

DATE: January 5, 2021

FILE: 5380-03

TO: Chair and Members
Comox Strathcona Waste Management Board

Supported by Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

R. Dyson

RE: Request to Waive Fees for Campbell River Residents Yard Waste Drop-Off

Purpose

To respond to the City of Campbell River (the City) request from November 12, 2020, to waive the \$10 minimum charge fee for landfill yard waste drop-off for the citizens of Campbell River.

Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:

THAT the Comox Strathcona Waste Management service continue to support the receipt and processing of yard waste pursuant to Bylaw No.170 being “Solid Waste Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 170, 2011” to fund the cost.

Executive Summary

The City has requested that the Comox Strathcona Waste Management (CSWM) service waive the minimum \$10 fee for residents of Campbell River dropping off small quantities of yard waste at the Campbell River Waste Management Centre (CRWMC). This request was precipitated by a series of events related to the contract between Emterra Group (Emterra) and the City in 2020.

- Since the closure of the City’s free yard waste drop-off site the CSWM service has supported the City by accepting consolidated loads of yard waste picked up by Emterra from curbside collection routes at the CRWMC.
- CRWMC staff have risen to the challenge of supporting the increased amount of vehicle traffic and tonnage of yard waste and grass clippings being managed through this facility in 2020.
- The quantity of yard waste, leaves and grass clippings from the general public has tripled in 2020, resulting in approximately 3,750 additional vehicle visits to the facility compared to the same period in 2019.
- The \$10 charge supports not only the third party costs to the CSWM service , but also pays for staff at the scale and tipping area, and in the equipment to support this diversion activity.
- Encouraging municipal residents to use their curbside yard waste option supports the CSWM initiative for cost effective diversion of combined food and yard waste to the organics facility in 2022.

CSWM staff are not recommending the elimination of the minimum fee for the residents of Campbell River as it would not significantly reduce the barrier for the proper management of this material stream for Campbell River residents, who have free unlimited curbside collection of yard and garden waste nine months of the year; and therefore is not likely to increase diversion.

Prepared by:

Concurrence:

Concurrence:

S. Willie

M. Rutten

Sarah Willie, EIT
Solid Waste Analyst

Jesse Lee, B.Sc.
Manager of Operations

Marc Rutten, P.Eng.
General Manager
Engineering Services

Stakeholder Distribution (Upon Agenda Publication)

City of Campbell River	✓
------------------------	---

Background/Current Situation

The City has requested that the CSWM service waive the minimum \$10 fee for residents of Campbell River dropping off small quantities of yard waste at the CRWMC. This request was precipitated by a series of events related to the contract between Emterra and the City in 2020 and the subsequent closure of the City’s yard waste drop off area on Willis Road.

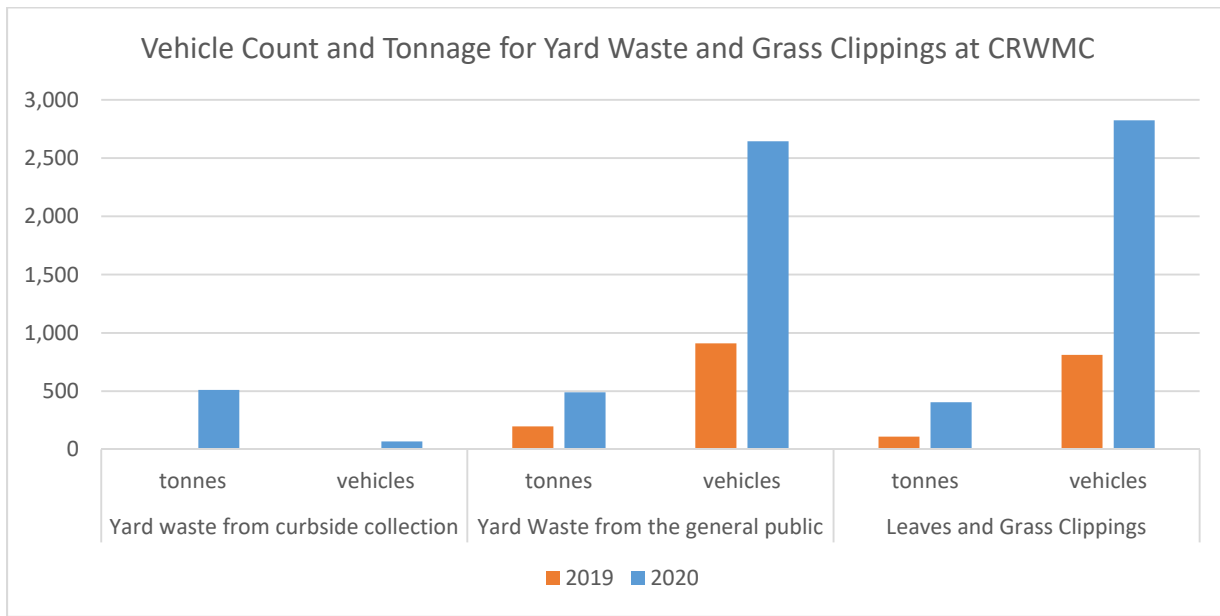
- Through their contractor, Emterra, the City funded free drop off for yard waste for their residents at a depot on Willis Road, which was leased by Emterra from the We Wai Kai Nation.
- Emterra was paid for this service as part of their solid waste contract, which included providing a suitable yard waste drop-off site. The facility was open year round Friday to Tuesday, from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.
- This facility was well used by Campbell River residents, rural residents and small businesses. In 2018, Emterra reported to the City that they accepted an estimated 5,886 tonnes of material.
- Yard waste from the Willis Road depot was consolidated and hauled to a private facility for processing.
- Emterra’s lease expired September 15, 2020 and they ceased accepting materials at the end of July.
- City staff have worked with Emterra to locate an alternate site within the City, including City properties. Unfortunately, none of the available properties met the combined requirements for zoning, size and suitable public access.
- Residents of the City pay for weekly curbside pick-up of unlimited amounts of yard waste seasonally, typically available from March until November.

Since the closure of the free yard waste drop-off site the CSWM service has collaborated with the City to accept their consolidated loads of yard waste picked up by Emterra from curbside collection routes, and drop them off at the CRWMC. The material is then further handled, loaded, and hauled to Pacific Wood Waste in the Comox Valley for processing. This material is accepted at the tipping fee rate for yard and garden waste of \$65 per tonne.

The CRWMC has also seen an increase in the amount of small vehicle traffic and tonnage of yard waste and grass clippings being managed through this facility in 2020. So far in 2020, tonnes of yard waste, leaves and grass clippings from the general public have tripled, resulting in approximately 3,750 additional vehicle visits to the facility compared to the same period in 2019. Yard and garden waste is accepted at \$65 per tonne, or a minimum of \$10 for loads smaller than approximately 150 kg; leaves and grass clippings are accepted at no charge.

The fee of \$10 is a combination of the previous site access fee (\$4) and the minimum charge (\$6), and was consolidated in July 2020 for simplicity. For a resident bringing less than approximately 150 kg of yard waste, this \$10 supports not only the third party costs, but also pays for staff at the scale and tipping area, and in the equipment to support this diversion activity.

The tipping fee for yard and garden waste of \$65 per tonne has been set to encourage diversion of this material from municipal solid waste, which is set at \$140 per tonne, but was also established at a rate that fairly covers the cost of managing this material stream.



The CSWM service encourages the diversion of small branches, tree clippings and other yard waste by Campbell River residents from the landfill, and is supporting the City by providing a local receiving facility for their curbside collection program. Encouraging residents to use the unlimited curbside collection program, rather than make individual trips to the CRWMC results in the most cost effective and convenient service for residents, the City and the CSWM service. Five-hundred tonnes of yard waste was delivered by just 68 curbside truck loads; in 2020 that same 500 tonnes arrived at the CRWMC in over 2,600 individual small haul residential trips.

CSWM staff are not recommending the elimination of the minimum fee for the residents of Campbell River as it:

- Would result in an administrative burden and potentially create conflicts for CRWMC staff to police the origin of materials;
- Would result in a further increase of small vehicle traffic to the CRWMC, putting a burden on the facility and the small available footprint for diversion;
- Would require the material management costs for this stream to be funded through alternative means, possibly subsidized by other facility users; and
- Is not going to significantly reduce the barrier for the proper management of this material stream for Campbell River residents who have free unlimited curbside collection of yard and garden waste nine months of the year; and therefore is not likely to increase diversion.

The City will be moving to year round curbside collection for yard waste and food scraps when the regional organics facility will be opened, encouraging municipal residents to use their curbside yard waste option supports the CSWM initiative for cost effective diversion of combined food and yard waste to the organics facility in 2022.

Policy Analysis

No CSWM Board policy exists for this topic.

Options

The CSWM Board has the following options for consideration:

1. Maintain the minimum charge of \$10 for the acceptance of yard waste as listed in Bylaw No.170 being “Solid Waste Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 170, 2011” for Campbell River residents to fund the cost of the management of this material stream.
2. Proceed with waiving the \$10 fee for landfill yard waste drop off for the City of Campbell River as per their November 12, 2020 letter.

The CSWM service supports the City’s curbside yard waste program by accepting consolidated loads at the CRWMC plus the increased small vehicle traffic that has occurred since closure of the City’s drop off depot. The \$10 min charge supports staff costs at the facility as well as the third party processing costs for these materials. If the City wishes to further investigate waiving the \$10 minimum charge, further financial analysis should first be completed to present the full financial impact. As such, only Option 1 above is recommended.

Financial Factors

Unlike scrap metal, yard and garden waste does not generate revenue from its sale; the CSWM service pays to have this material managed offsite. The CSWM service also pays the CRWMC contractor, Berry & Vale Contracting Ltd, to manage these materials, and to haul the material to Pacific Wood Waste. The 2021-2025 Financial Plan has budgeted \$65,000 in processing fees for 2021 for yard waste from the CRWMC.

Legal Factors

The elimination of the minimum fee for the residents of Campbell River could result in an unfair business advantage to small landscaping companies based within City limits, relative to their rural competitors.

Intergovernmental Factors

The City of Campbell River is challenged to meet the service level expectations of their residents for a free yard waste depot, and as such have made this request to the CSWM. While CSWM supports the City’s desire to continue to provide their residents free yard waste drop off, there are financial and operations concerns for the CSWM service that outweigh the potential increase in diversion.

If the CSWM were to waive the minimum fee for yard waste for Campbell River residents, consideration would need to be given to waiving the fee for all small volume users at both the CRWMC and the CVWMC facilities. There are operational and financial consequences to this larger policy change that would need to be further explored prior to implementation. However, this is not the recommended option as it would encourage additional unnecessary loads from residents with curbside yard waste collection. This could eroding the effectiveness of curbside diversion of yard waste when the CSWM and municipal partners will soon be asking residents to divert their combined food scraps and yard waste in their curbside bins.

Interdepartmental Involvement

This report was developed by the Engineering Services with support of Financial Services.

Citizen/Public Relations

There are no public relations planned related to this report.

Attachments: Appendix A – “City of Campbell River correspondence dated November 12, 2020 regarding a request that the \$10 fee for landfill yard waste drop off be waived”



City of Campbell River
From the Office of the Mayor

12 November, 2020

Director Arzeena Hamir, Co-Chair
Councillor Michele Babchuk, Co-Chair
Comox Strathcona Waste Management Board
770 Hamston Avenue
Courtenay, BC V9N 0G8

Dear Director Hamir and Councillor Babchuk:

Re: Request to waive fees for landfill yard waste drop off.

At their November 2 meeting, City of Campbell River Council resolved,

"That the City send a letter to the Comox Strathcona Waste Management Board requesting that the \$10 fee for landfill yard waste drop off, be waived."

The City offered a free yard waste drop off service until the end of July 2020, when the Contractor's (Emterra) lease for the site on Willis Road terminated. The property owner advised Emterra that the lease for the yard waste drop off site would not be renewed.

City staff have worked with Emterra to source an alternate site within the City, including City properties. Unfortunately, none of the available properties meet the combined requirements for zoning, size and suitable public access.

With the objective of continuing to promote yard waste diversion, which will be required for the future organics program and waste diversion in the landfill space, Council wishes to continue to provide the basic service (site access) at no additional cost for the residents. We appreciate that grass clippings and leaves can be dropped off free of charge at the landfill, and ask that the \$10 fee for small branches and tree clippings also be waived for the citizens of Campbell River.

Yours sincerely,


Andy Adams
Mayor