



## *The Corporation of the Municipality of Wawa*

### *Proposed Changes to Waste Disposal Site Levels of Service*

#### *Office of Infrastructure Services*

<b>Prepared For:</b> Committee of the Whole	<b>Report No.:</b> RW 2023-16
<b>Agenda Date:</b> November 21, 2023	<b>File No.:</b> C11

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the information required to determine if the current level of service at the municipal waste disposal site is necessary, especially as they relate to summer and winter hours of operation.

#### **Background**

The Municipality of Wawa's waste disposal site is owned and operated by the Municipality. The waste disposal site is located at 161 High Falls Road, and is open for public use during the following hours of operation:

- Tuesday to Friday: 11:00AM to 3:00PM; and
- Saturday: 8:00AM to 4:00PM.

The waste disposal site is closed Sunday, Monday, and provincial holidays.

The waste disposal site is staffed during its hours of operation by a part-time site attendant who is responsible for daily checks of the site and communicating needs to the Infrastructure Services management, directing patrons to the correct waste disposal area based on refuse materials, and accepting cash for waste disposal site services. In addition to the part-time site attendant, the Municipality's full-time equipment operators and truck drivers are responsible for ensuring refuse piles are pushed and packed, refuse collection bins on site are emptied, and that seasonal activities such as road maintenance and snow removal are completed regularly to ensure user safety.

Upon completion of the waste disposal site expansion, a review of the waste disposal site operations was initiated by the Infrastructure Services management team, in consultation with the current site attendant and municipal senior management. The operational review includes a comparison of seasonal hours of operation with similar communities, and a summary of annual revenues versus expenditures for the Municipality.

<b>Respectfully Submitted By:</b>	<b>Prepared By:</b> <b>Rebecca Weatherall</b> <b>Infrastructure Services</b>
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**Seasonal Hours of Operation Review**

Seasonal hours of operation were reviewed by comparing 20 communities (including the Municipality of Wawa), that had similar local population demographics, seasonal tourism, and service area sizing. The communities reviewed were:

- Municipality of Wawa
- Township of Dubreuilville
- Township of Chapleau
- Town of Marathon
- Township of White River
- Town of Blind River
- Municipality of Huron Shores
- Municipality of Arran-Elderslie
- Township of Hornepayne
- Township of Terrace Bay
- Township of Nipigon
- Township of Manitouwadge
- District of Muskoka South  
Gibson Depot – Georgian Bay
- Municipality of Lion’s Head
- Municipality of Tobermory
- Village of Kirkfield
- Municipality of Tweed
- Village of Calabogie
- Township of Ignace
- Municipality of Neebing

Out of the 20 communities canvassed for the waste disposal site review 8 communities had seasonal hour changes, with summer hours beginning at the first of the month in May or April, and winter hours beginning at the first of the month in October or November. Generally, waste disposal sites with seasonal hours changed hours to reflect changes in daylight and revenue. The following graph illustrates the total number of hours per week each community’s waste disposal site is open for both winter and summer seasons:

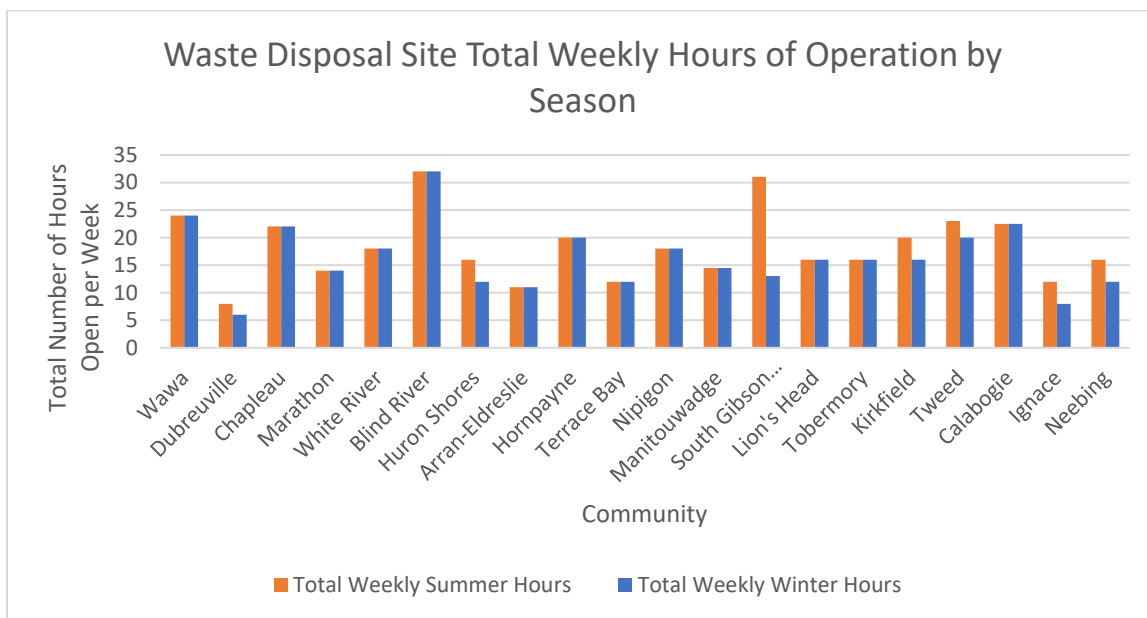


Figure 1 - Comparison of Waste Disposal Site Weekly Hours of Operation by Season

The following chart summarizes the minimum, average, and maximum total weekly hours of operation by season:

Table 1 - Weekly Hours of Operation Comparison

Hours of Operation	Winter	Summer
<b>Minimum</b>	6	8
<b>Average</b>	16	18
<b>Maximum</b>	32	32
<b>Wawa</b>	24	24

Based on these results, the Municipality of Wawa’s waste disposal site is open 8 and 6 more hours per week during the winter and summer seasons respectively, compared to the average total weekly hours of operation.

In addition to the weekly hours of operation differences, IS staff reviewed the number of days per week that each waste disposal site is open for public use. Generally, most waste disposal sites are open 3 days per week in the summer, and between 2 and 3 days in the winter. Out of the 20 communities reviewed, only 2 are open 5 days per week in the winter; Wawa being one of those communities.

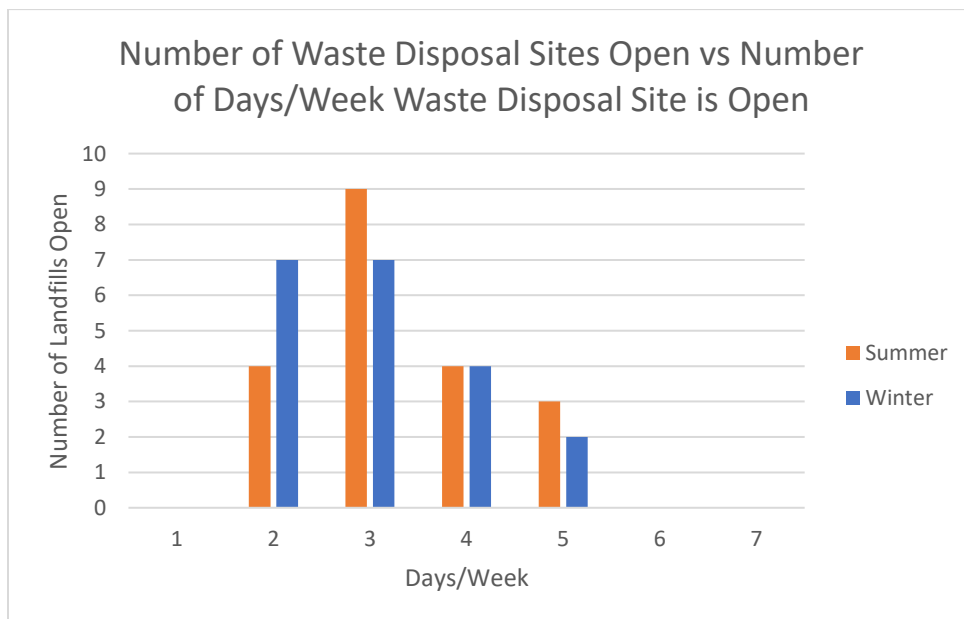


Figure 2 - Comparison of Number of Days per Week Waste Disposal Sites are Open

Based on the results above, the Municipality of Wawa’s landfill is open more often, and for a longer duration than similar waste disposal sites.

To determine which days Wawa’s waste disposal site has the most public use, daily revenues from October 2022 to October 2023 were reviewed. To determine an equivalent number of users for each day, revenues from charge accounts and cash were added together and divided by \$20/user, as the average user pays approximately \$20 per use of the landfill site. This results in a total of 3,821 equivalent users. The total users for each respective day were then added together and compared. As illustrated in the pie chart below, most users access the landfill site on Tuesdays, 58% of users access the site between Thursday and Saturday (with an almost even distribution of 19-20% of users each day), and the least number of users access the landfill site on Wednesday.

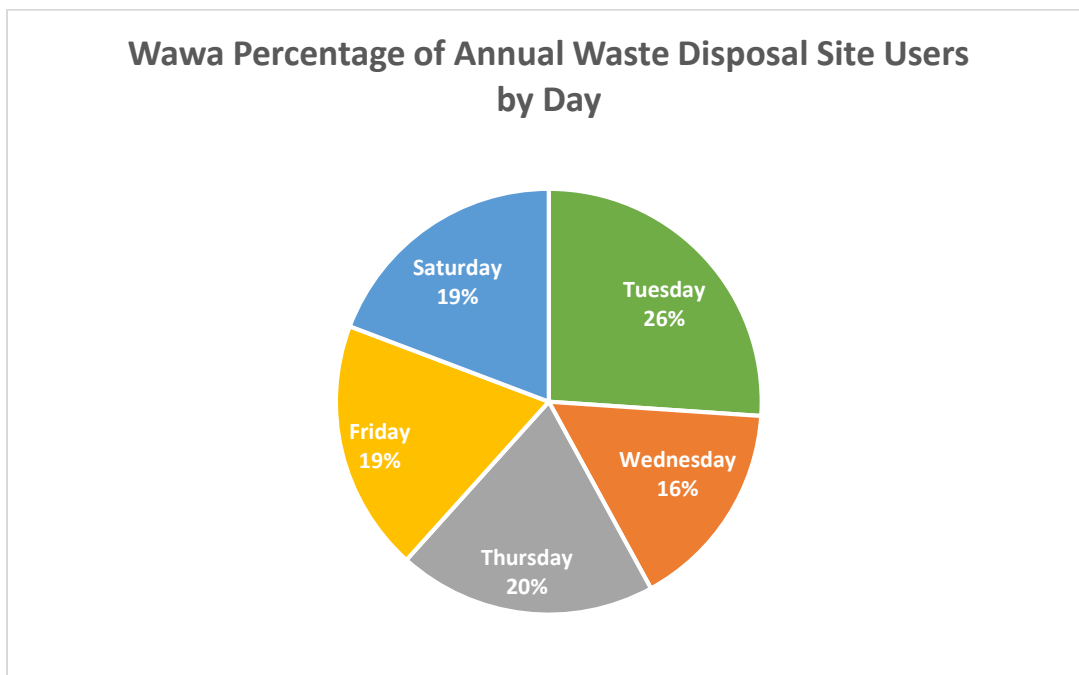


Figure 3 - Percentage of Annual Users by Day of the Week

Based on the distribution of users above, the Municipality should consider reducing the number of days the waste disposal site is open to the public to concentrate the number of users into fewer days a week. By reducing the number of days open per week, the Infrastructure Services Department could better optimize staff and equipment resources as it relates to site maintenance. Expenditures related to site maintenance are summarized in the revenues and expenditures review below.

**Waste Disposal Site Revenues and Expenditures**

An important consideration when providing needed municipal services, such as waste disposal sites, is the service’s ability to recover its own operation and maintenance costs. To identify whether Wawa’s waste disposal site can recover its own costs, revenue and expenditures over the past 5 years (2019- Oct 2023) were compared, and are illustrated in the line graph below:

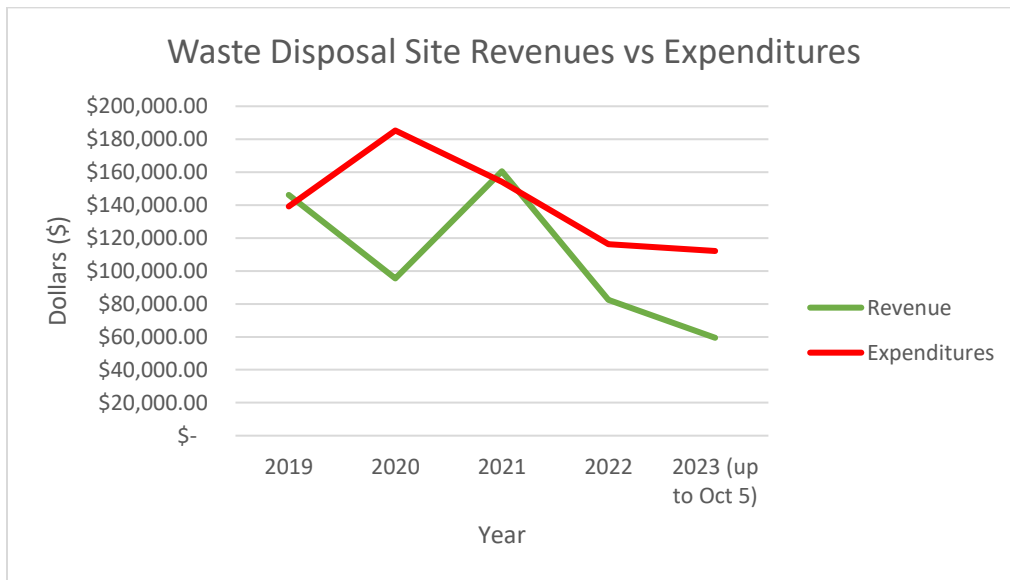


Figure 4 - Wawa Waste Disposal Site Revenues and Expenditures

As demonstrated in the graph above, the only two (2) years that the Municipality’s waste disposal site revenues surpassed its expenditures were 2019 and 2021 by \$6,971.00 and \$6,375.00 respectively. A summary of the landfill budget report indicating the waste disposal site’s revenues, expenditures, and surplus/deficit are highlighted in the table below:

Table 2 - Historical Wawa Waste Disposal Site Revenues and Expenditures

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 (up to Oct 5)
<b>Revenues</b>	\$146,103.00	\$95,506.00	\$160,535.00	\$82,510.00	\$59,414.00
<b>Expenditures</b>	\$139,132.00	\$185,293.00	\$154,160.00	\$116,312.00	\$112,121.00
<b>Surplus/ Deficit</b>	-\$6,971.00	\$89,787.00	-\$6,375.00	\$33,802.00	\$52,707.00

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When reviewing the data collected above, there are a few expenditures to be aware of:

- Wages to operate and maintain the site have remained consistent (with the exception of 2019);
- Consulting and professional services have remained relatively stable, with the exception of higher expenditures in 2020 which can be attributed to the landfill expansion design; and
- From 2019-2021, \$40,000 was transferred to reserves (total of \$120,000 over 3-years).

Regardless of the variances in expenditures, there are noticeably lower revenues generated for the years 2020, 2022 and 2023. When reviewing the current landfill site fees, the Municipality of Wawa's fees are generally on par with other waste disposal sites. A budget report summarizing the revenues and expenditures above is included as an attachment to this report.

## Alternatives

When considering the future of Wawa's waste disposal site, optimizing the life span for the new cell and cost recovery are two (2) important factors to consider. The IS management team considered the following alternatives for its waste disposal site operations:

### **Alternative 1: Do Nothing**

**Alternative 1:** Do Nothing, means leaving current landfill operations the same. The hours of operation will be kept as-is, operating at 24 hours per week, five days a week. Doing nothing will ultimately lead to an increasing waste disposal site budget deficit. **This alternative is not recommended by staff.**

### **Alternative 2: Reduce the Number of Days Open**

**Alternative 2** considers the number of days that the landfill is accessible for public use. Concentrating users to access the waste disposal site on a smaller number of days would assist in focussing operational and maintenance efforts, which has the potential to reduce costs. As an example, Wednesdays has the least amount of users annually, operating hours Wednesday could be redistributed to days that consistently have more users. Further research and consultation with Mayor and Council, staff, and stakeholders would need to be considered before definitively determine the total reduction in days for public use. **This alternative is recommended by staff.**

### **Alternative 3: Reduce the Total Hours Open per Week**

**Alternative 3** would consider the number of hours per week that the waste disposal site is accessible for public use. During the week, the landfill is open only 4-hours per day, where it is open for 8-hours on Saturday. Considering most of the waste disposal site's users come on Tuesdays, it could be appropriate to reduce hours on Saturday (or other days of the week) in favour of adding hours to the days with the most use. Further research and consultation with Mayor and Council, staff, and stakeholders would need to be considered before definitively determine the total reduction in days open and hours of operation. **This alternative is recommended by staff.**

### **Alternative 4: Combination of Alternatives 2 and 3**

**Alternative 4** would see a reduction in the number of days and total weekly operating hours for the municipality's waste disposal site. When comparing to similar waste disposal sites, Wawa is open 2 to 3 days more, and 6 to 8 hours more weekly. An example of how Wawa could change the number of hours of operation to be in line with similar sites is being open 3-days per week, for 6-hours (total of 18 hours per week). Based on user attendance and revenue generated, a new schedule could be to have the landfill open Tuesday and Friday from 9AM-3PM, and Saturday 8AM-2PM. Further research and consultation with Mayor and Council, staff, and stakeholders would need to be considered before definitively determine the total reduction in days open and hours of operation. **This alternative is highly recommended by staff.**

### **Alternative 5: Increase the Number of Day Open and/or Operating Hours**

**Alternative 5** acknowledges that it is possible that the landfill is not open enough to encourage users to come to the site. However, due to the trend of falling revenues for the existing operating hours, it can be deduced that marginally increasing hours of operations will not generate sufficient revenues to close the deficit gap the site is experiencing. **This alternative is not recommended by staff.**

### **Staff Recommendation**

When considering the alternatives, it is important to note that affecting total hours of operation can, and likely will, have an impact on the total number of days open. Therefore, staff ultimately recommends pursuing **Alternative 4**, which would result in reducing the number of days open for public use, reduce the total number of hours of operation per week, but overall increase the number of hours open per day by concentrating operational hours to fewer days per week. In addition, further investigation and consultation with user groups may result in the development of seasonal operating hours.

**Recommended Next Steps**

- Resolution from Mayor and Council in support of the level of service change at the waste disposal site with respect to reducing days open and total hours of operation;
- Collecting feedback from stakeholder groups on what their level of service needs currently are at the waste disposal site;
- Providing results from stakeholders feedback to provide Mayor and Council with information necessary to support recommended changes to the levels of service at the waste disposal site;
- Public education and engagement regarding the changes in levels of service; and
- Implement level of service changes as per legislated requirements and purchasing of new signage for the waste disposal site.

Two other factors to consider to ensure the longevity of the new waste disposal site are:

- The current refuse collection by-laws; and
- opportunities to divert wastes from the site.

Currently, residents are permitted six (6) bags per week as part of the refuse collection contract. The acceptance of this large amount of bags may be the reason for low waste disposal site usership. When compared at a high level to other communities, Wawa's refuse collection by-law is out of date and should be reviewed for best practice considerations. In addition, Wawa currently only participates in tire, scrap metal and electronics recycling programs. Recently, the waste disposal site has seen an increase in large furniture items such as mattresses and living room furniture. Opportunities to divert large refuse items such as furniture should be pursued to reduce the volume of waste entering the waste disposal site. Further, diversion of household wastes such as food scraps would assist in the site's reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Due to the nature of wildlife in the area, many residents do not compost in their backyards for a fear of attracting wildlife. By investing in emerging and innovative waste diversion programs, the Municipality can reduce the number of bags for household refuse collection, reduce the amount of waste that is decreasing the life cycle of the new landfill cell, and ultimately decrease the amount of operation and maintenance efforts by staff; all of which complement and support the reduction in the number of days the landfill site is open and a reduction in operating hours.



Based on the above, Staff also recommends:

- Mayor and Council support investigating by-law amendments for household refuse collection best practices; and
- Mayor and Council support investigating other waste diversion streams to protect the longevity of the new cell lifespan.

## **Conclusion**

Ultimately, it is in every resident's best interest socially, environmentally, and economically to revise our waste disposal site operations and management. The municipal landfill site's future will be directly impacted by its ability to provide services that are safe, environmentally responsible, and economically sustainable. Revising the level of service through days and hours of operation at the landfill is just one small component to bigger landfill site operational challenges, but an important step to begin considering refuse collection and waste diversion opportunities.

If you have any comments or questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

*Respectfully submitted by:*  
Becca Weatherall

## **Attachments**

The following documents are attached to this report for information:

- Budget Report for 2019-2023

**MUNICIPALITY OF WAWA**  
**Budget Report By Function**



From Category : 1000 To Category : 9200

Account Code : 1-?-4020-???? To : 1-?-4020-????

Account Code	Account Description	2023 ACTUAL VALUES	2022 ACTUAL VALUES	2021 ACTUAL VALUES	2020 ACTUAL VALUES	2019 ACTUAL VALUES
1-->	GENERAL FUND					
4020-->	LANDFILL					
3-->	Revenue					
1-3-4020-7400	Landfill - Landfill Revenues	-59,414	-82,510	-160,535	-95,506	-146,103
	Total Revenue	-59,414	-82,510	-160,535	-95,506	-146,103
4-->	Expense					
1-4-4020-1000	Landfill - Dist Wages -Regular	39,137	46,634	43,036	46,840	28,057
1-4-4020-1015	Landfill - Dist Wages -Non-Reg	20,609	26,809	23,762	24,906	27,370
1-4-4020-1040	Landfill - Overtime - FT	243	521	2,212	1,216	387
1-4-4020-2010	Landfill - Materials/Supplies	851	1,289	1,068	948	3,545
1-4-4020-2030	Landfill - Hydro	939	1,734	1,396	1,515	1,373
1-4-4020-2035	Landfill - Taxes	1,745	1,692	1,879	1,142	1,129
1-4-4020-2050	Landfill - Telephone	49	200	0	0	0
1-4-4020-2215	Landfl-Consulting/Professional	45,408	36,222	38,959	67,398	35,909
1-4-4020-2315	Landfill - Cash Over / Under	55	224	-162	-168	-94
1-4-4020-3010	Equipment Rental (Non-Owned)	3,085	0	0	0	0
1-4-4020-4020	Landfill - Insurance	0	1,187	909	826	827
1-4-4020-6500	Landfill - Annual Amortization	0	0	210	629	629
1-4-4020-6501	Landfill - Disposal - Fixed As	0	0	891	0	0
1-4-4020-7140	Landfill - Building Maintenanc	0	0	0	41	0
1-4-4020-8000	Landfill -Transfer To Reserves	0	0	40,000	40,000	40,000
	Total Expense	112,121	116,512	154,160	185,293	139,132
	LANDFILL Surplus/Deficit	52,707	34,002	-6,375	89,787	-6,971
	Total GENERAL FUND	52,707	34,002	-6,375	89,787	-6,971