

**Proposed Actions to Achieve 60% Residential Waste Diversion  
Waste Reduction and Reuse Initiatives and Policies**

**15. Create a Waste Reduction and Reuse Coordinator position within the Solid Waste Management Division**

**16. Provide financial support for community waste reduction and reuse initiatives**

**17. When the Green Bin Program is operational reduce the container limit to two or three containers for biweekly garbage collection**

**18. Further explore the use of clear bags for garbage collection if London does not move to a roll-out cart based garbage collection system**

**19. Further explore a full user pay garbage collection system if London moves to a roll-out cart based garbage collection system**

**20. Further examine other incentive and disincentive initiatives (best practices) from other municipalities (e.g. mandatory recycling by-law, reward systems, user fees, etc.)**

**21. Provide additional feedback approaches to residents (including how waste reduction and waste diversion are calculated when providing waste management progress reports)**

**Summary:**

- Create a Waste Reduction and Reuse Coordinator position within the Solid Waste Management Division;
- \$150,000 to 250,000 per year in increased funding be allotted to waste reduction and reuse initiatives;
- Reduction of the container limit to 2 or 3 containers per collection when the Green Bin program with bi-weekly garbage collection is implemented;
- Further explore the use of clear bags for garbage collection if London does not move to roll-out cart based garbage collection system;
- Further explore a full user pay garbage system if London moves to roll-out cart based garbage collection system;
- Further examine other incentive and disincentive initiatives (best practices) from other municipalities (e.g., mandatory recycling by-law, reward systems, user fees, etc.); and
- Include the calculation of waste reduction in addition to waste diversion when providing waste management progress reports to Council.

## **Proposed Actions to Achieve 60% Residential Waste Diversion Waste Reduction and Reuse Initiatives and Policies**

In addition to the City measures, it is expected that additional province wide measures as part of their Waste-Free Ontario Strategy will be undertaken and many residents will take additional actions on their own to reduce their waste.

It is estimated that the above measures will cost the City \$150,000 to \$350,000 per year. For planning purposes, it is estimated all waste reduce and reuse initiatives and policies will divert approximately 1% to 4% of residential waste.

### ***Background***

#### Waste Reduction and Reuse Initiatives

There are numerous initiatives that could be introduced that focus on raising awareness and engaging citizens to make small changes in their daily life to reduce waste and increase reuse of materials. Initiatives include lending libraries, repair workshops, promotion of reuse events and increased waste reduction education and outreach.

As some of the initiatives listed above are already underway in London through other organizations, the City could explore options to build partnerships with these organizations. This could include providing financial support for new waste reduction and reuse programs and initiatives.

The most effective way of increasing diversion through waste reduction and reuse is often by increasing community engagement, education and providing feedback to residents. The impact of any one community engagement or education initiative may not be significant but together these small changes contribute to cultivating a culture of waste reduction and over time could make a significant difference to how we manage resources. To accomplish this, it is proposed to increase funding and staff resources for waste reduction and reuse initiatives.

It is hoped the City's initiatives coupled with any provincial and industry initiatives will reduce per capita garbage going to landfill. Currently, overall the diversion rate is reported to council on a regular basis. The diversion rates for specific programs are also provided to Council as required. It is not possible to measure the reduction/reuse achieved by individual initiatives but is possible to calculate the overall change in per capita waste generation from year to year.

#### **Waste Reduction Success Story**

In 2007, the Ontario government introduced a goal to reduce the number of carry-out plastic bags in the province by 50% by 2012.

A number of initiatives were introduced by industry and municipalities including promotion of reusable bags and bins, improved bagging practices at check-outs, charging for plastic bags.

By 2009 there was a 70% drop in Ontario's per-capita use of plastic bags.

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Including this measure in future reports to Council will allow us to track progress being made in waste reduction and reuse and highlight their importance.

### Summary

It is recommended that the City:

- create a Waste Reduction and Reuse Coordinator position within the Solid Waste Management Division;
- \$150,000 per year in increased funding be allotted to waste reduction and reuse initiatives; and
- the City include the calculation of waste reduction in addition to waste diversion when providing waste management progress reports to Council.

### Waste Reduction and Reuse Policies

Although there are high levels of resident participation in City diversion programs, participation is voluntary, and does not require residents to first minimize the quantity of waste being generated in the home. There are a number of "behaviour change initiatives" that could be undertaken to encourage both waste reduction (i.e., not produced in the first place) and waste diversion of recyclables and compostables. As waste diversion programs mature and all practical programs have been implemented, behaviour change initiatives become the key tools remaining to increase diversion. Some of these programs are not costly to implement and may generate revenue (e.g., user pay for garbage) or reduce costs (e.g., lower container limits). Other programs would require support by businesses and residents, and could range from tougher enforcement of waste by-laws (e.g., garbage container and weight limits) to City policies and by-laws that would impact how business is conducted and consumers must abide by (e.g., restricting/banning certain business transactions). Some residents and businesses may see these programs as inconvenient or "going too far".

Below are some common behaviour change/adjustment initiatives that may have a role in London in the future. Most of these initiatives will require a change to current Council policies and practices and be implemented through a by-law.

#### *Bag Limits*

Reducing the container limit encourages participation in the various waste diversion programs as well as reducing garbage generation.

The City of London currently has a 3 Container Limit (included in taxes) for garbage collection for single family households. The City's container limit takes into consideration the longer cycle times between collections which varies from 8 to 12 days throughout the year. This is equivalent to 1.8 containers per week for a 12 day cycle to 2.6 containers per week for an 8 day cycle with an average of 2.4 containers per week

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over the entire year. Most large Ontario municipalities with a source separated organics program have a garbage container limit equivalent to one or two containers per week. It is recommended that the City implement a 2 or 3 Container Limit per collection if the City implements a source separated organics collection program with bi-weekly garbage collection.

Residents will still have the option of paying to dispose of extra garbage at the curb or the EnviroDepots.

### *Clear Bags*

Some municipalities have residents use clear bags so that recyclables or compostables could be easily spotted in the garbage. This is more common in the Maritimes but the City of Markham has had a clear bag program for five years and credits this program for a significant reduction in the amount of garbage and an increase in recycling and composting. London is currently looking at garbage collection options including collection of garbage in roll-out carts. A clear bag program is not compatible with a roll-out cart program for garbage collection.

London should further explore the use of clear bags for garbage collection if London does not move to a roll-out cart based garbage collection system.

### *User Pay*

Some smaller municipalities have gone to full user pay systems where residents pay for every container of garbage placed to the curb. Full user pay systems encourage participation in the various waste diversion programs as well as reducing one's garbage generation.

A full user pay system is typically not practical in larger municipalities unless the municipality has a cart based garbage collection system. In Toronto, residents pay an annual fee ranging from \$255 to \$487 per year per household depending on the size of cart they select.

A full user pay garbage system should be explored further if London moves to roll-out cart based garbage collection system.

### *Other Incentive and Disincentive Programs*

The vast majority of Londoners participate in various diversion programs although there are those that refuse to participate in these voluntary programs. There are various incentive and disincentive programs that will encourage greater participation.

For example, the City could explore developing a mandatory by-law for the diversion of materials for which there are recycling or composting programs. Enforcement of the by-law may require additional staff. Mandatory diversion by-laws usually work best in conjunction with a clear garbage bag program.

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Alternatively, some municipalities ban recyclables or other materials from garbage collection. The City currently has banned a number of materials from garbage collection including renovation materials, grass clippings, blue box recyclables, scrap metal, electronics, tires and yard materials. These materials were banned because reasonably convenient recycling options exist. As new programs are developed, consideration could be given to banning materials accepted by these programs.

There are incentive programs that the City could consider to encourage greater program participation like the Gold Box program in Hamilton or Recycle Bank (rewards program) in the United States.

### Summary

It is recommended:

- reduction of the container limit to 2 or 3 containers per collection when the Green Bin program with bi-weekly garbage collection is operational;
- further explore the use of clear bags for garbage collection if London does not move to a roll-out cart based garbage collection system;
- further explore a full user pay garbage system if London moves to roll-out cart based garbage collection system; and
- further examine other incentive and disincentive initiatives (best practices) from other municipalities (e.g., mandatory recycling by-law, reward systems, etc.).