



Hamilton

INFORMATION UPDATE

TO:	Mayor and Members City Council
DATE:	February 14, 2020
SUBJECT:	Waste Free Ontario Act Update - Blue Box Transition Plan (ES20002) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
SUBMITTED BY:	Craig Murdoch Director, Environmental Services Public Works Department
SIGNATURE:	

The following information is provided as an update on the current and next steps related to the Waste Free Ontario Act, 2016 (WFOA), specific to the Blue Box Transition Plan.

Summary of Information Provided to Date by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

The WFOA's objective is to move the Blue Box Program to a Full/Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) model. In August 2019, Minister Jeff Yurek, of the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP), provided Stewardship Ontario (SO) with a direction letter to transition the funding and operational responsibility of the blue box program from municipalities to producers. The direction letter included a timeline for transitioning the Blue Box Program, as follows:

- June 30, 2020 – deadline for when SO must provide a plan to the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority (RPRA).
- December 31, 2020 – deadline for the RPRA to approve the transition plan.
- January 1, 2023 – when municipalities and First Nation communities are first eligible to transition.
- December 31, 2025 – when all municipalities and First Nation communities will complete transition.

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Approximately one third of municipalities, or municipalities that represent one third of the annual collected blue box tonnage, will be transitioned each year between 2023 to 2025.

Consultation

City staff are part of two stakeholder groups that are consulting on the Blue Box Transition which include the MECP stakeholder group and the Ontario Waste Management Association EPR and Recycling Committee. Staff will provide comments on the draft transition plan and regulations both directly and through these groups. The MECP notified stakeholders the next opportunity to provide comments will be a policy paper released in the Spring of 2020 on the Environmental Registry of Ontario. This policy paper will establish the framework of the draft regulations that will regulate the transition of the Blue Box Program and what the new Program will look like. In addition to providing comments, the MECP stakeholder group provides staff with the opportunity to participate in consultation sessions with the MECP. Consultation sessions to date took place on December 17, 2019 and January 22, 2020. The December session focused on what materials should be included in the regulations, type of properties which would receive collection, and collection service level. The January session discussed acceptable diversion outcomes and targets. The next consultation session will be held on February 24, 2020 and stakeholders will be asked to discuss the Blue Box Program as a common collection system and review discussions from previous sessions. Future sessions are planned to discuss how the Blue Box Program will transition while we await the policy paper from the MECP in May.

Hamilton's Preferred Transition Year

On October 29, 2019, at the joint AMO/Continuous Improvement Fund update on the blue box transition, it was identified that municipal staff should analyse program costs to determine the most advantageous transition year for their municipality (2023, 2024 or 2025) and seek Council endorsement for the recommended transition year. While the Province has not yet determined what mechanism will be used to choose when municipalities will transition, waste program staff and Council are in the best position to decide when is the best time to transition our Blue Box Program based on our specific circumstances (assets, contracts, etc). AMO is asking that a Council resolution be passed by June 30, 2020 and should include Council's preferred date to transition based on existing service provision and the rationale for the selected transition date.

Next Steps

- Staff will continue to consult with the Waste Management Advisory Committee (WMAC) on issues related to the transition progress and provide a report to the

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Public Works Committee this Spring requesting endorsement of a recommended transition year.

- Staff will continue to participate in consultation opportunities used to develop the transition plan. The next stakeholder consultation session is on February 24, 2020.
- Staff will advocate for the consideration of assets and contracts during the consultation process.

If you require more information please contact Angela Storey, Manager of Business Programs, at extension 6483.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Not applicable

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