

Village of Haines Junction January 29, 2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting 6:00 pm

This meeting will be held in Council Chambers. Attendance at this meeting is also available through Zoom web or teleconferencing (see <u>below for instructions)</u>.

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order
- 2. Acknowledgement of Champagne and Aishihik First Nations Traditional Territory
- 3. Adoption of Agenda
- 4. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest
- 5. Adoption of Minutes of Regular and Special Council Meetings
- 6. Proclamations
- 7. Delegations
- 8. Public Hearings and Public Input Sessions
- 9. Old Business
 - a. Review and discuss public input gathered during the January 13, 2025 public meeting on tipping fees
 - Attached for discussion: PowerPoint presentation on roundtable results
 - Attached for reference: Roundtable results
 - Attached for reference: Public meeting PowerPoint (roundtable introduction and instructions start on slide 23)
- 10. New Business
- 11. Bylaws Reports, Readings and Adoption
- 12. Correspondence
- 13. Council Reports and Notice of Motions
- 14. Questions from the Public
- 15. Motion to Close Meeting to the Public
- 16. Adjournment

The next Regular Council Meeting will take place at 7:00 pm on February 12, 2025 in Council Chambers and via Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8676347100 Meeting ID: 867 634 7100 ___ One tap mobile +17806660144,,8676347100# Canada +12042727920,,8676347100# Canada Dial by your location • +1 780 666 0144 Canada • +1 204 272 7920 Canada • +1 438 809 7799 Canada • +1 587 328 1099 Canada • +1 647 374 4685 Canada • +1 647 558 0588 Canada • +1 778 907 2071 Canada Meeting ID: 867 634 7100 Find your local number: https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kbg7uk0jkn

Please call the Village Office (634-7100) during regular office hours for assistance in joining via zoom.



Committee of the Whole

Review and discussion of public input at the January 13 Public Meeting on Tipping Fees

January 29, 2025

Background: Community Roundtables



History of community concerns

Concerns were raised about the new Waste
 Management and Cost Recovery Bylaw:
 At the Public Information Session held in September 2024
 See summary: hainesjunction.ca/p/waste-management
 In letters sent to Council in October and November 2024
 See letters: hainesjunction.ca/p/council-meetings

Concerns include:

- 1. The high cost of end-of-life vehicle disposal
- 2. The impact of new fees on low-income residents
- 3. The need for more education and outreach
- 4. How salvaging and the free store will be managed
- 5. Potential increased illegal dumping
- 6. The cost to dispose of grubbing / stripping and how this may impact lot affordability
- 7. The relatively high by-volume fee for residual waste
- 8. The desire for a composting program
- 9. Disposal of household waste at commercial / institutional bins in town

Given Council's decision to move forward with regionalization, how can community concerns be addressed, so we can move forward with something everyone can live with?

Community solutions: January 13 roundtable instructions

Tables had 30 minutes to:

- a) Select a topic(s)
- b) Discuss:
 - i. Options for how this concern could be addressed
 - ii. Pros/cons of each option
 - iii. Make a recommendation
- c) Write a <u>concise</u> summary of your group's recommendation on the flip chart paper provided

After all tables reported back, everyone was given three stickies to "vote" on which solutions they consider to be the most important for **Council to further** explore in the nearterm

Results: Community Roundtables



- >100 people attended the public meeting
 - Not all stayed for the roundtable discussion
- 13 Roundtables
 - Not all concerns were addressed; some duplication
- 47 solutions were suggested
 - Duplicates
- 206 votes
 - Not everyone who attended voted or used all their votes



Free days (combined votes = 34)

Community solutions proposed

- Mimic Whitehorse's approach
 - Last year, Whitehorse held clean-up days on May 16-20, 2024 and Dec 26, 2024
 - On clean-up days, residential tipping fees are waived on the following sorted items: garbage, food and yard waste, construction and demo waste, mattresses and box springs

• Suggested timing:

- o Quarterly
- o Twice/year

- Free days undermine goal to encourage waste diversion
- Delaying waste disposal could lead to unsightly yards and odor issues
- Free days could strain staff capacity

Composting (combined votes = 30)

Community solutions proposed

- Much needed
- Most important thing we can do to
 - o Decrease volume
 - o Limit toxicity of our landfill
 - o Limit consumer waste
- Consider curbside pickup
- How maximize community participation?
 - o Buy a bin for each home
 - o Has to be easy

- Staff are currently working with YG on acquiring a composting unit
- Increasingly intensive regulatory regime
- Interim solutions could be explored

Free store (combined votes = 27)

Community solutions proposed

- Relocate
- Keep drop off free
- Staff needed to regulate what comes in
 - o Summer students
 - o Contract out
 - o Community members are willing to volunteer
 - o Provide honoraria to volunteers
- Opening hours
 - o Reduce hours to what VHJ can afford to staff
- Funding
 - o Use donated refundables
 - o Membership fee
- Create a list of acceptable items
 - o Include usable kitchen ware
 - o Broken items = garbage
- Coordinate with thrift store
 - $\circ~$ Help navigate incoming garbage

- The free store is not a major source of waste diversion as almost of it is eventually recycled
 - ~90% of the material entering the free store winds up being recycled
 - $\circ ~$ 5% landfilled
 - \circ ~ 5% is re-homed
- The free store is an important community service for low-income residents
- Recent closure highlights health and safety issues
- The current free store location is suboptimal

Out of region users (combined votes = 27)

Community solutions proposed

- How do we account for its cost? Need to collect data on:
 - ➤ Where it is coming from
 - ➤ How much is coming
- Free store is a tourist attraction
- Provide a discount for local users

- Will be difficult to track
 - Deposited at Village, Parks or Highways bins, gas stations, hotels
 - These locations also collect garbage from local users
- Local businesses have raised concerns about getting more garbage from locals who are avoiding paying tipping fees
- The Village, Parks and Highways provide and maintain bins as a public service

Consultation/committee (combined votes = 25)

Community solutions proposed

- Why:
 - Combat apathy e.g. the Village is not interested in public input
 - Address disengagement e.g. outcomes are pre-determined

• When:

- $\circ\,$ Consult before actions are taken
- o Frequent planning for further steps

• How:

- \circ Need to budget for it
- $\circ\,$ Keep record of different ideas over time

- A working group could be formed
- Having specific mandates and deliverables helps groups to excel
- Ground-level engagement brings fresh ideas and energy

Education and outreach (combined votes = 24)

Community solutions proposed

- Provide information on:
 - how to recycle / compost to help individuals reduce their tipping fees
 - o why we sort recyclables when some of these items are put the landfill
 o items are actually recycled
- Fund educational activities through:
 - Donated refundables fund
- Host community yard sales

- What is recyclable is in constant flux
 - New Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) legislation
 - Commodity prices affect what is recyclable, and costs of recycling
 - o International changes, local effects
- Information sharing/education opportunities
- Encourage reuse by creating/hosting a free store site on Facebook

Flat rate/annual fee (combined votes = 12)

Community solutions proposed

- Charge all users an annual flat rate
- Mimic Mayo's approach
 - o Annual fee for residential customer: \$80
 - o Annual fee for residential customer: \$160
 - o Residential 3 month \$25
 - \circ Residential 6 month \$40
 - \circ Commercial 3 month \$50
 - \circ Commercial 6 month \$80

- Flat fees disincentivize waste reduction
- Flat fees disproportionately affect small households and lower-income residents

Other waste management issues (combined votes=12)

Community solutions proposed

• Same fees for all

- Diverting recyclables will bring cost down to \$1-2/month; at these rates there is no need for different rates for low-income users
- Contracts with YG Departments (school, campgrounds, housing, etc.)
- By-volume residual waste fee
 - \$204 for truckload of garbage bags is too high; \$20-\$40 is more reasonable
- Planning for new waste streams
 - o E.g. electric vehicles
- Need to increase what can be recycled • E.g. glass

- Regionalization agreement requires us to have same rates for all residential users
- The by-volume residual waste fee was an error and should be corrected

Salvage (combined votes = 9)

Community solutions proposed

• Tickets/credits

- Provide a ticket to people when they salvage that allows them to bring that material back for free
- Create a credit system for removing things from the dump
- Construction materials
 - Create a free store for good construction material and metals to provide easier access for salvaging
 - Advertise when salvage materials are available for pick up at construction sites

- Salvage credits would be difficult to administer
- Health and safety issues
- Mayo issues (free) scavenging permits

Support low-income users/seniors (combined votes = 8)

Community solutions proposed

- Financial supports
 - Provide low-income residents with a yearly pass
 - Free days
 - Will need to define low income
- Educational supports
 - Encourage community members to help [seniors/those with limited mobility] bring their garbage to the dump
 - Provide information on how to recycle / compost will help individuals reduce their tipping fees
 - Advertise when salvage materials are available for pick up at construction sites
- Lower the price to dispose of end-of-life vehicles; adjust later
- Same fees for all
 - Diverting recyclables will bring cost down to \$1-2/month; at these rates there is no need for different rates for low-income users

- Regionalization agreement requires us to have same rates for all residential users
- Privacy issues
- Support could be given to local non-profit groups that support low-income users
- Vehicle disposal fees are based on principle of cost-recovery; Council could decide to subsidize
- The free store provides important access to needed items

Grubbing/stripping (from Jan 14 Contractor meeting):

Solutions proposed

- Improve road conditions beyond gate for commercial users
- Provide options for disposal of clean fill
- Explore tub grinder
- Review price for disposal of grubbing materials
- Provide commercial access to facility on Monday/Tuesday

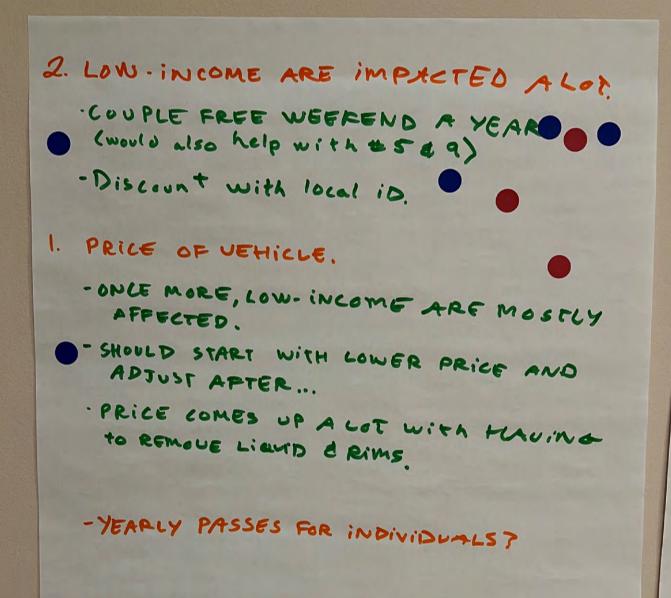
- Construction season starts ~ May; time to resolve concerns
- Discussions are ongoing with contractor community

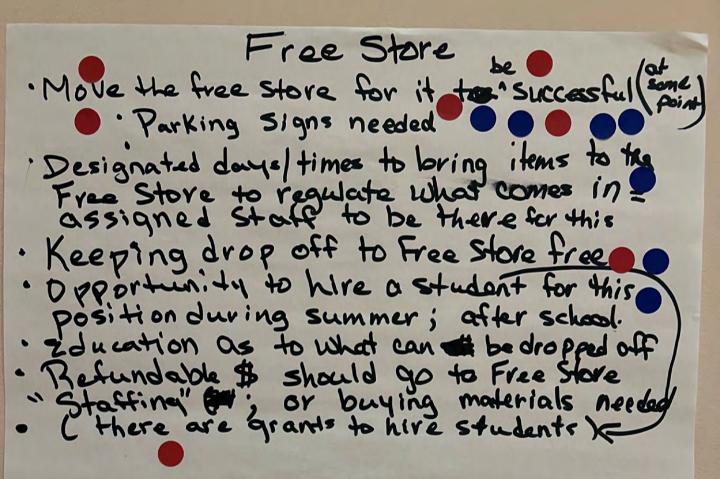
Concerns raised earlier, but not substantively addressed in the January 13 roundtables:

- 1. The high cost of end-of-life vehicle disposal
- 2. The impact of new fees on low-income residents
- 3. The need for more education and outreach
- 4. How salvaging and the free store will be managed
- 5. Potential increase in illegal dumping
- 6. Cost to dispose of grubbing / stripping and how this may impact lot affordability
- 7. The relatively high by volume fee for residual waste
- 8. The need for a composting program
- 9. Disposal of (local) household waste at commercial bins in town

lour.3t Garbage Where is it coming from? how much ? how do we account for it's cost? Yukoner, Communnity identified to see the difference.

FLAT RATE ANNUALLY FOR ALL USERS (LIKE MAYO DOES). A FREE DAY OCCASIONALLY (QUARTERLY) FOR ALL. (LIKE WHITEHORSE DOES.)





Salvaging & Free Store · Let people salvage without a cost (per after take things at of the dump to re-use part of it, will they than have to pay again to bring unused parts back) Membership cord for the freestore so prople can brig & take things. many contented could be an honourarian for a voluntour to sort. · Our thrift store could be imparted. * - no charge for the toft store so they can navige to incoming garbage. (Could the thrift store be more connected to the free store ?) Salvage material out that allows then to bring that much motorsal back for free? · Free store is its own tourist a thraction. · Free store idea but for construction material -CADIET to decens & salvage - An area where good / sems - good metals can be piled.

Freestore 1. Need staff 2. Restricted hours for drop off statt salary. 4. include kitchen ware that is usable 5. Broken items = garbage 6. Offtopic but support for /host (freeday) community yard sales. Hus been dove before ic at school -gym equipment

Statest

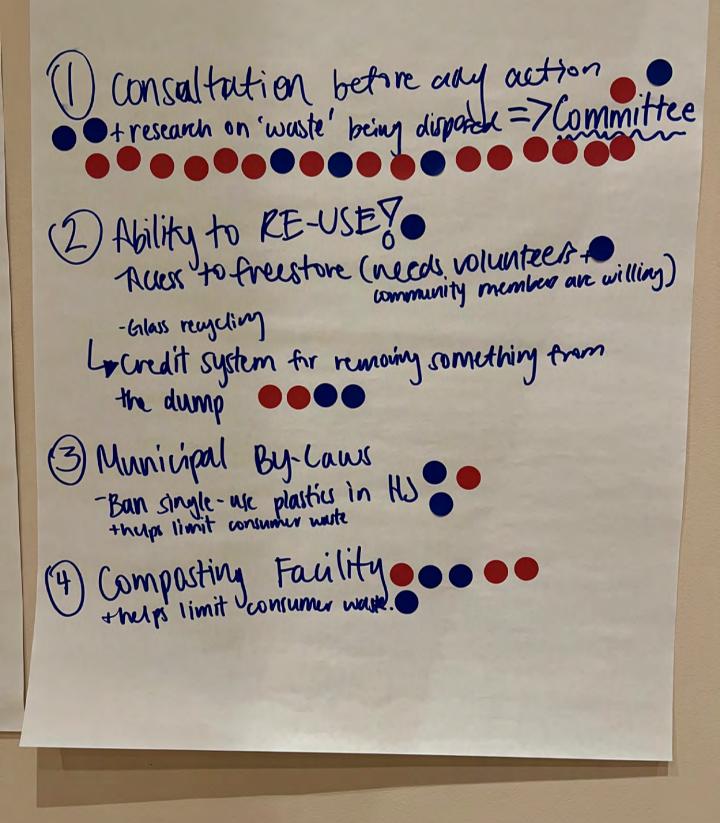
COMPOSTING . much Needed, most important thing to I solume atoxicity to our landfill - consider possibility of compost - curbside. - buying a bin for each individual home. - how do we get the maximum input from the community (for everything) Has to be EASY people are lazy.

· Educate about reycle/compost to reduce tipping fees. -Community with help others to' shaff' to the dump. - How do we define low income? - Free dump for all twice a year -Salvingo - Salvinge • Construction sites could let the public Know when they have waste materials: . Grie one week. LOW - Income

Suggestion () Inform us all as to why we sort recycle in order for these items to be put back into the dump site. . . . Please update us on which items actually are recycled. Thank. You.

* Refundables collected should go to educating people on recycling.? * 204 for truckload of garbage bags is too much. (*20-40 more 1000 * Will you have contracts in place with YTG Dept. (YTG Campgrounds, Yukon Housing, School etc.)-*Consider EV's coming in to landfill. * Contract out FREE STORE * Why a different amount for "low income" - encourage everyone to recycle then it would be #1-2/month.

On soing process of dump development (Reuse Hisetups, Education) . Community based consultations . Working group . Lo frequent planning for further steps . Lo trail of different ideas over time . Lo boudget for it



Dublic Meeting

Pointless Costs are pre-determined - will not be reduced

VHJ-not interested in Public Import



Public Meeting:

Tipping Fees

January 13, 2025

Agenda



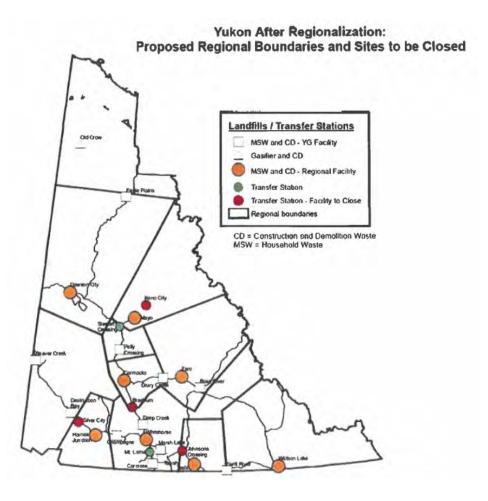
Time	Agenda Item
6:00 pm	Welcome/introductory comments (CAO)
6:05	Presentation: Landfill regionalization in Yukon (YG)
6:15	Q&A re: Landfill regionalization in Yukon
6:30	Presentation: Local impacts of landfill regionalization
6:45	Q&A re: Local impacts of landfill regionalization
7:00	Roundtable discussion: community concerns and solutions
7:30	Reports from roundtables
8:00 pm	Meeting adjourned

Landfill Regionalization



Yukon moves to regional waste management

- YG is advancing a territory-wide Regional Waste Service model in rural Yukon
- This involves:
 - Investing in regional landfill sites
 - Standardizing regional landfill services



News Release: <u>https://yukon.ca/en/news/government-yukon-advances-territory-wide-regional-waste-service-model-rural-yukon</u>

How this change is being implemented

- YG is closing 3 transfer stations
 - Cost savings put to regional landfills
- Tipping fees at <u>all</u> regional landfills to:
 - shift from tax-base to user pay
 - eliminate "dump shopping"
- Increased fines for illegal dumping



News Release: <u>https://yukon.ca/en/news/government-yukon-change-waste-management-system</u>

Why this change is being implemented

Over time, regionalization is intended to:

- Improve waste management practices and diversion
- Increase lifespan and reduce environmental liability
- Address increasing regulatory requirements



Read the 2018 Report from the Ministerial Committee on Solid Waste: https://yukon.ca/sites/yukon.ca/files/cs/cs-solid-waste-action-plan.pdf



Regional waste management:

- Why is this happening?
- How is this happening?
- What are the timelines?
- What are other communities doing?



Local Impacts of Landfill Regionalization



What this change means to Junction residents

Council signed an interim agreement on April 11, 2024

VHJ must:

- Establish sorting requirements
- Staff a gate attendant
- Establish tipping fees
- Charge the same tipping fees to all residential users
- Tipping fees must be comparable to other communities

<u>YG will</u>:

- Partially offset costs of regional households
- Support groundwater testing costs
- Share closure/post-closure costs
- Continue to pay for designated materials
- Continue to pay for non-commercial special waste until EPR is implemented in 2025
- Help with environmental issues

What this change means to Junction residents

- Council passed the Waste Management Cost Recovery and Sorting Requirements Bylaw on <u>September 25, 2024</u>
- The purpose of this bylaw is to:
 - > Ensure the Village is eligible for Regionalization
 - > Reduce the amount of waste entering the landfill
 - > Set tipping fees based on the type of waste
 - > Establish fines for illegal dumping within the municipality



Process for setting tipping fees

Tipping fees will be:

- 1. <u>Set according to the principle of cost</u>recovery.
- 2. <u>Calculated</u> each year during the budget process.
- 3. <u>Posted</u> for 1 month before new fees come into effect.

The new Waste Management and Sorting Requirements Bylaw :

- Is based on research on what <u>other</u> Yukon communities are doing
- 2. Enables an <u>annual review</u> so fees are based on local data



Estimated costs of operating the landfill

Source: Bylaw #415-24 Waste Management Cost Recovery and Sorting Requirements Bylaw

ltem	2024	2025	
Operating costs			
Contract services	\$61,300	\$65,000	
Equipment and supplies	\$19,000 \$25,00		
Maintenance	\$4,000	\$4,000	
Utilities	\$13,750 \$13,		
Insurance	\$3,710	\$4,000	
Recycle funds paid out	\$40,000	\$40,000	
Administration			
Salaries	\$225,104	\$235,000	
Training and travel	\$2,900 \$3,		
Debt servicing	n/a n		
Transfer to reserve	n/a	\$100,000	
Landfill closure and post-closure costs ¹	\$15,000	\$15,000	
TOTAL OPERATING COSTS	\$384,764	\$504,860	
Capital and Projects			
SWMP Design Implementation	\$200,000	TBD	
Landfill Front Area Modernization	\$1,500,000	TBD	
TOTAL CAPITAL AND PROJECT COSTS	\$1,700,000	TBD	

¹¹ The total net present value of the estimated total costs for closure and post-closure care at the end of 2023 was \$690,680.

Estimated revenues from operating the landfill

Source: Bylaw #415-24 Waste Management Cost Recovery and Sorting Requirements Bylaw

ltem	2024	2025
Tipping fees	\$0	\$252,125
Institutional User Fee	\$27,880	\$27,139
Agreements		
Grant funding	\$48,120	\$47,784
Beverage Container Refunds	\$70,000	\$66,312
Programs (Food Cycler)	\$6,600	\$0
Interim Regionalization	\$55,900	\$111,800
Agreement		
TOTAL REVENUES	\$208,500	\$505,160

Tipping Fee Schedule: 2025 Free Items

Source: Bylaw #416-24 Consolidated Municipal Fees Bylaw#343-19 Amendment #7 on Tipping Fees

Tipping Fee Category	Tipping Fee	Anticipated Revenues
Recyclables	FREE / Refundable	\$0
Compostables	TO BE ACCEPTED SOON	N/A
Clean fill	FREE	\$0
Yard and grass trimmings and brush	FREE	\$0
Wood chips and sawdust	FREE	\$0
Tires 24.5" or less, not on rim	FREE	\$0
Automotive batteries	FREE	\$0
Electronic waste	FREE	\$0
Special waste		
Paint cans	FREE	\$0
Oil/fuel filters	FREE	\$0
1lb propane bottles	FREE	\$0
Empty oil containers	FREE	\$0
Waste oil up to 10 liters	FREE	\$0
Kitchen oil up to 10 liters	FREE	\$0

Tipping Fee Schedule: 2025 Per Item Costs

Source: Bylaw #416-24 Consolidated Municipal Fees Bylaw#343-19 Amendment #7 on Tipping Fees

Tipping Fee Category	Estimated Tipping Fee Volume of Waste to be Collected		Anticipated Revenues
Residual (mixed) waste – prepaid bag tags (45L)	10,000 bags	\$1/bag	\$10,000
Residual (mixed) waste – prepaid bag tags (90L)	15,000 bags	\$2/bag	\$30,000
Residual (mixed) waste – paid at landfill (45L)	10,000 bags	\$1.25/bag	\$12,500
Residual (mixed) waste – paid at landfill (90L)	15,000 bags	\$2.50/bag	\$37,500
Bulky item	100 items	\$20/item	\$2,000
White goods with refrigerant	50 items	\$50/item	\$2,500
White goods without refrigerant	50 items	\$20/item	\$1,000
Oil tanks	10 tanks	\$125 each	\$1,250
Vehicle	20 vehicles	\$900/vehicle	\$18,000
Tires 24.5" or less, on rim	75 tires	\$50 each	\$3,750
Emergency callout to open landfill outside of regular hours	10 callouts	\$200	\$2,000

Tipping Fee Schedule: 2025 By Volume Costs

Source: Bylaw #416-24 Consolidated Municipal Fees Bylaw#343-19 Amendment #7 on Tipping Fees

Tipping Fee Category	Estimated Volume of Waste to be Collected	Tipping Fee	Anticipated Revenues
Residual (mixed) waste – by volume	200 m ³	\$60/m ³	\$12,000
Construction/demolition waste	1,750 m ³	\$15/m ³	\$26,250
Grubbing / stripping	1,500 m ³	\$25/m ³	\$37,500
Concrete	100 m ³	\$200/m ³	\$20,000
Materials containing asbestos	100 m ³	\$90/m ³	\$9,000
Uncontaminated scrap metal	200 m ³	\$30/m ³	\$6,000
Special waste			
Unknown liquids/chemicals	500 litres	\$5/liter or \$5,000/m ³	\$2,500
Hydrocarbon contaminated soil up to 1m ³	500 litres	\$5/liter or \$5,000/m ³	\$2,500
Hydrocarbon contaminated water and waste	500 litres	\$1.75/liter or \$350 for	\$875
leachate up to 200 liters		200 liters	

Other requirements

Source: Bylaw #415-24 Waste Management Cost Recovery and Sorting Requirements Bylaw

- 1. <u>Waste from outside the region</u> Waste from outside the region will be subject to a 50% surcharge. Special waste, concrete and materials containing asbestos will not be accepted if they originated from outside the region.
- 2. <u>Emergency callouts</u> to open the landfill outside of regular hours will only be offered if/when public works staff are available.
- 3. <u>Uncovered loose loads</u> (e.g. open top transport vehicles) will be subject to a 10% surcharge.
- 4. <u>Prorating</u> Loads measured by volume may be prorated if less than 1m³ at the discretion of Landfill staff



Other requirements

Source: Bylaw #415-24 Waste Management Cost Recovery and Sorting Requirements Bylaw

- 5. <u>Right of refusal</u> The Village reserves the right to refuse to accept any materials that do not meet the requirements at the discretion of Landfill Staff
- 6. <u>Right to ban</u> The Village reserves the right to ban a user who is routinely not meeting sorting requirements.
- 7. <u>Contracts with high-volume users</u> The Village may set up a contract with high-volume users.
- 8. <u>Monthly invoicing</u> May be available to small businesses and any non-residential users.



Fines for illegal dumping

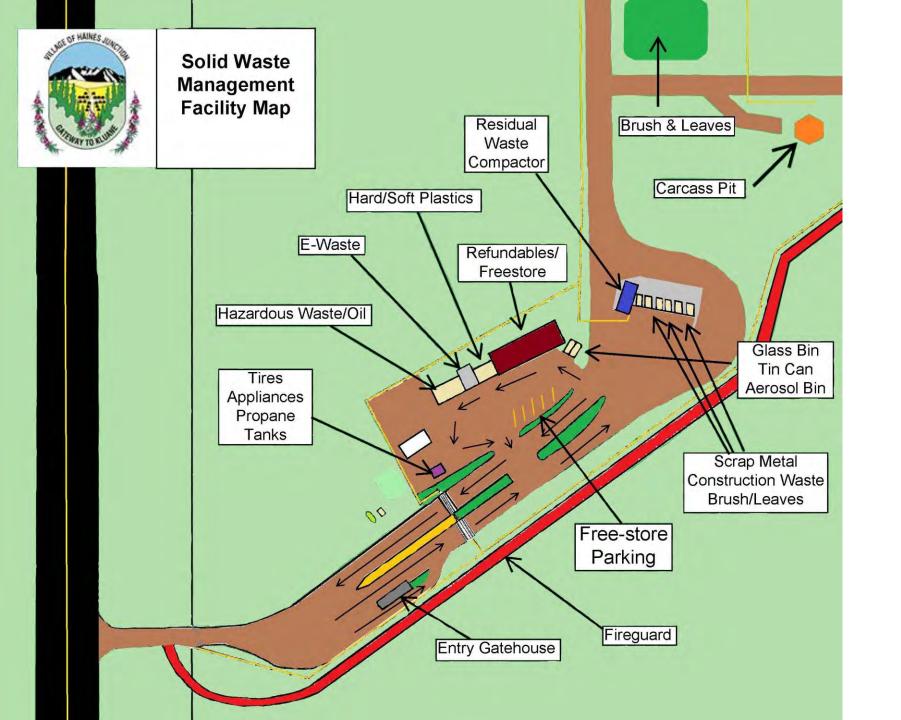
Source: Bylaw #415-24 Waste Management Cost Recovery and Sorting Requirements Bylaw

Illegal dumping includes

- a) Improper waste disposal
- b) Littering

Fines for illegal dumping will be calculated as follows

- a) Illegal dumping = Cost of cleanup + cost of tipping fee + administrative fee of \$400/m³ of material
- b) Littering: as calculated in (a), minimum fine of \$500
- c) Littering from a motor vehicle: as calculated in (a), minimum fine of \$750
- d) Transporting unsecured litter: as calculated in (a), minimum fine of \$750



Front of House Upgrades

Summary: local impacts of regionalization

Benefits

Improve waste management and diversion

Extend life of landfill and reduce liability

Prevent "dump shopping"

New landfill capital/projects reserve

Address increasing regulatory requirements

YG will help with environmental issues

YG will support groundwater testing

YG will continue to pay for designated materials

YG will continue to pay for non-commercial special waste until EPR is implemented in 2025

YG will pay for gate attendant

YG will cost share closure/post-closure costs

YG will provide funding to partially offset costs of regional households

Costs

Revenues shift from tax-base to user pay

Average household will pay \$130/year to dispose of household waste

Principle of cost recovery = no subsidy for ELV disposal

Lower income households will be disproportionately impacted

Increased illegal dumping?

Cost to dispose of grubbing/stripping may impact lot affordability?



Local impacts of regionalization:

- Sorting requirements
- Tipping fees
- Front of house upgrades
- Benefits vs. costs



Roundtable Discussion: Community Concerns and Solutions



Community concerns

Concerns have been raised about the new Waste Management and Cost Recovery Bylaw:

- At the Public Information Session held in September 2024
 See summary: hainesjunction.ca/p/waste-management
- Letters sent to Council in October and November 2024

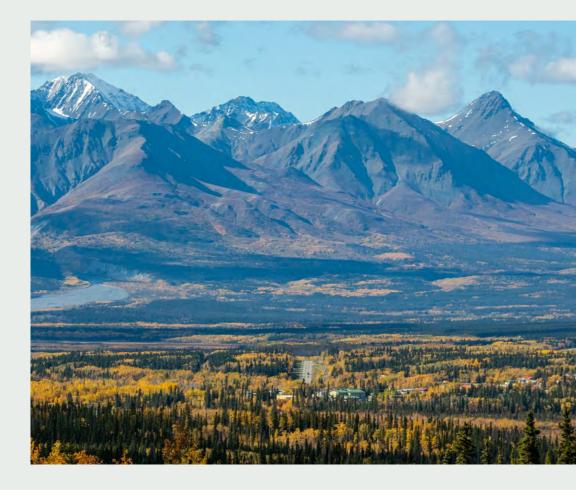
See letters: hainesjunction.ca/p/council-meetings



Community concerns

Concerns we have heard include:

- 1. The high cost of end-of-life vehicle disposal
- 2. The impact of new fees on low-income residents
- 3. The need for more education and outreach
- 4. How salvaging and the free store will be managed
- 5. The increased possibility of illegal dumping
- 6. The high cost to dispose of grubbing / stripping and how this may impact lot affordability
- 7. The relatively high by volume fee for residual waste
- 8. The need for a composting program
- 9. Disposal of household waste at commercial / institutional bins in town



Addressing community concerns within the context of regionalization

Council has decided to move forward with regionalization to:

- Prevent dump shopping
- Benefit from additional funding from YG

Given Council's decision to move forward with regionalization, how can community concerns be addressed, so we can move forward with something everyone can live with?

Community solutions: roundtable instructions

- 1. <u>Select a table with a topic that is important to you.</u>
- 2. You will have 30 minutes at your tables to:
 - a) Select a facilitator and a rapporteur.
 - b) Discuss:
 - i. Options for how this concern could be addressed.
 - ii. Pros/cons of each option.
 - iii. Make a recommendation.
 - c) Write a <u>concise</u> summary of your group's recommendation on the flip chart paper provided.
 - d) Be prepared to share a <u>concise</u> report on your discussion.

After all tables have reported back, everyone will be given three stickies to "vote" on which solutions you feel are most important for **Council to further** explore in the near-term