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## **Council-In-Committee Meeting – October 09, 2024**

Subject: Simcoe BIA Public Space Garbage Container Collection  
Report Number: EIS-24-080  
Division: Environmental and Infrastructure Services  
Department: Environmental Services  
Ward: Ward 5  
Purpose: For Decision

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### **Recommendation(s):**

That staff report EIS-24-080 be received as information; and

That Council provide direction on Option 1, 2, or 3 to handle the Simcoe BIA public space garbage containers until the new curbside waste collection contract begins in September 2026.

### **Executive Summary:**

Over the past four (4) years, the Simcoe BIA has had many discussions with Norfolk County Council and staff regarding the management of waste in the Simcoe BIA. In 2021, the Simcoe BIA was provided with a waste grant to assist with the collection of bulky items and the collection of public space garbage containers. A waste grant was provided in 2022 and 2023 as well. During budget deliberations in 2024, the waste grant was reduced to \$7,000. In turn, the Simcoe BIA indicated it was unable to continue collecting bulky items. In August 2024, the Simcoe BIA advised Norfolk County staff that the Simcoe BIA will discontinue collecting public space garbage containers as of January 1, 2025, and options on how to collect this material in the interim until the new waste collection contract is in place in September 2026 are presented below.

### **Discussion:**

Prior to the current curbside collection contract, which began in 2017, the Simcoe BIA had opted to collect public space garbage cans in the BIA through their own means. Public space garbage cans are emptied three (3) times per week by two (2) individuals employed by the Simcoe BIA. These individuals are supported through the employment program at the Norfolk Association for Community Living (NACL). There are two (2) dumpsters, one (1) at the east end of the BIA and another at the west end to contain the public space garbage collected.

In 2020, the Simcoe BIA hired a private contractor to collect illegally dumped bulky items. It was realized that this contracted service provided more on-demand collection availability than what was offered through the County and was a cost-effective solution.

In September 2021, the BIA requested a grant from Norfolk County to assist with covering the costs of bulky item collection and street can collection, as it estimated costs for these two (2) services of \$10,300. The Simcoe BIA identified that the illegal dumping was mainly from the residential portion of the Simcoe BIA and should not be covered by commercial businesses.

During the 2022 budget deliberations, Council approved a grant to the Simcoe BIA up to a maximum of \$10,000 for waste collection in the BIA for the duration of the curbside waste collection contract.

During 2023 budget deliberations, the Simcoe BIA requested an additional \$4,000 to the \$10,000 grant due to increased expenses relating to inflation and increased illegal dumping. Council requested staff to provide more information regarding the request, and staff brought back report CS-23-041 in March 2023. Costs and services provided by the Simcoe BIA were compared to contractual costs by the curbside collection contractor and it was determined that the services being provided by the Simcoe BIA were efficient and cost-effective solutions to the illegal dumping challenges, costing less than what services would cost under the waste collection contract. As a result, the \$4,000 increase request was approved.

Throughout 2023, the Simcoe BIA identified to Norfolk County staff, addresses that were not complying with the Waste by-law, including incorrect set out time, exceeding bag limits, and setting out bulky items. Staff worked with the Simcoe BIA by sending multiple letters to owners/landlords about the issues, with no response. Door hangers were produced by Norfolk County and supplied to the Simcoe BIA to utilize for problematic properties. The door hangers contained information on set out times and bag limits as well as information on the transfer stations and the Bulky Item Appointment system to aid in dealing with bulky items.

During the 2024 budget deliberations, Council voted to reduce the Simcoe BIA's grant to \$7,000. The Simcoe BIA presented their concerns regarding the reductions to the operating grant at Council-in-Committee on January 16, 2024. Council directed staff to bring back a report (EIS-24-004) on the historical information and possible solutions to the illegal dumping, which was shared with Council in Committee on February 13, 2024. On January 18, 2024, the Simcoe BIA advised Norfolk County that due to the reduction in grant funding, beginning on February 1, 2024, the Simcoe BIA will no longer collect and dispose of illegally dumped bulky items. Norfolk County's Roads department has taken on the additional task of collecting and disposing of illegally dumped bulky items in the Simcoe BIA.

On August 15, 2024, Norfolk County staff received a letter from the Simcoe BIA with a motion passed at their August 14, 2024, meeting stating:

*That the Simcoe BIA discontinue the collection of garbage in the Simcoe BIA area effective January 1, 2025, and further that the responsibility for the collection of garbage from the waste containers be provided by Norfolk County.*

Due to the timelines outlined in the Simcoe BIA's letter for discontinuing the collection of public space garbage containers, staff are bringing this report to Council-in-Committee ahead of budget deliberations in January to ensure that a solution is in place for January 1, 2025.

Staff reviewed possible collection options for the public space containers. These options are an interim solution until the new curbside collection contract would begin in September 2026. When the new curbside collection contract begins, BIAs/downtown areas will not have the option to opt out of the public space garbage collection by Norfolk County's contractor and all BIAs/downtown areas will receive the same level of service.

*Option 1: Continuation of the NACL agreement*

Staff explored the option to continue the NACL agreement with the two (2) individuals that currently collect the public space garbage containers. With this arrangement, the Simcoe BIA has two (2) dumpsters at the east and west ends of the BIA to place the public space garbage bags in. These dumpsters are also used to handle other BIA related garbage. Norfolk County would be required to get a separate dumpster to allocate the public space container garbage to.

*Option 2: Utilizing current curbside waste collection contractor*

Staff reached out to our current curbside waste collection contractor to inquire about picking up the BIA public space garbage containers twice per week. This would align services being provided by Norfolk County's curbside collection contractor for the removal of public space garbage containers. Norfolk County would be required to amend the current waste collection contract to include the Simcoe BIA public space garbage containers as part of the current waste collection contract. The cost to assume this service twice per week is approximately \$16,700. Since the Simcoe BIA will no longer be providing this service, staff would recommend that the waste grant of \$7,000 provided to the Simcoe BIA be discontinued under this option.

*Option 3: BIA continues to manage public space collection until new collection contract*

For option 3, staff are proposing to discuss with the Simcoe BIA to continue managing the collection of public space garbage containers as an interim measure until the start of the new curbside waste collection contract in September 2026. At that time, the collection of public space garbage containers will be completed by the curbside waste collection contractor at the same frequency for all BIAs/downtown areas. The Simcoe BIA may request the continuation of the waste grant to offset the costs related to

providing this service. Should Council choose Option 3, staff will need to report back to Council in November 2024 with the outcomes of the discussion to ensure alternate arrangements can be made (if required) so there is no disruption of service.

### **Financial Services Comments:**

#### Current Budget

The Approved 2024 Levy Supported Operating Budget includes an allocation of \$7,000 for a transfer payment to the Simcoe BIA as directed by Council through the 2024 Levy Supported Operating Budget Deliberations.

The County currently does not collect waste from public space garbage containers in Simcoe because a third-party handles this service delivery. If Council approves an Option to begin doing so (or when the County begins doing so upon the commencement of a new curbside collection contract as approved by Council through Report EIS-24-068, presented at the September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Council-in-Committee meeting), this will represent a service level increase, so it is expected that increased budget would be required to accommodate.

#### Option 1

The County does not currently have an agreement with Norfolk Active Community Living (NACL). It is unclear whether the organization would grant the County funding to hire individuals to perform this service.

The estimated cost for the County to provide dumpsters as the drop-off point for collection is \$3,900. Assuming no allocations are provided to the Simcoe BIA for the purposes of garbage collection and the 100% funding was secured from NACL for the labour, this would likely result in a budgeted decrease to the Proposed 2025 Levy Supported Operating Budget.

However, if 100% funding was not secured, it may not be feasible to proceed with this Option. While the Option hasn't been fully investigated, staff believe it would be unlikely that this Option would be cost-effective in the event no funding was secured for the labour of the individuals, in comparison to Option 2.

#### Option 2

The estimated cost for the County to collect the public waste garbage containers in Simcoe for 2025 is \$16,700. To deliver this service in 2025, the existing curbside contract must be amended prior to the end of the year.

Overall, assuming no allocations are provided to the Simcoe BIA for the purposes of garbage collection in 2025, this will result in a budgeted increase \$9,700, or approximately 0.00% of the net levy requirement. As a result, a Council Approved Initiative (CAI) of \$9,700 should be included in the Proposed 2025 Levy Supported Operating Budget.

### Option 3

It is unclear whether the Simcoe BIA would be receptive to Option 3 given previous information received by staff, and it is further unclear how much budget would be required for the upcoming year if this Option were to proceed.

If the Simcoe BIA accepts the idea, they could submit an updated request for garbage-related expenses with their presentation included in the 2025 Budget Deliberations, for Council's consideration.

If the Simcoe BIA does not accept the idea than staff would need to bring another report to Council to proceed otherwise (e.g., Option 1 or 2 of this report), or consider how to avoid this service delivery in 2025, such as the removal of public space containers.

The cooperation between the County and the BIA would need to be determined before the end of November so that the result could be included in time for the printing of the Proposed 2025 Levy Supported Operating Budget.

### **Interdepartmental Implications:**

None

### **Consultation(s):**

Finance was consulted for this report.

### **Strategic Plan Linkage:**

This report aligns with the 2022-2026 Council Strategic Priority Empowering Norfolk - Putting the tools and resources in place to ensure our businesses' and residents' success.

Explanation: By ensuring the Simcoe BIA is free of waste, it aids in the creation of an aesthetically pleasing area, which encourages visitors and shoppers to the downtown area to support local businesses.

### **Conclusion:**

The Simcoe BIA as of January 1, 2025, will discontinue collecting public space garbage containers in the Simcoe BIA. As a result, Norfolk County staff have explored potential options to manage the public space garbage collection in the Simcoe BIA. Staff would like Council to decide which option they would like to pursue.

### **Attachment(s):**

- Attachment 1: Simcoe BIA Letter Aug 2024

**Approval:**

Approved By:

Andrew Grice, General Manager, Environmental Infrastructure & Services

Reviewed By:

Stephanie Davis, Director, Environmental Services

Prepared By:

Merissa Bokla, Supervisor, Waste Management