



## Committee of the Whole Report

Report Number WM2020-011

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**Meeting Date:** November 3, 2020

**Title:** Textile Recycling Pilot Program

**Description:** Recommendations to initiate the process for a textile recycling pilot program

**Author and Title:** David Kerr, Manager Environmental Services

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### Recommendation(s):

**That** Report 2020-011, **Textile Recycling Pilot Program**, be received;

**That** Staff issue a Request for Proposal to partner with an organization to develop and implement a textile recycling pilot program for 2021;

**That** Staff report the results of the pilot program and future recommendations for textile recycling to Council by June 30, 2022; and

**That** this recommendation be brought forward to Council for consideration at the next Regular Council meeting.

**Department Head:**\_\_\_\_\_

**Financial/Legal/HR/Other:**\_\_\_\_\_

**Chief Administrative Officer:**\_\_\_\_\_

## **Background:**

One of the initiatives in the Waste Management Strategy in 2020 is to develop a textile recycling/reuse program in Kawartha Lakes. Textiles include items like clothing, curtains, towels and bed sheets. We would like to provide residents with convenient access to opportunities to keep these items out of the landfill. This could include opportunities for reuse of gently used textiles but also recycling opportunities for soiled or damaged textiles which cannot be reused.

At the Council Meeting of November 19, 2019 Council adopted the following resolution:

CR2019-641

Moved By Councillor Yeo

Seconded By Deputy Mayor Elmslie

**That** Report WM2019-012, Making Waste Matter: Integrated Waste Management Strategy Update, be received;

**That** Council approves the integrated waste management strategy update for implementation with the following accelerated amendments;

**That** an immediate focus be placed on public education;

**That** an immediate enhanced online presence be implemented regarding recycling;

**That** a \$10/ton increase to the tipping fees be implemented in January 2020 and the increase in revenue be used to offset additional operating costs to enhance diversion; and

**That** the by-law for allowable recyclables in waste be amended to reduce the amount from 20% to 10% starting in early 2020.

## **Carried**

This report addresses that direction from Council.

## **Rationale:**

In order to develop and implement a successful program that is convenient for the public we considered different ways to partner with organizations that already operate textile reuse and recycling programs.

To better assess the different types of programs and determine which is best suited to us, we partnered with Fleming College's Sustainable Waste Management program (College) on a research project over the last year. The aim

of the project was to determine the best course of action for implementing a textile program in Kawartha Lakes. Students in the course submitted a report to us with their findings attached as **Appendix A**. The report includes:

- a review and summary of successful textile programs offered by other municipalities,
- information on municipalities which do not have textile programs and why they do not have such a program,
- a review of markets for recycled textiles,
- methods used for collection in other programs,
- a list of companies which are in proximity to Kawartha Lakes that accept textiles for recycling.

In review of the report submitted by the College as well as other background information it is apparent that the most successful programs operate in a collaborative partnership between a municipality and a “not for profit organization”. “Not for profit organizations” listed in the report include the Canadian Diabetes Association (CDA), Salvation Army, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Canada, and a few smaller local charities.

The majority of municipal programs that were reviewed (10 out of 12) were in partnership with the Canadian Diabetes Association (CDA), either solely or in conjunction with other smaller charities. The CDA has positioned itself as the leading partnership choice, having been successful in developing a program that offers services attractive to local governments at no cost. Predominantly, municipalities rely on the CDA as the primary partner. They appreciate the minimal financial/time commitments they have to make in order to set up this partnership. They also indicate that the monthly report provided by CDA is beneficial in tracking the effectiveness of the program and provides relevant diversion metrics.

A typical partnership involves the municipality coordinating and advertising pick up dates, and the organization completing the curbside collection and/or collection in bins and providing diversion data at no cost to the municipality. The method of collection would be mutually agreed to by the City and the agency chosen to provide the service. The most significant savings is measured in the cost of landfill space.

The report completed by the College also looked at potential organizations in the Kawartha Lakes area and several indicated that they would be interested in partnering with the City. These included Vicky's Values, CDA, Talize, and the Humane Society.

Staff recognize the recommendations from the college and that there are both not for profit and commercial businesses interested in the potential textile market. It is recommended that the City issue a Request for Proposal to organizations (both profit and not for profit) to develop and implement a textile recycling pilot

program in 2021. Staff will then report back to Council by June 30, 2022 on whether the pilot has been successful and if so what the recommendations are for continuation of the program.

The recommendations in this report are to achieve initiatives set out for 2020 in the Integrated Waste Management Strategy Update approved by council. Textiles are estimated to make up to 5-10% of the residential waste stream so there is opportunity for a significant increase in waste diversion through implementing increased textile reuse/recycling according to the Continuous Improvement Fund. Increased diversion from landfill will save on landfill space and will better position us to realize sustainable savings. The program will not be costly to the City other than our own staff time (which will be minor coordination and administrative work) and any advertising costs if necessary).

An added benefit of the program such as this is that it is the ethical and right thing to do. Being able to recycle or provide re-used clothing fulfils a community and society need.

While many residents are familiar with textile reuse programs and donating clean reusable textiles to charitable organizations, waste staff receive many inquiries from residents inquiring about what to do with soiled or stained textiles which cannot be reused. Many residents are unaware that there are recycling opportunities for these non-reusable textiles and this will be a focus of the advertising for this pilot program.

Staff presented this information in a memo to the Waste Management Advisory Committee at the meeting on September 21, 2020 and received the following resolution:

**Moved By** Councillor Yeo

**Seconded By** Councillor Veale

**That** the Textile Recycling Memo, be received; and

**That** the Waste Management Advisory Committee is supportive of the City going through an RFP process to partner with an organization for a textile recycling pilot program for 2021.

This item was also discussed with the Fenelon Landfill Public Review Committee and Lindsay Ops Landfill Public Review Committee and both committees were supportive of the program.

## **Other Alternatives Considered:**

Council could decide not to pursue a textile recycling program; however, this would not be in line with council's approval of the Integrated Waste Management Strategy. The program will likely come at no cost to the City other than for any advertising of the program and will divert more waste from the landfill.

## **Alignment to Strategic Priorities**

One of the four Strategic Priorities of the Plan is A Healthy Environment and one of the main items under this category is "Increase Waste Reduction and Diversion". This will be achieved through executing the updated Integrated Waste Management Strategy. A textile reuse/recycling program is an initiative from the updated Waste Strategy.

## **Financial/Operation Impacts:**

Through research of municipalities operating well-advertised programs with a similar population to Kawartha Lakes approximately 40 tonnes of textiles are diverted each year with the potential to capture more (up to 1200 tonnes or 10% of curbside waste). The City of Kawartha Lakes' initial goal will be to capture and divert 40 tonnes of textiles per year which aligns with industry success rates. As the program grows and with full public participation, there is significant potential to exceed this target. Since textiles are approximately one third the density of compacted municipal waste that would otherwise take up the landfill space, and landfill space is normally valued at \$150/tonne, the estimated annual space savings for diverting 40 tonnes of textiles is \$18,000. As there will be advertising costs on the order of \$1,500/year the estimated total savings is \$16,500. This estimate assumes the density of used clothing to be 0.25 tonnes per cubic meter which is based on USEPA figures as an average between loose and baled clothing, and the average density of compacted waste is estimated at 0.75 tonnes per cubic meter.

## **Attachments:**

Appendix A: Summary Report from Fleming College



Appendix A.pdf

**Department Head E-Mail:** [brobinson@kawarthalakes.ca](mailto:brobinson@kawarthalakes.ca)

**Department Head:** Bryan Robinson, Director of Public Works