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| TO: | CHAIR AND MEMBERS CIVIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING ON MAY 10, 2016 |
| FROM: | JOHN BRAAM, P.ENG MANAGING DIRECTOR - ENVIRONMENTAL & ENGINEERING SERVICES & CITY ENGINEER |
| SUBJECT: | SELLING BLUE BOXES AT THE ENVIRODEPOTS |

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director - Environmental & Engineering Services & City Engineer, the following actions **BE TAKEN**:

- a) That Blue Boxes be sold at cost from the 4 EnviroDepots beginning August 2016, **BE APPROVED**;
- b) That the price for Blue Boxes be set at \$6 per Blue Box and the maximum number purchased at one time is 2 **BE APPROVED**; and
- c) That Civic Administration **BE AUTHORIZED** to undertake all the administrative acts that are necessary in connection with this matter.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER

- Update: Interim Waste Diversion Plan (2014-2015) and Additions for 2016 (February 2, 2016 meeting of the Civic Works Committee (CWC), Item #15)
- Interim Waste Diversion Plan 2014-2015 (July 21, 2014 meeting of the CWC, Item #18)
- Solid Waste Management Updates (April 23, 2012 meeting of the CWC, Item #17)
- Status Report: Update of Road Map to Maximize Waste Diversion 2.0 (July 22, 2013 meeting of CWC, Item #14)
- Additional Information – Possible Elimination of Plastic Bags as a Recycling Container (July 19, 2011 meeting of the Community and Neighbourhoods Committee (CNC), Agenda Item #30)
- Answers to Initial Questions - Possible Elimination of Plastic Bags as a Recycling Container (June 14, 2011 meeting of the Community and Neighbourhoods Committee (CNC), Agenda Item #24)
- Potential Changes to the Blue Box Recycling Program (May 3, 2011 meeting of the CNC, Agenda Item #13)

2015 – 19 STRATEGIC PLAN

Municipal Council has recognized the importance of solid waste management including waste diversion, climate change and other related environmental issues in its 2015-2019 - Strategic Plan for the City of London ([2015 – 2019 Strategic Plan](#)). With respect to this CWC Report 3 of the 4 Areas of Focus address increasing waste diversion as it relates to the selling of blue boxes at the EnviroDepots.

Building a Sustainable City

- Strong and healthy environment

Leading in Public Service

- Excellent service delivery

Growing our Economy

- Strategic, collaborative partnerships

BACKGROUND

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to examine the sale of Blue Boxes at the EnviroDepots and recommend a preferred option.

CONTEXT:

At the February 2, 2016 meeting of Civic Works Committee staff presented the report Update: *Interim Waste Diversion Plan (2014 – 2015) and Additions for 2016*. That report provided updates on the five remaining (not completed) approved actions from the 2014 – 2015 Interim Waste Diversion Plan (IWDP) and proposed three new items to be added in 2016. These eight initiatives are presented in Appendix A. This report examines one of the new items added for review in 2016, selling Blue Boxes at EnviroDepots. Municipal Council at its February 16, 2016 meeting directed the Civic Administration, among other items, to prepare and submit to the Civic Works Committee the following from clause c) of the Council Resolution:

- ii) *a report examining the advantages, disadvantages and requirements of selling Blue Boxes at the EnviroDepots (by June 2016)*

DISCUSSION:

Current System

The City requires residents to use at least two Blue Boxes in order to separate their recyclables into two streams (paper and containers). Blue Boxes are provided at no charge under the following circumstances:

- residents of newly constructed homes receive two Blues Boxes (as these homes have never been provided with Blue Boxes),
- Blue Boxes damaged by collection vehicles or snow plows are replaced,
- Blue Boxes delivered to residents in 2011 have a seven year warranty and are replaced as they become broken from normal wear and tear, and
- Blue Boxes may be provided as part of a promotion or campaign to increase recycling and to encourage correct sorting of recyclables.

Providing Blue Boxes as outlined above is considered a “*Best Practice*” standard by Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO). The City of London receives additional industry funding for recycling when WDO approved Best Practices are used.

The replacement of Blue Boxes under all other circumstances is the responsibility of the homeowner. Many retail outlets sell Blue Boxes that meet our program size requirements. Blue Boxes are generally sold for \$10 to \$13.

Providing Blue Boxes at Cost

It is expected that selling Blue Boxes at cost (\$6) will result in more boxes in the system which will increase the capacity to recycle more and provide convenience for residents. Further benefits include:

- improved ability of residents to sort recyclables into two streams,
- improved litter control by reducing overflowing boxes and the use of other containers (e.g. cardboard boxes, laundry baskets, etc.) and broken Blue Boxes, and
- increased access to recycling for those less able to purchase Blue Boxes at retail prices.

Role of EnviroDepots

The EnviroDepots have become a valued one-stop drop-off location for many residents in London. Since 2007, the number of visits to the EnviroDepots has doubled and the following materials were added to those managed at the depots; tires, appliances, used clothing and small household items, batteries, fluorescent tubes and bulbs, empty oil

containers and vegetable oil (HSW Depot only). Residents appreciate the services provided at these locations and that these services are continually being expanded to include more items. Providing Blue Boxes for sale at these locations would offer another convenience in helping families to recycle and reduce their waste. There are four EnviroDepot locations where Blue Boxes could be sold:

- Oxford Street EnviroDepot (1450 Oxford St. W.)
- Clarke Road EnviroDepot (28 Clarke Rd)
- City EnviroDepot located at TRY Recycling Depot North (21462 Clarke Rd.)
- W12A Landfill (3502 Manning Dr.)

These two items are already sold at the EnviroDepots:

- Home composters (\$35/unit)
- Small quantities of woodchips, compost, soil/compost mix (\$5/bag), not sold at W12A

Home composters are currently sold at cost or less as mandated by Ontario Regulation 101/94 to encourage home composting. Woodchips, compost and soil/compost mix are sold from the EnviroDepots to promote products and develop markets for the products produced from London's leaf and yard materials.

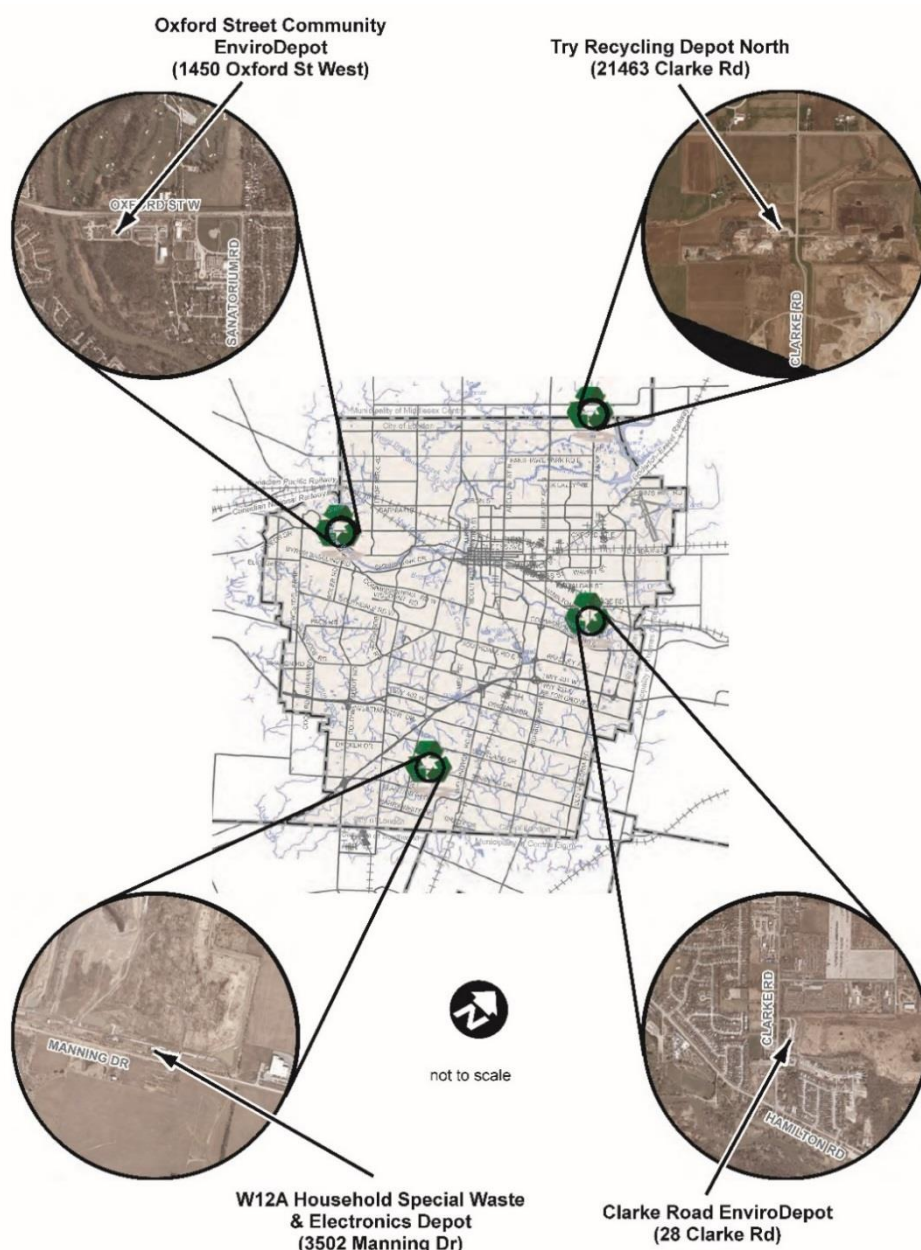
Advantages and Disadvantages of Selling Blue Boxes at EnviroDepots

Many of the advantages of selling Blue Boxes at the EnviroDepots were previously mentioned and include:

- customer satisfaction with Blue Boxes being more accessible and less costly for resident pick-up at EnviroDepots,
- more Blue Boxes in the system has the potential to increase the quantity of recyclables collected, increase revenue, and reduce litter, and
- processing costs of Blue Box materials may be less as materials would be better sorted.

Disadvantages of implementing the sale of Blue Boxes from City Depots include:

- minor increase in traffic and administrative burden at the EnviroDepots, and
- possible impact on retailers who currently sell Blue Boxes as some customers may buy at the City locations.



If selling Blue Boxes at cost is approved, retailers would be notified and provided details of the program.

In addition to selling Blue Boxes at the EnviroDepots, the EnviroDepots could become a pick-up location for Blue Boxes that are provided at no charge under the scenarios noted previously (e.g., newly constructed home, etc.). A system like the one currently being used in Ottawa (Table 1) would eliminate some of London's staff time spent on handling and delivery of Blue Boxes under our current system. For example, in the case of a Blue Box broken by a snow plow, a coupon would be mailed to the resident for them to redeem for a Blue Box at a depot.

Review of Other Municipalities

City staff surveyed sixteen Ontario municipalities and the results are presented in Table 1. Three municipalities (Guelph, Peel and Toronto) are no longer involved with Blue Boxes as they have moved to Blue Carts for recycling collection.

Most municipalities (11 of 13) make available or sell Blue Boxes from municipal locations. There was an even split between municipalities that sold Blue Boxes at cost and those that provide Blue Boxes at no cost. Only one municipality charges more than their cost for Blue Boxes. All municipalities with one exception provide Blue Boxes to newly constructed homes and replacements due to damage from collection crews.

Table 1: Selling Blue Boxes from Municipal Locations

| # | Municipality | Total Number of Households | Blue Boxes Available or for Purchase at Municipal Locations | Cost | Comments |
|----|-----------------|----------------------------|---|-------------|--|
| | London | 117,600 | X | - | Residents to purchase |
| 1 | Waterloo Region | 146,600 | X | - | Residents to purchase |
| 2 | Windsor | 120,000 | X | - | Residents to purchase |
| 3 | Barrie | 58,600 | ✓ | \$0 | |
| 4 | Halton Region | 154,000 | ✓ | \$0 | |
| 5 | Hamilton | 168,900 | ✓ | \$0 | |
| 6 | Ottawa | 277,200 | ✓ | \$0 | Residents redeem coupon sent by City of Ottawa |
| 7 | Sudbury | 74,100 | ✓ | \$0 | Use online request |
| 8 | Simcoe County | 127,600 | ✓ | \$5 | |
| 9 | Woodstock | Oxford County 44,600 | ✓ | \$5.50 | |
| 10 | Durham Region | 192,800 | ✓ | \$6 | |
| 11 | Niagara Region | 170,200 | ✓ | \$6 | |
| 12 | Sarnia | 25,800 | ✓ | \$6 | |
| 13 | York Region | 298,700 | ✓ | \$9 to \$13 | Varies by local municipality |

X = No ✓ = Yes

Cost

Blue Boxes would be sold at cost. The WDO Continuous Improvement Fund (CIF) currently has a Cooperative Container Procurement Program for Blue Boxes. The rates from the two suppliers are between \$5.35 and \$5.59 per unit before hot stamping, delivery charges and tax. City staff recommend that Blue Boxes be sold:

- at cost
- the rate for 2016 and 2017 be set at \$6.00 per Blue Box, and
- the maximum number of Blue Boxes that can be purchased at one time is 2.

Implementation

The Fees and Charges By-law would be updated in June to include the new fee for Blue Boxes. Selling Blue Boxes from the EnviroDepots would begin in August. Other implementation details include:

- Initially between 50 and 100 Blue Boxes will be kept on-site for sale. This amount may change after additional experience.
- The EnviroDepot contractor, Try Recycling, will be administering the program in the same manner as the sale of home composting units. All customer fees are returned to the City on a monthly basis. There is no additional charge to the City from Try Recycling assuming the administrative and operational work is minor (as anticipated).
- Receipts are provided to residents upon purchase.
- Duplicate copies of the receipts are provided by TRY Recycling to the City for invoicing and/or fee tracking purposes.

Conclusion

Based on the details in this report and our experience with other items for sale at the EnviroDepots such as home composters, we believe the benefits of providing Blue Boxes at cost far outweigh the one disadvantage of potentially competing with retail locations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was prepared with the assistance of Anne Boyd, Manager, Waste Diversion.

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**Appendix A: Interim Waste Diversion Plan Initiatives, 2016
(Status reflects January 2016)**

| # | Initiative/Program | Comment | Status |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Carryover from 2014-2015 IWDP | | | |
| 1 | Add vegetable oil and used motor oil to EnviroDepots | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA) amendment by MOECC for implementation • A pilot project is underway for fats, oils and greases (FOG) to obtain additional details on handling methods and citizen comments at the depots | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In progress • Next step is to amend EnviroDepots Environmental Compliance Approval |
| 2 | Examine reduced container limits for garbage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey work undertaken in 2014 (85% to 90% of households set out 3 or fewer garbage containers) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CWC report in April 2016 details next steps |
| 3 | Begin a community composting pilot project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2015, community composting projects were started in six locations at multi-residential buildings and will continue in 2016 • Related work with the community via the London Environmental Network | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In progress • 50% complete • CWC report in Quarter 1 2017 |
| 4 | Begin food reduction awareness pilot project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • London participates on several local and provincial working groups that are exploring this new potential area of waste reduction, cost savings and community benefit • Activities will occur throughout 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In progress • 20% complete • CWC report in Quarter 1 2017 |
| 5 | Examine incentive options for Blue Box recycling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary work has begun on potential incentives • Will be influenced by the direction set by the Provincial Government | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In progress • 20% complete • Future report tied to Provincial direction |
| New Initiatives | | | |
| 6 | Examine increasing Christmas tree composting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine the options for increasing Christmas tree composting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CWC report in April 2016 |
| 7 | Examine selling Blue Boxes from EnviroDepots | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine the advantages, disadvantages and requirements of selling Blue Boxes at the EnviroDepots | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject of this report |
| 8 | Explore increasing downtown recycling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine options for increased recycling in the downtown core • Currently pilot downtown drop-off depot | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In progress • 20% complete • Future report tied to Provincial direction |