

<b>TO:</b>	<b>CHAIR AND MEMBERS CIVIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING ON APRIL 16, 2019</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>KELLY SCHERR, P.ENG., MBA, FEC MANAGING DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL &amp; ENGINEERING SERVICES &amp; CITY ENGINEER</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>COMMENTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL REGISTRY OF ONTARIO (ERO): REDUCING LITTER AND WASTE IN OUR COMMUNITIES: DISCUSSION PAPER</b>

### RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Directors of Environmental & Engineering Services & City Engineer; the comments (Appendix B) **BE ENDORSED** and submitted to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks' Environmental Registry of Ontario posting (013-4689) titled *Reducing Litter and Waste in Our Communities: Discussion Paper* by April 20, 2019 (ERO submission date) with any additional comments submitted following the Council meeting on April 23, 2019.

### PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER

Relevant reports that can be found at [www.london.ca](http://www.london.ca) under City Hall (Meetings) include:

- Comments on Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO): a Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan (January 8, 2019 meeting of the Civic Works Committee (CWC), Item #2.5)

### STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2019 AND DEVELOPMENT OF COUNCIL'S 2019-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

Municipal Council has recognized the importance of solid waste management, climate change, other related environmental issues and innovation in its previous Strategic Plan (2015-2019) and in the development of its 2019-2023 Strategic Plan for London. This work touches on three Areas of Focus: Building a Sustainable City, Growing our Economy and Leading in Public Service

### BACKGROUND

#### PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide Committee and Council with:

- A summary of the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks (MECP) proposal titled, *Reducing Litter and Waste in Our Communities: Discussion Paper*, and
- The City of London's comments (Appendix B) on the proposed questions listed in the Discussion Paper.

#### CONTEXT:

In January 2019, the City of London submitted comments through the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) on the proposed Preserving and Protecting our Environment for Future Generations: A Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan covering the following areas:

- Protecting Our Air, Lakes and Rivers

- Clean Air
- Clean Water
- Addressing Climate Change
  - Building Resilience: Helping Families and Communities Prepare
  - Continuing to do Our Share: Achieving the Paris Agreement Target
  - Make Polluters Accountable
  - Activate the Private Sector
  - Use Energy and Resources Wisely
- Doing Our Part:
  - Government Leadership
- Reducing Litter and Waste in Our Communities & Keeping Our Land and Soil Clean
  - Reduce Litter and Waste
  - Clean Soil
- Conserving Land and Greenspace

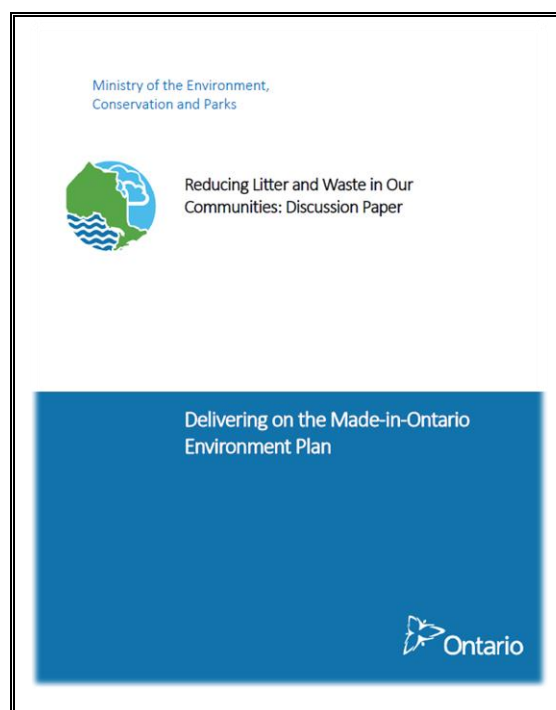
The MECP released for comment on March 6, 2019 further details on litter and waste in a document called *Reducing Litter and Waste in Our Communities: Discussion Paper*. The province has permitted a 45 day comment period closing on April 20, 2019.

## DISCUSSION

The Reducing Litter and Waste in Our Communities Discussion Paper provides more details on the government's policy direction on the waste management issues outlined in its November 2018 Environment Plan. City of London comments on the Environment Plan (section: Reducing Litter and Waste in Our Communities & Keeping Our Land and Soil Clean) and how they were addressed is identified in Appendix A.

The new Discussion Paper states three broad waste management goals for the Ontario government:

1. Decrease the amount of waste going to landfill
2. Increase the province's overall diversion rate
3. Reduce greenhouse gases from the waste sector



### Summary Comments

From an overall municipal perspective, it is important to recognize that this Discussion Paper includes input directly from municipalities in many areas. It also highlights the need to work closely with municipalities on current and future waste diversion and resource recovery systems. Municipal messaging is very clearly reflected throughout, including but not limited to:

- The importance of full producer responsibility and the commitment to move forward with transitioning all existing programs (with an emphasis on addressing other areas like parks and public spaces) and designating new materials. This includes shifting the financial burden of recycling from municipalities to industry.
- The need to address the industrial, commercial and institutional sectors as recycling rates lag far behind the municipal sector.

- The need to focus on more effective/efficient capture of data, statistics and performance measurements.
- Greater clarity related to the continuation of Food and Organic Waste Policy Statement and the need for further clarification on how to meet obligations. There has been no indication that the current government is stepping away from the previous direction.
- The need to address plastic waste through a multi-pronged strategy with the ultimate goal being no plastic to landfill or left on the ground or in water bodies.
- A clear understanding of the challenges municipalities have with organics management.
- A recognition of the need to address barriers to planning, infrastructure and end markets for recyclables, organics and other materials that can be diverted from landfill.
- Recognition of the need to examine a variety of resource recovery technologies that create value from materials that are difficult to recycle and/or are often sent to waste disposal or turn up as litter.
- There is a lot of discussion throughout on the need to work closely with municipalities.

The Discussion Paper is divided into a number of specific sections with questions (about 37) posed in each section:

- 2.1 Prevent and Reduce Litter in Neighbourhoods and Parks (p. 6-8)
- 2.2 Increase Opportunities for Ontarians to Reduce Waste (p. 8-12)
- 2.3 Make Producers Responsible for Their Waste (p. 12-14)
- 2.4 Reduce and Divert Food and Organic Waste (p. 14-19)
- 2.5 Reducing Plastic Waste Going into Landfills or Waterways (p. 19-21)
- 2.6 Provide Clear Rules for Compostables (p. 21-23)
- 2.7 Recover the Value of Resources (p. 23-26)
- 4.0 We Want to Hear From You (p. 29)

Comments to be submitted to the ERO for each question are contained in Appendix B. City staff are grateful for the work undertaken and shared by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), Regional Public Works Commissioners of Ontario (RPWCO), Municipal Waste Association (MWA) and the City of Toronto acting as one entity called the Municipal 3Rs Collaborative (M3RCs). The City of London is an active member of M3RCs via RPWCO.

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Appendix A: How were City of London Previous Comments Addressed?

Appendix B: Comments to be Submitted to the ERO (#013-4689)

## Appendix A

### How were City of London Previous Comments Addressed?

#	Previous Comment	Were City's Comments Addressed?
1.	The City of London supports the direction in this section of the Plan. It clearly builds on years of solutions that have been implemented and actions that are still required to be implemented. The simple theme of "reduce litter and waste" has an enormous amount of complexities that require strong Provincial direction with implementation by municipalities and businesses coupled with actions by citizens and employees.	Yes, the Province produced a focused Discussion Paper as the first item to implement the Environment Plan.
2.	The City of London supports the need to reduce and divert food and organic waste from households and businesses as it generally represents 20 to 35% by weight of the residential waste stream as well as a significant component in many businesses waste streams (e.g., restaurants, food processing operations, hospitality industry, etc.).	Yes, the Province has made this a priority in the Discussion Paper for all generating sectors.
3.	The City of London supports plastic waste reduction strategies that are comprehensive and have consistency across provinces and municipalities but also recognize differences and solutions that may exist in some regions.	Yes, the Province has made plastics waste reduction, recycling and recovery a priority in the Discussion Paper.
4.	The City of London supports the goal of enhanced programs to clean up litter in communities. We welcome the opportunity to work with Provincially-sponsored programs to build long-term local leaders in this area.	Yes, the Province continues to highlight the importance of reducing litter, keeping parks and recreational areas clean.
5.	The City of London supports quick action on extended producer responsibility and shifting recycling costs to businesses that create packaging, products and printed materials. Municipalities have an important role to play in helping businesses be successful and cost effective in expanded recycling systems.	Partially, the Province has recognized the importance of extended producer responsibility for municipalities. However, it is very light on timing and implementation plans.
6.	The City of London supports exploring opportunities to recover the value of resources in waste and recommends that the Province ensures that all resource recovery options that maximize the value of unwanted materials are available for municipalities and businesses to implement. The ultimate goal is materials of value should not go to a landfill and all materials should never end up as litter or illegally dumped.	Yes, the Province has recognized the need for further discussion and assessment of new and emerging technologies to increase the value of materials that end up in landfills.
7.	The City of London encourages the Province to work with Ontario municipalities, the Ontario Waste Management Association, and the Canadian Biogas Association to develop clean fuel programs that supports both the production of renewable natural gas (RNG) from landfill gas and/or organic waste.	Yes, the Province has recognized the need for further discussion and assessment of renewable natural gas (RNG) from various materials such as organics, landfill gas, conversion technologies, etc.

## **Appendix B: Comments to be Submitted to the ERO (#013-4689)**

The following Discussion Questions were posed in the Discussion Paper. City of London answers, comments and/or questions are listed below the Discussion paper question.

### **2.1 Prevent and reduce litter in neighbourhoods and parks:**

#### **1. How best can the province coordinate a day of action on litter?**

Many Ontario municipalities, businesses, organizations and institutions organize litter clean events during the month of April as part of Earth Day activities. In London, many organizations and businesses are involved in the London Clean & Green Program. The province could begin by determining what is currently undertaken and how these events could be coordinated and supported through provincial direction and common messaging.

Organizing a province-wide cleanup day must not conflict with local action. Municipalities have been coordinating activities that meet their municipal needs for years. Building upon the successes versus creating something new is advisable.

#### **2. What do you or your organization do to reduce litter and waste in our public spaces? What role should the province play to facilitate this work?**

The City of London works with community organizations and businesses to raise awareness about the need to prevent litter, to plan and support cleanup events to remove litter and garbage in public spaces. The province could help through province wide promotion and information campaigns that support local actions. The province should not dictate a specific date that municipalities must use.

#### **3. What and where are key hotspots for litter that you think should be addressed?**

There are many and they are varied. In London, litter is found on boulevards, in parks, along creeks, streams and rivers.

#### **4. How do you think litter can best be prevented in the first place? Where is access to diversion and disposal particularly limited?**

Residents and businesses need to understand the financial impact of letter, illegal dumping and related poor behaviours. Littering and illegal dumping needs a supportive enforcement system whereby consequences are visible and supported by the judicial system. In addition, there are important environmental and social consequences of litter and illegal dumping. Because many impacts will be similar across Ontario, access to powerful and meaningful statistics and background details would benefit all municipalities in their messaging.

The Province should also play a legislative and enforcement role by:

- Implementing full producer responsibility for paper products and packaging (PPP) and other materials that are most often captured as litter,
- Strengthening litter and illegal dumping laws and bylaws especially related to roadside litter,
- Consider restricting or banning problematic materials or packaging or activities such as balloon releases that create litter for short-term enjoyment, and
- Review the requirements related to waste management vehicles to ensure these vehicles are not contributing to litter.

## **2.2 Increase opportunities for Ontarians to reduce waste:**

### **1. How can the province best help the public participate in waste reduction and diversion activities? How can the province facilitate better diversion in lagging areas, such as multi-unit residential building?**

The province needs to provide additional financial resources to municipalities to help with current reduction and diversion programs from promotion and education to support for community groups. Programs are already in place and the majority will have greater impact with more investment. The province could set up a matching program (50% funding) with municipalities and ensure that it is based on meeting objectives.

Multi-residential buildings will always require different methods to reach tenants and owners. The needs of residents living in these locations are not the same as traditional single family homes.

The province could:

- Review the Building Code to ensure multi-unit buildings are better designed to accommodate source separation and include design requirements for the safe and efficient delivery of collection services,
- Provide funding opportunities for research, innovation and infrastructure upgrades such as chute diverters that may drive resource recovery in existing buildings as well as mixed waste processing to recover resources from the waste stream,
- Lead an Ontario-wide promotion and education campaign targeted at lagging areas such as multi-unit residential buildings. Consider requiring multi-unit residential owners to provide information to residents,
- Standardize the materials collected across the province as part of the move to full producer responsibility for PPP, and
- Expand the definition of what constitutes a multi-unit residential building so that new privately serviced developments are mandated to comply with provincial direction.

### **2. What types of initiatives do you think would result in effective and real action on waste reduction and diversion for the IC&I sectors?**

- Enforcement of existing provincial legislation and regulation,
- Establish a working relationship with municipalities to help with the dissemination of information, rationale for action and the consequences of inaction,
- Mandatory data collection and publishing of waste diversion and management statistics by IC&I sectors, and
- Recognition programs for those offering services to their employees and customers.

### **3. What role do you think regulation should play in driving more waste reduction and diversion efforts from the IC&I sectors?**

Backdrop regulations are necessary. Waste reduction, waste diversion and/or resource recovery must be viewed as an operating business practice similar as all other business functions.

### **4. How can we get accurate information on waste reduction and diversion initiatives in the IC&I sectors?**

Require reporting through a regulation for businesses of a certain size. If that is too cumbersome, it could be handled through requirements of processing facilities in Ontario. The latter would not be as accurate but it may be a good starting point.

### **5. What do you think about a province-wide program for the recovery of clothing and textiles?**

For the most part, textile and clothing recovery programs are well-established in Ontario. It is imperative that any future province-wide system not impact local programs which not

only divert materials from landfill but create local employment. Estimates in London suggest that 50% of textiles and clothing are already managed without any investment by the municipality. Provincial involvement would be helpful but it must be carefully considered. It may be best undertaken on a regular basis.

### **2.3 Make producers responsible for their waste:**

#### **1. How do you think the Blue Box Program could best be transitioned to full producer responsibility without disrupting services to Ontario households?**

Producers need to be aware of the current service levels provided in each municipal program, to ensure that existing service levels are maintained through the process of transition, and for programs once they have transitioned. This will require that Blue Box contracts are assigned from municipalities to producers. Ontarians need to be kept informed of changes, so they are better prepared for them, and understand the end goals. An informed public is also more ready to weather changes and disruptions. The Blue Box Program has a long history in Ontario, and it is essential that citizen confidence in the program is not eroded.

#### **2. Should it transition directly to producer responsibility under the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016 or through a phased approach?**

There are merits to both approaches, and the Minister should consider both scenarios. The proposed amended Blue Box Program Plan had envisioned a phased approach, as it appeared to be more manageable. What is key is that timelines need to be made very clear to municipalities so that they can plan budget and contract end-dates potentially. If a phased approach means that some municipalities transition before others, those municipalities that transition later are at a financial disadvantage. The readiness of municipalities to transition is dependent on contract end-dates, or existing contract language that will allow them to transition without penalty. Municipalities that are not able to transition sooner should not be penalized. This could be avoided by all municipalities sharing in the financial benefit that will occur by producers paying the full costs for transitioned programs. This would mean that as transition begins, the funding to all municipalities will increase from 50% to 100% at the same rate.

#### **3. When do you think the transition of the Blue Box Program should be completed?**

The transition should be completed no later than the end of 2023 in accordance with the timeline outlined in the Waste-free Ontario Strategy. At the very latest, the end of 2024 as noted on the timetable found in question 6.

#### **4. What additional materials do you think should be managed through producer responsibility to maximize diversion?**

In addition to designating new materials, producers need to improve how current materials are managed through increased diversion rates, sustainable end markets (e.g., plastics such as film, polystyrene foam), and measures to prevent them becoming litter (e.g., hot beverage cups, plastic bags, etc.). Producers need to be responsible for materials that also end up in landfill, on the ground and in our waterways as litter. In addition to the new materials that have been discussed to be included in diversion programs (e.g., carpet, furniture, mattresses), producers should continue to invest in research and development to identify remaining materials in the waste stream to determine if there are better options.

#### **5. How can we make it easier for the public to determine what should and should not go in the Blue Box?**

Implementing a standard, Ontario-wide list of items that can be managed in the Blue Box system would assist with this goal. This would limit the current confusion between the various municipal Blue Box programs when people move to different areas of the province.

## 6. How should the province implement the transition process of its existing programs to producer responsibility without interrupting service?

The City of London supports the extended producer responsibility work and transition work completed by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), Regional Public Works Commissioners of Ontario (RPWCO), Municipal Waste Association (MWA) and the City of Toronto acting as one entity called the Municipal 3Rs Collaborative (M3RCs). The City of London is an active member of M3RCs via RPWCO. The text below has been copied from M3RCs:

*It is the view of municipal governments that the Blue Box Program transition to full producer responsibility via a regulation under the RRCEA, and that the Minister initiate this process as soon as possible. This approach was outlined in a letter from AMO President, Jamie McGarvey, to Minister Phillips on March 19, 2019.*

*There is agreement amongst all stakeholders that the current Blue Box system is not working. It is costly for all stakeholders and, without substantive changes, these costs will continue to increase municipal budgets. Making producers fully responsible for managing the PPP that they supply into Ontario fundamentally changes this structure. Producers are best positioned to reduce waste, increase the resources that are recovered and reincorporated into the economy and enable a consistent province-wide system that makes recycling easier and more accessible.*

*The RRCEA ensures transparency; it focuses on outcomes over process; provides producers with flexibility in decision-making; and ensures proper oversight and enforcement. It also moves us away from a process that requires constant government intervention.*

*Initiating the process to a regulation as soon as possible will allow for more time for important collaboration to occur. It will provide certainty to:*

- *Enable much needed investments into Ontario's recycling collection and processing infrastructure,*
- *Allow for informed business decisions between municipalities and their contractors,*
- *Enable producers to prepare to assume their future obligations,*
- *Enable producers to drive towards outcomes-based performance standards, and incentivize them to innovate their products and packaging, and*
- *Provide a schedule and framework for municipal governments, their existing service providers, producers, and their future service providers to develop interim steps that will enable a smooth transition.*

*Having a schedule and framework for municipal governments will be critical to ensure that there is no disruption to services for Ontario households. Additionally, we are learning from the approach already successfully taken for used tires, and moving forward, waste electrical and electronic equipment and municipal household hazardous waste. This combination of having certainty and a well understood process with the other waste diversion programs will allow for municipal governments and producers alike to plan and mitigate against any potential disruptions to services.*

*Municipal governments along with other stakeholders are proposing that the Blue Box program transition to full producer responsibility under the RRCEA using a phased approach that would take approximately five years to complete. This timeline would include the development of a PPP regulation under the RRCEA, a regulatory start-up period where producers would have time to register and organize themselves and see the incremental turnover of programs from municipal governments to producers over a three-year period.*

*We believe this approach applies a thoughtful, stepwise transition to full producer responsibility under the RRCEA which is the ultimate destination for most stakeholders. It also avoids the unnecessary step of an amended Blue Box Program Plan.*



There were many lessons learned from the amended Blue Box Program Plan process in 2017 that can be leveraged in a PPP Regulation under the RRCEA. However, we found that the legislative structure under the Waste Diversion Transition Act (WDTA), perpetuates many of the challenges stakeholders currently face with the existing program and the need for frequent government intervention.

Moving to a regulation under the RRCEA provides all stakeholders with a clear timeline within which operational and financial decisions can be made. It will also lead to a regulation with enforceable outcomes established in the public interest that provides obligated businesses with the flexibility to achieve the outcomes in the most efficient and effective manner.

In our view, the regulation should prescribe a defined transition mechanism that would allow for a municipal self-nomination process over three years with an annual cap on the amount of PPP collected that can transition. We understand that this transition mechanism is necessary to allow for change that is both orderly and balanced.

The current thinking of municipal governments to transition the Blue Box Program is below:

<b>Proposed Step</b>	<b>Proposed Timeline</b>	<b>Description</b>
1. <u>Initiate the Regulation</u> : Minister gives direction to the Resource Productivity & Recovery Authority (RPRA) and sets the completion date for transition to full producer responsibility	As soon as possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minister should send a letter to Stewardship Ontario (SO) and RPRA to start the transition of the Blue Box program</li> <li>We are suggesting the letter be sent as soon as possible and that it include two important dates to ensure adequate time and certainty for all to plan and collaborate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A date to start transitioning municipalities to the RRCEA (proposed Q4 2021);</li> <li>A date when all municipalities would be transitioned to the RRCEA (proposed Q4 2024)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Provides an almost 5-year window to transition all operational and financial responsibility to producers</li> </ul>
2. <u>Draft a Regulation</u> : Minister leads a province-wide consultation to develop a regulation for PPP under the RRCEA	Q2 2019 to end of Q3 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Given the range of stakeholders, the province should lead the consultation</li> <li>Key areas of discussion should include targets for recovery and accessibility, eligible sources of material (i.e. residential), designated materials, transition timeline, transition approach</li> <li>Changes to Regulation 101/94 would need to be considered at the same time</li> </ul>
3. <u>Regulatory Start-up Period</u> : An appropriate amount of time is provided to register producers and potentially service providers before the regulation fully comes into force	Q4 2020 – end of Q3 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After the regulation is approved, time is required for producers to establish contracts to assume operational and financial responsibility</li> <li>Municipal self-nomination would begin to occur during this period</li> </ul>

Proposed Step	Proposed Timeline	Description
4. <u>Begin Transition:</u> The municipal self-nomination process would take place over three years with an annual cap on the amount of PPP collected that can transition	Q4 2021 – end of Q4 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The proposed transition schedule would include:</li><li>• First set of municipalities (up to 1/3 by tonnage of Blue Box materials) would transition between Q4 2021 and Q4 2022</li><li>• Second set of municipalities (up to 2/3 by tonnage of Blue Box materials) would transition between Q4 2022 and Q4 2023</li><li>• Third set of municipalities (total tonnage of Blue Box materials) would transition between Q4 2023 and Q4 2024</li><li>• Municipalities that have transitioned would have O. Reg 101/94 requirements removed (as producers would not have these requirements under the RRCEA)</li><li>• Producers would be required to meet targets linked to transitioned municipalities</li><li>• For those municipalities not transitioned, the Blue Box Program Plan would continue with 50% funding being provided by Stewardship Ontario until transition is complete</li></ul>
5. <u>Transition Completed:</u> At a defined date outlined in the Minister’s letter, all municipalities must transition their Blue Box programs to producers.	End of Q4 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The PPP regulation under the RRCEA would be in place with province-wide targets and servicing in place</li><li>• The Waste Diversion Transition Act would cease and all municipalities would be relieved of all Blue Box related requirements under Reg. 101/94</li></ul>

We think that this transition schedule would allow for the wind-up of the old Waste Diversion Act and brings the full benefits of the RRCEA into effect for all designated wastes.

With full financial and operational control, producers are best positioned to enable a consistent province-wide system that makes recycling easier and more accessible. To date, promotion and education has been up to individual municipalities who each take different items based on their own infrastructure and residents. A harmonized list of acceptable materials for the program across the Province would enable promotion efforts to be done with more scale and ensure residents know what materials can be included.

Municipal governments think this process is reasonable because the main elements of the regulation have already been discussed in some detail as part of the proposed amended Blue Box Program Amendment. This includes what paper products and packaging are designated across the province, accessibility, environmental outcomes and targets. There is a growing understanding between the various stakeholders of the issues each has and of practical solutions to address to ensure a smooth transition of the Blue Box which will lead to better outcomes for all. We are confident that any remaining issues can be addressed through the consultation.

## **2.4 Reduce and divert food and organic waste**

### **1. What can be done to increase the safe rescue and donation of surplus food in Ontario?**

The nature of food rescue and donation requires local systems to be in place that build confidence in all aspects. This cannot be driven by a central authority(ies). However, it does require support and direction from “head offices” with implementation occurring within municipalities. It is imperative that qualified people are engaged and understand the importance of rules, regulations and requirements of food, food handling, food storage, etc.

### **2. What role do you think government and industry can play in raising education and awareness on the issue of food waste?**

To raise awareness and educate, the province and industry need to assist with funding programs and use established channels to help convey messages. There is no need to create new systems; rather enhance and improve upon existing systems. The province must ensure this is built into school curriculums at the provincial level.

### **3. Do you think the province should ban food waste? If so, how do you think a ban would be best developed and implemented?**

Any consideration of food and/or organics disposal restrictions and/or ban needs to take into account the geographic and population differences in Ontario; how and why food waste is generated; where the ban would occur (from disposal, at the source, etc.). Restrictions and/or bans are best done at the provincial level. Items that need to be examined include:

- Realistic implementation timeframe – a five to ten-year period is likely required,
- Complementary push and pull mechanisms such as incentives for resource recovery; quality standards for products from organics (e.g., fertilizer and other soil amendments); streamlining of environmental approvals for processing infrastructure so other systems are in place and meeting regulations; government procurement practices (e.g. servicing and end market related); and disposal levies,
- Clear direction and consistent communication,
- Phase-in and appropriate exemptions,
- Proper oversight, monitoring for compliance and enforcement, and
- Promotion & education.

## **2.5 Reduce plastic waste going into landfills or waterways**

### **1. What do you think is the most effective way to reduce the amount of plastic waste that ends up in our environment and waterways?**

Reducing the amount of plastic waste that ends up in the environment and waterways requires action on both the part of producers of products utilizing plastic packaging and the consumers of those respective products. Producers of plastic packaging waste should be encouraged when designing packaging to consider ways to discourage and/or limit the potential for the package to become litter. Similarly, consumers of products that contain plastic packaging should be incentivized and discouraged through campaigns and programs to limit the potential for the plastic packaging materials associated with product purchases to become litter.

### **2. What role do you think the various levels of government should play in reducing plastic waste?**

Whether it is plastic waste or other packaging materials, the answers are very similar. Moving to extended producer responsibility is key – shifting this responsibility to producers will create economic opportunities, incent innovation, improve our environment, and reduce the burden on Ontario’s taxpayers. Producers of plastic are in the best position to communicate directly with consumers about whether their products and packaging can be

recycled and how to best collect them. They are also best informed to invest in the recycling collection and processing system necessary and to create markets to support their end use. This means making producers directly responsible for ensuring accessibility to all Ontarians, continually improving both collection and recycling outcomes, allowing for competition to drive innovation both at the service provider and producer level, and ensuring transparency and direct accountability.

Other key items to consider include:

- Establish provincial, or even better, national targets for waste diversion and resource recovery and have consistent definitions and metrics,
- Have industry address issues related to single-use packaging and problematic materials. If they cannot produce suitable strategies, then the province or federal government should step in. The Province should work with the federal government to take targeted actions, such as fees, or recycled content requirements, to reduce the use of disposable single-use products and where appropriate, eliminate problematic plastics and plastic additives. If no action is being taken, then bans could be considered, and
- Support end market development

### **3. Would you support and participate in shoreline and other clean-up projects to keep our waterways and land free of plastic waste?**

The City of London, organizations and businesses already do this. It is important to note that there are many materials that contribute problems, not just discarded plastics. Behaviours need to change for all materials that become litter.

### **4. Would a ban on single-use plastics be effective in reducing plastic waste?**

No. Single use plastics should not be singled out from a ban perspective. All single use materials, regardless of material type need to have responsible management systems available. Implementing extended producer responsibility is key in this regard.

### **5. What are your views on reducing plastic litter through initiatives such as deposit return programs?**

This should be decided by the producers. It represents a proven solution. However, it can also fragment a system.

## **2.6 Provide clear rules for compostables:**

### **1. How do you think compostable products and packaging should be managed in Ontario?**

Compostable products should be managed through an organics management system. The challenge is how do residents and business know when an item is compostable and another similar item is not compostable? The province needs to manage this growing dilemma with industry, facility operators and municipalities.

### **2. Should producers of compostable products and packaging be held responsible for the management and processing of their materials?**

Yes, extended producer responsibility applies here as well. A standard for compostability and stricter requirements related to advertising are required so that property taxpayers are not burdened by companies making misleading claims. There also needs to be consistency across product/packaging categories to avoid cross-contamination between recycling and organic processing streams and to avoid consumer confusion.

### **3. What role do you think standards and facility approvals should play in the proper management of compostable products and packaging?**

New facilities can be designed to handle these materials; however existing facilities are not designed to handle them and it will require added investment to handle them.

## **2.7 Recover the value of resources**

### **1. What role do you think chemical recycling and thermal treatment should have in Ontario's approach to managing waste?**

All solutions to recovering resources from materials that are typically sent to landfill or become litter should be considered. Municipalities should be engaging in solutions that meet their municipal needs. Chemical recycling, waste conversion technologies (e.g., gasification, pyrolysis, hydrogen reduction), mixed waste processing technologies and energy-from-waste (with combustion) are all technologies that can play an important role to recover the value of waste.

### **2. What types of waste materials do you think are best suited for thermal treatment?**

- Process residuals from recycling, composting and biogas operations
- Hard to recycle or compost materials
- Unseparated garbage
- Any material where it is proven that environmental (e.g., greenhouse gas reduction), social and financial benefits are greater and more sustainable than traditional waste diversion processes

### **3. How can we clearly and fairly assess the benefits and drawbacks of thermal treatment?**

First and foremost it is key that decision-makers, residents, technical staff, etc. have access to current information. This requires documents with up-to-date, independent and peer reviewed information being publicly available.

Next, any new technology must be considered based on local conditions and from a waste systems perspective (e.g., how feedstock for a facility is procured and delivered right through to the handling of any process residuals).

Lifecycle assessments for different technologies help to illustrate the overall environmental benefit or impact versus other technologies. This could be captured in a single document made available to all interested parties.

Thermal treatment already falls under a streamlined Environmental Assessment (EA) process. *Environmental Protection Act* studies are also required. These requirements do not need to change.

It is recognized that the Government must thoroughly review the application (and supporting documents) but the review must be completed within appropriate (shorter) timeframes. The province may need to hire more technical consultants to undertake reviews of submissions that have met submission requirements. There needs to be a commitment to review timelines. There also needs to be consequences of missed deadlines.

Community engagement is already a requirement and must not be circumvented.

**4. Are there obstacles in the current regulatory requirements and approvals processes that could discourage the adoption of technologies such as chemical recycling and thermal treatment? How can we maintain air standards and waste management requirements in addressing these obstacles?**

Yes there are obstacles. First and foremost, the province needs to embrace new, emerging and next generation technologies as being part of the solution.

The province needs to quickly understand how advanced resource recovery technologies work in order that they can be properly and fairly reviewed. This may mean hiring technical consultants to assist with application reviews. Information from one project (review team) must be shared with others in order that review consistency is established.

Chemical recycling, waste conversion technologies (e.g., gasification, pyrolysis, hydrogen reduction), mixed waste processing technologies and energy-from-waste (with combustion) along with aerobic composting and anaerobic digestion all need appropriate levels of environmental and technical scrutiny coupled with appropriate siting in communities. Risks need to be understood and mitigative measures established.

**5. How can we best work with municipalities and stakeholders to integrate new soil reuse rules and other best practices into operations quickly, and to continue to develop innovative approaches to soil reuse and management?**

Establish a working group to clearly understand the gaps that are preventing greater movement in this area, solutions to reduce the gaps, solutions to reduce risks (e.g., contamination levels), and establish standards and thresholds for use. It will be key to have different ministries at the table to ensure that there is agreement on solutions and risks.

## **2.8 Support competitive and sustainable end-markets**

**1. What changes to the approvals process do you think would best facilitate a reduction in waste going to landfills?**

Developing a system of approval similar to the EASR process for known recovery processes and technologies that have readily known and quantifiable effects and/or emissions would make the approval process for these process and technologies more efficient and timely. This would allow for technology to be implemented and adapt more quickly to the changing requirements to meet diversion goals and as such reduce the potential for materials to be landfilled.

**2. What type of end-markets for resources from waste do you think Ontario is best positioned for?**

Ontario should not say no to any opportunity. It is a large province representing almost 40% of Canada's population. Most of that population lives along the 401/402 corridor and one to 2 hours north or south.

If resources are pooled sufficient quantities would be available to attract private sector investment. Economies of scale are essential in keeping costs low. Even a new paper processing facility is a possibility.

**3. How do you think municipalities should be given more of a say in the landfill approvals process?**

The province's Environmental Assessment process already provides municipalities with a very important "say." It is imperative that municipalities are involved at the start of a process and automatically placed on a stakeholder committee. This would include more than one representative from a municipality. Municipalities need to be actively involved. Smaller municipalities may require funding in order that they can be engaged.

Municipalities need to have proper zoning within its boundaries including adequate buffer areas between zones to handle items such as odour and traffic concerns.

## 4.0 We want to hear from you

### 1. Of all the initiatives detailed in this discussion paper, what do you think should be a priority for early action?

- Implementing extended producer responsibility – placing financial responsibility with those that create paper products and packaging
- Implementing food waste avoidance programs
- Increasing the amount of organics diverted from landfill
- Advancing resource recovery technologies
- Introducing lifecycle assessments into the decision-making process

### 2. How do you think Ontario can best maintain its competitiveness and growth while reducing the amount of waste going to landfill and litter in our communities?

- More jobs are created through waste diversion and resource recovery; therefore this is job creation.
- Economies of scale help to contain and control costs
- Reducing fragmentation in the waste management system and increase consistency in what is delivered
- Recognizing that these services have a cost and building these costs into all products and packages minimizes the impact as the percentage increase will be small.

### 3. How do you think we can make Ontario a leader in waste reduction and diversion once again?

The province needs to move on extended producer responsibility and removing the costs of recycling from municipalities. Municipalities will then focus on organics with technology suppliers.

The province becomes proactive with approvals as facilities are not currently available.

Finally, all plans need to build confidence in the private sector to invest money. That means politics should be removed from resource recovery and waste management as much as possible. Reversing government decisions does not build confidence.