

OTTAWA VALLEY WASTE RECOVERY CENTRE



PEMBROKE DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

PDDC MEMBER SURVEY
WASTE & RECYCLING

APRIL 2011
FINAL REPORT
ELIZABETH GRAHAM, OVWRC COMMUNICATIONS SUPERVISOR

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Members of the Pembroke Downtown Development Commission have access to collection programs for waste and recycling removal at their businesses. Businesses within the area defined by the PDDC are the only businesses in the City of Pembroke who can access curbside collection of recycling, green carts, and waste through the Municipal Program. At least 51 PDDC businesses are accessing curbside collection for the removal of one or more waste materials. The remainder are utilizing local commercial haulers. To help ensure proper disposal of waste material and to increase waste diversion from landfill additional education outreach to the business and residential community and increased Public Space Recycling opportunities within the Downtown Core must be implemented.

PURPOSE

A survey of businesses within the area defined by the Pembroke Downtown Development Commission (PDDC) was undertaken by the Ottawa Valley Waste Recovery Centre (OVWRC) to:

- Assess the current collection services provided by the City of Pembroke and/or local haulers.
- Provide Downtown business/building owners and tenants the opportunity to offer feedback on what services can be provided to assist in decreasing the amount of waste sent to landfill.
- Enable the Centre to provide individual businesses/buildings with recommendations on how to improve existing programs.

DATA COLLECTION

The majority of businesses were contacted in person by Elizabeth Graham, OVWRC's Communications Supervisor during December 2010 to March 2011. Every effort was made to talk to the business or building owner; however, when this was not possible information was obtained from an available employee. Businesses were also contacted via e-mail and telephone and were given the opportunity to provide responses via an electronic survey on Survey Monkey. A copy of the electronic survey is included in Appendix A. Visual observations and feedback were also obtained from Tomlinson Environmental Services; the municipal curbside collection contractor for Downtown and Priceless Maintenance, the contractor responsible for emptying Public Space Recycling/Waste Bins for the PDDC.

Businesses were asked to provide information on the following:

- General Business/Building Information
- Type of Waste Material Generated and Current Handling Methods
- Current Waste Services – Collection Methods
- Waste Management Challenges
- What Tools/Information Would Help Businesses Recycle More

General discussion also took place around the benefits of a business recognition program for those who excel at waste diversion, residential recycling Downtown and the interest for an organics collection (green cart) program.

RESULTS

In total, 86 businesses provided responses. There are approximately 150 PDDC members within 107 buildings Downtown. Most often, waste and recycling are handled the same way by businesses within the same building. Therefore, 86 responses is a good representative sample of how waste is managed within the 107 buildings Downtown.

Waste Material Generated and Current Handling Methods

Downtown businesses are generating typical commercial wastes. The quantity of each waste stream varies depending on the business type (i.e. offices generate significant amounts of paper recyclables). The survey focused on material generated within the following waste streams: Garbage, Cardboard, Paper (newsprint, computer paper), Containers (plastic, glass, metal) and Organics. Other material generated by businesses that was often discussed during the survey was hazardous and electronic waste.

The majority of businesses are storing material inside their building or in sheds/areas outside until pick-up. Based on visual observations, cardboard makes up the majority of the waste streams by volume. Businesses are folding cardboard boxes and placing them inside one another for collection. Recyclables tend to be placed in clear, plastic bags and garbage in black/green plastic garbage bags. Very few blue boxes or yellow bins are used and even fewer green carts are used. Of those used, it is assumed these containers belong to residents. Larger offices and banks have contracts for managing shredded paper. A service provider shreds the large amounts of confidential files and removes them from the premises for disposal/recycling.



Figure 1: Typical set-out of waste and container recyclables at businesses Downtown.

Current Waste Services - Collection Methods

The following table provides a summary of the responses related to Current Waste Services Collection Methods:

Table 1: Current Waste Services Collection Methods

Collection Method	Total Number of Businesses Using Collection Method
Curbside Garbage	51
Curbside Paper	42
Curbside Containers	37
Curbside Organics	1
Curbside Cardboard	48
Take Material Home/Residential Collection (all materials)	14
OVWRC Self-Haul	5
Garbage - Front End Bin – Commercial Hauler	7
Paper/Cardboard - Front End Bin – Commercial Hauler	4
Garbage – Commercial Contractor Other*	10
Containers – Commercial Contractor Other	3
Cardboard – Commercial Contractor Other	6
Cleaning Contractor	11

*Commercial Contractor Other Examples: Roll-Off Bin, Compactor, Store in shed and hauler loads material in truck by hand

The above results show that most businesses are using a combination of methods to dispose of material. For example, some businesses were utilizing curbside collection for cardboard and have a commercial hauler for garbage. Their method of waste disposal depends on the quantities generated.

Of the 86 businesses surveyed 41 were using curbside collection *only* to handle *all* their waste streams.

Waste Management Challenges

There was a wide range of responses gathered for this portion of the survey. The majority of businesses were pleased with the current waste management system they had in place. The methods of storage and collection have been established for many years by a lot of businesses and they have in place a system that suits their individual needs.

In general; challenges and concerns that were expressed during the survey included:

- *Tuesday Collection Day* – material is generally set-out Monday night for collection; many businesses are closed on Monday, especially with Monday statutory holidays.
- *Litter/Blowing of Material* – material that is set-out in the evenings for collection is often scattered and can result in litter. Business owners often find bins toppled over or even missing (this would explain the prevalent use of clear, plastic bags). Larger retail businesses Downtown receiving inventory often have large, Styrofoam packaging that is light and easily blown away.
- *Illegal Disposal* – 4 businesses had experienced significant illegal disposal many times and have had to put measures in to discourage it (i.e. locking bins). While this seems like a small amount, this is a relatively common experience for commercial businesses and many have probably dealt with it at least once.
- *Hazardous and/or Electronic Waste* – 8 businesses inquired about their options for disposal of electronic waste and small amounts of hazardous waste. Handling this material is a challenge for businesses as it can be cost prohibitive and/or businesses are unsure what their options for disposal are.
- *Unaware of Services Available* – Some businesses accessing curbside collection were only, for example, placing cardboard out for collection. They were surprised to learn that there may be options for disposal of additional materials thru curbside collection such as paper and container recyclables.

Tools/Information That Would Help Businesses Recycle More

The following table provides a summary of the responses for Tools/Information that would assist businesses to recycle or divert more waste. They are discussed in detail under Recommendations.

Table 2: Summary of tools/information that would help businesses recycle more

Tool/Information	Total Number of Businesses Suggesting The Tool/Information
Electronics Drop-Off	2
Wednesday Collection	3
Green Cart Collection	8
Additional Public Garbage/Recycling Bins	3
Additional Information on Waste Diversion	2
More Frequent Pick-Up	2
Containers (for residential unit)	1

Other Discussions/Observations

- *Business Recognition Program* - Discussions took place with some businesses regarding the implementation of some sort of recognition program for businesses that excel at waste diversion. It was felt this would not be useful so it is not considered further in this report.
- *Public Space Recycling* - There are numerous recycling/waste receptacles along the Downtown streets which provide excellent opportunities for visitors, shoppers, etc. to recycle. The bins are a complete unit with two separate bins inside; one for garbage, one for recycling. There is only text on these bins to describe what is acceptable; no pictures or signage. Observations by Priceless Maintenance show there is little recycling occurring within these bins. The recycling that is captured in these bins is stored and placed out for curbside collection.
- *Residential Recycling* - It appears there is limited residential recycling happening and some businesses confirmed this through their own visual assessments. There are many apartment units within the Downtown that could be accessing curbside collection.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the above findings various recommendations are provided. From the survey responses three focus areas will be discussed. They include Promotion and Education, Collection and Public Space Recycling. OVWRC is primarily responsible for the promotion and education to users of the local waste and recycling programs; City of Pembroke is responsible for the curbside collection contract and the PDDC is responsible for the public space recycling bins throughout the Downtown.

A summary table of recommendations is provided on page 7. A summary of waste disposal options by material type for Pembroke Downtown Businesses is provided in Appendix C.

Promotion and Education

Electronics Drop-Off – Businesses can drop off unwanted electronics at the Ottawa Valley Waste Recovery Centre's Electronics Waste Depot or at one of the community Environmental Days. This is a relatively new program and businesses may be unaware of this option.

Hazardous Waste – Businesses can drop off small quantities of hazardous waste at the OVWRC Hazardous Waste Depot with a pre-approved agreement. Similar to electronics waste, this is a relatively new program and businesses may be unaware of this option.

Additional Information on Waste Diversion – Businesses, that were accessing curbside collection, were very pleased to be provided a Curbside Collection Schedule during the door-to-door visits. While much of the information on the Schedule applies only to residential collection; it is still a good reference tool to determine collection days and what recyclable material is acceptable. The Ottawa Valley Waste Recovery Centre is responsible for distributing the Collection Schedules via Canada Post. The OVWRC will distribute the calendars via direct mail as through this survey, information on those accessing curbside collection has been obtained.

With respect to other information that businesses were unaware of, such as hazardous waste and electronics drop-off, an information pamphlet on Managing Waste Downtown will be developed by OVWRC. This could be provided to businesses by the PDDC.

Residential Recycling – Residents can easily access curbside collection of recyclables, however, it appears there are very few that do. To increase residential recycling Downtown, a flyer or door hanger will be developed to promote recycling in apartments. It is recognized that there are barriers to apartment recycling (i.e. storage capacity) and the information provided will reflect that.

Cleaning Contractors – Many businesses utilize their cleaning contractors to handle the removal/disposal of waste and recycling. These companies could provide valuable information to OVWRC on what the Promotion and Education needs related to waste management are within the business community (i.e. common sorting mistakes). OVWRC will begin contacting local cleaning contractors to obtain feedback on local waste management programs.

Collection

Wednesday Collection Day – New curbside collection schedules are typically determined annually in January and schedules are delivered in March. It is possible Pembroke could enter into discussion with Tomlinson, the current collection contractor, to determine if Wednesday collection in the Downtown would be feasible beginning in April 2012. This would alleviate the issues some businesses have with the current collection day and having to put the material out Monday night.

Green Cart Collection – There was some interest in food waste collection within the Downtown. The concern with food waste collection was the potential for odours and attraction of rodents. The current method of bi-weekly curbside green cart collection (weekly in June, July & August) will likely not work for larger generators of food waste in Downtown; businesses would require additional pick-ups. Businesses that have access to curbside collection could utilize the bi-weekly curbside collection of food waste and supplement with additional collections through a paid contractor with a private collector.

More Frequent Pick-Up – Some businesses are faced with storage issues. More frequent pick-ups would be ideal but the cost would have to be borne by the businesses. Businesses can arrange collection via private haulers if the curbside collection program is not meeting all their needs (i.e. they generate more waste during the summer months). It is not recommended that the City pursue this further at this time.

Services Available – Because some businesses are unaware of the curbside collection services available, it is recommended the OVWRC act as a liaison between businesses and the City of Pembroke to assist in getting a recycling program set-up for new or existing businesses.

Collection Container – At least one business inquired about obtaining containers (blue box, yellow bin, green carts) for their residential unit. The City of Pembroke is responsible for distributing containers. It is recommended that residential units are provided (upon request) the appropriate containers for waste diversion. In addition, it is recommended that the City of Pembroke provide, upon request and on a case by case basis, the appropriate containers to small businesses. Initial containers (i.e. one blue box) could be free of charge, additional bins can be purchased by the business/building owner and/or tenant.

Public Space Recycling/Waste Bins

Additional Curbside Collection Bins & Signage – Some businesses felt that additional bins on Downtown streets would assist with reducing litter. One business offered to be responsible for emptying the bin if it was installed. The PDDC is responsible for installing public space recycling/waste bins and should consider additional bins throughout the Downtown. It is recommended more visual signage be placed on the bins to designate recycling/garbage. Recycling cans should always be lined with clear bags so recyclables can be clearly identified.

Summary

Table 3: Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation	Description	Action/Timeline
Promotion and Education		
Electronics Drop-Off, Hazardous Waste & Additional Information on Waste Diversion	Information on e-waste & hazardous waste will be included in a pamphlet specific to Downtown. Collection schedules will be distributed Downtown by direct mail.	OVWRC –3 months COMPLETED
Residential Recycling	Information provided to residents Downtown.	OVWRC – 6 months
Cleaning Contractors	Contact cleaning contractors to obtain feedback on business recycling.	OVWRC – 6 months
Collection		
Wednesday Collection	Discuss with current collection contractor; possible change in April 2012.	City of Pembroke – within 9 months
Green Cart Collection/ More Frequent Collection		NONE required at this time.
Services Available	Ensure businesses (existing & new) are aware of services available (either thru curbside pick-up or local contractors)	City of Pembroke/ OVWRC – 6 months
Public Space Recycling		
Additional Public Waste/Recycling Bins & Signage on Bins	Install additional waste/recycling bins Downtown for public use. Install visual signage on new and existing bins. Ensure collection contractor is lining bins with clear bags.	PDDC OVWRC can provide suggestions for signage. – 6 months

CONCLUSION

The survey indicates that Downtown businesses are generally recycling and the current waste management systems they have in place are meeting the majority of businesses' needs. There is an opportunity to increase diversion of waste from landfill by providing additional information to businesses on the services that are available. The greatest impact of decreasing waste going to landfill is to implement a food waste composting program that is available to businesses. The current curbside green cart program would not be sufficient to manage larger generators of food waste. It is hoped that OVWRC can continue to work with the City of Pembroke and local collection contractors to develop cost effective options for food waste diversion.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

OVWRC would like to thank the Downtown Pembroke business community for participating in this survey as well as PDDC and City of Pembroke staff for their assistance in providing the necessary support, information and feedback required to conduct this survey and develop this report.

Appendix A - Pembroke Downtown Business Waste & Recycling Survey

1. Introduction

The Ottawa Valley Waste Recovery Centre (OVWRC) is conducting a survey within the Downtown Core to gather information on how waste is currently managed. Information gathered from this survey will assist the OVWRC in making recommendations on how to improve waste management options within the Downtown Core.

Thank you for taking a few minutes to complete this survey. Please be advised that your answers will remain completely confidential. Most questions are self-explanatory; examples are provided where needed. Please pay special attention to these examples.

2. Company/Building Information

1. Please provide your company details

Company Name	<input type="text"/>
Contact Person	<input type="text"/>
Phone	<input type="text"/>
E-Mail	<input type="text"/>

2. Are you the building owner?

Yes

No

3. How many residential units are in the building?

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="5"/>
	<input type="text" value="6"/>

4. Is there any other applicable information that you think would help us understand your business/building operations better?

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="5"/>
	<input type="text" value="6"/>

3. Types of Waste Materials and Handling Methods

1. What waste materials are you currently managing and how are they being handled/managed (e.g. Cardboard-bundled and stored inside the building until collection):

Cardboard	<input type="text"/>
Paper (newsprint, office paper, etc.)	<input type="text"/>
Containers (glass, metal, aluminum, plastic, etc.)	<input type="text"/>
Organics (food waste)	<input type="text"/>
Garbage	<input type="text"/>
Other (please describe)	<input type="text"/>

Pembroke Downtown Business Waste & Recycling Survey

4. Current Waste Services - Collection Method

1. How is your waste material currently being collected?

	Curbside Pick-Up	Private Hauler	Combination of Curbside Pick-Up/Private Hauler	Take to a Drop-Off Location	Other	N/A
Cardboard	€	€	€	€	€	€
Paper (newsprint, office paper, etc.)	€	€	€	€	€	€
Containers (glass, metal, aluminum, plastic, etc.)	€	€	€	€	€	€
Organics (food waste)	€	€	€	€	€	€
Garbage	€	€	€	€	€	€

Other (please specify)

5. Waste Management Challenges

1. What are some challenges you face with regards to managing each of these waste material types (e.g. Organics-no collection available, cannot store green carts). If you are not currently managing a particular material type please describe why.

Cardboard	<input type="text"/>
Paper (newsprint, office paper, etc.)	<input type="text"/>
Containers (glass, metal, aluminum, plastic, etc.)	<input type="text"/>
Organics (food waste)	<input type="text"/>
Garbage	<input type="text"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>

6. Improving Waste Management

Pembroke Downtown Business Waste & Recycling Survey

1. What tools and/or information would assist you to increase the amount your business recycles and/or composts to reduce the amount of garbage you send to landfill (e.g. Organics - Would need weekly collection)?

Cardboard	<input type="text"/>
Paper (newsprint, office paper, etc.)	<input type="text"/>
Containers (glass, metal, aluminum, plastic, etc.)	<input type="text"/>
Organics (food waste)	<input type="text"/>
Garbage	<input type="text"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>

7. Conclusion

1. Do you have any other comments or suggestions related to waste management within the Downtown?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Summary/results are expected early Spring. Should you have any questions/concerns please do not hesitate to contact Elizabeth Graham, Communications Supervisor at 613-735-7537, ext. 216 or at egraham@ovwrc.com. You can also visit www.ovwrc.com for more information on Business Recycling Programs.

Appendix B - PDDC Member Survey Waste & Recycling Final Report Waste Disposal Options for Pembroke Downtown Businesses

Material Type Description	Disposal Options
Recycling	Recycling
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two stream sorting for recycling Containers & paper recycling in two different bins/collected separately Cardboard separate or with mixed paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal curbside collection available for small businesses Private collection contractor Free to drop off at OVWRC depot
Organics	Organics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All food waste and soiled paper products Small quantities of leaf and yard waste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private collection contractor Drop off at OVWRC Tipping fees apply see www.ovwrc.com for details
Hazardous or Special Waste (HSW)	Hazardous or Special Waste (HSW)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials requiring special disposal such as paints, fluorescent lights and batteries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Businesses that generate small amounts of HSW can drop off HSW at OVWRC free of charge with a previously approved agreement Visit www.ovwrc.com for the agreement with list of material types accepted, amounts and agreement details Visit www.makethedrop.ca for HSW provincial program details Private HSW collection contract for amounts exceeding those acceptable by OVWRC
Waste Electronics and Electrical Equipment (WEEE) or 'E-waste'	Waste Electronics and Electrical Equipment (WEEE) or 'E-waste'
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Printers, monitors, computers and peripherals like mice and keyboards. Visit www.ovwrc.com for a detailed list of acceptable items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drop off at OVWRC free of charge Phone OVWRC with 24 hours notice for amounts greater than 10 units Less than 10 units accepted at OVWRC mobile events Visit www.recycleyourelectronics.ca for information on acceptable material and additional drop off locations
Construction and Demolition Material	Construction and Demolition Material
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood waste (unpainted, untreated), drywall, concrete/bricks, shingles, brush 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private contractor, e.g. bin rental Drop off at OVWRC Tipping fees will apply, see www.ovwrc.com for details
Tires	Tires
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tires are accepted from consumers for recycling under the Ontario Tire Stewardship program Tires are not accepted from tire generators (e.g. garages that change tires) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drop off at OVWRC free of charge, 9 tires per day Visit www.ontariotires.ca for additional tire collection locations and details
Landfill	Landfill
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Material that can't be recycled or diverted as described above. Loads going to landfill that contain any of the above material types will be charged the higher mixed waste fee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curbside collection for small businesses Private collection contractor Drop off at OVWRC Tipping fees apply see www.ovwrc.com for details
Waste Reduction	Waste Reduction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiatives to reduce the amount of waste being generated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free waste assessment by OVWRC staff Conduct waste audits Consider changes in packaging, customer policies