

Region of Waterloo

Biosolids Strategy Project Charter



BIOSOLIDS
Strategy 



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www.regionofwaterloo.ca/biosolids


DILLON
CONSULTING

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The Region of Waterloo Strategic Plan (2015-2018) has identified the Biosolids Strategy as a key component of its Environment and Sustainable Growth programs, and notes the crucial importance of public engagement as part of developing these programs:

“The Region will work in partnership with the community and area municipalities to manage growth in environmentally sustainable ways and create spaces and places that enhance living, working and travelling experiences for the community.”





"We are all involved in creating biosolids, so we should all be involved in determining what we do with them as a community. The most suitable strategies take the whole community's interests to heart and we need the public to help us identify the solutions that fit."

- Kaoru Yajima
Water Services Project
Manager at the Region of
Waterloo



The Biosolids Strategy Workshop Team

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Biosolids Strategy Launch Event
Region of Waterloo Museum
November 17, 2015

1.0 Introduction

The Region of Waterloo's Biosolids Strategy: Planning for a Sustainable Solution

Biosolids are the processed organic material that remains after the treatment of our wastewater. We are all involved in creating biosolids, so as a community we should all be involved in determining what we do with them. The Region is embarking on a **comprehensive process** to develop a new Biosolids Strategy and we need everyone to be involved. The successful strategy will take the whole community's interests to heart and we need the public and all key stakeholders to help us identify the most suitable solutions.

The Biosolids Strategy will take a critical look at today's practices, consider all the available technologies and develop a sustainable way to manage biosolids within the Region to the year 2051.

Purpose of the Project Charter

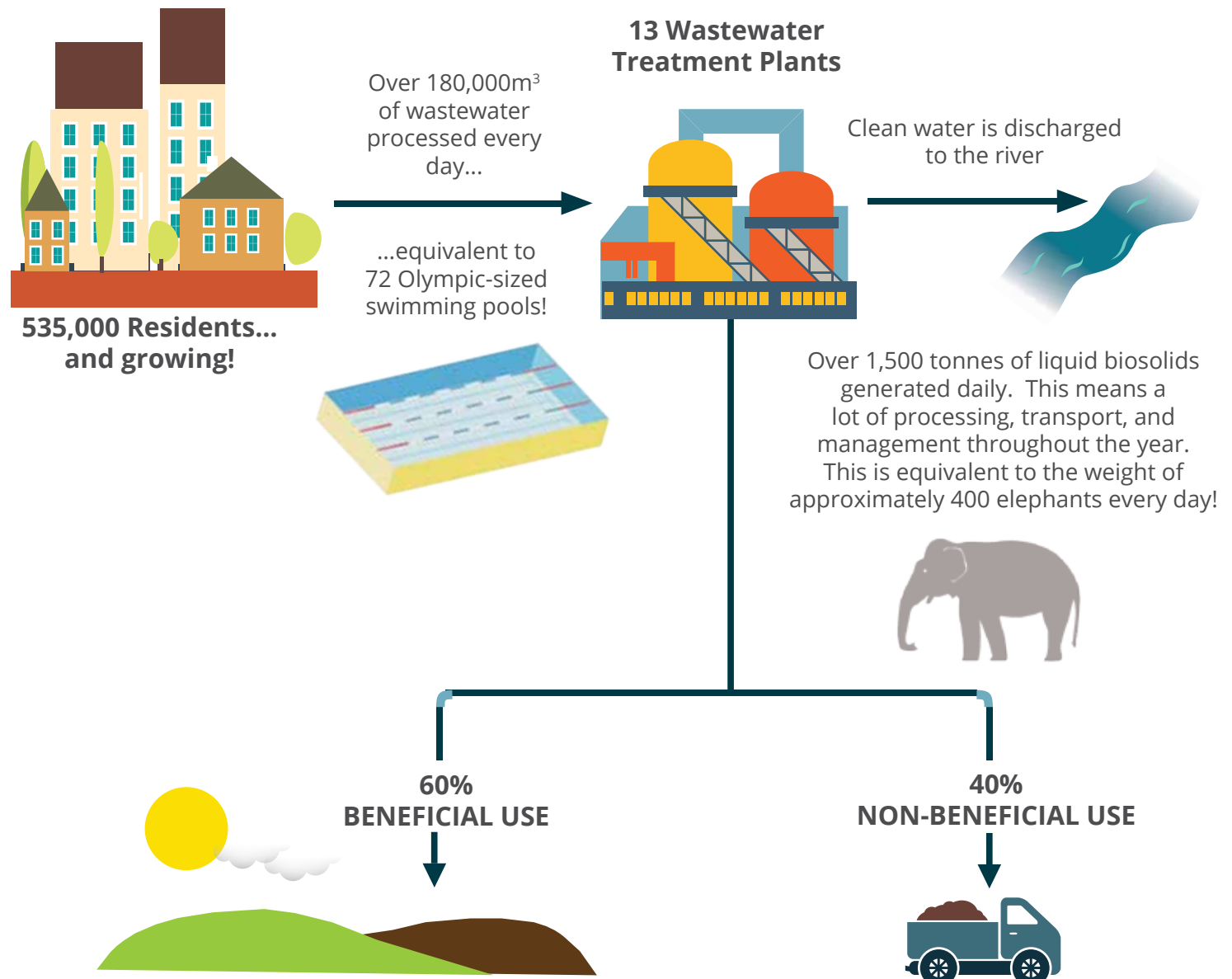
The Project Charter will act as a guiding document for the project and a communications tool for the public, describing the need for a Biosolids Strategy and opportunities for biosolids management. This document will serve as a reference tool for project team members and the public throughout the process, describing the scope and intent of the project. The Project Charter also provides background information both on biosolids management in the Region, and on the Biosolids Strategy project.

This Strategy development roadmap demonstrates the focus on meaningful and open conversations with citizens and collaboration with community partners.



2.0 A Primer on Biosolids Management in Waterloo Region

When you finish doing your business, that's when the Region of Waterloo gets busy doing its business. The diagram below describes how biosolids were managed in **2015** in the Region.



Beneficial use refers to the application of biosolids for land-based uses to improve soil quality and enhance crop growth in varying ways from year-to-year. In 2015, **Land Application** in agricultural areas surrounding the Region of Waterloo comprised roughly 45% of the Region's total biosolid output. In 2015, the Region also began **Land Reclamation**, with roughly 15% of the total used in former mining tailing ponds (near Sudbury, Ontario).

The **remainder** of biosolids produced in the Region's treatment plants **is safely disposed of in landfills outside the Region of Waterloo.**

The management of biosolids in the Region varies from year to year; this diagram provides an overview of the approach in 2015.

3.0 Why do we Need a Biosolids Strategy?

As the Region plans for its future, having a strong Strategy for biosolids management will allow for important decisions to be made with community input. A few of the main reasons why a Strategy is essential are outlined here.



The region is expected to experience population growth equivalent to the size of the City of Kitchener in the years ahead. This means that there will be additional demand and pressures placed on the current approach.



A number of environmental, social, and economic constraints will need to be considered, including land availability, range of applications, climate change, and transportation routes.



Updates to regulations can place more restrictions on how we can use biosolids, or create opportunities for beneficial use.



The costs associated with trucking, storage and disposal of biosolids will continue to rise over time, and it is important to consider the best value to the Region in developing the Strategy.



A more diversified Strategy would allow the Region the flexibility and adaptability to appropriately plan for contingencies and emergencies, manage risk, and tackle mid to long term biosolids storage needs.



With new technologies and scientific advances, the Region should consider and present new, feasible approaches and opportunities.

4.0 Roadmap to the Strategy

The cornerstone of a good Strategy is a strong commitment to engagement and the planning process.

Project Scope

The project will follow the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) process for master plans, to develop a strategy that will focus on determining the most suitable biosolids management approach for the Region. The recommended Strategy will identify the need for any new facilities. The siting of any such facilities is not part of the current project scope, and would be the focus of a separate and future process to develop the implementation plan for the recommended Strategy.

Guiding Principles

The Project Team will aim to meet the intent of the following principles that will guide the Strategy development process:

- Emphasize public engagement and participation from the community;
- Identify a long term, flexible, secure, and sustainable Strategy for the Region; and
- Broadly consider all possible alternatives in developing the Strategy.

Project Organization

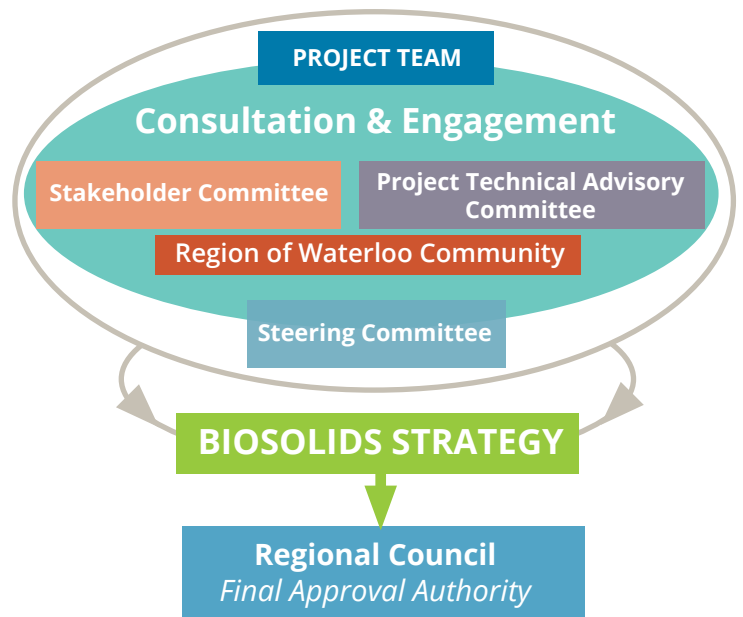
The Strategy will be developed by a Project Team, consisting of staff from the Region of Waterloo's Water Services division, along with an external consultant team. There are also three main Committees to support the Strategy with detailed roles:

- **Steering Committee**, to provide strategic direction, which is composed of Region of Waterloo technical planning and communications staff along with Regional Councillors;

- **Stakeholder Committee**, to provide advice and feedback on key aspects of the strategy, that holds diverse representation across sectors and community groups, as well as academic experts and industry representatives;
- **Project Technical Advisory Committee**, to provide technical and regulatory advice feedback on the strategy, which brings together technical and regulatory perspectives from municipal, Regional, and Provincial bodies involved in the management of biosolids.

The input from these three Committees will be combined with feedback received from the wider Region of Waterloo community.

The final strategy will be submitted to the Region of Waterloo Council, who will be responsible for final approval. An illustration of the Project organization is shown below.



5.0 Engagement Approach

Principles of Engagement

The Region of Waterloo is committed to engaging citizens and collaborating with community partners to foster meaningful and open conversation about Regional programs and services. The project has an emphasis on community input and participation at multiple points throughout the development of the Strategy, to help identify values important to the public. Throughout the Strategy development process, the Region will endeavour to provide a wide range of event types and opportunities for public engagement and involvement. The Guiding Principles for engagement are:

- Accountability
- Transparency
- Respect
- Inclusivity and Accessibility
- Responsiveness
- Clarity and Simplicity

Engagement Opportunities

Public and stakeholder engagement will be achieved through a variety of channels:



Biosolids Bulletin Email Updates



Project Website:
www.regionofwaterloo.ca/biosolids



Public Consultation Events & Workshops



Surveys (Online, In-person, and Telephone)



Online and Multimedia Engagement Channels: Open Town Hall Tool, Videos, Webinar & Educational Materials



www.facebook.com/ROWWaterServices



[@RegionWaterloo](https://twitter.com/RegionWaterloo)

Who do we Need to Engage?

A number of key stakeholder groups will be engaged in developing the Strategy, including:

- Community members
- Elected Officials
- Regulatory bodies
- Technical experts
- Academic advisors
- Aboriginal communities
- Advocacy groups
- Community-based organizations
- Business and industry experts
- Agricultural groups
- Health, environmental, and scientific experts
- Municipal staff

6.0 Issues that Matter

In developing the Strategy, there are a number of important factors that will be taken into account. The categories below represent the key issues that have been raised by community members in the early stages of the project.



Odour | Noise | Truck Traffic | Visual Impacts



Public Safety | Environmental Safety | Product Safety | Worker Safety | Public Health



Public Perception of Alternatives | Waste as a Resource | Support for Innovation | Agriculture



Existing Infrastructure Efficiency & Compatibility | New Infrastructure Needs | Security & Flexibility of Options



Climate Change | Pharmaceuticals in Wastewater & Biosolids | Energy Consumption | Beneficial use | Sustainability



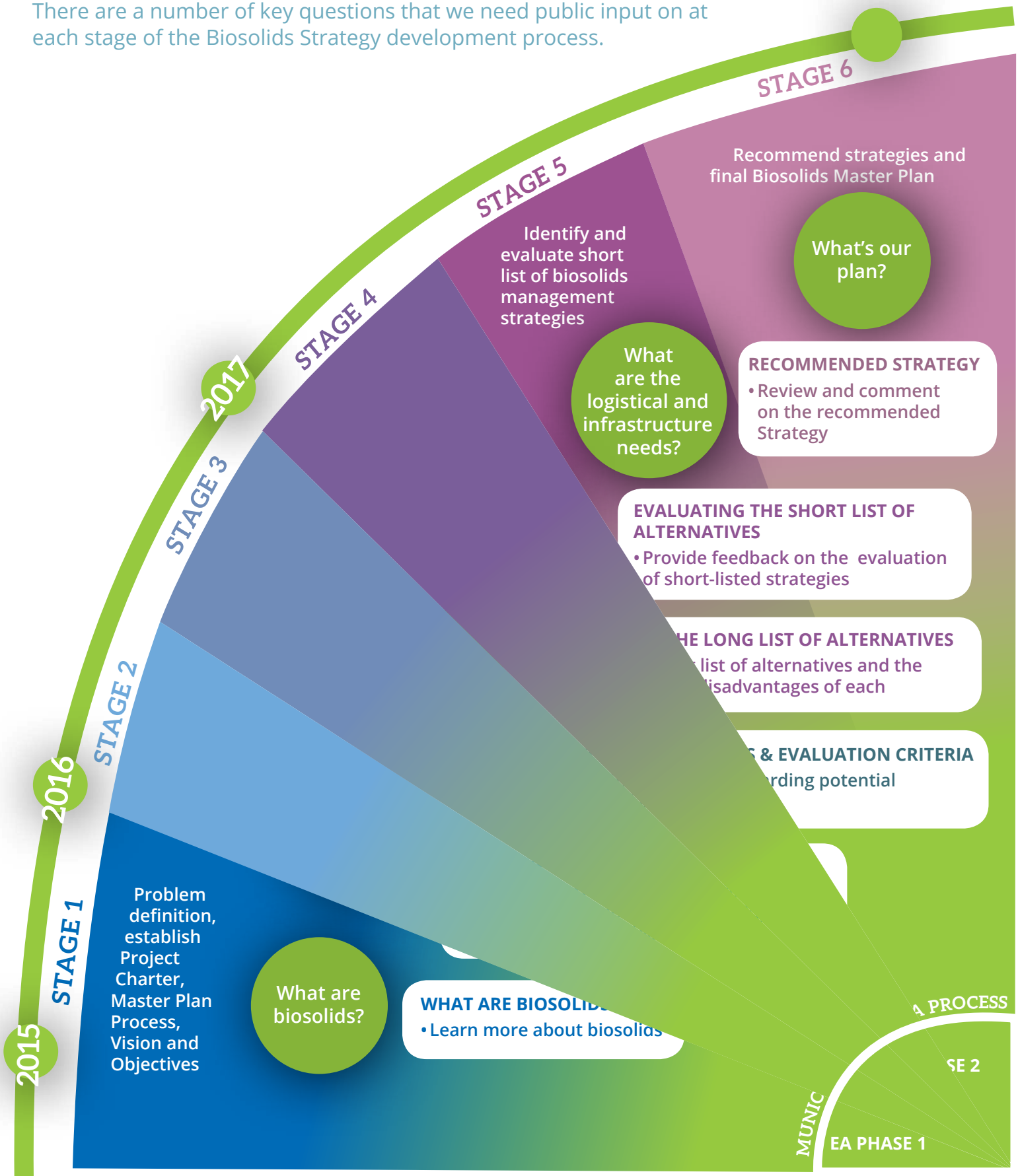
Technology | Innovation | Cost | Forms of Beneficial Uses



Transportation | Storage | Locations for Biosolids Use & Disposal

7.0 Project Timeline

There are a number of key questions that we need public input on at each stage of the Biosolids Strategy development process.





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