

Report to Waste Management Working Group

To: Chair and Members
Waste Management Working Group

From: Jay Stanford, M.A., M. P. A.
Director – Environment, Fleet & Solid Waste

Subject: Progress Report #12: Community Engagement Program
Update – August 1, 2020 to February 28, 2021

Date: March 16, 2021

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Director, Environment, Fleet and Solid Waste, this report **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of the public engagement that took place as part of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the expansion of the W12A Landfill from August 1, 2020 to February 28, 2021. Public engagement during this period included mailouts to all stakeholders including residents living near the landfill, a workshop with Indigenous Communities and a fourth series of open houses.

Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

Municipal Council continues to recognize the importance of solid waste management and the need for a more sustainable and resilient city in the development of its 2019-2023 - Strategic Plan for the City of London. Specifically, London's efforts in solid waste management address three Areas of Focus, at one level or another:

- Building a Sustainable City
- Growing our Economy
- Leading in Public Service

On April 23, 2019, the following was approved by Municipal Council with respect to climate change:

Therefore, a climate emergency be declared by the City of London for the purposes of naming, framing, and deepening our commitment to protecting our economy, our eco systems, and our community from climate change.

Both the Resource Recovery Strategy and Waste Disposal Strategy (including the EA) address various aspects of climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation. These elements are also a requirement that must be addressed as part of EA documentation.

Analysis

1.0 Background Information

1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

Relevant reports that can be found at www.london.ca under Government (Council and Civic Administration) include:

- Environmental Assessment Process – Updates and Preferred Method to Expand the W12A Landfill (September 22, 2020 meeting of the Civic Works Committee (CWC), Item 2.11)
- Proposed Terms of Reference - Environmental Assessment of the Proposed W12A Landfill Expansion (September 25, 2018 meeting of the CWC, Item #3.1)

- Draft Proposed Terms of Reference – Environmental Assessment of the Proposed W12A Landfill Expansion (April 17, 2018 meeting of the CWC, Item #3.3)
- Update and Next Steps – Resource Recovery Strategy and Residual Waste Disposal Strategy as part of the Environmental Assessment Process (February 7, 2017 meeting of the Civic Works Committee (CWC), Item #10)
- Individual Environmental Assessment Long Term Solid Waste Resource Recovery & Disposal Plans (October 6, 2015 meeting of the CWC, Item #14)

Relevant reports that can be found at www.london.ca under City Hall (Meetings – Advisory and other Committees) include:

- Progress Report #10: Community Engagement Program Update – December 1, 2019 to July 31, 2020 (August 13, 2020 meeting of the Waste Management Working Group (WMWG), Item #3.3)
- Progress Report #8: Community Engagement Program Update - April 1, 2019 to November 30, 2019 (December 18, 2019 meeting of the WMWG, Item #3.3)
- Progress Report #6: Community Engagement Program (April 18, 2019 meeting of the WMWG, Item #3.3)
- Progress Report #5: Community Engagement Program (March 8, 2018 meeting of the WMWG, Item #3.2)
- Progress Report #4: Community Engagement Program (January 18, 2018 meeting of the WMWG, Item #7)
- Update Report #4: Community Engagement Program (September 28, 2017 meeting of the WMWG, Item #6)
- Progress Report #1: Community Engagement Program (June 27, 2017 meeting of the WMWG, Item #6)
- General Framework for the Community Engagement Program for the Resource Recovery and Residual Waste Disposal Strategies as part of the Environmental Assessment Process (January 19, 2017 meeting of the WMWG, Item #7)

1.2 Overview of Previous Public (Community) Engagement

In February 2017, Municipal Council directed City staff to undertake a number of actions with respect to the development of a long term Resource Recovery Strategy and a Residual Waste Disposal Strategy for the City of London. These actions included approving the general framework of the Community Engagement Program including:

- Using the following community engagement tools and forums: public notices, project website including use of the *getinvolved.london.ca* website, interested stakeholders contact and distribution list, open houses, meetings/presentations, City of London Advisory Committees, and using a range of information and communications tools; and,
- Contacting individuals and groups within the following broad stakeholder categories: the general public, the Government Review Team (GRT) and Indigenous Communities.

The Community Engagement Program began on March 30, 2017 with the release of the Notice of Commencement.

The WMWG has received community engagement activity updates for the following periods:

1. March 30, 2017 to June 5, 2017 (on June 5, 2017)
2. June 6, 2017 to September 12, 2017 (on September 28, 2017)
3. September 13, 2017 to January 10, 2018 (on January 18, 2018)
4. January 11, 2018 to March 1, 2018 (on March 8, 2018)
5. March 2, 2018 to March 30, 2019 (on April 18, 2019)
6. April 1, 2019 To November 30, 2019 (on December 18, 2019)
7. December 1, 2019 to July 31, 2020 (on August 13, 2020)

2.0 Discussion and Considerations

A formal Public Consultation Report (i.e., the title assigned by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks - MECP) for the EA process is required for both the Terms of Reference (ToR) and for the EA. The Public Consultation Report documents all aspects of the Community Engagement Program including information on advertising, outreach, events and activities as well as comments received.

The Public Consultation Report for the ToR was submitted in 2018. The Public Consultation Report for the EA will be submitted as part of the Environmental Assessment Study Report (EASR). The draft EASR is scheduled to go before Council in April 2021. A similar report will be prepared for the Resource Recovery Strategy by City staff in 2022.

Table 1 provides an updated summary of the community engagement activities that took place from August 1, 2020 to February 28, 2021.

Table 1 – Community Engagement Activities from August 1, 2020 to February 28, 2021

| Activity | Description |
|---|---|
| Project Website (<i>getinvolved.london.ca</i>) | <p><i>Residual Waste Disposal Strategy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 6,000 visits to the website between August 1, 2020 and February 28, 2021. • Total visits since community engagement program started exceeds 9,000 visits. • Opportunity for people to review and comment on the proposed expansion of W12A Landfill and the Community Enhancement and Mitigative Measures Program. <p><i>Resource Recovery Strategy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 1,000 visits to the website between August 1, 2020 and February 28, 2021. • Total visits since the community engagement program started exceeds 8,100 visits. |
| Fourth Series of Open Houses (November 18 & 19) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertised in Londoner and project website. • Notices sent to stakeholders (Nearby residents, government review team, Indigenous Communities, various stakeholder groups, etc.). • 18 visitors. • Many people stayed for over 30 minutes and some over an hour. • There were no feedback forms due to COVID restrictions. There were numerous verbal comments which were followed up by City staff by email. • A summary of the comments received at and following the open houses is provided in Appendix A. |
| Virtual Open House (Project Website) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The materials presented at the November 18 & 19 open houses were presented on the project website along with the opportunity to provide feedback. The feedback closed on December 11, 2020. No responses were received. |
| Indigenous Communities ¹ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A second Groundwater Work Plan Workshop was planned to be held in April 2020, but was delayed due to the COVID situation. It was held virtually on August 20, 2020. • Representatives from Aamjiwnaang First Nation, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation and Munsee-Delaware First Nation participated along with various technical consultants. |
| Community Liaison Committee (CLC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No in-person meetings were held during this period. All members of the CLC received a Notice of the Open House by email on November 9, 2020. |

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August 1, 2020 to February 28, 2021**

| Activity | Description |
|----------|---|
| Other | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update provided to the W12A Landfill Public Liaison Committee on February 25, 2021. |

Notes

1. First Nation communities are Aamjiwnaang First Nation (AFN), Caldwell First Nation (Caldwell), Chippewas of the Thames First Nation (COTTFN), Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point (Kettle and Stony Point), Oneida Nation of the Thames (Oneida), Delaware Nation (Delaware), Munsee-Delaware First Nation (Munsee) and Walpole Island First Nation (WIFN).

Conclusion

The EA for the proposed expansion of the W12A Landfill continues to have a comprehensive community engagement program.

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Prepared and Recommended by: Jay Stanford, MA, MPA
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Concurred by: Kelly Scherr, P. Eng., MBA, FEC
Managing Director, Environmental and Engineering Services and City Engineer

c. Wesley Abbott, Project Manager, Oakridge Environmental

Appendix A – Summary of Comments from Open House #4

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| Comment Received | City Response |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns raised due to potential impact to wireless internet connection because of higher landfill. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City is committed to determining if the existing landfill or the landfill expansion will impact internet and/or cell phone reception of local residences. If it is determined there will be an impact, the City will propose measures such as small communication towers on effected properties (if any) to rectify the situation. This process could potentially be formalized and included in the CEMMP as part of the current review of the program. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opposition expressed to expanding service area. There is a need to control waste coming from regional service area. An increase in the amount and type of waste should not be allowed; only residential waste should be accepted. Municipalities sending waste should have effective diversion programs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City will consider conditions such as only accepting waste from municipalities that have a lower residential disposal rate or equivalent waste diversion programs. Feedback on potential options was presented in Table 4.7.1 of the EASR. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objection expressed to Alternative 1; preference to Alternative 2. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The comparison of alternative methods indicates that Alternative 1 is the preferred expansion alternative (see Section 7 of the EASR for full details). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning period for the landfill expansion should be longer. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Amended ToR was approved by the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks for a 25 year period. This cannot be increased. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns raised regarding speeding trucks from new cement plant. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted. Speeding concerns are London Police Services matters. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water quality concerns expressed, and specifically the quality of nearby water wells. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groundwater monitoring wells located around the landfill do not show any off-site migration of contaminants from the landfill. Monitoring of private water wells in the area do not show any impacts from the landfill. The results do include some elevated aesthetic water quality parameters in some wells but the water is safe to drink. The elevated parameters are naturally occurring. Groundwater modelling indicates that the landfill can be designed to meet applicable groundwater quality guidelines (see Section 9.2 of the EASR). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nuisance wildlife (i.e., vultures) cause damage by roosting on nearby structures. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed mitigation measures are being considered as part of the current review of the CEMMP. This would include a pilot project on using various turkey vulture control measures to keep turkey vultures off private property. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bad odours in 2019, but none in 2020. Concerns expressed over potential increase in odours at nearby residence due to increase landfill height. Individual requested data from other | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preliminary air quality modelling completed for the Environmental Assessment indicates that the proposed expansion will be within the MECF guideline for odour (see Section 9.1 of the EASR). Additional air quality modelling and monitoring will be undertaken as part of the more |

| Comment Received | City Response |
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| <p>landfills that have expanded vertically.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns over increased height and the potential for odours to travel farther. | <p>technical <i>Environmental Protection Act</i> approval for the landfill expansion and during initial operations of the landfill expansion. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verify that the odour emission rates used in the odour assessment were reasonable, but conservative. This will include 1) one-time landfill gas sampling early in the expansion to confirm emission rates from the site of indicator compounds and 2) sampling analysis to include odourous compounds, Vinyl Chloride and Hydrogen Sulphide. Review and update the odour management plan and complaints response protocol. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval should include a sunset clause when landfill has to close or commit to not expanded again. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval for a landfill expansion is given for a specific volume of waste not a set period of time. Landfill would not function optimally as designed if less waste is received (e.g., surface water flows would be different which could impact the stormwater management ponds). Future Municipal Councils always have the opportunity to determine where garbage within its responsibility (i.e., residential waste) is delivered and whether or not a landfill site should continue to be owned and/or operated by the City. For example, this was last discussed and voted on in 2006 and re-confirmed when Council, in 2015, approved undertaking the EA for the expansion of the W12A Landfill. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various information and documents requests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How were residents informed about the open house Waste composition Where plastics are recycled CEMMP document Existing Conditions and Impact Assessment Study for Archeology, Biology, etc. Renderings of the view of the expanded landfill from specific properties | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All documents and information requested were provided. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm screening berm will be constructed on south side of the landfill. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To reduce the visual impact of daily operations to the south of the landfill, waste would be placed initially to build a berm along the south side of the landfill's waste disposal area and will be covered with final cover soil and seeded to establish vegetation. (see Section 9.9.2.2 of the EASR) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What can the City do to screen the view of the landfill's operating equipment from residences to the north of the landfill. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The existing CEMMP will be seeking stakeholder feedback on how the program can be improved including what are appropriate screening measures for private properties. This could include the City providing funding to properties with visual impacts to construct |

| Comment Received | City Response |
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| | screening measures (e.g., plant trees). (see Section 9.10 of the EASR) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerned the increase landfill height will increase winds at the Islamic Cemetery of London. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A desktop analysis was completed to evaluate the effects of wind flows on the cemetery. The analysis concluded that the cemetery is located outside the highly turbulent region where wind effects induced by the landfill expansion are likely. Consequently, the landfill expansion is unlikely to have significant effects on wind flows at the cemetery. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asked for clarification of what agricultural land included in the on-site buffer will be used for. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In general, the additional buffer lands that are currently in active agricultural production will be seeded and left fallow (for a period of time) with the following exceptions; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fencing along the new landfill boundary Berms constructed along the new landfill boundary that runs long White Oak Road and Scotland Drive Land between the existing landfill and Material Recovery (Recycling) Facility that will accommodate a new small vehicle Waste and Resource Material Drop-off Area. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will any listed heritage buildings be purchased as part of expansion? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No heritage buildings will be purchased (see Section 9.8 of the EASR). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Litter from trucks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential changes to the landfill's off-site litter management program can be considered as part of the review of the existing CEMMP. Any changes can be formalized and added to the revised CEMMP and/or to the Design and Operations report for the landfill expansion. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential health impacts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preliminary air quality, groundwater and surface water modelling completed for the EA indicates that the proposed expansion will be within applicable MECP guidelines. (see Sections 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3 of the EASR) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor treatment of local residents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted. (The City is always open for further discussion on these matters. That is also one of the goals of the W12A Landfill PLC). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate change impact | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The document entitled "Considering Climate Change in the Environmental Assessment Process" (MECP, 2019) was used as a guide for incorporating measures in the landfill expansion design that reduce both the potential impact of climate change on the landfill (i.e., climate change adaptation) and its potential impact on climate change (i.e., climate change mitigation). (see Section 10 of the EASR). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road traffic concerns | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The anticipated increase in traffic as a result of increasing population and additional communities using the expanded landfill is not forecasted to cause any issues with traffic movement along the haul routes (see Section 9.11 of the EASR). Concerns relating to traffic movement may include changes to access/egress to the site for trucks and increased truck traffic. No changes to access and egress are anticipated from the expanded site. |

| Comment Received | City Response |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential noise impacts were evaluated using existing information and predictive modelling. The change in traffic noise levels between the existing landfill and the landfill expansion is projected to be insignificant to noticeable using the provincial scale to quantify this change; this is considered an acceptable change (see Section 9.1 of the EASR). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could the City use the landfill gas to generate electricity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City is currently looking at renewable natural gas from the landfill as it is not possible to add more electricity to the grid in this area of London as the transformers are near capacity and cannot receive more electricity |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could near-by City land be used for creating habitat for species at risk birds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The use of City land to encourage the nesting of birds, including species at risk, would likely best be handled through the CEMMP. One option for how this could work would be for the City to identify lands that they would make available for such purposes (e.g., not in agricultural production, not needed in the future for other uses, etc.) and the W12A Landfill PLC use funds from the Community Enhancement Fund to establish features on the land to encourage nesting (e.g., barn like structures for barn swallows). |