

# SWAP Update

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October 2015



The **2013 Solid Waste Action Plan (SWAP)**, adopted in August 2013, laid out a path for the City to achieve 50% waste diversion by 2015. The SWAP was based on a partnership model and focused on four key commodities: cardboard, clean wood, organic waste, and mixed recycling. Following is a brief review of the status, successes, challenges and next steps of the Solid Waste Action Plan for City Council

## CARDBOARD

Controlling Cardboard in May 2014 was a significant driver to increasing recycling rates. YG Community Development Fund (CDF) funding made possible the purchase of new cardboard bins for service providers, but infrastructure funding may still be requested.



### Successes:

- Both recyclers increased cardboard recycling volumes by 32% combined, even with Raven Recycling closing its public drop-off for a few months.
- Monthly meetings with waste haulers lead to an agreement with the haulers that delayed unsorted load fees on front load bins so that they could improve basic diversion infrastructure (e.g. locks, education, etc.).
- Infrastructure – CDF funded new cardboard bins for the business sector. This relieved infrastructure pressure on haulers.

### Challenges:

- Enforcement – Haulers are very hesitant to enforce unsorted load fees on front load trucks since the material comes from multiple sources. Traditional practice by the haulers has been to absorb those few charges and set rates accordingly. The unsorted load fee is critical to ensuring unwanted materials do not end up in the City's landfill, and thus administration is reviewing ways to intervene before an unsorted load arrives at the Waste Management Facility.

### Next Steps:

- Continue working on enforcement protocols as per the City's agreement with the Haulers.
- Continue providing technical assistance and education to businesses on cardboard recycling.
- Consider the City directly fining businesses for cardboard (and other) contamination.

*FACT: Cardboard represents 53% of the total recycled material in the Territory*

## ORGANICS

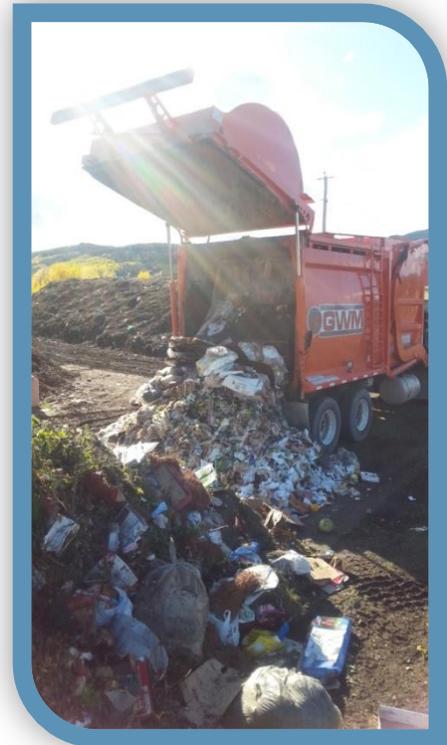
The compost facility is now City operated and is going strong. Organic waste from food service businesses was controlled in June 2015. Commercial collection has almost 70 customers. Feedback has been positive, but there are still logistical improvements required and participation must increase to make the program sustainable and cost neutral.

### Successes:

- Infrastructure investments (thanks Gas Tax and BCF!) have increased capacity and efficiency in order for the City to accept more organics and make top-notch compost.
- Two private haulers are piloting the large volume collection program meaning businesses have two collection options (City cart or larger bin).
- Commercial compost collection has diverted over 80 tonnes this year and is still growing.
- Compost sales are at a record high (\$27,410 as of September).

### Challenges:

- Voluntary participation has peaked; many food service businesses are holding off participating in organics collection until Sept. 2016 enforcement.
- Haulers both report initial costs for commercial collection is too low thus collection fees may need to go up if more participants do not sign on.
- Some businesses require greater frequency of collection.
- Businesses are reluctant to share bins to reduce bin clutter & they find compost bags costly.



*FACT: 5 out of the 6 grocery stores in Whitehorse are now participating in the commercial organics collection (and hopefully soon to be 6 of 6!)*

**Next Steps:**

- Compost Facility is in the process of having the compost product *certified organic*.
- Determine enforcement options for organics.
- Identify ways to increase participation in commercial organics program.

**WOOD WASTE**

Controlling clean wood (CWW) has had less effect due to lack of enforcement measures. A lower tipping fee has been established, but work continues on integrating Waste Plans and separation requirements in all City permitting processes.

**Successes:**

- Visibly seeing less clean wood waste entering the landfill.
- Some contractors are selling off-cuts in cords to those with fire places since CWW is controlled.
- City offering lower tipping fee (\$36/tonne) for CWW.

**Challenges:**

- While there is a space cleared for clean wood waste at the Waste Management Facility, it is not signed and thus rarely used.
- Little advertising was done when controlling clean wood.
- Unsorted waste fees for clean wood are rarely charged due to lack of clarity on enforcement guidelines.
- Waste plans for new construction require a thorough internal review of all inter-related bylaws (eg. Zoning, Building & Plumbing) and their procedures.

*FACT: Clean wood and brush are now chipped (using the City's new grinder) and added to the compost pile as a valuable carbon source.*

## MIXED RECYCLING

Diversion credits were increased to \$75/tonne, the budget was increased to \$150,000/year (up \$50,000), and a Blue Box concept was developed in order to provide a stable contract for recycling services. Funding is still a pressing issue since YG contributions via direct funding or regulations are still unknown.



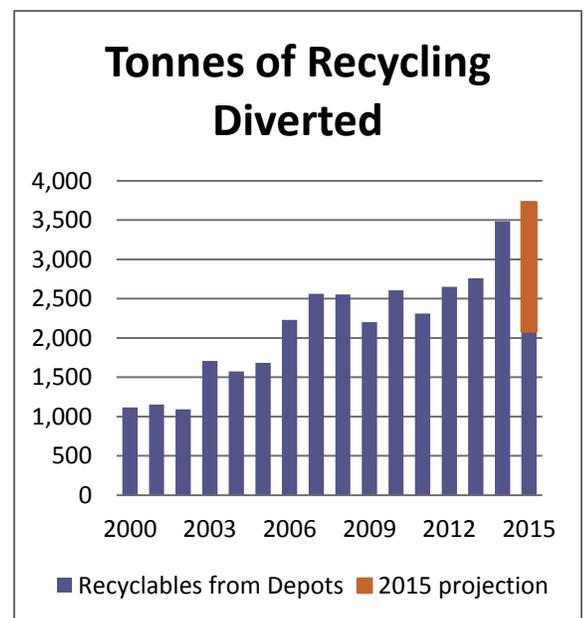
### Successes:

- 52% of survey respondents said they were willing to pay more for a Blue Box. 68% said it would make it easier to recycle. This program will likely increase diversion (slightly), but more importantly, provide a stable funding source for recycling.
- The City was able to fully fund diversion credits from 2014 and bring in quarterly payments to the processors.
- Mixed recycling is now included in the PaperSave collection contract for most City facilities.

*FACT: 2015 has seen the highest recycling volumes ever*

### Challenges:

- Proposed changes to BCR regulations do not follow best practices in stewardship. If YG moves forward with proposed changes (doubling handling/processing fees), the financial situation for mixed recycling, especially non-refundables, will still be unknown.
- Diversion Credits are underfunded by \$64,700 after the first two quarters in 2015. It is estimated that Diversion Credits will be oversubscribed by roughly \$100,000 this year. There is no reserve, and thus processors could end up receiving significantly less than the \$75/tonne allocated.



- The Blue Box only pays for residential recycling when a large majority of recycling is from the commercial sector.
- Commodity prices have been falling recently.

#### Next Steps:

- Work with AYC to develop a Yukon-wide solution for recycling systems and funding.
- Seek Council approval to release Blue Box RFP to the private sector.

## RESIDUAL WASTE

Waste landfilled has been going down as diversion increases. Tipping fees increased in 2015 due to higher than expected contract costs at the Waste Management Facility. Items listed as controlled prior to the SWAP (e.g. metals, HHW etc.) still need considerable enforcement and education.

#### Successes:

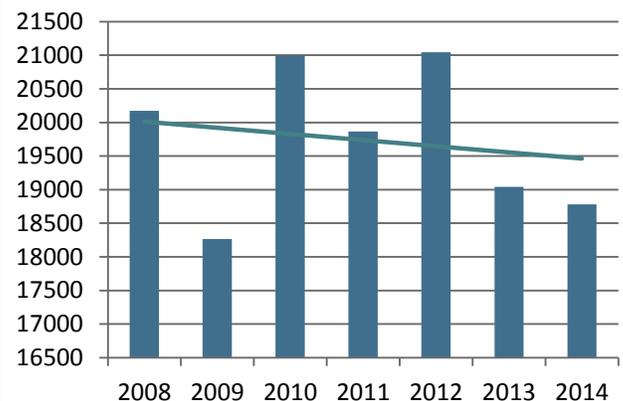
- New Compliance Officer position at the Waste Management Facility is offering better enforcement of the Waste Management Bylaw.
- Waste sorting app and collection schedule app (ReCollect) launched on City website.
- New contracts for the Waste Management Facility have all been awarded and are in place for five years.



#### Challenges:

- Scavenging became a liability risk and was discontinued.
- Assessing and mitigating health and safety risks at the landfill is a continuous struggle.

**Tonnes waste landfilled  
(excluding communities)**



- Illegal dumping of waste continues to be an issue.
- In 2015 recycling metals became an expense instead of revenue due to a drop in metals prices.

#### Next Steps:

- Improve separation of waste & organics in residential curbside collection via "OOPS!" education program.
- Develop an illegal dumping strategy.
- Work with business community to increase waste separation in commercial sector and amend enforcement mechanisms.

## OTHER

In addition to individual waste streams, the SWAP implementation also incorporated and or helped facilitate:

- Yukon Solid Waste Advisory Group
- City Facility Internal Waste Strategy
- Zero Waste Yukon
- Independent Waste Audit
- New waste website within City Website

