

To: David Creery, Chief Administrative Officer
From: Dan Locke, Director of Public Works
Re: Municipal Blue Box Program Update – Transition to Full Extended Producer Responsibility

AIM:

To inform City Council of the changes to the Blue Box Recycling Program under O Reg 391/21 and seek direction from Council as to the City of Woodstock continuing to deliver Blue Box curbside collection services.

BACKGROUND:

This report is to provide an update on the changes to the Blue Box Recycling Program in Ontario under O Reg 391/21. The regulation is aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the program while ensuring that Ontario remains a leader in waste diversion.

The Blue Box Recycling Program was introduced in Ontario in 1984 to encourage the recycling of household waste. The program was expanded in 2004 to include additional materials such as plastic containers but has not undergone any significant changes since then.

Recently, the County of Oxford Staff brought forward a report to seek direction from County Council.

The following recommendations were passed at County Council:

- 1. That County Council authorize staff not to pursue Circular Materials Ontario's upcoming Request for Proposal for recycling collection services.*
- 2. And further, that County Council authorize staff to investigate options for the provision of Blue Box collection services for non-eligible sources and report back to County Council.*
- 3. And further, that County Council authorize staff to investigate the service continuation of Convenience (drop-off) Depots to receive Blue Box materials from eligible and non-eligible sources and report back to County Council.*
- 4. And further, that County Council authorize the Chief Administrative Officer and the Director of Public Works to negotiate and execute amendments to waste management service agreements with the City of Woodstock and Township of South-West Oxford to*

reflect the changes associated with the transition of the municipal Blue Box Program to the province-wide common recyclable collection system.

The County Staff report and supplemental document are linked below for your reference. This report gives a better understanding of the changes and an update on the transitioning process.

<https://pub-oxfordcounty.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=10406>

<https://pub-oxfordcounty.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=10407>

County staff have been authorized by County Council to investigate options for non-eligible sources and the convenience drop off depots. There is no direction in the County Report on what the City's curbside collections service will be once the Producers have taken over the recycling program. It has been left to the individual lower tier municipalities to investigate.

COMMENT

County staff are investigating continuing service offerings for the non-eligible sources such as the ICI sector, downtown areas as well as the convenience depots such as our EnviroDepot for the materials collected in the traditional curbside recycling program.

The new circular economy collection program starts January 1, 2026, and all Oxford County Municipalities transition on Dec 31, 2025 which effectively means that the Oxford County Municipalities just move to the new program.

The City needs to understand its role, effective Jan 1, 2026, when these changes take effect for the City of Woodstock residents. To do this staff need to investigate the options that are available to Woodstock.

Option 1: Partner with a Contractor that is positioned to be awarded the entire Oxford County Catchment area for Recycling Collection services.

We currently have a contractual relationship with GFL, and it would be logical to investigate a further contractual agreement with them for the city to be a sub-contractor for the recycling collection services in Woodstock.

Option 2: The City would cease to provide curbside recycling collection services and the Producers would take over full control of the curbside residential collection recycling program Jan 1, 2026.

These changes are expected to have a significant impact on the Blue Box Recycling Program in Ontario. To minimize the impacts to Woodstock residents it is important to understand what the City's role could be in the newly created Producer Responsibility model effective Jan 1, 2026. The next key milestone is the submission of bids for the curbside collection services in Q4 2023.

It is expected that there will be a loss of curbside recycling collection services for a number of areas in the city when the new program takes effect in 2026. Examples in institutional uses, commercial and industrial businesses along with downtown collection

service. The County will explore options to continue services in each of these areas. City Council will have an opportunity to determine if it wishes to continue curbside service delivery and whether it will be funded from the City sources should the County opt to end service.

RECOMMENDATION

That City Council approve Staff to explore the option of partnering with a Contractor that is positioned to be awarded the entire Oxford County Catchment area for Recycling Collection services within Woodstock.

Authored by: Dan Locke, C.E.T., Director of Public Works

Approved by: David Creery, P.Eng., MBA, Chief Administrative Officer