

**2. MOTION - PHASING OUT USE OF CITY-OPERATED GAS-POWERED  
LAWN AND YARD EQUIPMENT**

**MOTION – MISE AU RANCART DE L'ÉQUIPEMENT D'ENTRETIEN DES  
TERRAINS ET DES PELOUSES ALIMENTÉ À L'ESSENCE**

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That Council approve:**

- 1. That the Public Works and Environmental Services department (PWES) commit to phasing out the use of gas-powered lawn and yard equipment when said equipment requires replacement and an electric alternative is available that meets operational needs within both city-owned and contracted services; and**
- 2. That phasing-out activities begin as quickly as possible, starting with summer operations planning in Q1 2022 and report back to the Standing Committee on Environmental Protection, Water and Waste Management as part of a Departmental Green Equipment Plan in Q4 2022.**

**RECOMMANDATIONS DU COMITÉ**

**Que le Conseil approuve :**

- 1. Que la Direction générale des travaux publics et de l'environnement (DGTPE) s'engage à mettre au rancart l'équipement d'entretien des terrains et des pelouses alimenté à l'essence dans les cas où ledit équipement doit être remplacé et qu'il existe un produit électrique de**

**rechange répondant aux besoins opérationnels dans le cadre des services assurés par la Ville et des services externalisés;**

- 2. Que les activités de mise au rancart soient lancées le plus rapidement possible, en commençant par la planification des opérations estivales au premier trimestre de 2022, et qu'on en rende compte au Comité permanent de la protection de l'environnement, de l'eau et de la gestion des déchets dans le cadre du Plan relatif à l'équipement vert au quatrième trimestre de 2022.**

#### DOCUMENTATION / DOCUMENTATION

1. Committee Coordinator's Report, Council and Committee Services, Office of the City Clerk, dated 11 March 2022 (ACS2022-OCC-ENV-0002).

Rapport du Coordonnateur de comité, Services des comités et du conseil, Bureau du greffier municipal, daté le 11 mars 2022 (ACS2022-OCC-ENV-0002).

2. Extract of draft Minutes, Standing Committee on Environmental Protection, Water and Waste Management, 22 March 2022.

Extrait de l'ébauche du procès-verbal, Comité permanent de la protection de l'environnement, de l'eau et de la gestion des déchets, le 22 mars 2022.

#### FOR THE INFORMATION OF COUNCIL

The Committee also provided Direction to Staff as noted below:

DIRECTION TO STAFF

Councillor S. Menard:

That when staff report back on Councillor King's motion they include the feasibility of phasing out gas powered lawn and yard equipment across the City of Ottawa in the community sector, exploring interventions at the procurement and operational level. This report back should include a sector wide scan of other two stroke engine bans, as well as an overview of the progress phasing out equipment in the Rec, Culture & Facilities, Infrastructure & Water Services and Emergency & Protective Services departments, along with Public Works.

Councillor M. Fleury:

1. That the City ensure that its commitment to electrification include tools across the organization;
2. That Finance and Procurement be empowered (through Purchase Orders, Invoices, Fleet, etc.) to ensuring a high level of accountability to this electrification objective, and;
3. That the City exercise caution in setting outcomes for technology if challenges occur as these technologies continue to improve.

POUR LA GOUVERNE DU CONSEIL :

Le Comité a fourni des directives au personnel comme indiqué ci-dessous:

INSTRUCTIONS AU PERSONNEL

Conseiller S. Menard :

Que le personnel détermine, dans sa réponse à la motion du conseiller King, la faisabilité d'éliminer progressivement l'utilisation d'équipement d'entretien des terrains et des pelouses alimenté à l'essence dans le secteur communautaire de

la Ville d'Ottawa, par l'examen des mesures possibles dans l'approvisionnement et les opérations. La réponse doit comprendre une analyse sectorielle d'autres interdictions d'utilisation de moteurs à deux temps ainsi qu'un survol de l'avancement de l'élimination de l'équipement à la Direction générale des loisirs, de la culture et des installations, à la Direction générale des services d'infrastructure et d'eau et à la Direction générale des services de protection et d'urgence, de concert avec la Direction générale des travaux publics.

Conseiller M. Fleury :

1. Que la Ville voie à ce que ses efforts d'électrification visent aussi les outils dans l'ensemble de l'organisation; et
2. Que le Service des finances et de l'approvisionnement soit outillé (bons de commande, factures, parc, etc.) pour veiller à une rigoureuse reddition de comptes sur l'objectif d'électrification; et
3. Que la Ville fasse preuve de prudence dans l'établissement de livrables technologiques au cas où des défis se présenteraient au fil de l'évolution des technologies concernées.

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**SUBJECT: MOTION - PHASING OUT USE OF  
CITY-OPERATED GAS-POWERED LAWN AND YARD EQUIPMENT**

**File Number: ACS2022-OCC-ENV-0002**

**Report to Standing Committee on Environmental Protection, Water and Waste  
Management on 22 March 2022**

**and Council  
13 April 2022**

**Submitted on 11 March 2022 by Christopher Zwierzchowski, Committee  
Coordinator, Council and Committee Services, Office of the City Clerk**

**Contact Person: Councillor Rawlson King, Rideau-Rockcliffe Ward (13)  
613-580-2483, [Rawlson.King@ottawa.ca](mailto:Rawlson.King@ottawa.ca)**

**Ward: CITY WIDE**

**OBJET : MOTION – MISE AU RANCART DE L'ÉQUIPEMENT D'ENTRETIEN  
DES TERRAINS ET DES PELOUSES ALIMENTÉ À L'ESSENCE**

**Numéro du dossier : ACS2022-OCC-ENV-0002**

**Rapport au Comité permanent de la protection de l'environnement, de l'eau et de  
la gestion des déchets le 22 mars 2022**

**et au Conseil municipal  
le 13 avril 2022**

**Soumis le 11 mars 2022 par Christopher Zwierzchowski, coordonnateur des  
comités, Services au Conseil municipal et aux comités, Bureau du greffier  
municipal**

**Personne-ressource : Rawlson King, conseiller municipal, Quartier  
Rideau-Rockcliffe (13)**

**Téléphone : 613-580-2483; courriel : [Rawlson.King@ottawa.ca](mailto:Rawlson.King@ottawa.ca)**

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**Quartier : À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE**

## **REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Standing Committee on Environmental Protection, Water and Waste Management recommend Council approve:**

- 1. That the Public Works and Environmental Services department (PWES) commit to phasing out the use of gas-powered lawn and yard equipment when said equipment requires replacement and an electric alternative is available that meets operational needs within both city-owned and contracted services; and**
- 2. That phasing-out activities begin as quickly as possible, starting with summer operations planning in Q1 2022 and report back to the Standing Committee on Environmental Protection, Water and Waste Management as part of a Departmental Green Equipment Plan in Q4 2022.**

## **RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT**

**Que le Comité permanent de la protection de l'environnement, de l'eau et de la gestion des déchets recommande au Conseil municipal d'approuver ce qui suit :**

- 1. Que la Direction générale des travaux publics et de l'environnement (DGTPE) s'engage à mettre au rancart l'équipement d'entretien des terrains et des pelouses alimenté à l'essence dans les cas où ledit équipement doit être remplacé et qu'il existe un produit électrique de rechange répondant aux besoins opérationnels dans le cadre des services assurés par la Ville et des services externalisés;**
- 2. Que les activités de mise au rancart soient lancées le plus rapidement possible, en commençant par la planification des opérations estivales au premier trimestre de 2022, et qu'on en rende compte au Comité permanent de la protection de l'environnement, de l'eau et de la gestion des déchets**

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dans le cadre du Plan relatif à l'équipement vert au quatrième trimestre de 2022.

## BACKGROUND

At the 16 November 2021 meeting of the Standing Committee on Environmental Protection, Water and Waste Management (SCEPWWM), Councillor King introduced the following Notice of Motion for the Committee's consideration at its next regular meeting, originally scheduled for Tuesday, 15 February 2022:

### MOTION N<sup>o</sup> SCEPWWM 2021 20-04

Moved by Councillor R. King:

**WHEREAS** two-stroke engines used in gas-powered lawn and yard equipment have been shown to emit more than 20 times the carbon monoxide than a vehicle, are a source of [toxic and carcinogenic exhaust and fine particulate matter](#), and are frequently used near residential areas, schools, parks, and other public spaces; and

**WHEREAS** equipment reliant on two-stroke engines contributes to excessive noise pollution, and, while the City of Ottawa's current noise by-law [does not specify a maximum acceptable dB\(A\) level](#), studies have shown the average operating dB(A) level for most gas-powered lawn equipment is well above both the by-law specified level for other equipment and the World Health Organization's community outdoor daytime sound standards, and furthermore said equipment produces low frequency noise that is able to [travel over long distances, penetrate construction walls and negatively impact health, productivity, and/or quality of life](#); and

**WHEREAS** Emergency and Protective Services will be including the review of regulations for leaf blowers as an emerging issue in next Term of Council's By-Law Review Work Plan to be considered by Council; and

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**WHEREAS other municipalities across Canada and North America have already – or are in the process of – restricting or banning the use of leaf blowers or other equipment reliant on two-stroke engines in response to the various negative social and environmental impacts said equipment can have; and**

**WHEREAS the National Capital Commission (NCC) has undertaken to eliminate the use of gas-powered equipment from their contracts estimated within the next two years, and the City and the NCC have many reciprocal maintenance arrangements throughout Ottawa, such that collaborating on a phaseout of equipment will provide a cohesive experience for residents and workers throughout Ottawa; and**

**WHEREAS Council has declared a Climate Emergency and has an obligation to position itself as a leader on climate action and market transformation; and**

**WHEREAS the Public Works and Environmental Services department operates two-stroke gas-powered lawn and yard equipment for a wide range of operational maintenance activities across the City;**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Public Works and Environmental Services department (PWES) commit to phasing out the use of gas-powered lawn and yard equipment when said equipment requires replacement and an electric alternative is available that meets operational needs within both city-owned and contracted services; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that phasing-out activities begin as quickly as possible, starting with summer operations planning in Q1 2022 and report back to the Standing Committee on Environmental Protection, Water and Waste Management as part of a Departmental Green Equipment Plan in Q4 2022.**

## **DISCUSSION**

The above Notice of Motion was introduced by Councillor King at the SCEPWWM meeting of Tuesday, 16 November 2021, for consideration at the Committee's meeting



of Tuesday, 15 February 2022. With that meeting having been cancelled, it is now before Committee for consideration at its meeting of 22 March 2022.

### **RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

This report was drafted to transmit the above Motion to the Committee for its meeting of 22 March 2022. No specific Rural Implications have been identified. Staff will be available at the Committee meeting if clarification is required.

### **CONSULTATION**

This report was drafted to transmit the above Motion to the Committee for its meeting of 22 March 2022; no public consultation was undertaken in the preparation of this report.

### **Staff Comment (Public Works Department)**

The Public Works Department is supportive of this motion and is committed to phasing out gas-powered lawn and yard equipment when it requires replacement, and a suitable electric alternative is available that meets operational needs, within both City-owned and contracted services.

Phase-out activities can begin quickly. Starting with Summer 2022 operations, Parks and Forestry and Roads and Parking Services will pilot the use of electric equipment and begin testing for suitability. In addition, Parks and Forestry is currently working with Supply to request that contractors include the use of electric equipment in their Summer 2022 bids.

To reduce emissions and environmental impacts, a Departmental Green Equipment Plan will be developed to phase out gas-powered equipment across the Public Works Department. Several considerations and inputs will be required to develop this Plan, including researching and testing available equipment to determine operational suitability, reviewing existing contracts and standing offers to determine when it's possible to update contract requirements to include the use of electric equipment, assessing the financial implications of electric equipment versus gas-powered equipment, training staff, reviewing the infrastructure required for the conversion of

equipment to battery power, and reviewing market availability and supply of electric equipment to ensure reliable supply of the required items.

Public Works has begun discussions with other departments that use gas powered equipment and will continue to share key findings with them throughout the development of the Departmental Green Equipment Plan. Staff will report back to Council in Q4 2022 with the Departmental Green Equipment Plan.

### **Councillor's Comments (R. King)**

Over the last two and half years, my office has been periodically approached by residents, organizations and community associations, including the Manor Park Community Association, concerned about the many negative impacts of gas powered leaf blowers. I understand other Members of Council hear similar feedback from residents in their own communities.

To quickly highlight some of these negative impacts, it is important to know that most gas powered leaf blowers operate on a two-stroke engine, or the marginally better four-stroke engine. Other maintenance equipment also makes use of this engine which, while light and portable, is so fuel inefficient it has been found to emit more than 20 times the toxic and carcinogenic exhaust than a vehicle. Now consider how frequently the City uses leaf blowers in public parks, near schools, or to maintain other public spaces.

Beyond the air pollution concerns, these engines operate at a decibel level and frequency that the World Health Organization has determined to negatively impact our health. A typical two-stroke leaf blower operates well above the decibel level our by-law stipulates for equipment such as air conditioners, exhaust systems, or pool filtration pumps. Although we restrict the hours during which they can be used, we do not currently specify an acceptable decibel level for leaf blowers.

Since the National Capital Commission is accelerating its efforts to eliminate the use of gas powered lawn equipment from all its maintenance contracts, and the City has many reciprocal maintenance agreements with the NCC throughout Ottawa, it makes sense

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for us to accelerate City efforts to transition away from outdated, harmful technology as quickly as possible.

### **COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)**

This report is city-wide in nature.

### **ADVISORY COMMITTEE(S) COMMENTS**

This report was drafted to transmit the above Motion to the Committee for its meeting of 22 March 2022; no Advisory Committee consultation was undertaken in the preparation of this report.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal impediments to Committee and Council's approval of the recommendations of this report

### **INDIGENOUS, GENDER AND EQUITY IMPLICATIONS**

This report was drafted to transmit the above Motion to the Committee for its meeting of 22 March 2022. No specific Indigenous, Gender and Equity Implications have been identified. Staff will be available at the Committee meeting if clarification is required.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

This report was drafted to transmit the above Motion to the Committee for its meeting of 22 March 2022. No specific Risk Management Implications have been identified. Staff will be available at the Committee meeting if clarification is required.

### **ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

This report was drafted to transmit the above Motion to the Committee for its meeting of 22 March 2022. No specific Asset Management Implications have been identified. Staff will be available at the Committee meeting if clarification is required.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

This report has no 2022 budget implications. Costs and budget needs will be identified in the Departmental Green Equipment Plan report in Q4 2022.

## **ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

This report was drafted to transmit the above Motion to the Committee for its meeting of 22 March 2022. No specific Accessibility Impacts have been identified. Staff will be available at the Committee meeting if clarification is required.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

This report was drafted to transmit the above Motion to the Committee for its meeting of 22 March 2022. No specific Environmental Implications have been identified. Staff will be available at the Committee meeting if clarification is required.

## **TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

This report was drafted to transmit the above Motion to the Committee for its meeting of 22 March 2022. No specific Term of Council Strategic Priorities have been identified. Staff will be available at the Committee meeting if clarification is required.

## **DISPOSITION**

Staff will take direction from Council as appropriate.

\* Note: A minor correction was made to the report pursuant to the City Clerk's Delegated Authority to correct clerical, spelling, or minor errors of an administrative nature as set out in Schedule C, Subsection 7 of *Delegation of Authority By-Law* (being By-Law No. 2022-29) to correct the reference from "Notice of Motion" to "Motion", as the Notice had been given at the Committee's previous meeting (i.e., for consideration at its meeting of 22 March 2022).