



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 12.1.2
Environment & Sustainability Committee
November 2, 2017

TO: Chair and Members of Environment & Sustainability Committee

Original signed

SUBMITTED BY:

Matthew Keliher, Acting Director, Transportation & Public Works

DATE: September 12, 2017

SUBJECT: **Cigarette Butt Disposal and Recycling**

ORIGIN

Environment & Sustainability Committee (ESSC) motion on June 8, 2017, "That the ESSC request a staff report to consider the implementation of a Pilot Program to recycle/dispose discarded cigarette butts and communicate with Cities of Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver who have implemented this program".

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Part IV of Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, Clause 79(1) provides that "Council may expend money required by the municipality for collecting, removing, managing and disposing of solid waste"

Part XIII of the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, Clause 335 provides that "Council may make by-laws respecting solid waste, including, but not limited to:

- (b) regulating the disposal, collection and removal of solid waste;
- (c) regulating the use of containers for solid waste;
- (g) requiring the separation of solid waste;
- (i) requiring compliance with a waste resource diversion strategy.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Environment & Sustainability Committee:

1. Not approve a cigarette butt recycling pilot program be implemented;
2. Direct Solid Waste staff to consult and work with internal as well as external stakeholders to develop and lead a litter and illegal dumping prevention and education campaign to be launched in 2018.

BACKGROUND

Cigarette butts when not properly disposed of are a form of litter. Litter is an ongoing issue in many municipalities in Nova Scotia and has been discussed at Halifax Regional Council.

The last litter prevention and education campaign was launched by HRM in 2006. There was a three-pronged approach to this litter prevention and education campaign consisting of 1) Public education and advertising; 2) Community Clean-ups and 3) Enforcement. This campaign was supported by HRM departments including Transportation & Public Works, Real Property & Asset Management, HRM Police and the RCMP, Capital District, By-law Enforcement, Corporate Communications and Metro Transit. Several non-profit organizations including Clean Nova Scotia, RRFB and Adopt-a-Highway also played a role in ensuring the success of this campaign.

Communication objectives were to increase awareness of the issue of litter, including the financial and environmental repercussions and to make the act of littering from one's vehicle or person, socially unacceptable in HRM. Police carried the litter message in the form of literature distribution, which included brochures that promoted the campaign message of "Can You Afford to Litter?" listing the fine amount and the environmental impact of littering on HRM communities. These were distributed by police to the community policing offices and district locales throughout HRM. Literature was available during Police Week at the police booth and exhibition. The police were represented by uniformed officers attending the launch of the campaign again to raise the public profile.

The official campaign launch occurred on April 5, 2006, during a press conference at city hall with the Mayor, councillors and HRM partners such as RRFB, Clean Nova Scotia, Adopt-a-Highway, the Nova Scotia Department of Environment & Labour, HRM Police/RCMP, and TPW. This event included an overview of the issue of litter, the new education and awareness campaign and public recognition of a local resident for environmental stewardship with respect to litter clean up.

Public education and awareness program involved coordination of a city-wide litter clean up. The 20-Minute Makeover was modeled after a similar event in the city of Toronto. It was a twenty minute clean up targeted at businesses, schools and residents, encouraging them to take twenty minutes out of their day to clean up litter around their work, school or home. The event was held during Environment Week. Participation in the event was over 7200 people, representing members of the local business improvement districts, elementary, junior high and high schools and area residents.

Media coverage of the new campaign and the issue of litter helped to increase the profile of litter. Local residents and businesses were also targeted through articles in community newsletters, television and transit advertising throughout April and returned in early June to highlight the issue during Environment Week.

DISCUSSION

TerraCycle Cigarette Butt Recycling Program

TerraCycle, a New York based Company, provides recycling solutions for waste products and packaging that are difficult to recycle. Funding is provided by product manufacturers to enable TerraCycle to offer recovery and recycling services. Imperial Tobacco funds the TerraCycle cigarette butt recycling program.

Individuals, groups and municipalities sign up to participate in the program and may purchase cigarette receptacles to facilitate collection. TerraCycle cigarette butt stations collection includes double bagging with materials being boxed for shipment to consolidation centres and then to processing sites.

Figure 1: Collection from butt station receptacles in municipal program



TerraCycle offers an initial assessment to determine who will be collecting the waste and sending it to their facilities. Arrangements for collection vary with municipal partnerships, however most are delivered by local Business Improvement Districts using existing litter cleanup activities to empty these receptacles. TerraCycle also offers incentives based on weights measured of butts collected with \$1.00/lb of waste, for shipments over 3lbs. Points or cash are provided to the non-profit organization or school of your choice.

Cigarette butt waste is shipped to TerraCycle consolidation sites and then to a processing facility in Pennsylvania to separate filters, paper and plastic components. TerraCycle reports plastic is re-purposed into plastic pallets and tobacco and paper is composted. Imperial Tobacco pays for all the material processing and is a part of its sustainability mission statement.

Jurisdictional Review - Communication with other Cities

Vancouver

In November 2013, the City of Vancouver was first to launch a pilot program with TerraCycle to recycle cigarette waste. The pilot program included purchase and installation of 100 receptacles in local business improvement districts (BID's). The city purchased the receptacles from TerraCycle at a cost of \$100/unit, with installation and collection at no cost to the city. TerraCycle arranged for local non-profit litter clean up crews to empty bins. The city conducted a survey before and after bins were installed over the course of two months and found 30% reduction in litter, where otherwise the butts would have been placed on the ground. The bins have helped but not fixed the problem.

In Vancouver, the local Health Authority expressed concern of affiliation with the tobacco industry funding the TerraCycle cigarette butt recycling program. The affiliation with a cigarette manufacturer funding recycling was not supported by the public and Health Authority. Social media response was quick to criticize the city as it was perceived as promoting smoking to support recovery and recycling of butts for smokers.

As a result, the city has not expanded the pilot further. Instead they have removed some units and adjusted locations of other units to be in compliance with city health by-law which requires a six metre set back from doorways, buildings and customer service areas. Further, the city was forced to take full ownership of program costs.

The city estimates 30 lb's/month are collected and sent to TerraCycle for recycling. Ongoing operational costs for collection of materials are funded by a grant program integrated with already existing pick up of litter. Municipal crews are responsible for replacing damaged bins and re-attaching new bins.

Toronto

City of Toronto 's 9,000 multi-stream street furniture litter bins include cigarette butt stations affixed to sides of existing litter bins. The butts are collected with regular garbage for landfill disposal. TerraCycle approached the city to establish a pilot program for cigarette butt recycling. The city did not agree to participate expressing worker health and safety concerns handling nicotine and combustible materials being consolidated in a plastic bag posed risks for fire, health and worker safety.

The Toronto Business Improvement Areas (BIA's) took on the program and partnered with TerraCycle to install the pole mounted collection receptacles. In Toronto BIA's are responsible for litter on the business street frontage. Five BIA's installed 60 receptacles to capture this litter product. Receptacles are purchased from TerraCycle or can be acquired through other litter abatement programs such as "Keep America Beautiful". Butts are collected by BIA maintenance staff volunteers and at risk residents. Two of the five BIA's partner with TerraCycle to ship butts for recycling, the remaining BIA's collect butts with garbage.

In a June 2017 report, the program results revealed issues with people placing garbage in the receptacles and the risk of the receptacles catching fire when cigarettes are not extinguished. Participating BIA's maintenance staff empty weekly and manage logistics for bags and box shipments to TerraCycle. While BIA's report receptacles are used, the public complained that the BIA promoted smoking by participating in the recycling program.

Current litter reduction strategies are lead by Toronto TPW's department. Initiatives include interdivisional collaboration on focussed communications and joint initiatives such as inclusion of litter reduction messages on smoking by-law literature, decals on litter bins, community clean up events, communication and public education to focus on strategies to reduce litter and enforcement of littering by-law.

Montreal

In June 2016, the Montreal's environmental society for action, education and awareness, "SAESEM" partnered with the City of Montreal to initiate a pilot project for cigarette butt collection and recycling to reduce street litter. There are 200 "ashtrays" (butt receptacles) currently installed. SAESEM provides resources for the collection and all program logistics. Butts are collected and shipped to TerraCycle.

HRM Current Cigarette Butt Disposal Infrastructure & Operations

HRM municipal operations does not provide infrastructure for cigarette butt recycling. Litter receptacles with attached butt stations are collected with garbage in the street right of way. Currently municipal operations crews clean up butts with sidewalk sweepers, which run 24 hours cleaning litter from sidewalks. In addition, crews service, downtown Halifax and Dartmouth in cooperation with BID's collecting butts with litter. Road operations current annual service and maintenance costs \$479.00 per litter receptacle.

The Nova Scotia (NS) Smoke Free Places Act and Regulations (as amended in 2006) restricts smoking and does not permit placement of receptacles for tobacco ashes or cigarette butts. Specifically, Section 9(1) reads "No employer or manager shall permit any ashtrays in any place at any time when smoking is prohibited in that place" Ashtrays are defined as "any receptacle" for tobacco ashes or cigar or cigarette butts, whether originally designed for that purpose or not. Prohibited outdoor locations include the outdoor

area of a restaurant or a place licensed to serve alcoholic beverages if that area is used for the serving or consumption of food or beverages, grounds of a school, an outdoor area within four metres of an intake for a building ventilation system, an open window of a place of employment or an entrance to a place of employment. Based on the Act, placement of cigarette butt recycling stations within the capital district would be challenging and perhaps not achievable.

A Litter Prevention Campaign

Media and public response to litter awareness campaigns, as occurred in 2006 in HRM are positive. These campaigns generate discussion about litter and kept the media spotlight on the issue. A Litter Prevention Campaign is a first step of enhancing and maintaining public awareness of the implication and consequences of littering. A campaign will involve collaboration with multiple stakeholders including various HRM departments, the Province of NS, non-profit and community organizations as well as BID's to initiate a re-newed focus on litter reduction strategies. With recent Council discussions on litter and illegal dumping, the campaign can include ways to minimize improperly placed cigarette as well as unsightly waste dumping.

Although litter and illegal dumping is under the jurisdiction of the Province, Halifax Solid Waste will take the initiative and work with internal business units, corporate communications and marketing to develop an education and awareness campaign. Solid Waste will also be reaching out to other business agencies to develop partnerships. This campaign is expected to launch in Spring/Summer 2018.

Basis for Recommendation

1. Smoke Free Places Act prohibits installing cigarette butt receptacles, even for recycling in many areas within the capital district where these stations would be best suited to be deployed.
2. Cigarette butt concerns are primarily related to litter, not the lack of recyclability infrastructure.
3. A communications and education campaign can be developed and launched by Solid Waste staff to promote proper disposal.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Estimated costs to support delivery of an education and awareness campaign is \$30,000 and would be funded by the operating budget in Cost Center R333 (C&E Program HRM).

RISK CONSIDERATION

The risks associated with this recommendation are low to nil.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The delivery of a litter reduction campaign will involve engaging with community partners in the design and delivery of this initiative.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of a litter reduction and awareness campaign is intended to bring attention to environmental implications of littering.

ALTERNATIVES

ESSC could make a formal request to the Province of Nova Scotia to amend the Smoke Free Places Act to permit the installation of cigarette butt recycling receptacles closer to high pedestrian traffic.

ESSC could request that staff research locations within the Region which conform to the Smoke Free Places Act requirements and return to ESSC with possible locations for cigarette butt recycling receptacles.

ATTACHMENTS

None

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Laurie Lewis, Program Manger-Policy & Outreach, 902.490.7176
