

Topic: Proposed Bylaw 35-2012 to amend Land Use Bylaw 20-2009

Introduction:

Proposed Bylaw 35-2012 is a Land Use Bylaw amendment to include a new definition and regulation for Composting Facility. The proposal also contemplates allowing composting facilities as a discretionary use within all residential districts.

Facts (Background Information):

Parkland County received a complaint from a County resident regarding a property owned by the Summer Village of Seba Beach which was being used by summer village residents as a composting site for yard waste. The property in question is located at 2-53123 Hwy 3, Pt. NW-07-53-05-W5. An investigation revealed that the Summer Village of Seba Beach was in fact operating a small scale composting site without County development permit approval. Even though the summer village only allowed yard waste on the site County approval is still required.

The Land Use Bylaw currently has no mechanism in place to approve a small scale composting facility and as a result a site specific Land Use Bylaw amendment was originally proposed to bring the property into compliance. The first consideration was to simply add composting facility to an already existing definition or create a new definition and regulation for a composting facility. Adding composting site to an existing definition is problematic because there is no current definition remotely close to this use. As a result staff decided to take a more comprehensive approach to this issue.

Alberta Environment only issues approvals for Composting Facilities that have an annual intake of materials (leaf and yard waste) greater than 100 tonnes. However the province does require composting facilities receiving less than 100 tonnes of material per year to register with the Province.

The proposed definition and regulations are drafted from the Standards for Composting Facilities in Alberta.

Proposed definition:

Compost Facility means a site that is used for the purpose of collecting leaf and yard waste with no wood based-material with a diameter greater than 1cm at its thickest point to create a stable humus-like material. No kitchen waste (fruit and vegetable peelings, tea bags, coffee grounds etc.)

shall be allowed on the site. The maximum capacity for a compost facility shall not exceed 100 metric tonnes per year.

Proposed regulations:

Compost Facility

1. The following applies to a Composting Facility:
 - a) Compost facilities shall follow the "Standards for Composting Facilities in Alberta" and "Code of Practice for Compost Facilities".
 - b) Compost quality finished product must meet the standards contained in the most current Guideline for Compost Quality, published by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME).
 - c) The compost facility shall not cause environmental damage, danger to public health or public safety.
 - d) The composting facility shall be screened from adjacent properties and roadways to the satisfaction of the Development Authority.
 - e) All composting piles of materials shall not be vertically higher than the approved screening.
 - f) The owner/applicant may be required to undertake mitigating measures to minimize any odour escaping the facility, at the discretion of the Development Authority.
 - g) The owner/applicant shall provide a Debris and Dust Control Plan to the satisfaction of the Development Authority.

Parkland County currently has one location (transfer station) that accepts yard waste. Giving County residents the opportunity to develop local community composting facilities would assist in reducing the County's costs for handling and transporting yard waste materials from the transfer station.

Parkland County has undertaken a residential composting program through the Rain Barrel and Composter Sale initiative they developed this past summer. This program was developed to encourage County residents to compost thereby reducing the impact on the environment and the County's transfer station facilities.

One of the sustainability challenges outlined in The Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) is solid waste management. The ICSP acknowledges that "there remain opportunities for improvement in terms of the amount of recyclable and compostable materials that can be diverted from the landfill." And goes on to state that "Parkland County's challenge in this area is to increase the diversion rate of recyclables and compostable items from the residential and operational sources to the highest degree possible."

Alternatives:

1. To amend Land Use Bylaw 20-2009 on a site specific basis to allow the existing composting site on Pt. NW-07-53-05-W5
2. Not to proceed with the proposed amendment of the Land Use Bylaw and issue a Stop Order to cease the activities on Pt. NW-07-53-05-W5

Conclusion/Summary:

Administration supports the proposed Land Use Bylaw amendment to incorporate a new definition and regulations for a composting facility as a discretionary use in the Residential Districts.

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