

Memorandum to the Council of Corporation of the Municipality of Temagami

Subject: Strathy Landfill – Expansion Update, Site Life, and Closure Cost Outlook

Memo No: 2025-M-180

Date: August 14, 2025

Attachment: None

Prepared By: Laala Jahanshahloo, CAO/Treasurer

Recommendation

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receives Memo 2025-M-180 as presented;

AND FURTHER THAT Council approves proceeding with the proposal from Story Environmental Inc. to support the Strathy Landfill expansion application and provide updated closure cost modelling at a cost of \$6,000 plus HST;

AND FURTHER THAT the associated cost be funded from the Landfill Closure Reserve.

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1. Executive Summary

This report provides an update on the operational status of the Strathy Landfill, the status of the pending expansion application with the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP), and the implications for site life expectancy, regulatory compliance, financial planning, and asset retirement obligations (ARO). The landfill reached its approved capacity under Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA) No. A7249201 by the end of 2024. An expansion application, submitted in 2018, remains under review. If approved, it would extend the site's life by approximately 16.6 years, from 2025 to 2042. The MECP has identified the application as a "district priority," but final approval is pending technical reviews. In anticipation of approval, the Municipality must now commission updated closure cost modelling and regulatory support, to ensure compliance with public sector accounting standards, reduce financial exposure, and maintain continuity of waste disposal operations.

2. Background

2.1 Site Context

The Strathy Landfill, located approximately 3 km northwest of Temagami, is the Municipality's primary waste disposal facility. It operates under Environmental Compliance Approval No. A7249201.

2.2 Capacity and Closure Status

- The approved design capacity is 63,750 m³.
- By year-end 2024, the site had accepted approximately 63,450 m³ of waste and cover material.
- This leaves no available remaining capacity under the current ECA.
- Closure was previously anticipated in 2025, with a cost estimate of \$1,194,000 for closure and post-closure monitoring, based on Story Environmental Inc.'s 2024 modelling.

3. Expansion Application Status

3.1 Application History and Clarification

- The Municipality submitted an application in 2018 to expand capacity by 39,820 m³, increasing the total authorized site volume to 103,570 m³
- MECP provided initial surface and groundwater comments in 2019
- In November 2021, Cambium Inc., in association with Tulloch Engineering Inc, on behalf of the Municipality, initiated a hydrogeological investigation and requested pre-consultation with MECP
- A groundwater review (Support Request ID 1-89657106) was submitted on December 13, 2021
- Cambium Inc., in association with Tulloch Engineering Inc, submitted a formal Feasibility Report in 2022 confirming the site's suitability for expansion
- On July 21, 2022, Cambium & Tulloch submitted two additional support requests to MECP's Northern Region Technical Support Section:
 - Groundwater Support Request ID 1-118171993
 - Surface Water Support Request ID 1-118171942
- Clarification provided in August 2025 confirmed that the expansion application seeks to increase the site's capacity by 39,820 m³ beyond the 2021 confirmed baseline of 63,750 m³, resulting in a total proposed capacity of 103,570 m³. Earlier references to a total of 80,000 m³ were due to interpreting the 40,000 m³ expansion as being based on a prior assumed baseline of 40,000 m³. This clarification aligns the current application with the waste-in-place volume confirmed by Cambium & Tulloch in their 2022 Feasibility Report.

3.2 Regulatory Review and District Priority

- As of July 28, 2025, MECP’s Environmental Compliance Officer (Brian Mills) confirmed that the file has been designated a “district priority”
- Despite this status, MECP’s technical reviews of the 2022 support requests remain incomplete
- No timeline for approval or ECA amendment has been provided
- MECP confirmed that the proposed expansion is exempt from the Environmental Assessment Act, pursuant to Ontario Regulation 101/07, meaning no further EA process is required

4. Life Expectancy Update

If the expansion to 103,570 m³ is approved, the landfill could operate until approximately 2042, significantly delaying the need for closure and post-closure activities. However, the current closure cost model assumes a 2025 closure. This model will become obsolete if the expansion is granted and must be updated to:

- Reflect the extended operating period
- Account for inflation and regulatory change
- Ensure accuracy of the Municipality’s asset retirement obligations under PSAB 3280
- Align with long-term financial planning and risk mitigation practices

5. Justification for Proceeding with Proposal

Accurate, current data is essential for responsible financial reporting, regulatory compliance, and landfill management. The Municipality’s current closure cost estimate is based on a 2025 closure scenario. If expansion is approved—as anticipated—the landfill will remain open until approximately 2042, and the existing cost model will no longer reflect the site’s true financial obligations.

To support the Municipality, Story Environmental Inc. (SEI) has submitted a proposal with the following scope of work:

- Communicate with MECP to help advance the expansion application
- Provide environmental information to address MECP comments and answer questions from the Municipality
- Attend necessary meetings related to the review and approval process
- Calculate updated closure costs, reflecting the expanded life expectancy of the landfill

These deliverables will culminate in a Life Expectancy and Closure Costs Letter, which will support the Municipality's financial planning, PSAB 3280 compliance, and regulatory submissions.

The total proposed cost is \$6,000 plus HST, to be funded through the Landfill Closure Reserve.

This modest cost is highly justified when weighed against the potential \$1.2 million closure cost that would be triggered by a delayed or denied expansion. Approving this proposal supports timely regulatory engagement, responsible budgeting, and operational continuity.

6. Conclusion

The Strathy Landfill has reached the end of its approved capacity. While the expansion application is under MECP review and has been prioritized, final approval remains pending. In the meantime, the Municipality must remain proactive. Approving the proposal from Story Environmental Inc. and funding the work through the Landfill Closure Reserve will ensure that landfill planning is based on accurate and current financial data, that regulatory processes are effectively supported, and that Council can continue to make informed decisions on the future of this critical municipal asset.