



Councillor Mike Layton
Trinity-Spadina
Ward 19



**Councillor Mary-Margaret
McMahon**
Beaches-East York
Ward 32

April 11, 2018

Public Works and Infrastructure Committee
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, M5H 2N2

Dear Public Works and Infrastructure Committee Chair and Members,

RE: PW28.8 State of Toronto's Blue Bin Recycling Program

Overconsumption of single use products have devastating consequences on our natural environment. While Toronto should always subscribe to “reduce” as a first principle, the City of Toronto must ensure it is diverting as much waste as possible. Unfortunately, not all packaging material and products are recyclable and our environment and City budget is suffering as a result. According to a recent report, 25% of all material placed in Toronto blue bins is non-recyclable, costing the city \$4 million each year in additional disposal fees.

Through the entire lifecycle of a product, disposable packaging and products unnecessarily consume resources, releasing harmful greenhouses gases and other toxins during the extractions, processing and manufacturing phases. Following their brief use, much of this waste finds its way back into the natural environment as litter, or trash that must be treated. According to provincial recycling reports, plastics have the lowest recycling rate of all packaging and disposable products (only 29% of plastic packaging is recycled, compared to paper at 74%, glass at 73%, metal at 53%).

The province is currently reviewing provincial waste regulations including packaging and recycling collection. The City would be well served to lead the way by proposing changes that could address collection and disposal costs while benefiting the environment.

Recommendations:

1. Public Works and Infrastructure Committee request the General Manager of Solid Waste Management Services to report back to Public Works and Infrastructure Committee by the end of 2019, on:
 - a. The environmental, social and financial implications of products and packaging comprised of plastic that are intended to be for single use; specifically:
 - Plastic takeout containers
 - Plastic straws and cutlery
 - Disposable drink cups and lids
 - Plastic bags
 - b. Programs, policies and other legally permissible controls to eliminate or reduce the use and waste generated from products and packaging;
 - c. Exploring ways to drive consumers and business to more closed-loop options; and

- d. Supporting and consulting with industry sectors on alternative options to single use or takeaway products and packaging comprised of plastic generated by their operations, and opportunities for Circular Economy capacity building to help achieve the City's goal to become a circular city as part of the Long Term Waste Management Strategy.

Thank you,

Mike Layton
City Councillor
Ward 19, Trinity-Spadina

Mary-Margaret McMahon
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Ward 32, Beaches-East York