



REQUEST FOR DECISION

SUBJECT:	FoodCycler Science Pilot Program		
SUBMISSION TO:	REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING	REVIEWED AND APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION	
MEETING DATE:	April 22, 2025	CAO:	MANAGER:
DEPARTMENT:	ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	DIR: RA	PRESENTER: ZS
STRATEGIC PLAN:	Governance	LEG: SS	

RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

Provincial (cite) – N/A

Council Bylaw/Policy (cite) – N/A

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

MOTION: That Council accept the FoodCycler Municipal Food Waste Diversion Pilot Program and alternative Lomi Food Recycling Program, for information.

BACKGROUND/PROPOSAL:

During the February 18, 2025 Committee of the Whole, FoodCycler Science presented their community Food Cycle Science program and subsequently the following motions were made:

MOTION 25.012 Moved by: Councillor Tom Burton

That Committee of the Whole accept the presentation from Food Cycle Science for information.

CARRIED

MOTION 25.013 Moved by: Councillor Sally Rosson

That Committee of the Whole direct Administration to bring the Food Cycle Science program to Council for consideration of implementation in Greenview, including alternatives. CARRIED

FoodCycler Science, from Ottawa, Ontario, has developed an innovative and environmentally friendly system to help reduce organic waste in municipal landfills. The FoodCycler is a compact unit where food scraps are placed, processed with a carbon filter to eliminate odors, and turned into a nutrient-rich compost additive. Once the storage bucket for food scraps is full, it is placed in the unit, then press the power button and the unit will do the rest. The unit will run for 4-9 hours depending on the amount and type of food scraps put into the unit.

A pilot program is being offered to municipalities across Canada and is now available for Greenview. Under this program, the municipality would purchase 100 FoodCycler units at 50% of the standard cost, which is \$600.00 or \$800.00 depending on selected unit. Greenview would then sell them to residents at a further discounted price, where Greenview subsidizes \$100 of the cost to be part of the program, recommended at \$200 and \$300 per unit, depending on unit size, but this can be adjusted). Participants will use the unit for 12 weeks and then report their results.

This program was successfully tested in the County of Grande Prairie, where the 100 pilot units diverted an estimated 23.9 metric tons of waste from the landfill in one year. Additionally, it prevented 31.06 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions. At the end of the trial, 97% of participants said they would continue using their FoodCycler to divert food waste. Big Lakes County is also currently running the pilot, with results pending.

How the Program Works

The pilot includes two different units sized 3.5 liters and 5 liters. Residents can choose the size that best suits their needs. If Greenview adopts the program:

1. Sign-ups will open immediately, with a deadline of approximately three weeks.
2. Residents will choose their preferred unit size and sign up.
3. Once 100 residents sign up (or the deadline is reached), FoodCycler Science will ship the units.
4. Residents will pick up their units at the closest public service or admin building to them and start FoodCycling.
5. During the 12-week pilot, participants will track how often they use the unit each week.
6. At the end of the trial, residents will submit their data to FoodCycler Science to compile and present the results to Greenview.

After reviewing the results, Greenview can decide whether to:

- Develop a subsidy program with FoodCycler Science for discounted units and filter replacements.
- Continue promoting the FoodCycler units with no program.
- Discontinue the initiative.

The initial investment for the FoodCycler Pilot Program is estimated to cost \$10,000.00.

Alternative to FoodCycler: Lomi, Kelowna British Columbia.

Administration also researched the Lomi, a competing food waste processing unit. While similar to the FoodCycler, the Lomi has a smaller capacity, 2.5 liters, uses a different grinding system, and has three different cycle options. The different cycle options include the eco-express cycle (2-3 hours), the grow cycle (16-20 hours) that is stated to retain more nutrients in the material once the cycle is complete, and the Lomi approved cycle that balances the efficiency with a shorter cycle (5-8 hours). The newer Lomi units are stated to have smartcycle, a built-in technology to optimize run time based on the food scraps placed in the unit. The Lomi can also connect to the internet for updates and be operated via a mobile app. However, research indicates:

- The Lomi does not process as many food scraps as the FoodCycler.
- Its initial pilot program is smaller and uses older units.
- The newer Lomi units offers an optional monthly subscription for additional warranty and filter/part replacements, at \$9.00 per month.

The Lomi Pilot program offered to municipalities is designed to test the process within the community, not the effectiveness of the unit. Lomi's pilot uses the older units (the Lomi 1), instead of the newest units (the Lomi 2, and the Lomi 3 when released). For the Lomi Pilot program:

- 100 Lomi 1 units are sent to Greenview at a cost of \$75.00 per unit plus shipping.
- Greenview runs the pilot program, recommended sending out 50 units and keeping 50 as backup in case there are issues.
- Residents sign up for the pilot program, and use the unit for 3 months, then report their usage back to Greenview.

- Following the 3 month testing period, Lomi will meet with Greenview to go over the data found from the pilot program.

If the pilot program is completed, and a full-scale program does roll out, the Lomi 1 units will still belong to Greenview. Recommendations for use for these units after the pilot program is complete, would be to donate them to schools or not-for-profits; or keep them as backup units. Residents who participate in the pilot program using the Lomi 1 units are offered a discount to purchase the Lomi 2 units if they choose to continue using the Lomi units. The initial investment for the Lomi Pilot Program is estimated to be \$7,500.00.

As an alternative to Lomi's pilot program, Greenview can select to roll out a larger program with the newer units. These newer units will cost \$150.00 per unit and have an optional \$9.00 per month charge for extra warranty and replacement filters/parts for the units. This larger rollout for the Lomi units is a full sale program that would not have any trial data collected.

Lomi offers a community dashboard on their website that would be linked to all the units within Greenview, showing the usage of all the units, and approximately how much organic waste and carbon dioxide has been diverted from the landfill and transfer station.

Cost Savings for Greenview (FoodCycler)

Although the FoodCycler pilot requires an initial investment, long-term savings could be significant. In 2024, Greenview's ten transfer stations sent a combined 1,685 metric tons of waste to landfills, costing \$160,075.00 in tipping fees. Additionally, the Grande Cache landfill accepted 3,177.41 metric tons of waste in 2024. With the landfill set to close and transition into a transfer station, new costs will arise, including:

- Tipping fees: Estimated at \$203,400 annually (based on 2024 figures).
- Trucking costs: Estimated at \$69,770 annually.

Reducing waste at the source through programs like the FoodCycler could help minimize landfill trips and lower disposal costs.

It is estimated that the average family of four makes 2 tons of waste annually, with approximately 28% (0.56 tons) of that being food waste. In Grande Cache there is approximately 760 families (2021 census) which would generate 425.6 tons of food waste per year. That amount of food waste costs Greenview approximately \$40,432.00 to place in a landfill. If the units were used diligently used by 50% of the families in Grande Cache that would mean a waste reduction of approximately 212.8 tons per year, saving Greenview approximately \$20,216.00 per year.

If Greenview was to fully fund the initial pilot program of 100 units, it would cost approximately \$35,000.00. Based on a break down of the 100 pilot units saving 56 tons of waste from landfills per year, each unit would save \$53.20 per family per year. Using that number, it would take 6 years for 100 units to pay for themselves. However, every year after the 100 units are paid for, Greenview will save \$5,320.00 in landfill tipping fees. In the first 10-year span, with 100 units fully subsidized, Greenview can save approximately \$21,280.00.

If Greenview is to use a combined system (3.5L or 5L, depending on resident preference) and charge \$250.00 to each family that wants one of the 100 pilot units, it would take 1.8 years to pay off Greenview's \$10,000.00 investment. Once the units are paid for, over the first 10 years Greenview would save approximately \$42,560.00 with the 100 units in service.

BENEFITS OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. The benefit of accepting the recommended motion is that that Council will have further knowledge in the possibility of selecting a waste reduction strategy.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION:

There are no perceived disadvantages to the recommended motion.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative #1: Council has the alternative to select the FoodCycler Municipal Food Waste Diversion Pilot Program for implementation within Greenview and provide various levels of subsidization for the FoodCycler units.

ALTERNATIVE MOTION: That Council direct Administration to proceed with implementing the FoodCycler Municipal Food Waste Diversion Pilot Program, [to be fully funded by Greenview /OR at a subsidized rate of \$250.00 per unit (3.5L or 5L) /OR \$____ for a 3.5L unit and \$____ for a 5L unit], with funds to come from Unrestricted Reserves.

Alternative #2: Council has the alternative to select the Lomi Food Recycling Program for implementation within Greenview, however, Administration does not recommend this action due to the Lomi not being able to handle as many organic items, smaller unit capacity, and less machine selection range. Greenview would also need to do the legwork and data collection for the trials.

Alternative #3: Council has the alternative not to promote either pilot program and continue normal operations, however, Administration does not recommend this action because such a program supporting landfill diversion could help the life of our landfills.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION:

There are no financial implications to the recommended motion.

STAFFING IMPLICATION:

There are no staffing implication to the recommended motion.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT LEVEL:

Greenview has adopted the IAP2 Framework for public consultation.

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

Inform

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL

Inform - To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC

Inform - We will keep you informed.

FOLLOW UP ACTIONS:

Administration will follow up accordingly with the any decisions resulting from the informational motion.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- FoodCycler Science Municipal Food Waste Diversion Pilot Program
- FoodCycler Science On-Site Organics Diversion Program Survey for the County of Grande Prairie
- Foodilizer Gardening Guide
- FoodCycler Municipal Pilot Program Resident Guide.
- Lomi Smart Waste Community, (Lomi-as-a-service).
- Emails from Lomi confirming pilot program explanation.