



CITY OF HAMILTON
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
Hamilton Water Division

TO:	Chair and Members Public Works Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	June 13, 2016
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Clean Harbour Outreach Program (PW16054) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Dan McKinnon (905) 546-2424, Extension 5941
SUBMITTED BY:	Dan McKinnon Director, Hamilton Water Public Works Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That Hamilton Water staff be directed to undertake a study to develop solutions to prevent the release of medical debris, personal care products and other floatable debris into Hamilton Harbour and Cootes Paradise at an upset limit of \$75,000 funded from the Storm Water Reserve (108010);
- (b) That Hamilton Water staff be directed to establish the "Clean Harbour Outreach Program" (CHOP) as described in the analysis section of this report;
- (c) That the Hamilton Water complement be increased for a period of five years by 0.75 FTEs to support the development and implementation of the CHOP.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the March 23, 2016 General Issues Committee (GIC) meeting committee discussed the recent occurrence of medical waste and personal care products washing ashore in Hamilton Harbour. The following motion was approved by Council on March 30, 2016:

"That Staff be directed to report to the Public Works Committee respecting the cost and resource requirements to undertake a program for Harbour Protection that includes".

- i. A study to identify opportunities for reducing the discharge of medical waste and personal care products into the harbour. This study should endeavour to determine the source of the pollutants and develop strategies for eliminating these events; and
- ii. Develop a community outreach program to raise awareness of the adverse effects of sewage overflow into the harbour and the environment, the unique operations of the Hamilton combined sewage system and with an emphasis on

the role homeowners can play in reducing these occurrences through their own actions at home”.

These types of events have happened in the past; however, the recurrence of these two events within a short time and the volume of debris washing ashore has been significant and has resulted in a heightened level of concern within the community. While it will likely be impossible to ascertain with certainty where the debris originated it is safe to say the material found on the shore is consistent with the type of material that is found in the City’s sewer system. There does not appear to be a direct correlation between the monitored operation of the City’s combined sewer system and these events, however, there may be a connection between the two.

During discussion at the March 23, 2016 GIC committee directed staff to return with a report to identify the necessary resources for studying this issue in an effort to identify a solution to prevent further events of this nature. Additionally, staff shall include the resources required to develop an outreach program to raise awareness about the adverse effects of sewage overflows into Hamilton Harbour and the environment, the unique operations of Hamilton’s combined Sewage System with an emphasis the role homeowners can play in reducing these occurrences through their own actions at home.

Alternatives for Consideration – See Page 4

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: The first year of the program requires \$75,000.00 funding to complete a study to determine if the source of floatable debris entering the harbour is originating in the City's sewer system and if there are measures that can reduce these occurrences. Beyond 2016 future budget requests if required, will be included in the annual rate budget request.

Staffing: 0.75 FTEs if required to deliver the program as envisioned in this report. Most of the effort required relates to the development and delivery of outreach as described in the report and would extend until approximately 2020-21 when the large RAP projects are completed.

Legal: N/A

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Since the early 1980s the City of Hamilton has taken a lead role in the Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan (RAP) in support of harbour clean up. RAP stakeholders and partners include the City of Hamilton, the City of Burlington, Region of Halton, Conservation Authorities, Hamilton Port Authority, Bay Area Restoration Council (BARC), Bay Area Implementation Team (BAIT) and others. The RAP was established to develop a list of actions required to have the harbour de-listed as an Area of Concern on the Canadian side of the Great Lakes and then to monitor progress of the plan and to act as an advocate to ensure the RAP was eventually successful. The plan was ambitious and required decades of investment and stewardship to deliver the results the original plan envisioned. Many of the water quality targets developed to support a

return of the harbour to an environment that supports fish and other wildlife were developed in consultation between the MOECC and the RAP teams. While much attention remains focused on water quality parameters such as phosphorus and suspended solids it is abundantly clear that the floatable material that flows through the sewer system can cause the greatest community response when they make their way to the harbour.

A study to determine the origin of floatable material that has been washing ashore in the harbour is proposed that would include staff and consultant resources to investigate and determine actions to reduce or eliminate these occurrences. In an effort to bring greater awareness and profile to the value and state of the harbour as well as sources of pollution that the community can have direct influence on an outreach program is proposed.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

Not Applicable

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Staff have consulted with the affected ward Councillors as well as interested community groups respecting outreach initiatives.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The study proposed includes review of the combined sewer system to ensure that city infrastructure is operating as designed. The study will also examine uncontrolled overflows which would include such actions as the installation of debris boom in the upper reaches of Chedoke creek and other harbour tributaries as a process of elimination. These actions may be undertaken in collaboration with community groups who may be able to provide valuable monitoring services.

The outreach program would include a number of initiatives which include but would not be limited to website development which communicates the history and value of the harbour to the community, City actions over the last three decades in support of Harbour clean up, descriptions of system operation, and actions residents can take to mitigate harbour pollution. There would also be a suite of outreach strategies that may see video development, advertising within the community, development of an ambassadors program and educational material. Once the necessary staffing resources are in place staff will return to committee with updates on the specific strategies to be employed. It is proposed that the staff resources be approved for a five year period to coincide with the completion of Randle Reef and the Woodward upgrade and hopefully the de-listing of Hamilton Harbour as an area of concern on the Great Lakes.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

An alternative to the recommendation in this report is to continue with the current level of outreach presently being undertaken, however, staff believe there is an opportunity to derive greater community benefit by increasing the resources in this regard.

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2012 – 2015 STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Priority #1

A Prosperous & Healthy Community

WE enhance our image, economy and well-being by demonstrating that Hamilton is a great place to live, work, play and learn

Strategic Priority #2

Valued & Sustainable Services

WE deliver high quality services that meet citizen needs and expectations, in a cost effective and responsible manner

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

None