville	19	150	34	17	2	8	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,867</b>	<b>10,087</b>	<b>2,421</b>	<b>2,917</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>3,554</b>	<b>1,025</b>
Vaughan Usage (%)	43%	55%	56%	63%	64%	66%	72%

*Source: Regional Municipality of York, Solid Waste Management Committee, Report 4, June 27, 2002*

As can be seen, Vaughan residents do take their excess or oversized recyclables, yard waste and “non-collectible” items directly to the City of Toronto’s Keele Valley Landfill site drop-off facilities. “Non-collectible” waste, as defined in By-law No.94-350, includes such items as: tires, soil, sod, trade waste, liquid waste, automotive parts, as well as bulky items deemed too large or heavy to be collected by curbside collection (i.e. garage doors, large screen televisions etc.).

## 2. Existing Regional HHW Sites

In addition to the City of Toronto’s Keele Valley facilities, the Region has four waste management facilities located across the Region (refer to Table 2). Three of these facilities (Markham, Georgina and East Gwillimbury) have a HHW depot. The fourth facility, located in Richmond Hill, consists only of an organic waste compost facility. The three public household hazardous waste depots serve to provide an environmentally sound means to dispose of residents’ household hazardous waste. The impact of not having any replacement (or continued use) of the facilities currently in place at the Keele Valley Landfill site is very significant. Vaughan residents will be required to use the Region’s facilities located either in East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Richmond Hill or Markham. A brief overview of these facilities is depicted in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
**Region of York Public Drop-off Facilities**  
**Options for Vaughan Residents Upon Keele Valley Landfill Closure**

Existing Regional Depots	Services Provided
Markham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HHW Depot</li> <li>• Electronic Equipment Depot (pilot project) for computers and other electronic equipment</li> </ul>
East Gwillimbury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HHW Depot</li> <li>• Some Recycling material: will accept recyclable materials such as scrap metal, metal appliances, boxboard and cardboard.</li> <li>• Electronic Equipment Depot (pilot project) for computers and other electronic items.</li> </ul>
Georgina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HHW Depot</li> <li>• Recyclable materials</li> <li>• Electronic Equipment Depot (pilot project) for computers and other electronic equipment.</li> <li>• Compostable Yard Waste</li> <li>• Solid Waste Transfer Station</li> </ul>
Richmond Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organic Waste Compost Facility</li> </ul>

Records indicate that the usage of other public drop-off facilities by Vaughan residents, whether it is for solid waste, recyclables, HHW or compostable material, was negligible. As an example, at the Region HHW depot in East Gwillimbury, the number of Vaughan vehicles processed at that facility represented 0.2%. The usage at the Markham HHW depot by Vaughan residents was similarly low, at 0.9%. Further, York Region did not attribute any material dropped off at the Georgina Transfer Station to Vaughan residents.

Upon the closure of the residential drop-off facilities (HHW, yard waste, recyclable material and solid waste) at the Keele Valley Landfill site, the immediate alternatives for Vaughan residents will be inconvenient and restrictive.

For HHW disposal, Vaughan residents will be required to use the HHW depots located in Markham, Georgina or East Gwillimbury.

For yard waste disposal, Vaughan residents will be directed to the Region's organic compost facility located on Bloomington Rd. in Richmond Hill.

For waste disposal, the Region's Georgina Transfer Station will be the only facility accepting solid waste.

For recyclable materials, residents will be directed to take excess/oversized material to either the Region's sites in East Gwillimbury (limited materials) or Georgina.

To many residents, this significant increase in travel time will be deemed as an inordinate inconvenience. As such, it is anticipated that there will be an increase in the quantity of compostable yard waste, HHW, recyclable material and non-collectible material (pursuant to By-law 94-350) being placed/hidden in the regular curbside solid waste stream and/or illegally dumped along the City's roads.

### 3. Region of York's Proposed Transfer Facilities

To handle waste after the closure of the Keele Valley Landfill site, the Region has indicated that they will construct two Transfer Stations. The "northern" transfer station is to be constructed on Bales Rd. in East Gwillimbury. Part of the facility will include a small public drop-off for solid waste and recyclable materials. The Region has indicated that the facility will be operational in early 2004.

The second "southern" transfer station is to be located along the highway 7 corridor. A site has not yet been identified for this facility and Region has not formally indicated whether this facility will include a public drop-off for solid waste and recyclable materials. However, preliminary discussion indicated that there would not be a HHW facility or public drop-off area.

The Region has further indicated that although they have the legislated responsibility for disposal and processing of municipally collected waste, they are not mandated to provide public drop-off facilities for solid waste, yard waste and recyclable materials.

### 4. Private Facilities

Region of York, in the aforementioned report, also, in a cursory manner, explored the use of private waste management facilities. Their report noted that *"although there are several private waste management facilities located in the southern part of the Region that accept solid waste and recyclable materials generated from the IC&I sector, none of these facilities appear to be licensed to receive waste or recyclable materials from individual residents."*

The report further stated, *“Regional staff intend to survey these companies to confirm what services, if any, their Certificates of Approval from the Ministry of Environment allow them to offer individual residents.”* Any significant findings are to be reported back to Regional Council.

#### 5. Area Municipality Facilities

In addition to the existing facilities noted above, three area municipalities in York Region own and operate their own recycling depots. These facilities are for the use of local residents only, and would not be available for Vaughan residents to use.

- Markham owns and operates four recycling depots.
- Whitchurch-Stouffville owns one recycling depot, which is operated by volunteers from the Whitchurch-Stouffville Recycling Group.
- Aurora owns and operates one recycling depot.

With the exception of the large wheeled containers at the City’s Joint Operations Centre, there are no public recycling depots in the City of Vaughan. This is due mainly to the Keele Valley facilities being located within the City of Vaughan.

#### 6. Future Land Use at the Keele Valley Site

After the Keele Valley Landfill site closes, there are extensive rehabilitation plans for the area. Although the infrastructure for the HHW site and public drop-off areas is already on-site, and the location is extremely convenient to Vaughan residents, the continued use of these facilities may, or may not, fit into the long term future plans for this land.

Although the landfill site will cease receiving waste as of December 31, 2002, there will still be trucks coming into the site to deposit fill material for the final cover. As is the current situation, the trucks will also be using the same main access road to get to the landfill area as residents use to access the waste drop-off area (the HHW building is located closer to the main entrance to the landfill site). Toronto staff indicated that they would fence off the area to ensure the public are not at risk from the continued activity on the landfill site, as well as to prevent any chances of illegal dumping on the landfill site itself. After the truck traffic ends, which is expected to be at the end of August 2003, grading and ditching in the area surrounding the waste drop-off area will take place to channel storm run-off water to the detention pond.

At present, the HHW building is separate from the waste drop-off area. The HHW building is located close to the main Administrative building, while the waste drop-off area is located closer to the actual landfill area. Staff recently met with representatives of the Region and the City of Toronto on-site to discuss concepts concerning future landscaping and site layout. It was proposed that the HHW building would eventually be moved from its existing site, to an area adjacent to the waste drop-off area. This, of course, would be dependant on the Ministry of the Environment’s approval. If the HHW building is moved adjacent to the waste drop-off area, it would consolidate all functions within a designated area. However, for 2003, it is likely that the HHW building would remain where it is presently.

In order for the proposed consolidated HHW and drop-off area to blend in better with the long-term passive uses, site improvements, including landscaping and plantings, would be required. The Region has indicated that they are willing to make the site a “first rate” facility, and have indicated such to staff. However, due to the timing of the final cover placement, and the grading and ditching required on the site, there is little point in the Region making extensive site changes or improvements until these operations have ceased. Again, these activities will most likely end late in 2003.

In order to ensure that a site remains open that is convenient for Vaughan residents to safely dispose of their HHW and excess waste materials, it is recommended that the HHW and waste drop-off programs be allowed to continue in their present locations for 2003.

This one year approval would allow time for the City and the Region time to discuss the potential continued long-term operation of the site, and allow time for Region staff to prepare detailed landscaping plans and other site improvements that could be implemented in order to make the facility fit in with Council's long term plans for this area. This one year period would also allow time for City staff to review these plans and report back to Council with a further recommendation concerning the continued operation of this site.

### **Conclusion**

Records indicate that the public drop-off and HHW facilities at the City of Toronto's Keele Valley Landfill site are used by a significant number of Vaughan residents. With the closure of the landfill site, these facilities are also scheduled to close.

The remaining Region-operated sites are not very convenient for Vaughan residents. Unless the Keele Valley site remains open, or alternative locations are found within a reasonable distance for Vaughan residents to travel, these materials will most likely be hidden in the regular waste stream and/or illegally dumped on City roads.

The financial burden to operate the existing Keele Valley drop off facility, and all site improvements would be borne by the Regional Municipality of York.

Although the Keele Valley site is an ideal location for Vaughan residents, and the infrastructure is already in place, the continued operation of the HHW and public drop off area may, or may not, fit into Council's long-term vision for the area. However, Council could agree to the continued operation of the site for 2003, which would allow time for City and Region staff to review detailed landscaping plans and other proposed site improvements, and bring a further report to Committee on this matter.

Based on all of the above, it is recommended that Council advise the Region that it has no objection to the continued operation of the HHW and public waste drop-off areas for 2003, with the understanding that continued operation after 2003 would be dependant upon the City and Region coming to an agreement with respect to site improvements, landscaping, and final land uses for the area.

### **Attachments**

N/A

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