



**CORPORATE SERVICES
ENVIRONMENT SECTION**

TO: Chair and Members of the Community and Corporate Services Committee
SUBJECT: Litter Program

Report Number: CORPSERV 02/06	Report Date: February 15, 2006
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Telephone: 905-335-7600 7931	Date to Council: March 2, 2006
Ward(s) Affected: 1 2 3 4 5 6 <u>All</u>	File Number(s): 210-01

APPROVALS: _____
Department Head General Manager City Manager

To be completed by the Clerks Department

Committee Disposition & Comments	<input type="text"/>
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01- Approved 02 - Not Approved 03 - As Amended 04 - Referred 05 - Deferred 06 - Received & Filed 07 - Withdrawn	
Council Disposition & Comments	<input type="text"/>
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1.0 RECOMMENDATION:

THAT a litter control by-law be presented to council for consideration.

2.0 PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the development of an anti-litter community awareness campaign, recommend adoption of a litter control by-law and provide an update on various operational issues related to litter within the community.

3.0 BACKGROUND AND RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

This issue is related to the city's strategic plan, Future Focus VI, where there is direction to introduce an anti-litter awareness program:

Long Term Goal Statement – Liveable #2

Support environmental awareness-raising and education programs for staff and the community on matters such as reduction of litter...

Further, council has directed staff to consider the implications of introducing a litter control by-law:

That the Director of RPM (Building) be directed to seek public consultation on the creation of an anti-litter by-law in 2005 and report back to the Community and Corporate Services Committee by the end of 2005 with a recommendation on the possible implementation of such a by-law.

Sources of Litter

Litter occurs due to people dropping items indiscriminately and wind blowing secured collectable waste, recycling, and construction debris. People litter for different reasons; they don't care; they feel no sense of ownership; litter has already accumulated; lack of container to dispose litter; and they believe someone (maintenance workers) will pick-up after them. Litter often collects along boulevards, fence lines, creek ravines and vacant lots.

Litter Workshop

In order to investigate these issues further, staff hosted two public workshops on September 19th, 2005 to obtain feedback from residents and business representatives on the litter issue within Burlington. There were a total of 13 participants and a summary of the workshop results is provided in Appendix A. An attempt was made to have representation for all wards within the community. Those that were unable to attend were provided notice of this report.

Overall, residents agreed that litter was an issue within the community, although it was noted that the problem is no worse or better than other communities. One participant indicated that one reason he was attracted to the city was the overall cleanliness of the community. A range of issues were raised from city /regional operations, such as roadside and recycling containers, school sites, and the problem of fast food containers.

Certain areas were noted to 'attract' litter more than others, such as highway off ramps, areas in proximity to fast food restaurants and convenience stores, vacant lots and creek ravines. It should be noted that there were some positive comments related to areas such as the downtown and certain commercial establishments along Plains Road. The downtown core does have a dedicated staff person to deal with litter+.

Some noted a concern with schools but it was acknowledged that some were better than others; the difference appears to reflect how the issue is addressed by the individual school administrators.

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In general it was agreed that litter can have a negative effect on quality of life, living standards, businesses and tourism. If left unattended, it can feed contagious behaviour leading to further littering. There are also health and safety issues (eg. broken glass in playgrounds) and environmental impacts on wildlife and water quality. Some participants indicated that litter leaves them disappointed and embarrassed.

Litter Issues

It was acknowledged that there are barriers and challenges to addressing the litter problem. Reducing litter often requires a change in attitude and behaviour. Also, the need to coordinate efforts between various levels of government responsible for different issues was recognized. Other issues raised included inadequate service of roadside containers and a lack of a local by-law and awareness of the issue within the community. Although it was noted that fast food restaurant packaging is a significant issue, it was also recognized that some chains support local clean-ups and remind patrons to properly dispose of their litter. The city's crime prevention committee has been working closely with some local fast food chains to post litter awareness messages.

The following issues were identified by the participants as priorities where increased attention is required:

- Education & awareness
- Roadside containers not being picked-up and lack of containers
- Lack of recycling containers (on public property as well as commercial establishments)
- Lack of a litter by-law
- Lack of a deposit system for bottles.

These issues are addressed within the next section of this report. It is interesting to note that the results of the workshop appear to reflect the experience and challenges of other communities identified through a network of municipalities led by the City of Mississauga working together to implement a litterbug campaign. Burlington staff continue to participate in these sessions and Mississauga has generously provided the 'litterbug' graphics they have developed to all participating municipalities wishing to use them.

4.0 DISCUSSION:

Education and Awareness

A litter awareness strategy has been developed and is included in Appendix B in response to issues raised during the workshops. The strategy builds on current community actions to reduce litter, such as the annual Community Clean-up Challenge, clean-ups organized by community partners such as the Field & Stream Rescue Team and the Clean-up Aldershot Project, and litter awareness messaging by the Crime Prevention Committee.

The strategy attempts to address several of the issues raised, such as:

- Supporting community clean-ups – The Community Clean-up Challenge is an annual event and the 20 minute makeover will also be introduced in 2006. Further, the city supports clean-ups organized by community groups by providing bags and picking up collected refuse.

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- Raising general awareness - Newspaper insert, posters, Environmental Corner, website info, signage, etc.
- Education – video short contest aimed at secondary school students.

The launch for the litter awareness campaign is planned for April 2006 to coincide with Earth Day (April 22) and the Community Clean-up Challenge and 20 Minute Makeover. Part of the launch will include a newspaper insert raising awareness of the issue, problems and challenges, and community actions to address the litter problem. Staff will work with the Burlington Post on the development of this insert and local retailers and agencies will be invited to participate by advertising. The City of Mississauga has successfully developed two inserts to-date with their local community newspaper where staff provided the material and the newspaper sold the advertising to cover the costs.

The 20 Minute Makeover was initiated by the City of Toronto in 2004 and grew to include several GTA municipalities (and some beyond the GTA) in 2005. It is usually held on the Friday close to Earth Day and businesses, institutions, schools and individuals are encouraged to get involved in a 20 minute clean-up across the community. This year, the non-profit organization, Pitch-in Canada, is promoting and supporting the program across Canada.

Staff will also work with regional staff to support messaging to residents and businesses on tips to secure items to reduce 'wind blown' litter. The issue of litter from overflowing roadside receptacles is addressed in this report under operational issues.

Litter By-law

Although not ranked the number one issue, many workshop participants felt there needed to be a deterrent to littering and a by-law could be publicly communicated through an awareness campaign. A parallel can be drawn with the anti-idling by-law where it is recognized that it will not solve the problem, enforcement is a challenge, but it is a tool to act as a deterrent and change behaviour. Staff have raised awareness of the idling by-law using such tactics as blitzes, signage, information tickets and media releases. Many of the workshop participants felt that at the very least it would help if the fines for littering were posted at specific locations to act as a deterrent, similar to other communities.

The Regional Municipality of Halton has in place By-law 30-96, a by-law established to implement single tier waste management throughout the Region for all of its area municipalities. While this by-law stipulates numerous regulations pertaining to waste collection, the by-law does not deal with the issue of litter. As well, the Region has limited resources to enforce its own by-law. Regional staff have noted that city staff could use a litter by-law to address the problem of repeat offenders placing their curbside garbage out for collection prior to the appropriate pick-up times identified in their by-law.

The City of Burlington does have a by-law that pertains to private property and the dumping of garbage, refuse, domestic and industrial waste, that being Lot Maintenance By-law 117-1976, but this is also not a littering by-law.

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There is a range of options to be considered for enforcing such a by-law, including: full proactive enforcement, complaint based enforcement, 'as it happens' enforcement, and occasional blitzes.

It is estimated that two additional staff resources would be required to implement a full proactive enforcement of the littering by-law. In addition there would also be costs to lease and operate vehicles, the administration costs to process a ticket and possible court costs.

Under a complaint based enforcement scheme, enforcement officers would receive a complaint and investigate. This is a less costly option to proactive enforcement but would still require administrative costs to process a ticket. However, it is recognized that under this option, it would be extremely difficult to actually issue a ticket to the offender given the time delay in responding to such incidents.

An 'as it happens' approach would require existing staff to either warn or ticket offenders when they witness a littering incident. This option should not require additional resources, just administrative costs to process a ticket. However, it is recognized that depending on the number of occurrences, this approach could divert resources from other duties.

Blitz enforcement periods have been used for the idling control by-law and can be effective in raising awareness of the issue. There would still be a cost for this approach to divert staff from their normal duties and to process additional tickets.

In researching how the other three municipalities within Halton Region combat litter, all three have anti-littering by-laws in place and are described as follows:

	By-law Number	Set Fines	Enforcement
Town of Halton Hills	By-law 93-165	Max \$105.00 ticket	By-law enforced by By-law Enforcement Officers
Town of Milton	By-law 50-91	Max \$103.75 plus Victim Surcharge of 25.00	By-law Enforcement Officers in addition to the Police and the Conservation Authority
Town of Oakville	1971-122	Maximum \$105.00 ticket	By-law Enforcement Officers

The issue of responsibility for enforcing the by-law needs to be determined. Generally, by-law enforcement officers from the Building Department do not enforce by-laws on public property. And although some staff in the Roads and Parks Maintenance and Parks and Recreation Departments are designated as by-law enforcement officers, they do not generally enforce city by-laws, with the exception of animal control officers.

The division of responsibilities is to be addressed under a comprehensive review of existing by-laws and enforcement issues, led by the Building Department. This review is also being coordinated with Halton Region staff regarding regional by-laws and enforcement.

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It is recognized that a litter control by-law can be a useful tool in the campaign against litter. Therefore, staff will review options for such a by-law, including the feasibility of amending the existing dumping by-law to deal with litter on private and public property. The by-law will be forthcoming to council for consideration following the completion of the comprehensive corporate review of by-laws to ensure that the issue of enforcement on public property is addressed.

Other Operational and Jurisdictional Issues

The following responds to other matters raised at the workshop related to operational and jurisdictional issues.

Roadside Container Collection: Participants identified a problem with containers along city and regional roads not being picked-up on a consistent basis with litter often overflowing. With the exception of downtown containers, Halton Region is responsible for emptying the roadside containers. City and regional staff have been working together to solve this problem. Regional staff are working closely with the contractor to ensure containers are emptied efficiently and consistently. However, regional staff have also advised that the city should consider the logistics of replacing roadside containers with larger units that are more durable to withstand inclement weather and can be emptied efficiently.

Downtown Containers: The Downtown Coordinator is leading a staff review of the feasibility of installing expanded containers in the downtown core that would handle regular waste as well as recyclables; paper, glass and plastics. Discussions are underway with the regional staff on the logistics of picking up the recyclables. As noted above, downtown roadside containers are currently picked-up by the city's Roads and Parks Maintenance staff.

City Parks and Facilities: Some participants were particularly interested in improving recycling opportunities, not only within city parks but also at commercial establishments. Recycling containers are provided within most city facilities, however, some workshop participants noted that containers are not always accessible in each meeting room. Provision of a full recycling program at city parks could be a costly endeavour to provide both containers and a contractor to empty them. Contamination by refuse is another issue cited. Currently the city requires groups hosting special public events in city parks to provide recycling. This cost is borne by the organizer.

Staff were advised by the Ontario Parks Association (OPA) that there are no standards, guidelines or best management practices for the provision of recycling within municipal parks. However, the OPA is reviewing this issue as part of a larger initiative to develop best management practices for municipal parks. It is anticipated that some information may be available from the OPA on this matter within a year.

Other: It was also noted that many commercial establishments do not provide recycling opportunities and should be made to do so. This matter falls under provincial jurisdiction and may be addressed by the new Waste Diversion Office. The region has recently provided recycling pick-up to downtown businesses and may be expanded upon review by regional staff.

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Another issue raised by participants was a lack of a deposit system for bottles in Ontario. It was felt that such an incentive would also deter people from littering and provide an incentive to others to pick-up empty bottles. Again, this is an issue of provincial jurisdiction and staff will advise the Waste Diversion Office of the results of our public consultation process.

5.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS:

The litter awareness strategy is estimated to cost a total of \$5,000 for year one and will be covered by the existing budget of the Environment Section with additional one-time funding proposed in the 2006 current budget in the amount of \$2,000. Refer to Appendix B for additional information.

6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS:

As noted in this report, litter can significantly deteriorate our natural environment and affect the sustainability of our community. With the introduction of a litter awareness program and a litter control by-law, and building on existing measures, these impacts can be lessened.

7.0 COMMUNICATION MATTERS:

Please see Appendix B for an outline of the anti-litter awareness campaign and responsibilities for implementation and communications.

8.0 CONCLUSION:

Although participants in the litter workshop noted that litter in Burlington is no worse or better than other communities, it was recognized that it can affect quality of life in many different ways and the problem can grow if not attended to. The implementation of an anti-litter campaign along with a litter by-law will help to ensure that Burlington continues to be a sustainable, liveable community.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Robichaud
Sr. Environmental Co-ordinator

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Appendices:

APPENDIX A – Litter Workshop Notes APPENDIX B – Litter Awareness Program

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Staff / Others Consulted:

Name	Telephone
Management Committee Environmental Management Team Sustainable Development Committee	
George Kotsifas, Building	X7617
Tracey Burrows, Building	X7476
Angela Morgan, Building	X7628
Alan Magi, RPM	X6134
John Duncan, RPM	X6151
Charlotte O’Hara-Griffin, P&R	X7488
Jody Wellings, Downtown Coordinator	X7259
Sean O’Brady, Communications	X7531
Fleur Storace-Hogan, Environment	X7580
David Miles, Halton Waste Management	825-6000 x7588
John Howard, Ontario Parks Association	905-864-6182
Organizations represented at the litter workshop: Field & Stream Rescue Team Aldershot Community Council Warwick Surrey Association Mayor’s Youth Advisory Ctte. Ribfest Recycling Volunteers Crime Prevention Ctte Chamber of Commerce Downtown Citizens Advisory Committee Sustainable Development Committee Plains Road BIA Clean-up Aldershot Project	

Notifications:

Name	Mailing or E-mail Address

Special Instructions:

Consent Agenda

APPENDIX A

City of Burlington Litter Consultation Workshops – September 19, 2005

Responses to Breakout Questions:

1. Do you agree that litter is an issue in Burlington and if yes, how extensive is it?

Yes, it is an issue.

- Some thought it was a growing problem.
- Inadequate road-side pick-up
- Drug paraphernalia found in parks is a concern
- Fast food containers, etc.
- Dumping of construction materials
- Prevalent with young people
- Graffiti also raised as an issue

No one thought that litter wasn't an issue. Comment - Burlington is no better or no worse than other communities – same issues

2. Are there specific problem areas? In your neighbourhood? Areas across the city? Near your business? Are there any good areas that don't appear to be impacted by litter problems?

- Fast food restaurants & convenience stores
- Highway off ramps
- Schools – along fenced areas and under bleachers (although generally agreed that it depends on the school's administration & how seriously they consider the issue – secondary schools appear to have more difficulty controlling the problem)
- Creek ravines (litter collects here as well as incidences of dumping)
- Plains Road (along commercial corridor) & Howard Road
- Areas behind plazas & vacant lots
- Litter in parks is worse in the spring after snowmelt but is ongoing.
- Rural areas – ditches, remote areas
- Cigarette butts at bus stops

- Positive comments – the boulevard gardens, some businesses along Plains Road, Aldershot HS. Generally schools where administrators take the initiative are very good.

General discussion -

- One high school is located near a fast food establishment and there are wrappers by the fence from students' lunches. Why don't schools get out there and do something? Depends on administration.
- Teachers who are on duty chaperoning should keep an eye for people who litter

3. Does it impact your quality of life and/or business? Individually? Neighbourhood? Community wide?

- Litter invites crime
- Impacts property values

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- Reflects lack of pride – people don't care
- Impacts on wildlife and water bodies
- Decreases living standards and feeds into contagious behaviour
- Impacts tourism
- Health and safety issues, particularly for children (broken glass in playgrounds)
- Can impact businesses, particularly retailers
- Disappointing, discouraging & embarrassing – tend to avoid areas with litter problems

- Positive - Burlington is cleaner than other cities, which helped one participant to make his decision to move here 5 years ago.
- Positive – Cleaner than 25 years ago

General Discussion -

- It's a matter of age; lack of leadership and guidance regarding a level of respect. The level of respect increases if there is a clean area.
- Litter hasn't come up as a big issue. Some issues behind malls/plazas, etc. Downtown is fairly clean. It's not a huge issue for small retailers but they realize that it could be an issue if litter gets out of control.
- 'Senior citizens' perception that if there is litter, then it is not a safe community – whether it's true or not.

4. What are some barriers/challenges to controlling or reducing litter in the community?

1. Legislation/co-ordination - different levels of government responsible for different issues
2. Lack of recycling at convenience stores – have to hire a private contractor so there is a disincentive. Mix of public and private pick-up – have to arrange. Lack of recycling opportunities – not enough products being recycled; need recycling bins (i.e. none in the meeting room we were in). Lack of blue barrels near trash containers. Sometimes blue bins used as trash cans.
3. Cigarette cellophane wrapping – light so tend to fly away
4. Roadside containers are not picked up enough
5. Lack of awareness of how residents can discard large items.
6. Fast food franchises are not doing enough (however, it was recognized that some chains support clean-ups and messaging to the public)
7. City doesn't have a litter bylaw but enforcement recognized as an issue. No accountability (no bylaw), no leadership.
8. If awareness program, who will be targeted, etc. Lack of knowledge about how to get rid of bulk items so people dump. Getting message out to children
9. Lack of resources
10. No deposit system in Ontario

Ten barriers/challenges identified. Each daytime participant was provided 2 dots to prioritize barriers/challenges that should be addressed:

- 7 votes for education/awareness
- 4 votes for roadside containers not being picked up/lack of containers
- 4 votes for lack of recycling opportunities i.e. at stores
- 3 votes for no litter bylaw, no accountability or leadership
- 2 votes for no deposit system for bottles

5. Can you provide some solutions/actions to raise awareness of the importance of reducing litter within our community, keeping in mind how can we address the challenges or barriers that we have listed? What should the city be doing? What can the community do?

Education and Awareness

- Campaign in grade schools and reinforce in grade 7 and 8 (the Crime Prevention Committee has a program targeting grade 1 students)
- Arrange more clean-up days – provide high school students opportunities for community service hours (CAP & FSRT do provide these opportunities)
- Ask high school students what can be done
- Target teens with messages at special events (eg. YMCA concerts & teen dances – Tansley Woods) & city's youth centre – Velocity. Put messages on wrist bands.
- Arrange clean-up competitions between schools
- Businesses should help raise awareness
- Partner with press and media awareness to assist in campaign – litter is not acceptable in society
- Toronto and Mississauga – similar campaigns
- How to deter people from littering – bylaw with fine and sign
- Show leadership – (eg. diversion kids from criminal system undertake clean-ups in front of others)

Roadside containers not being picked up/lack of containers

- Standardize public pick-up for all (eg. City picks up downtown containers and Region picks-up all other roadside containers).
- Provide financial incentive to retailers that provide recycling for customers.
- More garbage and recycling bins – standardize colour –
- Improve communications with regional staff

Lack of recycling opportunities i.e. at stores

- Need recycling and garbage containers side-by-side
- City needs to encourage/show commitment for recycling
- Better signage on bins to know what to recycle
- Put recycling symbol on all bins – make it clear that bins are for recycling

No litter bylaw, no accountability or leadership

- Adopt bylaw
- Post signs with fines (bins near signs), use creative messages
- Show cost of clean-ups on tax bill
- If bylaw – have officers at schools cracking down on the issue

No deposit system for bottles

- City to advocate to the province for a deposit system

APPENDIX B

City of Burlington Litter Awareness Strategy

	Actions – Events	Timing	Cost	Responsibility	Community Partners
1.	Community Clean-ups – target clean-up sites generally include beach, city parks & ravines. Individuals & community groups participate.	Saturday, Late April – annual event		Mayor's Office coordinates Communications assist	Open to all
2.	NEW - 20 Minute Make-over – target clean-up of private & institutional grounds by employees & school grounds by students.	April – generally weekday on or close to Earth Day	TBD – retailers have sponsored in past in GTA	Environment, Mayor's Office Communications	Open to all – focus on schools & businesses
3.	Local clean-ups – provide bags, gloves, garbage pick-up	Spring, Summer, Fall (ongoing)	RPM – approximately \$2,500 in resources	RPM provides supplies and picks-up waste collected by volunteers	Field & Stream Rescue Team, Clean-up Aldershot Project (CAP), Green Team & other local community groups
	Actions – Awareness	Timing	Cost	Responsibility	Community Partners
1.	NEW - Insert in Burlington Post – articles on city and community activities related to litter/beautification. City to provide articles & Post to sell advertising.	April – lead up to Earth Day	\$1,500 commitment for 1 page of advertising. City departments may purchase advertising in insert.	Sr. Environmental Co-ordinator & Communications	
2.	NEW - Poster & other promotional items (eg. buttons)	April	\$1,500	Communications – graphic design	Distribute to city facilities, schools & special events
3.	City website – develop NEW litter awareness page under Environment Section – announce activities, resources available	March/April	No cost	Environment & Communications to assist	
4.	Advertising – general litter awareness (eg. Environmental Corners; Recreation & Leisure Guide)	Ongoing	Approx. \$1,500	Environment	
5.	City Talk – article	Spring Edition – 05	No cost	Environment & Communications	
6.	NEW - Park Signs re: by-law if applicable	2006	Included as part of an overall signage program for city parks.	Parks & Recreation	
7.	Request special messages on 'tray liners' with local fast food establishments	Ongoing – as required	No cost	Crime Prevention Committee	Fast food franchises
	Actions – Education	Timing	Cost	Responsibility	Community Partners
1.	Targeting schools – impacts of litter in the community (eg. displays and contests)	2006	\$500	Environment & Communications	School Boards