

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Committee of the Whole set to review Organics Processing Facility and Materials Management Facility siting report

Midhurst/ March 1, 2016 – During its next scheduled meeting on Tuesday, March 8, 2016, County of Simcoe Committee of the Whole will review a report which outlines the recommendation for the preferred site for the proposed Organics Processing Facility (OPF) and Materials Management Facility (MMF). The report, Item CCW 16-054, was issued today in the County of Simcoe’s Committee of the Whole Agenda.

The staff report includes the following recommendation: THAT development of the Organics Processing Facility (OPF) and Materials Management Facility (MMF) proceed with consideration that both facilities be located on a single site, located at 2976 Horseshoe Valley Road West, Springwater.

The recommendation from Committee of the Whole will require ratification by County Council on March 22, 2016. Additional public information sessions on the report will occur on April 19th at 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. at the Simcoe County Museum.

“Our staff and consultants evaluated more than 500 sites, held many consultation meetings and reviewed more than 200 comments from the public and stakeholders to ultimately determine the best possible site for this facility,” said Warden Gerry Marshall. “Given the comprehensive process and Environmental Assessment methodology used in the evaluation, I am confident in our consultant’s recommendation that the Horseshoe Valley Road site is the best location for a co-located facility. As a Council, we will evaluate the facts presented to us and make a decision that supports our long-term objectives to securely manage our own transfer and processing costs and find solutions to meet our own goals of diverting 77 per cent of waste generated in Simcoe County by 2030.”

The Preferred Site and Process

Site C136, located at 2976 Horseshoe Valley Road West, Springwater, ranked first for all three options – an OPF, MMF and a co-located facility. Industry-leading consultants evaluated 502 sites in three screening phases. Although not required for these projects, Environmental Assessment methodology and criteria was applied to the evaluation. Extensive public, Aboriginal and stakeholder consultation supported the evaluation process.

Primary Advantages of siting a co-located OPF and MMF on this site

Provides transportation efficiencies

- As a classified “highway” there will be minimal impacts to current traffic volumes on Horseshoe Valley Road West
 - Estimated maximum impact of 210 vehicles generated by a co-located facility (at the 30-year design capacity) would only result in a 6.2 per cent increase in vehicles on Horseshoe Valley Road West
 - Horseshoe Valley Road is designed to accommodate 1,800 vehicles/hour
- Close and convenient access to other major highways and transportation networks

Offers the most usable space

- The footprint of the facility would only utilize approximately 5 per cent of the property (the site is approximately 207 acres, comparatively, the footprint of a co-located facility is approximately 11 acres)
- Large usable space accommodates a co-located facility and allows for design and operational flexibility, as well as potential expansion in the future

Has good separation distance from nearby houses

- All neighbouring houses/businesses have the potential to be more than 500 meters (0.5 km) away from the facility. This mitigates potential impacts such as odours, noise, and provides visual screening of the facility for nearby neighbours through existing vegetation and trees.

Scored high among all environmental criteria used to evaluate the 502 sites

- Given large usable space on this site, the facility footprint will be designed and placed in a location that avoids environmental impacts to groundwater and surface water features
- There are no net effects to Class 1-3 Agricultural Lands on this site
- Preserving forested areas on the site is important as they act as visual screening for the neighbouring landowners. Compensation for the forested areas cleared will be considered in consultation with neighbouring landowners and the public. Replanting of trees on a 1:1 ratio or higher may be considered, for example.

Provides cost savings and economic benefits

- Allows for a co-located facility which would enable shared capital and operating costs
- As existing County asset, there are property acquisition savings
- With good usable space and conditions and limited constraints at this site, there are no increased costs for design
- Central proximity of this site provides close and convenient access to major highways has the potential for cost efficiencies associated with transportation from feedstock sources and transportation to markets and end users

Item CCW 16-054, also recommends: THAT further engineering studies and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the preferred site be initiated to support procurement of technology and planning and environmental approvals. These studies will help determine if further mitigation efforts are required.

What is an OPF and MMF

An Organics Processing Facility (OPF) is a location where organics (green bin material, potentially materials such as leaf and yard waste, pet waste and diapers) are processed and converted into other valuable products, such as compost or fertilizer. The County currently hauls its materials to a processing facility in Hamilton. A Materials Management Facility (MMF) is a location for consolidation and transfer of waste from multiple collection vehicles for more economical shipment to other disposal or processing locations. The County is currently under contract with a facility based in Barrie, Ontario.

Next Steps

County Council will review the recommended preferred site and provide direction, which could include proceeding with engineering and environmental studies on the preferred site later this spring. The County will host two public information sessions on April 19 at the Simcoe County Museum at 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. With Council direction, discussions are set to begin on the procurement process and Request for Proposal (RFP) for technology, anticipated to be released in fall 2016. The opportunity for County Council to provide full approvals for development of this facility is scheduled to occur in 2017 with results of the RFP and a business case.

Additional Information

Details about the proposed facilities including siting methodology, anticipated costs, completed meetings and reports can be found at www.simcoe.ca/opf and www.simcoe.ca/mmf. The agenda and staff report can be found at www.simcoe.ca/dpt/clk/amr.

The County of Simcoe is composed of sixteen member municipalities and provides crucial public services to County residents in addition to providing paramedic and social services to the separated cities of Barrie and Orillia. Visit our website at simcoe.ca.

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