

Staff Report

Report To: City Council
Report From: Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services
Meeting Date: May 8, 2023
Report Code: OP-23-023
Subject: Leaf and Yard Waste Compost Site - Residential Usage Agreement with the Township of Georgian Bluffs

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report OP-23-023 respecting the 2023 Leaf and Yard Waste Compost Site - Residential Usage Agreement with the Township of Georgian Bluffs, City Council directs staff to bring forward a by-law to authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute the 2023 Leaf and Yard Waste Compost Site Residential Usage Agreement with the Township of Georgian Bluffs as outlined in the report.

Highlights:

- City staff and Georgian Bluffs staff worked collaboratively to develop a solution to address the residential use of the Leaf and Yard Waste site by Georgian Bluff's residents.
- According to City data, the average number of vehicles visiting the site daily in the first week of 2023 was 300.
- The Leaf and Yard Waste Compost site is an essential component of the overall waste management strategy for the City of Owen Sound.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

This report supports the delivery of Core Service.

Climate and Environmental Implications:

This supports the objectives of the City's Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan by strengthening the natural infrastructure, including the urban forest.

Previous Report/Authority:

[Presentation and Supplemental Information from the Director of Corporate Services Re: 2023 Operating Budget – presented at the February 6, 2023, Special Council Meeting](#)

[OP-23-007 Leaf and Yard Waste Compost Site – Interim Control and Security City of Owen Sound Waste Management By-Law 2005-001](#)

Background:

Staff advised Council that a stronger focus on compliance at the City's Leaf and Yard Waste Compost site was required due to the increased expenses associated with maintaining the site due to various issues, including use by non-residents of the City. The Leaf and Yard Waste Compost site was developed strictly for the benefit of residents of Owen Sound. According to Staff Report OP-23-007, presented at the Operations Committee on March 16, 2023, the site has grown in popularity over the years and has received leaf and yard waste from City residents, commercial operators, and sources outside the City.

At the March 27, 2023, City Council meeting, staff brought forward a by-law to amend 'Schedule H' of Waste Management By-law 2005-151 to reduce the size of brush, branches, logs, and stumps to 15cm (6-inches) in diameter and to no longer permit commercial use unless the material is generated from a residential property within City limits. At that meeting, Council also approved the minutes from the March 16, 2023, Operations Committee meeting, which listed interim measures to help reduce misuse and non-City resident use at the site, including:

- Posting clear and visible signage at the entrance and within the site to inform visitors of site access policies and accepted materials, clearly stating the City of Owen Sound resident's usage only.

- Stationing By-law Enforcement/security personnel periodically at the site during operational hours to monitor residential usage and materials brought to the site.
- Sending reminder letters to surrounding municipalities to inform them that the site is for Owen Sound residents only.

The Leaf and Yard Waste Compost site opened to City residents for the 2023 season on Monday, April 10, at 8:30 a.m. Security initially monitored the site for a 6.5-hour timeframe, resulting in a refusal of approximately 53 vehicles. This excludes those who passed the site when they noticed it was being monitored.

Within days of the site opening for the 2023 season, staff from Georgian Bluffs approached City staff to explore potential opportunities for a partnership to allow residents of Georgian Bluffs to use the Leaf and Yard Waste Compost site.

A meeting was held on April 19, 2023, between the City Manager and Georgian Bluffs CAO to discuss potential opportunities.

Analysis:

Based on multiple factors, including observations by site security staff since the site opened in 2023, feedback from Georgian Bluffs' residents, and consideration of the Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) cost-sharing partnerships between Georgian Bluffs and the City (where the proportional rate of Georgian Bluffs residents in attendance is 50 per cent of the City's residents), City staff anticipate that the estimated usage of the site by Georgian Bluffs residents is equal to approximately 20 per cent of all users.

City Council approved the annual operating budget of \$130,000 for the Leaf and Yard Waste Compost Site in the 2023 Operating Budget. Staff are proposing that the 2023 fee for use of the site by Georgian Bluffs' residents be a simple calculation of 20 per cent of \$130,000 or \$26,000 for 2023. A one-time fee is the most administratively easy method to implement this cost recovery until a future business case is brought to Council regarding the Leaf and Yard Waste Compost Site and better data is available regarding the point of origin for those using the site.

City staff are preparing a Usage Agreement in consultation with the City Manager, Director of Public Works and Engineering, the Manager of Legislative Services, and the Supervisor of Environmental Services.

Georgian Bluffs staff have indicated that they will be providing a report to their Committee of the Whole meeting on May 3, recommending the approval of the Usage Agreement and the one-time contribution.

Should City Council approve the recommendations in this report, it is expected that the Township of Georgian Bluff's Council will follow up and approve the Usage Agreement between the City and the Township, including the 2023 fee, at their Council meeting on May 10.

Following approval from both Councils, the compost site is expected to be available for use by Georgian Bluffs' residents starting May 12.

The partnership and associated fee are only intended for the 2023 season. Any future use of the compost site by Georgian Bluffs residents will be evaluated by staff at the City and Township before the 2024 season with a forthcoming report to each municipality's respective Council.

Financial Implications:

City Council approved the annual budget for the Leaf and Yard Waste Compost site of \$130,000 in the 2023 Draft Operating Budget presented to Council on February 6, 2023. City staff's proposed estimate of 20 per cent of site usage by Georgian Bluffs residents equates to a fee assessed to Georgian Bluffs in the amount of \$26,000 for 2023. City staff believe this will correspondingly reduce the operating cost of the Leaf and Yard Compost site equitably levied to City taxpayers.

Communication Strategy:

- Georgian Bluffs will be responsible for notifying their residents.
- City staff will update signage at the Leaf and Yard Waste Compost site to indicate site usage is authorized for Owen Sound and Georgian Bluffs residents.
- City staff will update the Leaf and Yard Waste Compost site webpage, a Media Advisory will be issued, and information will be posted on social media to announce this partnership.

- For more information regarding the Owen Sound Leaf and Yard Waste Compost site, visit [Leaf and Yard Composting - Owen Sound](#).

Consultation:

City Manager, Director of Public Works and Engineering, Manager of Engineering Services, CAO and Director of Community Services of the Township of Georgian Bluffs.

Attachments:

None.

Recommended by:

Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services

Lara Widdifield, Director of Public Works and Engineering

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services at hjennen@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 ext. 3223.