

briefing note



Date: November 12, 2012
To: Toronto City Councillors
From: Emily Alfred, Waste Campaigner
Re: BU31.2 2013 Rate Supported Budgets - Solid Waste Management Services and Recommended 2013 Solid Waste Rates

Recommendations:

1. **Hire 26 staff to do outreach and education to the thousands of apartment and condo buildings across Toronto.**
2. **Build 3 durable goods processing centres (aka Reuse Centres). Reject the proposal to reduce it to 2.**
3. **Get diversion processing infrastructure built now: begin the process of developing a new composting facility in Toronto and reject the delay in building the Mixed Waste Processing Facility (MBT) at Green Lane.**
4. **Reject a 0% rate increase. This contradicts the need to create a stable capital reserve fund for SWMS.**

Background

The proposed waste budget does almost nothing to help Torontonians meet the Council goal of achieving 70% waste diversion (see note 1 on the back.) There is almost no investment in outreach and education to increase waste diversion in apartment buildings and yet another year of capital delays for building waste diversion process capacity.

Therefore TEA recommends:

1. Invest in effective outreach to residents of multi-family buildings to increase recycling and green bin use, potentially increasing Toronto's diversion rate by up to 16% overall. Hiring 26 staff would provide 1 staff per 200 buildings and 4 staff to leverage hundreds of volunteers in the successful 3R's Ambassador program, and then restore 4 communications positions cut in 2011. This would cost only \$2.25 million.
2. Build 3 more durable goods processing sites, or "Reuse Centres." Reject the proposal to reduce it to 2. Delaying the construction of durable goods processing just delays waste diversion.

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 at 416-596-0660 or emily@torontoenvironment.org**

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3. Begin developing a new green bin composting facility in Toronto and reject the delay in building the Mixed Waste Processing Facility (MBT) at Green Lane. The city needs to start planning for another organics processing facility now to ensure there is sufficient capacity to process organics collected from apartment buildings and condos. The Mixed Waste Processing Facility at Green Lane is needed to sort through garbage to remove any important recyclables or organics still left in the waste stream. This project has been delayed repeatedly, and this budget delays it again.

4. Reject a 0% rate increase. This means waste fees are not keeping up with inflation, and puts the Solid Waste budget in a more precarious long term position. A modest increase of 2-3% would mean a net increase of only \$1-6 per household, and would provide crucial funds for the capital reserve.

To learn more about how Toronto can get to 80% waste diversion, please read TEA's new report "*Leaping to 80%: A Plan for City Hall to Help Torontonians Divert More Waste*" available at www.torontoenvironment.org.

NOTES:

1. Toronto committed to a target of diverting 70% of waste from landfill by 2010 in 2007. (City Council, December 2007, pages 111-112 of the document: <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/cc/decisions/2007-12-11-cc15-dd.pdf>)

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