

**DATE:** Friday, January 17, 2014

**TO:** Honourable Mayor Bevilacqua and Members of Council

**FROM:** Paul Jankowski, P. Eng.  
Commissioner of Engineering & Public Works

**RE:** **FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – JANUARY 20, 2014  
REPORT 2, ITEM 5, PW-2067-14  
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION – RECYCLING AT DESIGNATED CANADA POST  
SUPER MAILBOXES**

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At the Finance, Administration and Audit Committee meeting of January 15, 2014, the following motion was referred, with a response requested:

**“That staff report further on the proposed pilot project PW-2067-14 (Recycling at Designated Canada Post Super Mailboxes) by referencing additional options to control littering;”**

**Background:**

At its meeting of January 15, 2014, Committee requested that staff review options for dealing with litter at the Canada Post Community Mail Boxes (CMBs).

**Financial impacts of the current additional resource requests are for a pilot project**

The current Additional Resource Request is for \$26,000 in Operating funds to pay for the contracted collection of the materials, and \$146,775 in Capital funds to purchase and install approximately 150 of specially designed recycling containers. These requests, if approved, would allow for the installation of special recycling containers at up to 150 CMB locations, and pay for the collection of the materials.

**City-wide costs of such a program would increase by approximately 30% if Canada Post moves ahead with its plan to eliminate door-to-door delivery of mail in the older urban areas**

As was noted in Communication 6, Report No. 14 of the Finance & Administration Committee, of November 24, 2013, if the program was deemed successful, and it was rolled out at all existing CMBs across the City, the annual operating costs would be approximately \$173,000, with one-time capital costs of approximately \$978,500.

Since that time, Canada Post has announced that it is proposing to phase out the existing door-to-door delivery service in Canada. Canada Post estimates, on a Canada-wide basis, only currently 1/3 of households receive door-to-door delivery. A significant amount of Vaughan's growth has occurred since the introduction of CMBs, and is, therefore, not served by door-to-door delivery. Using both Canada Post's estimate, and comparing rough population numbers from the mid 1980's to now, it is estimated that elimination of Canada Post door-to-door delivery in, would likely result in the installation of another 300+ CMBs. Based on the costs for the pilot project, the annual operating costs of the proposed program would increase by approximately 30% to \$225,000, and the one-time capital costs would rise to \$1.27 million, for a city-wide uniform service.

## **Vaughan's previous initiatives to reduce litter and at Canada Post Mail boxes**

Previous to the submission of the proposal in 2010 for 'Recyclable Paper Collection at Canada Post Super Mail Box Locations', the City engaged in a number of initiatives to reduce litter issues at Canada Post locations. These initiatives, to date, had limited success.

Some of these initiatives included:

- Placement of anti-littering signs (in partnership with Canada Post) at designated CMB locations (ongoing)
- Promotion and education through the City's website, newsletters, and annual waste collection calendar reminding residents of options to properly dispose of unwanted mail and / or to participate in the 'red-dot' program (ongoing)
- Door to door literature in the communities surrounding problematic mail box locations
- Placement of standard curbside blue boxes at designated super mail box locations. These were often vandalized or stolen and contributed to incidences of illegal dumping.
- Working with Canada Post and special interest groups such as local ratepayer associations.

## **Options and Alternatives to Proceeding with the Current ARRs**

Following the discussion at the January 15, 2014 Finance, Administration and Audit Committee meeting, staff have categorized and scoped the following four options as alternatives to the proposed pilot project for Committee's consideration:

### **Option 1: The number of locations and costs of the trial could be reduced**

As noted previously, the current funding would allow for up to 150 locations as part of the suggested pilot program. Previously, when staff were reviewing a newly designed litter container, a total of 25 units were tested, with 5 units placed in each Ward. Staff worked with the local Councillors to identify areas where the containers would be of most benefit.

If a similar approach was to be taken in dealing with testing the benefit of installing special recycling containers at CMBs, i.e. 5 per Ward, then the total capital outlay would be approximately \$24,975, with an estimated annual collection cost of approximately \$4,500. This would bring the total cost of the trial to under \$30,000. Although much smaller in scope, it would still allow staff to evaluate the success of such a program and report back to prior to further consideration.

### **Option 2: The pilot project could be eliminated and the requested \$26,000 Operating funds could be directed to an extensive promotion and education program, along with a feasibility assessment of a potential dedicated anti-litter enforcement program**

As was noted by some Committee members, the placement of recycling containers is an "end of pipe" solution, and does nothing at the "front end" in terms of stopping littering before it starts. Educating residents about the impact of littering on the community, on abutting property owner(s) who have to deal with the unwanted ad mail, and on the City's costs, may be beneficial.

As the issue revolves around littering of unaddressed ad mail, the use of flyers or notices is not recommended. Instead, alternative "paperless" means of reaching out to the residents would be considered. Such means of reaching out could include: "robo-calls" to all residents, e-blasts to residents, Councillors' e-newsletters, and use of the City's web site and social media channels. In addition, the hiring of summer students to provide information to residents about Canada Post's ad mail elimination program (the Red Dot program), and littering in general, could be part of an overall City education program.

Furthermore, it has been suggested that increased and targeted enforcement of the City's anti-littering by-laws may be of assistance in altering the behaviour of those who do not properly dispose of their mail at the problem CMB locations. As part of such an alternate approach, City staff could also be directed to evaluate the feasibility of such a potential targeted enforcement program, with quantified costs and benefits, for further consideration by Council.

**Option 3: The funds for the proposed pilot project could be held in abeyance until the Solid Waste Operational Review is complete, and the results are evaluated and presented to Council**

A component of the Operational Review on Solid Waste involves a questionnaire that asks residents about installing recycling containers at CMBs. As the Operational Review report has not yet been finalized, it may be beneficial to defer the start of such a pilot program and to hold the funding in abeyance until the review has been completed. The results of the Operational Review can then be presented to Council, and Council would have more information to make a decision on going forward with this project.

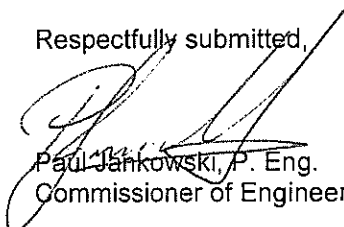
**Option 4: The Additional Resource Requests could be eliminated from the budget**

As the placement of recycling containers at CMBs would be a new level of service, there is always the option to delete the Additional Resource Request from the budget and carry on as usual, with Public Works staff responding to requests for staff to clean up the problem areas. While not sustainable over the long term, it could be done on a short term basis, or until these requests more severely impact the ability of the Roads Division to perform its mandated road maintenance duties. In addition, the associated \$146K in capital requests could be allocated to other projects.

**Conclusion**

Four options to the originally proposed pilot project have been scoped by staff following the discussion at the January 15, 2014 Finance, Administration and Audit Committee meeting. These options have been presented above for Committee's further consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Jankowski", is written over the printed name and title.

Paul Jankowski, P. Eng.

Commissioner of Engineering & Public Works