



# **Corporate** NO: R210

# **Report** COUNCIL DATE: September 25, 2000

## **REGULAR COUNCIL**

**TO: Mayor & Council**    **DATE: September 19, 2000**

**FROM: General Manager, Planning & Development**    **FILE: 4600-001**

**SUBJECT: Possible Bio-medical Waste Facility in Surrey**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Planning & Development Department recommends that:

1. Council receive this report as information;
2. Copies of this report be circulated to the Bio-Medical Waste Task Force, Ministry of Environment, and Greater Vancouver Regional District; and
3. The Ministry of Environment and Greater Vancouver Regional District be requested to incorporate a more intensive public consultation process to be conducted by the facility proponents, as outlined in this report.

## **BACKGROUND**

Following receipt of a memo from the General Manager, Planning & Development on a possible bio-medical waste storage and processing facility in Surrey (Appendix I), Council at the Monday, July 31, 2000 Regular Council meeting, passed the following resolution:

*"That staff, in light of the memo circulated to Council, prepare a report to Council in the fall on the matter of an appropriate location for accommodating hazardous biomedical waste."*

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Overview of Proposed Facility**

As outlined in our previous memo to Mayor and Council, the various Lower Mainland Health Regions (Vancouver-Richmond, North Shore, Simon Fraser, and South Fraser) are looking to establish a regional treatment facility for bio-medical waste. Currently, bio-medical waste is packaged and shipped across the border to disposal facilities in Washington. The City has been advised by the Chairperson of the Task Force overseeing this initiative that the proposed facility will employ state of the art technology to treat special (anatomical) waste (pathological, sharps and chemotherapeutic waste) as well as a steam sterilizer system to treat non-anatomical medical waste such as gowns, gloves, dry dressings, etc. Non-anatomical waste will comprise roughly 80% of the total waste treated at this facility. The treatment process sterilizes the waste which can then be landfilled.

According to the information received, the building required to house the processing technology will be approximately 10,000 square feet in area with a site area of approximately 1 acre. Roughly 4 tonnes of waste material will be processed on a daily basis. The proposed facility is to be a joint public - private partnership with the various Health regions partnering with a private vendor which will construct and operate the facility. It is anticipated that the contract with the successful vendor will be finalized by the end of September.

Although a site for the proposed bio-medical waste facility has yet to be selected, staff understand that Surrey has not been ruled out as a possible location. The selection of a site including obtaining various provincial, regional and local government approvals will be up to the successful contractor.

### **Zoning Requirements**

Biomedical waste is classified as a special waste under the Waste Management Act and any location for a possible biomedical waste facility in Surrey would need to be zoned High Impact Industrial Zone (IH). This zone includes as a permitted use the "Storage and handling of *dangerous goods* and *special wastes*, provided that the use is authorized by and in compliance with a permit issued by the Waste Management Branch of the Ministry of Environment; and in conformity with the regulations of the "Surrey Fire Prevention By-law".

There are approximately 151 hectares (374 acres) of High Impact Industrial zoned land in Surrey generally located in the West Newton and the East Cloverdale industrial areas (Appendix II).

### **Potential Issues and Locational Criteria**

In evaluating if there is an appropriate site for a bio-medical waste storage and processing facility in Surrey, there are a number of potential issues related to site selection which should be considered, as follows:

1. The compatibility of the proposed site in relation to neighbouring land uses and the interface with and impact on neighbouring sites (hours of operation, noise, etc.).
2. The transfer of medical wastes to, from and within Surrey and the adequacy of transportation routes and the traffic impacts of such a facility.
3. Site servicing including potential migration of pollutants into water courses and waste discharge into sanitary and storm systems.
4. The volume of daily shipments and the amount of on-site storage in relation to the amount of material which may be processed on a daily basis.

In view of these potential issues, the following locational criteria are suggested:

1. The facility should be located on a site which is currently zoned High Impact Industrial Zone (IH) or can be rezoned to IH and is surrounded by existing IH zoned properties. The IH zone is the only zone which would permit a bio-medical waste facility. While the City has been advised that the proposed facility will have state of the art "high tech" equipment and operate as a clean, non-polluting business, bio-medical waste is considered a "special waste". Selecting a site which is currently zoned High Impact Industrial and is surrounded by sites zoned High Impact Industrial would increase the probability that the proposed use will be compatible with the adjacent existing uses.
2. The facility should be located in the heart of an industrial area and not on the edge of an industrial area. In this way, the impacts on non-industrial uses can be reduced.
3. The facility should be located on or near a designated truck route. This will facilitate the transportation of the "special waste" to the site while minimizing travel distance on public roads. As well, emergency vehicles can quickly respond to any emergency situations.
4. The site must be fully serviced.

## **Review Process**

Depending upon the existing zoning of the selected site, the City's involvement in the review process for the proposed bio-medical waste facility will differ. The following is an outline of the process based on two zoning scenarios:

### **1. Selected Site Zoned High Impact Industrial Zone (IH)**

Under this scenario rezoning is not required. The vendor (partner) chosen by the Health Regions to construct and operate the bio-medical waste facility will be required to obtain a Special Waste Storage Permit from the Ministry of Environment. The Ministry's review process for this Permit requires notification to the municipality within which the vendors selected site is located as well as public notification. The public notification requirements include the posting of a billboard outlining the application, written notice to the owners immediately neighbouring the selected site, and publication in the B.C. Gazette as well as a local newspaper (Appendix III). Comments from the Municipality and the public received by the Ministry will be taken into consideration in its evaluation of the permit application.

### **2. Selected Site Not Zoned High Impact Industrial Zone (IH)**

Under this scenario, rezoning of the selected site will be required. The Planning & Development Department will process the rezoning application in the normal manner including pre-notification and a Public Hearing. The applicant may be required, at Surrey's discretion, to undertake public consultation and involvement as part of the rezoning process and to address any concerns identified through this process. Council can decide to approve, approve with conditions, or deny the rezoning application. The Ministry of Environment's Special Waste Permit application under Scenario 1 above, can proceed simultaneously with the rezoning process. However, the Ministry's decision on the permit application will be subject to Council's decision on the rezoning application.

## **Review Process Options**

In view of the preceding commentary, if Council is of the view that the City and public review process is inadequate, if an IH-zoned site is selected by the vendor, two alternative approaches may be considered by Council.

### Option 1

Council could amend the High Impact Industrial Zone (IH) to specifically exclude bio-medical waste facilities as a permitted use.

Amending the High Impact Industrial Zone (IH) to exclude bio-medical waste facilities as a permitted use will ensure that any such facility would require a rezoning process including a Public Hearing. This will ensure that all concerns related to such a facility including location and impacts are addressed to Council's satisfaction. However, requiring a rezoning may lengthen the review process and delay approvals. Also, this approach "discriminates" against one high impact industrial use, i.e. bio-medical waste facility, while allowing other such uses including the storage and handling of other dangerous goods and special wastes, as defined under the Waste Management Act.

### Option 2

Continue to allow bio-medical waste facilities as a permitted use in the IH Zone but request the Ministry of Environment to include a more extensive public consultation process as part of the Special Waste Storage Permit review process

Under its review process for Special Waste Storage Permits, the Ministry of Environment requires that the Municipality and the public be notified of such permit applications. These comments are then considered by the Ministry together with the technical merits of the proposal in its evaluation of the permit application. The City is notified of the permit application as part of the Ministry's public notification process.

To better replicate the Public Hearing process, the City could recommend that written notice be provided by the Ministry to owners of neighbouring properties within a 100 metre (300 ft.) radius of the subject site similar to Council's Public Hearing notification policy (Appendix IV). Moreover, the Ministry of Environment could require the vendor to undertake a public consultation process including a public information meeting. Under this option, the results of the public consultation should be forwarded to the City to assist in establishing a position to communicate to the Ministry.

### Preferred Option

The Planning & Development Department recommends that Council endorse Option 2, as outlined above. Option 2 continues to allow the High Impact Industrial Zone (IH) to accommodate bio-medical waste facilities as a use. The proposed bio-medical waste facility is an exceptional "one-time" project. The current Ministry of Environment review process for Special Waste Storage Permits is generally sound. However, as part of its public notification process, the Ministry of Environment should expand the area for notification to include the owners of properties within 100m (300 ft.) of the selected site (which is the same as the City's Public Hearing notification distance) and require the vendor to undertake a more extensive public consultation process including a public information meeting before a final decision is rendered on the selected site. As well, the City should be informed about the outcome of the public consultation process so that it can establish a position on the selected site. A copy of this report should be forwarded to the Ministry with a request that the site selection criteria outlined in this report be provided to the vendor and the application review process be amended to include the steps outlined above as Option 2.

## **CONCLUSION**

The various Lower Mainland Health Regions are looking to establish a region-wide bio-medical waste facility for the processing and treatment of bio-medical waste. While a site has yet to be selected for this facility, staff understand that Surrey has not been ruled out as a possible location. This report outlines general locational criteria for the siting of a bio-medical waste facility as well as a recommended review process should the vendor choose to pursue locating the facility on a site in Surrey. In addition, this report recommends that the Ministry of Environment require the successful vendor to conduct an extensive public consultation process as well as receive input from the City before a decision is made on the selected site.

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Planning & Development Department

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### Appendices

- I. Previous Memo to Mayor & Council On A Region-wide Bio-medical Waste Facility
- II. Heavy Industrial (IH) Zoned Properties in Surrey
- III. Ministry of Environment Project Review Flow Chart
- IV. Recommended Ministry of Environment Project Review Flow Chart

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