

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM9.21	ACTION			Ward: All
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Diverting Textiles from Toronto's Waste Stream - by Councillor Jaye Robinson, seconded by Councillor Jennifer McKelvie

** Notice of this Motion has been given.
 * This Motion is subject to referral to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Jaye Robinson, seconded by Councillor Jennifer McKelvie, recommends that:

1. City Council direct the General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services to develop an implementation plan for a City-wide textile waste diversion program, in consultation with potential providers, and report back to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee in the first quarter of 2020.

Summary

The City of Toronto is home to one of the largest municipal waste management systems in North America. The Solid Waste Management Services Division is responsible for collecting, transporting, processing, composting and disposing of municipal sector waste, which includes garbage, Blue Bin recyclables, Green Bin organics, yard waste, oversized and metal items, as well as household hazardous waste and electronic waste. However, the City does not offer a textile waste diversion program.

Every year, the average Toronto household throws out about 13 kg/29 lbs of clothing and other textiles. This is problematic given the environmental impact of the resources consumed during production, the chemicals used during the dyeing, printing, and finishing processes, and the time of decomposition in landfills.

Currently, textiles cannot be accepted as part of the City's Blue Bin recycling program. When textiles are placed in the blue bin, they can tangle sorting machines, damage equipment, and cause workplace injuries. In 2018, City staff identified textiles as one of the top contaminants of the Blue Bin recycling program, which costs the City millions annually.

The City's Long Term Waste Management Strategy included a commitment to create a new textile and clothing recycling program for all residents. This is an important step to further divert waste from landfills and achieve a zero waste future. In 2018, City Council adopted my motion requesting staff to consider implementing a requirement for retailers of textile material

to post reuse, recyclability, and waste disposal options at the point of purchase.

Other municipalities are participating in pilot initiatives to reduce the amount of textiles in their waste streams. A textile waste diversion program will help to ensure that Toronto remains a safe, clean, and healthy City for future generations.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM9.21