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USER PAY FOR GARBAGE CAN PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN OTTAWA'S NEW WASTE MASTER PLAN

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Waste Watch Ottawa is a locally based environmental advocacy group that is committed to the promotion of waste management, waste reduction, recycling and composting best practices and the overall improvement of the City's environmental performance. More information on WWO may be found on our website at: [Waste Watch Ottawa](http://www.wastewatchottawa.ca)

As the City Ottawa starts work on a new solid waste master plan (*Environmental Protection, Water and Waste Management Committee, June 25, 2019: Solid Waste Master Plan Roadmap*), Waste Watch Ottawa (WWO) urges that a major component of the planning process and the plan itself should be a user pay system for garbage.

Under a user pay system residents would pay more directly for the waste they generate rather than through general property taxes. Recyclable materials and organic waste would be collected with no direct charge.

A report prepared with the assistance of University of Ottawa graduate students and released today confirms that user pay systems which operate in many other Ontario municipalities encourage reduced garbage collection. "User pay systems provide direct incentives to residents to use their blue and black recycling boxes and green bins", says Duncan Bury one of the founders of WWO. Bury further suggested that a well-designed user pay system would be a far more effective way of enhancing participation in the green bin program than allowing the use of plastic bag liners as the City is about to do.

The WWO report suggests the City adopt a bag / tag user pay system whereby residents would be required to purchase tags or stickers for any bags or cans they put out for garbage collection. Tags could be required for all of the garbage or only for those containers over a certain number.

In addition to the implementation of a user pay system the waste plan process and the plan itself should ensure:

- That all reduction, recycling, organics and residual waste management options are reviewed through a climate change lens to determine and minimize GHG impacts
- That the waste management hierarchy is respected and that all forms of incineration be avoided
- That ambitious waste reduction and diversion targets are set with the aim of preserving disposal capacity at the Trail Road landfill for the long term
- That established and proven best practices are followed
- That a major effort is made to improve recycling and green bin performance in multi-residential buildings, and
- That resources for promotion and education are significantly improved

Waste Watch Ottawa believes that if the City adopts a user pay system and abides by the above key waste plan components that the City can significantly improve its waste diversion and environmental performance to match and perhaps even ultimately surpass that of leading municipalities.

WWO will be closely following and participating in the solid waste master plan process as it unfolds over the next two years.

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