

Staff Report

Presented By: Matt Prentice, Director of Operations
Meeting Date: March 9, 2026
Subject: Residential Source Separated Organics
Attachment(s): Feasibility Study – Management of Residential Source Separated Organics

Recommendation

That Council direct staff to continue next step investigations related to Residential Source Separated Organics (SSO).

Report Summary

The proposed Source Separated Organics (SSO) Program is intended to reduce landfilled waste and extend the lifespan of the Town's landfill. The SSO report findings will be integrated into the Waste Management Master Plan and Financial Plan and will present associated costs and a phased implementation strategy in the Town's 2027 Business Plan for Council's consideration. This phased approach includes initiating contracted SSO services in 2027, assessing opportunities for municipal partnerships within five years, and reviewing long-term treatment and collection options following the landfill upgrade.

Background/Analysis

Provincial Requirements & Diversion Benefits

- The Town of Saugeen Shores is expected to fall under the Provincial obligation for Source Separated Organics (SSO) collection within the next 5–10 years due to population growth and evolving policy pressures.
- Implementing SSO sooner rather than later could significantly increase diversion rates, reducing landfilled waste by an estimated 10–20%.
- This reduction could extend the landfill's remaining life by 1–2 years, providing valuable time to plan, fund, and construct the landfill optimization project while also lowering long-term costs by preserving landfill capacity post-upgrade.

Alternatives for SSO Collection

The report evaluated several collection area options for curbside SSO:

1. Urban + Rural – entire Saugeen Shores
2. Urban Only – Port Elgin and Southampton
3. Urban 5 – shared services with five urban centres
4. Urban 6 – shared services with six urban centres

Recommended Approach

- The report recommends beginning with Option 2 – Urban Areas Only, as 85% of the population lives within 8.5% of the land area, meaning the Town can capture most organics with the shortest and most cost-efficient route.
- Importantly, per-household costs (\$73 per stop per year) are comparable across all four alternatives, supporting future expansion without major cost increases.

Implementation Considerations

- Establishing the feasibility of in-house SSO collection and treatment and/or forming municipal partnerships will take time.
- Integrating SSO into the landfill optimization process would also introduce delays in the landfill approval process.
- For these reasons, it is recommended to proceed with the phased approach outlined in the Report Summary.

Transfer Station Findings

- Section 8 of the report examined the potential benefits of a transfer station.
- The analysis found no net benefit, so a transfer station is not included in the preferred alternative.

Timing & Next Steps

- The Town's garbage collection contract with BASWR expires September 30, 2027.
- Phase 1 of the SSO program—coordinated SSO and garbage collection—is intended to begin after this date under a new contract.
- It is the intent to include the proposed program, into the Waste Management Master Plan. Results of market requests for proposals for SSO collection, transportation, and processing will be included in the 2027 Business Plan for Council consideration.
- Given the importance of diversion, it is recommended to expedite the SSO program in parallel with completing the Waste Management Master Plan and Financial Plan.

Linkages

- Strategic Plan Alignment: Pillar 1: Meeting the Needs of a Growing Community
- Business Plan Alignment: Operations Division Highlight

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding

No cost or revenue are associated with this report.

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