

Frequently Asked Questions

What is municipal mixed waste?

Municipal mixed waste is the portion of waste remaining after materials for other city waste diversion programs, such as the Blue Bin (recycling) or Green Bin (composting), have been partially separated at source by the waste generator, and collected by or on behalf of the city. Mixed waste also includes materials that have not been separate at source, as well as biosolids.

What does the City of Toronto currently do with its garbage?

The City of Toronto currently has a disposal contract with Republic Services Inc. that continues to the end of 2010. The majority of Toronto's mixed solid waste is hauled to Carlton Farms Landfill Site located in Michigan. Toronto's garbage is comprised of waste from residents, and some of the Industrial, Commercial, Institutional, City Agencies, Boards, Commissions and Divisions and schools.

Toronto's waste disposal contract with Republic at Carlton Farms Landfill was never intended to be long term and in 2007 the City purchased the Green Lane Landfill in Southwold Township, Ontario. In January 2011 mixed waste from Toronto will be landfilled at Green Lane. The City's goal is to divert 70% of waste from landfill by 2010 and also adhere to the Ministry of the Environment's definition of diversion.

How does the City plan to increase diversion from the current rate, 44% to 70% by 2010?

The City plans to divert an additional 174,000 tonnes of waste through a number of initiatives including:

- source reduction initiatives (e.g., promotion and education)
- extending the Green Bin program to apartments
- education and enforcement of the City's mandatory diversion by law
- introduction of a volume-based rate structure (residents pay a fee for the collection of their waste)
- addition of new materials to the recycling collection (e.g., plastic film)
- replacement of Blue Boxes with Blue Bins to increase recycling container capacity
- development of Reuse Centres for the reuse/disassembly and recycling of household durable goods
- curbside townhouse collection, which encourages separation of recyclables (vs. a single collection point)
- additional single stream recycling process capacity (e.g., building organics processing facilities).

To reach 70% diversion, an additional 75,000 tonnes of waste will need to be diverted through the development of a mixed waste processing facility to recover resources from mixed waste and reduce the amount of material to be landfilled. A Mixed Waste Processing Study was carried out to select the best technology and location for this facility.

What is the Mixed Waste Processing Study and why is it needed?

The Mixed Waste Processing Study is a detailed study to evaluate and recommend the best possible technology and site for Toronto to process mixed waste. This technology is needed to divert an additional 75,000 tonnes of waste per year to help reach the City's goal of diverting 70% of waste by 2010. The scope of work includes:

- a planning horizon from 2010 to 2035;
- an assessment of technologies and site options;
- the development of screening criteria;
- a life cycle analysis – environmental, social and economic analysis;
- a health impact screening; and,
- estimates of capital and operating costs.

What screening criteria were used?

Screening criteria were established to evaluate the waste processing technologies and the site selection. These were exclusionary criteria that, if not satisfied, eliminated that technology or site from further evaluation.

The following criteria were established to evaluate technologies:

- ability to divert 75,000 tonnes per year from landfill;
- ability to conform to MOE Policy Statement and to qualify as diversion;
- ability to market recovered materials;
- ability for markets to meet Ontario environmental standards;
- ability to dispose the residual material in the Green Lane Landfill in accordance with its Certificate of Approvals;
- technology to have a proven operating history; and
- ability to have facility under construction by 2010.

The following criteria were established to evaluate potential sites:

- site currently owned by the City, (within or outside City boundaries);
- sites with existing MOE Certificate of Approval; (although additional approvals will be required)
- initial estimate of land required between 3 to 12 hectares;
- existing land uses for the site and surrounding area compatible with mixed waste processing facility;
- site accessibility; and,
- site servicing, including water, sewer and energy.

Have a technology and a site been selected for the mixed waste processing facility?

The Mixed Waste Processing Study recommends mechanical biological treatment (MBT), with either aerobic or anaerobic digestion as the preferred technology, and the City-owned Green Lane Landfill in the Southwold Township, Ontario as the preferred location for the facility.

Why isn't the facility being built in Toronto?

Of the 12 potential sites considered, nine were located within the City of Toronto. Two of the Toronto sites were screened out because they had previously been selected as the locations for Toronto's new source separate organics facilities, which will process Green Bin materials. During the site screening process all sites except for Green Lane Landfill were excluded, primarily because they had insufficient property to accommodate the size of the required mixed waste processing facility.

How will a mixed waste processing facility assist Toronto?

A mixed waste processing facility will help the City reach its 70% diversion target by extending the life of the Green Lane Landfill as less residual waste will require landfilling. In addition, the local community will receive enhanced trust fund contributions through the development of a mixed waste processing facility at the Green Lane Landfill.

What will the facility be called?

Green Lane Resources is the proposed name. Green Lane is already the name of the site/location and Resources refers to materials (recyclables, compost like output) that will be recovered and diverted from landfill.

How has the City of Toronto consulted stakeholders?

Discussions were held with the local Community Liaison Committee for the Green Lane Landfill in October 2008 and March 2009. Green Lane Landfill was one of the sites identified early as having a high likelihood, from an available land perspective, to accommodate any of the candidate processing technologies.

Following on previous meetings with the First Nation Liaison Committee in the Green Lane Landfill area a meeting was also held in March 2009 to advise the Committee of the mixed waste processing facility's recommended location. The City of Toronto has invited both groups to recommend a consultation strategy for their communities.

A number of intensive consultation processes have taken place in the lead-up to the Mixed Waste Study and they include:

- [Task Force 2010 \(January 2001 - June 2001\)](#), which recommended a comprehensive waste diversion plan to achieve landfill diversion targets. Recommendations lead to the implementation of a 3-stream system: combined Blue and Grey Box materials, Source Separated Organics and residual waste sent to landfill.
- [New and Emerging Technologies, Policies and Practices Advisory Committee \(February 2003- December 2004\)](#) was formed to assist in guiding the review of new and emerging technologies, policies and practices to process and manage the residual waste remaining after the full implementation of the 3-stream system. Recommendations included carrying out of an Environmental Assessment process to decide on the best way to manage residual waste.
- The [Community Environmental Assessment Team \(CEAT\)](#) was formed in February 2006 to guide the City's environmental assessment for the management of residual solid waste under the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act. Due to changes in the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act regulations in 2007 a detailed environmental assessment is no longer required for specific waste processes that do not involve either landfill or thermal treatment without energy recovery. In response to the legislative

change, CEAT was split into two working groups: the 3Rs Working Group and the Residual Waste Working Group.

How, as a member of the public, can I become involved?

The public can send in their comments to mwp@toronto.ca.

What are the next steps and timelines?

- The MBT (aerobic and anaerobic digestion) Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) and a the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) screening will be finalized in order to compare the overall impacts of the waste management system with the option of direct landfilling all of the mixed waste waste - July 2009
- Consultation with the community at the proposed Green Lane Resource site, MOE and interested stakeholders – September 2009
- Issue Request for Expressions of Interest to solicit vendors interested in providing the selected technology – Early 2010
- Issue Request for Proposals and evaluate technology submissions – Mid to late 2010
- Report recommended vendor to Public Works and Infrastructure Committee and City Council – Early to mid 2011
- Begin constructing the facility – Late 2011