
MEMORANDUM**PWC-C 23-2020**

Subject: Terms of Reference for Long Term Waste Management Strategic Plan
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2020
To: Public Works Committee
From: Jennifer Mazurek, Program Manager, Policy, Planning and Engagement

This purpose of this memorandum is to provide members of the Public Works Committee (PWC) with an overview of the Terms of Reference (TOR) and timelines proposed for Niagara Region's Waste Management Long Term Strategic Plan (WMSP).

Background

The need for a WMSP was originally identified in PWA 32-2010 Contract Award for Garbage, Recycling and Organics Collection Services. In 2011, Waste Management prepared a Request for Proposal (RFP) that was finalized but not released due to Public Works Committee's concern with the estimated project costs. In lieu of the WMSP, three of the core project deliverables were undertaken in 2011 and subsequently other major planning initiatives have been completed:

- (i) A review focused on alternative waste management technologies viable for implementation in Niagara Region was initiated and then evolved into annual monitoring and reporting by Waste Management staff of projects in Canada (most recent report WMPSC-C 34-2019).
- (ii) A study and resulting approval of the current financing methodology for Waste Management Services (PWA 55-2011).
- (iii) A Blue Box program diversion plan, required to fulfill Best Practices requirements for the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority (RPRA) annual datacall, was developed in 2011 and subsequently updated in 2016 (WMPSC-C 01-2017).
- (iv) The Environmental Assessment for the vertical expansion of the Humberstone Landfill was initiated in 2012 and received the final approval in 2019 (WMPSC-C 26-2019).
- (v) Review and implementation of new service levels for the next collection contracts (PW 61-2019).

While the above initiatives are important, an integrated long-term WMSP was recommended and approved through the 2017 waste management operating budget as a multi-year project, to be initiated after the implications of provincial waste reduction legislation and regulations are identified. Provincial direction will impact the amount of tonnage to be managed in Niagara Region's waste management system (e.g. the quantity of material that may be directed to potential alternative technology facilities). A WMSP will establish a planning framework and strategic direction for waste management in Niagara Region over the next 25 years to ensure resource recovery, sustainable long-term disposal infrastructure, and to enhance revenue opportunities. A detailed implementation plan, with timelines, will be developed for the first five years from 2022 – 2026, and then in five year intervals between 2027 - 2046. The WMSP should recommend sustainable, diverse, long-term waste management practices and systems that are consistent with Niagara Region's corporate vision and strategies.

Requirements

The WMSP must consider existing policies, practices, directions and best practices, as well as the potential upheaval in the waste management industry resulting from provincial policies and world market conditions, to define the vision, goals, targets, strategies, actions and measures that will guide Niagara Region's decisions with respect to the management of waste.

As a result of this project, Niagara Region will have a guiding document to support decisions related to Waste Management infrastructure, programs and policies. The document will provide innovative strategies and solutions for management of Niagara Region's waste stream that minimize disposal. Cost benefit analysis based on financial, social and economic factors will be provided for the recommended infrastructure and programs/services. The WMSP will be flexible enough to adapt to changing legislation, increasing provincial targets, changes in waste composition, population growth, and advances in technology. The TOR incorporates the following components:

(i) Assessment of System – 'Where We Are'

- What is Niagara Region's baseline?
- How does Niagara Region compare to other municipalities?
- What are best practices provincially, nationally and internationally?

(ii) Development of Direction and System Options – 'Where We Want To Go'

- What are the vision, goals and guiding principles supporting Niagara Region's long-term needs?
- What is Niagara Region's updated diversion goal and timeline?
- What are the gaps and challenges we will resolve?
- What innovative opportunities for program delivery and waste processing technologies can be implemented and how will we determine which alternatives are preferred?

(iii) Preferred System – 'How We Are Going To Get There'

- What options are preferred?
- What will the implementation plan look like for the first five (5) years between 2022-2027 and then over the remaining twenty (20) years? How and when will the recommendations be implemented?
- How will the components of the system be financed, including a review of current financing methodology?
- What investments are required from Niagara Region?
- How will Niagara Region adapt to legislative and regulatory changes?
- What performance measures, targets and methods for monitoring progress in the plan should be used?

The plan will not be developed in isolation. Stakeholders that will be consulted and informed throughout the process include:

- Waste Management Planning Steering Committee (WMPSC), Public Works Committee (PWC), Niagara Region and Local Area Municipal Councils
- Regional departments including Planning and Development Services and Corporate Services
- Residents
- Business groups
- Waste Management service providers (collectors, processors)
- External municipal customers (e.g. Region of Waterloo)

Timelines

Table 1 below outlines estimated timelines for high-level milestones associated with the project.

Table 1: Estimated Timelines for High-Level Milestones

Milestone	Estimated Dates
RFP Issued	August 2020
RFP Award	October 2020
Public and Stakeholder Engagement	Q1 2021
Strategic Plan Draft	Q4 2021
Report to Council	Q1 2022

Related Projects and Potential Risks

It is important to note that in addition to the WMSP and in response to a motion from the City of Niagara Falls, Niagara Region has had preliminary discussion with the Continuous Improvement Fund (CIF) to complete an independent review of “the current practices related to garbage collection and recycling/recycling materials recovery facility” with the intent that “recommendations on how the system can be made more cost effective and efficient for the taxpayer” will be implemented over the term of the next collection contract, subject to Niagara Region Council approval. Staff are currently working with an equipment manufacturer to acquire a design and the associated costing to convert our existing two-stream recycling processing facility into a single-stream facility. Results from this report will be considered in development of the WMSP.

Provincial legislation/policy announcements and development of provincial plans to support the shift to a producer responsibility model for recyclable material, occurring during preparation of the WMSP, may influence the recommendations or ability of Niagara Region to implement short-term recommendations. The successful consultant will be expected to incorporate strategies in the WMSP to manage the risks that changes will impact Niagara Region programming.

Lastly, stakeholder group fatigue may result in low participation rates, as the same groups were consulted in late 2018 regarding Waste Management services for the collection contract starting on October 19, 2020. Also, it is expected that the ongoing and evolving situation related to COVID-19 will impact Niagara Region’s ability to interact with stakeholders at in-person events. To mitigate these risks, it is expected that

the successful consultant will propose innovative and alternative methods to encourage participation (e.g. options for on-line engagement). Waste Management staff will ensure Corporate Communications is engaged throughout the project.

Next Steps

Per the timelines outlined above, Waste Management staff are working with procurement staff to draft an RFP, targeting release in Q3 2020 with award process completed before the end of 2020. Staff in other departments have been consulted during development of the TOR, including staff in the Asset Management Office and in Planning and Development Services, to ensure that the resulting strategy will encompass corporate requirements and policies. Staff will continue to inform WMPSC and PWC of project progress.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

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