

**To: David Creery, Chief Administrative Officer**  
**From: Brian Connors, Director of Parks & Recreation**  
**Re: Special Events – WEAC Waste Audit Recommendations**

---

### **AIM**

To provide Council information on the feasibility and timelines of each recommendation within the Woodstock Environment Advisory Committee Waste Audit report.

### **BACKGROUND**

On April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, the Woodstock Environment Advisory Committee came before Council to present their findings and recommendations of their Canada Day 2023 waste audit. The following 11 recommendations were presented:

1. Starting immediately, the City of Woodstock should consult and follow guidelines for creating zero waste events.
2. Starting immediately, waste, recycling, and compost generated at City events should be collected and weighed separately.
3. On a yearly basis, the City of Woodstock should conduct at least one waste audit at a City event.
4. For each event, select vendors that will align with waste goals set for the event,
5. For each event, establish a “zero waste” agreement with vendors,
6. For each event, increase availability of recyclable deposition sites to encourage patrons to properly divert recyclable materials.
7. For each event, establish clear messaging of “what goes where” at each of the waste deposition stations,
8. For each event, City to provide staff or volunteer “waste monitors” at waste deposition sites,
9. For each event, City to provide additional drinking water stations and reusable cups in conjunction with either encouraging residents to bring their own reusable, refillable container and prohibiting and/or discouraging the sale of bottled water,
10. City to develop a green-bin program for City events,
11. The City market events promoting “low waste” or “zero waste events”.

### **COMMENTS**

City staff agrees with the direction that the 11 recommendations are taken in principle. However, the timelines indicated would not be practical. In addition, some of the prescribed actions would be antithetical to reducing waste during special events.

1. *Starting immediately, the City of Woodstock should consult and follow guidelines for creating zero waste events.*
  - City staff agree that working towards a low waste or zero waste event should be a goal of special events but the timeline of immediately is not practicable.
2. *Starting immediately, waste, recycling, and compost generated at city events should be collected and weighed separately.*

- The cost and practicality of this recommendation is questionable as it would require loading and unloading of waste, recycling. At present there is also no compost available in Oxford County.
3. *On a yearly basis, the City of Woodstock should conduct at least one waste audit at a City event.*
    - During special events in the summer there aren't City Staff available to conduct waste audits. We also have a shortage of volunteers to help run special events. There is value in having an audit process but given the shortages of volunteers around these events it would not be practical to use event volunteers or City staff.
  4. *For each event, select vendors that will align with waste goals set for the event.*
    - Balancing attracting vendors to Special Events and having them incorporate green goals should be considered. City staff believe the best method to do this going forward would be to have a green rate for vendors who put in a system to reduce waste.
  5. *For each event, establish a "zero waste" agreement with vendors.*
    - Zero waste agreement should be the end goal but will take several steps in order to get there without losing quality vendors.
  6. *For each event, increase availability of recyclable deposition sites to encourage patrons to properly divert recyclable materials.*
    - Increasing the number of recycling depositions sites will not help the public increase the number of recycled materials from the Park. If one person contaminates a recycling bin the whole bin is garbage. The best method to ensure Special Event material is recycled is to have a large garbage & Recycling zone in which volunteers separate garbage from recycling. The staff's hope is that members of Woodstock Environmental Committee would be enthusiastic to take up many of these volunteer positions that would be required during the event.
  7. *For each event, establish clear messaging of "what goes where" at each of the waste deposition stations,*
    - A large kiosk should have very identifiable signage, with volunteers separating garbage from recyclables.
  8. *For each event, City to provide staff or volunteer "waste monitors" at waste deposition sites.*
    - Waste monitors would not be needed if the City moved to the kiosk method, however several volunteers would be needed.
  9. *For each event, City to provide additional drinking water stations and reusable cups in conjunction with either encouraging residents to bring their own reusable, refillable container and prohibiting and/or discouraging the sale of bottled water.*
    - At Southside Park there is a hydration station in the main washroom. Park staff also plan on putting in another fountain and bottle refill station in Southside Park where Special Events occur. Staff have also looked into a portable hydration station but the cost in capital and operating was considered too high for the number of yearly usages it would receive.
  10. *City to develop a green-bin program for City events,*
    - The Green-bin program could be an effective program once it is up and running in the county.
  11. *The City market events promoting "low waste" or "zero waste events".*
    - Low waste event marketing is something that should be implemented and rolled out.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Woodstock City Council receives this report as information.

*Authored by: Brian Connors, Director of Parks and Recreation*

*Approved by: David Creery, MBA, P.Eng., Chief Administrative Officer*