



## Committee of the Whole Report

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<b>Report Number:</b>	<b>WM2021-011</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	September 7, 2021
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Lindsay Ops Compost and Woodchip Giveaways</b>
<b>Description:</b>	Review of the compost and woodchip giveaway entitlements and costs
<b>Author and Title:</b>	David Kerr, Manager of Environmental Services

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### Recommendation(s):

**That** Report **WM2021-011, Lindsay Ops Compost Giveaway Recommendations**, be received;

**That** compost and woodchip giveaways continue to be a free program offered to the residents of Kawartha Lakes provided the users are loading the material into their own vehicles using hand tools;

**That** the Consolidated Fees By-Law be amended to include a fee of \$100 per tonne to use landfill equipment to load compost and/or woodchips into residential and/or commercial vehicles; 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:**

The City accepts leaf and yard waste at every open landfill, free up to 250kg for each resident. The City also conducts spring and fall curbside leaf and yard collection events throughout the entire municipality. All material collected is consolidated at each landfill site, and separated into two piles where possible, a brush (branches/woody material) pile and a leaf (paper bagged material) pile.

### Compost

Leaf material is placed into long, narrow piles (called windrows), to further be broken down and composted. Landfill staff monitor the temperatures of the piles and periodically turn them to aid in the composting process. Ontario Regulation 101/94 dictates the requirements for composting at municipal sites, before material can be taken offsite. This is a labour-intensive process, that takes a minimum of seven months to complete and a commitment of staff time, labour and equipment resources. Staff have been working to improve composting operations and were able to meet regulations with one pile of finished compost, in September of 2020. Since that time, 420 tonnes of finished compost material has been given away to a total of 856 residents. This has exhausted our supply of compost material at the landfill for the year.

### Woodchips

Brush material is placed into piles onsite, and once a significant amount of brush material has amounted, a contractor comes onsite to grind the material into windrows of woodchips. The woodchips are either used onsite operationally, or they are given away to residents, free of charge. In 2020, 244 residents took a total of 98 tonnes of material.

### Compost and Woodchip Giveaways

Currently, both compost and woodchips are available for residents to take for free, every Wednesday from 8AM to 4PM. Residents are able to bring their own tools and buckets to the landfills, during the designated times, to remove and take as much compost material and woodchips as they would like. These giveaways run all year round at the Lindsay Ops landfill, while quantities last.

Upon request and availability, landfill staff will occasionally utilize a loader to assist in filling a resident's vehicle of compost and/or woodchips. Of note, this involves an expense of both staff and equipment time and pulls resources from other duties at the landfill site. To provide an incentive to residents, stock of the finished compost has been limited to only residents as free giveaways. Commercial contractors have not been able to participate in the compost material giveaways to date.

### **Rationale:**

As of August 2021, all finished compost material at the Lindsay Ops landfill has been given away, but landfill staff have been working to finish another six windrows of compost material. These six windrows are currently in a 'curing stage' of their composting process, that is to be completed at the end of November (2021). Pending the results of sampling it is possible that this compost material will once again be available for giveaways in 2022.

With compost giveaways being a more common resource available to residents, staff are hoping to address whether local commercial companies are also able to take the material, as multiple inquiries have come in from them.

The main concern from an operational standpoint is that residents and companies seeking large loads of material (both compost and woodchips), require the assistance of landfill staff and equipment. In this circumstance, due to the increased cost from an operational perspective, and the fact that the supply would be dwindled more quickly, it's suggested that the applicable person (residential or commercial) would be subject to a cost of \$100 per tonne. This cost was calculated based on staff and equipment time. Any person (residential or commercial) coming in, and loading their own material, would not be subject to any fees, and would be able to take the material free of charge. At no time would a resident or commercial operation be allowed to bring their own loading equipment on site for health and safety and potential liability issues.

This system would limit the amount of large loads removed by commercial contractors in order to maintain stock for the majority of residential users coming in for small loads. Of note, landfill staff will use their discretion in ensuring quantities are maintained for residential uptake.

All individuals that request being loaded with landfill equipment would be required to complete a waiver, as reviewed by risk management.

## **Other Alternatives Considered:**

The alternatives would be as follows:

1. Allow residential loading with no loading charge (status quo)

This is not recommended, as it is a special service only provided to some residents that is subsidized by the entire municipality.

2. Allow residential loading with a loading charge, no commercial access

This is not recommended, as the City is working to support local business so it should be fair across the board.

3. Allow commercial access and no loading charge

This is not recommended as it does not limit the amount of large loads removed by commercial contractors and would not maintain stock for the majority of residential users coming in for small loads. Since the majority of the raw material for compost is brought in by residents we want to make sure they benefit from the opportunity.

## **Alignment to Strategic Priorities**

The diversion of leaf and yard waste from landfill aligns with goal #3 of "A Healthy Environment". This aligns with the City's vision of a naturally beautiful community that protects our local environment, enhances water quality and created improved quality of life.

The review of compost and woodchip giveaways, relates to a good government and improving all service levels for both residents and commercial locations.

## **Financial/Operation Impacts:**

The operational costs to collect, maintain and divert leaf and yard materials from the landfill are covered within the annual waste management budget. The recommendation of applying a \$100 per tonne loading charge to compost and woodchips materials loaded into large vehicles by landfill staff and equipment would cover additional costs incurred through staff labour and equipment hours. The estimated annual revenue is unknown at this time as loading vehicles has not been historically tracked however if we assume a third of the volume of the material is loaded by landfill equipment the annual revenue would be approximately \$17,000. As this service would be provided on

Wednesdays when Lindsay Ops is closed for the public waste drop-off and equipment operators are already working in the area, impact to overall operations will be minimal.

**Consultations:**

Insurance Risk Management Coordinator

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