

# Blue Box Program Transition to Extended Producer Responsibility

Post-Transition - Update  
Presentation to Infrastructure and Environment Committee  
April 9, 2025



# Presentation Overview

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- Background on transition of the Blue Box to Extended Producer Responsibility
- City of Toronto's Post-Transition role in eligible recycling
- Utilization of City's Transfer Stations
- Collections and preparing residents for January 1, 2026
- Re-optimizing system for collection efficiency
- Future of public space recycling

# Background

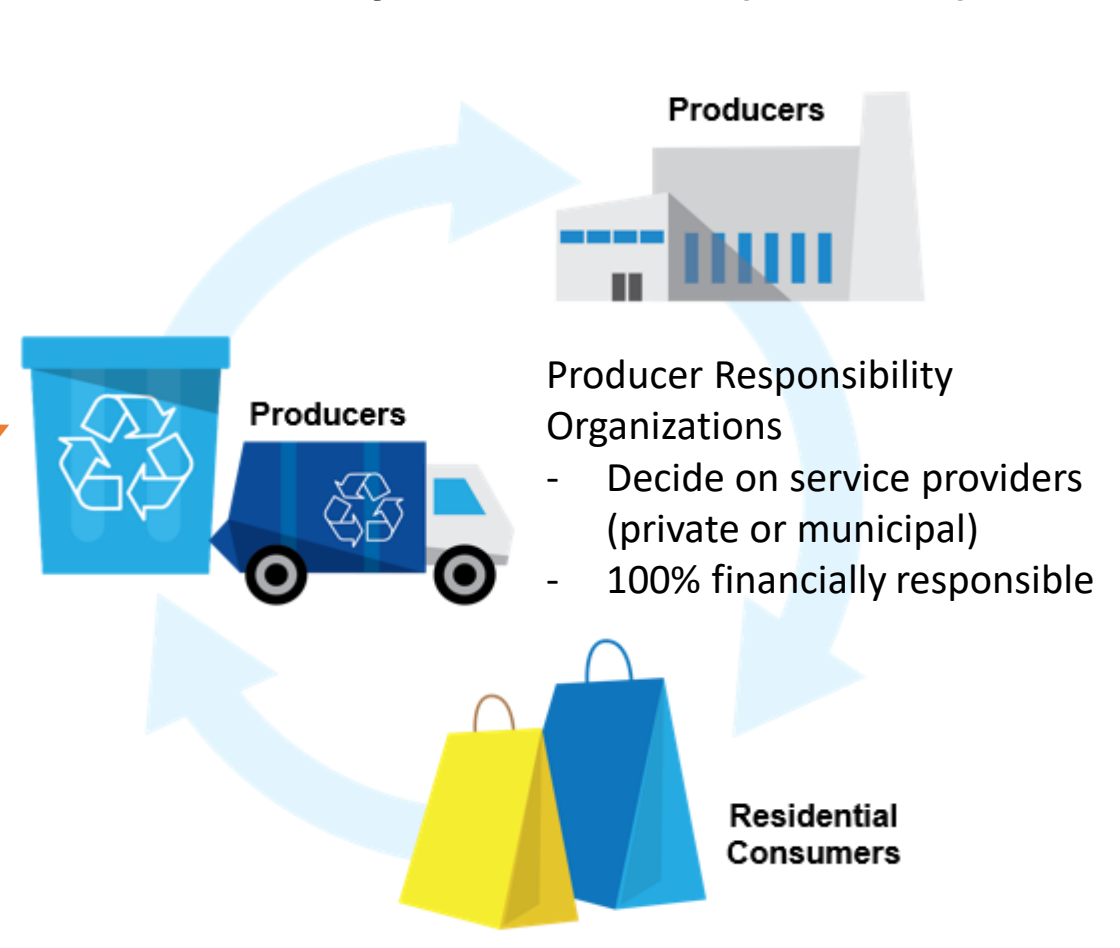


# Extended Producer Responsibility

## Pre 2023 Shared Industry Funding



## As of July 1, 2023 EPR (Current)



# EPR – Procurement of Services



# EPR Transition Timeline

## Transition State

July 1, 2023 – December 31, 2025



- ▶ The transition period from July 1, 2023 to December 31, 2025 when producer responsibility takes effect
- ▶ Toronto transitioned July 1, 2023

## Post-Transition State (Standardized Program)

January 1, 2026 –



- ▶ Producers are fully responsible for implementing a standardized program across Ontario

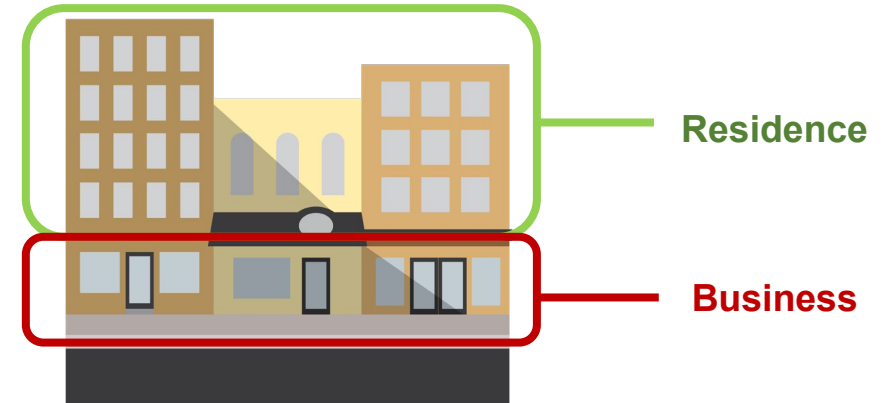
# City's Role during the Transition Period (July 2023 – Dec 2025)

**City continues to deliver curbside collection services, Front End collection city-wide, transfer and haulage services, promotion and education, customer service and administer the Blue Bin Contract.**

Residents experienced no change to their Blue Bin recycling program during the transition period.



Eligible sources include residential households, City-serviced multi-residential buildings, schools, and long-term care facilities



Businesses are non-eligible sources but recycling is co-collected with materials from residences above

# City's Role during the Transition Period (July 2023 – Dec 2025)

## City staff continue to provide recycling collection services for parks and litter bins during transition



For Toronto, producer responsibility for recycling expands to public spaces beginning January 1, 2026, which will include parks, public transit stops and shelters, and street-side recycling bins.

# Post-Transition Update



# EPR Post-Transition - January 1, 2026

As of January 1, 2026, the City will no longer be involved in the following eligible source recycling-related activities: promotion and education; customer service (311); managing curbside residential Blue Bin assets, collection, transfer, and haulage. Furthermore, the City will not accept Blue Box Materials from eligible sources at its transfer stations.

	Operational Areas Impacted by EPR (Eligible Sources Recycling)					
	Promotion & Education	Collection Services	Receiving Facility	Haulage Services	Processing	Public* Space
<b>Current State:</b> <b>Transition Phase</b> (July 1, 2023 – December 31, 2025)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
<b>Future State:</b> <b>Post Transition Phase</b> (January 1, 2026 onwards)	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	?

\*Eligible source as of January 1, 2026

# Utilization of City's Transfer Station Network

- The City was not chosen by Circular Materials for Transfer Station recycling work
- As of January 1, 2026, Division will manage approximately **167,000 fewer tonnes** of material through the City's transfer station network
- Explored and planned to implement opportunities to optimize operations and cost efficiencies:
  1. Shift work to staff previously hauling recycling and will scale back on contractors
  2. Drop & Load Service Review
    - a) Introduce Premium Drop & Load Service; or
    - b) Introduce Premium Drop & Haul Service to third-party landfill

# Collections

- The City is still responsible for managing garbage, organics, yard waste, and bulky items from all sources.
- Non-Eligible Source Recycling
  - ❖ The City will remain responsible for any Blue Box Materials from locations not classified by the regulation as eligible sources such as businesses, municipal facilities and offices, charities, institutions and religious organizations.
- Curbside residential blue bins have been sold to the Producers and will be rebranded with their contact information.
- Recycling inquiries should be directed to 1-888-921-2682 not 311 starting January 1, 2026
- City Council Direction – 2024.IE12.1: re-optimize collection services and to investigate potential efficiencies and synergies within collections and litter operations and return to Council for direction as required.

# Preparing Residents for January 1, 2026

**Goal:** Educate residents about transition and new service provider

**Timeline:** Q4 2025

## Major Tactics & Campaigns

- Communication tools for Councillors (e.g. matte content)
- General ad campaign
- Multilingual ad campaign
- Web, social media
- Updated promotion & education resources (e.g. Waste Guide)
- Outreach activities (presentations, events)
- Alerts on TOWaste app
- Collection Calendars without recycling noted as Producers will send their own.



# Sale of Residential Curbside Blue Bin Assets



- City staff negotiated the sale of the City-owned residential curbside blue bin recycling assets (single-family homes and residential units above commercial establishments)
- Residents can use their current blue bins during post-transition
- Bin requests and bin repairs will be managed by Circular Materials' contracted service provider
- Circular Materials will cover the City logo with a sticker
  - **Direct mail:** postcard to all households prior to rebranding
  - **Public education:** social and digital media ads, multi-lingual
  - **Web content:** dedicated web page
  - **Councillor communications:** sharable content for constituents
- Rebranding to begin in May 2025

# Curbside Collection Optimization

## Removal of eligible recycling collection results in operational inefficiencies from unbalanced staff and fleet resources

The best approach to re-optimize collections and to minimize impacts to residents:

- a) change collection week from Week 1 to Week 2 and vice versa for garbage for approximately 125,000 households in total for Districts 2 and 3 combined
- b) Rerouting of collection vehicles (may change the approximate time of day of collection)

### These changes will result in:

 Re-optimized efficiencies

 No impact to staff

 Collection day remains the same

 Approximate savings of \$2M annually

# Councillors in District 2 Area

Ward	Impacted	Not Impacted
Parkdale-High Park	10481	8158
Davenport	12371	9759
Spadina-Fort York	3682	0
Eglinton-Lawrence	6031	15633
Humber River-Black Creek	10618	4322
Toronto – St. Paul’s	2645	11709
University-Rosedale	8691	2660
Willowdale	6947	1250
York Centre	1989	14118
York South-Weston	8897	11148



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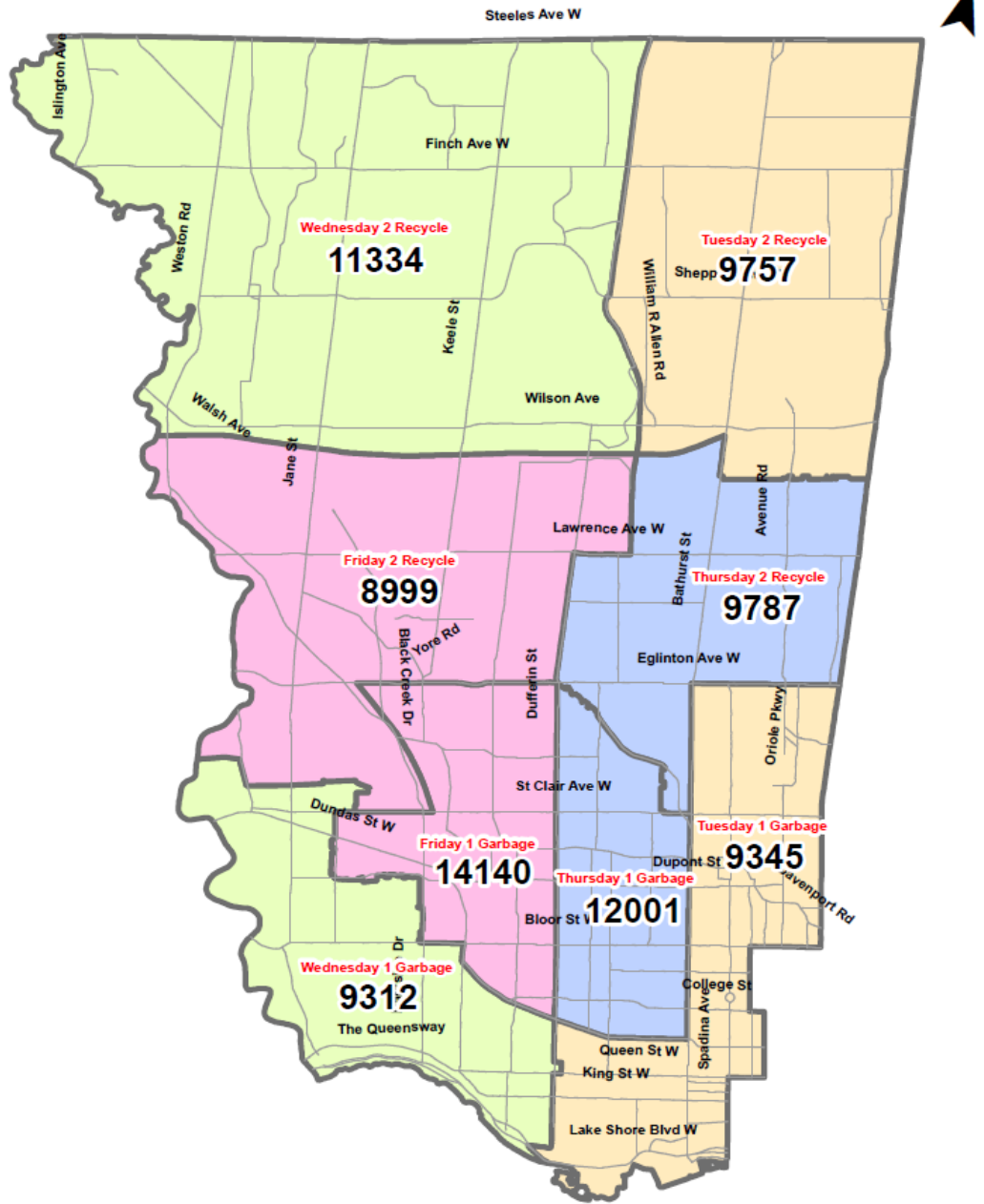
**York Centre**  
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- Approximately 75,000 residents impacted

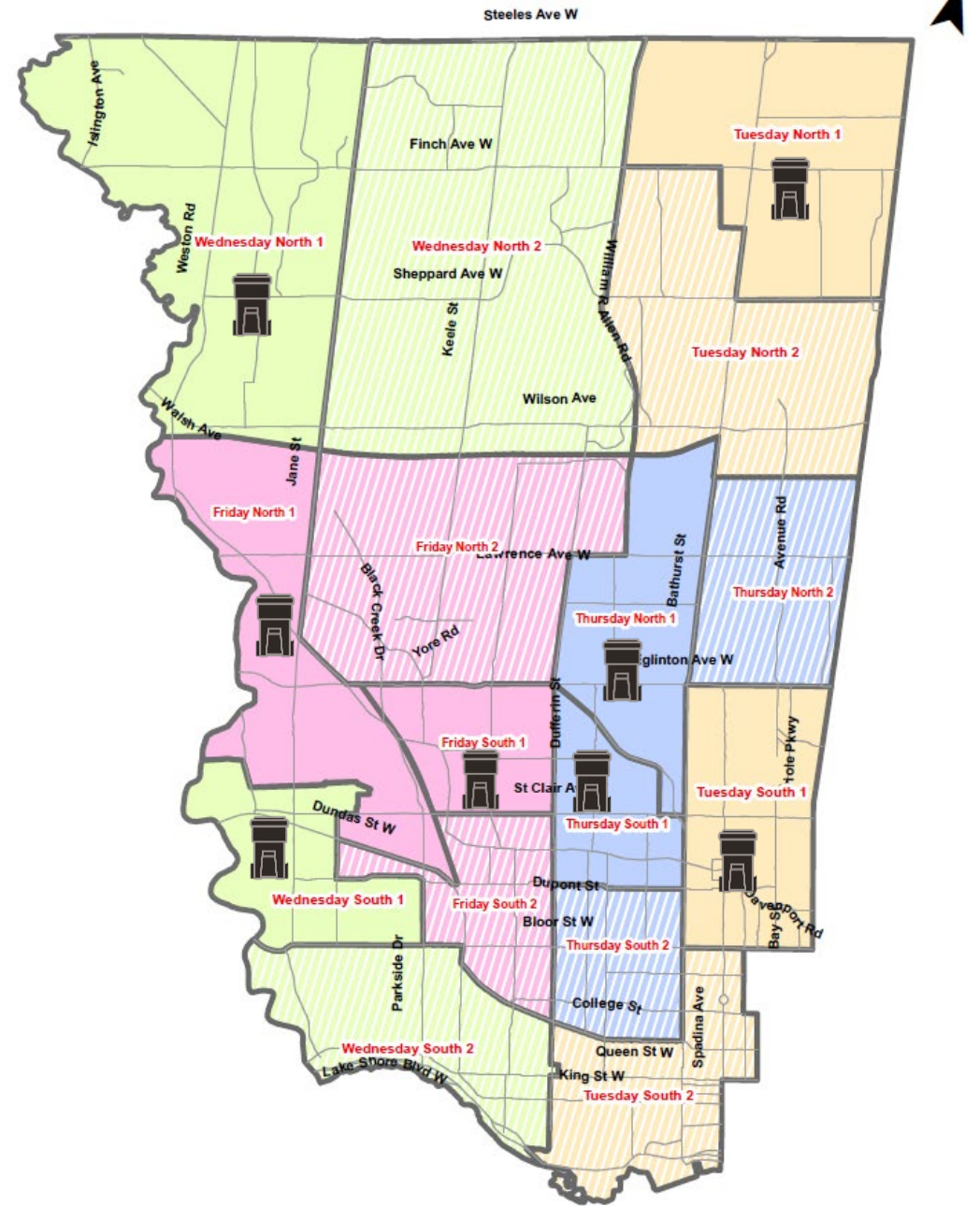
# SWM District 2 Current Daytime Collection Areas



Week 1

3,000 1,500 0 3,000 Meters

# SWM District 2 EPR Future State Daytime Collection Areas



Week 1

3,000 1,500 0 3,000 Meters

# Councillors in District 3 Area

Ward	Impacted	Not Impacted
Beaches-East York	5572	18845
Don Valley East	3020	6356
Don Valley North	8766	7894
Don Valley West	12534	6072
Toronto-Danforth	19506	4719
Toronto – St. Paul’s	1029	0
University - Rosedale	58	3648
Willowdale	699	6878



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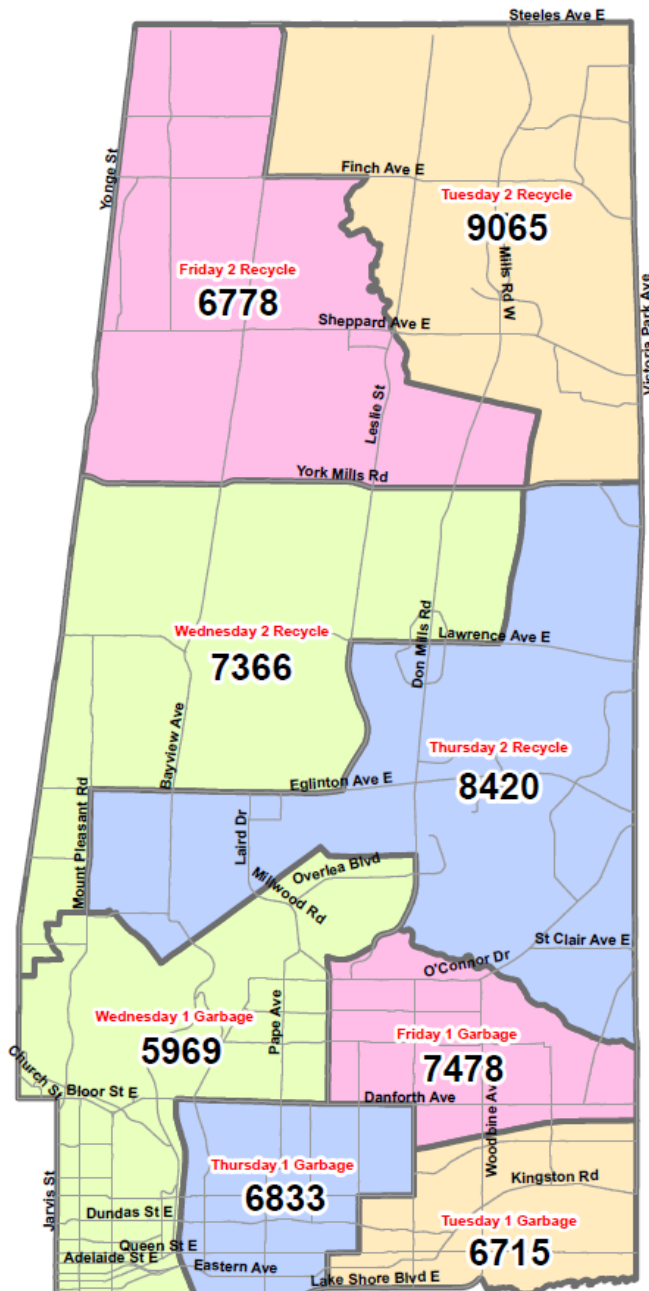
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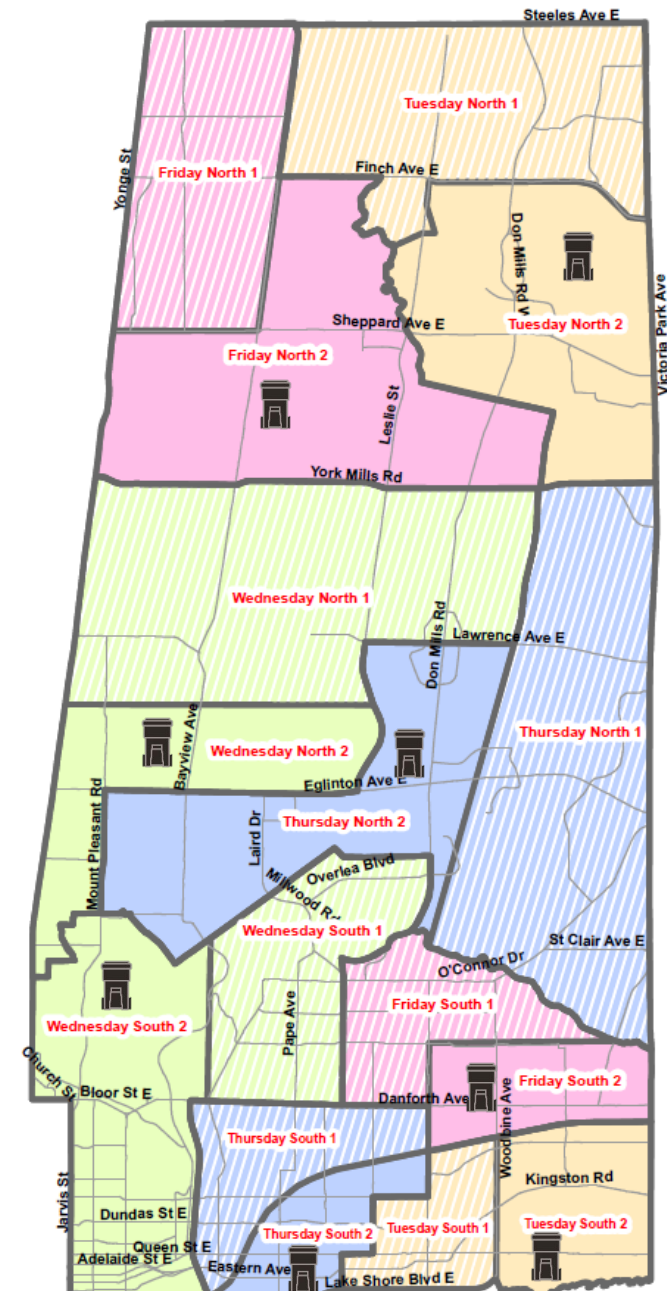
- Approximately 50,000 residents impacted

# SWM District 3 Current Daytime Collection Areas



Week 1

# SWM District 3 EPR Future State Daytime Collection Areas



Week 1

# Curbside Collection Optimization Promotion & Engagement Plan

## Communication / Operations Plan

- Standalone Waste Collection Schedule, city-wide instead of sending through utility bill
- Direct Mail and/or door to door information campaign for impacted customers
- Key Messages and FAQs for Councillors
- Web content and social media
- Additional collections in January help with the transition

## Establish Solid Waste Management Services Customer Care Team

To provide dedicated, focused and proactive excellent customer service to collection customers and the public.

- Work closely with 311 Toronto (CXD) on:
  - Deliver 311 Toronto staff training
  - Issues management
  - Review monthly error logs
  - Trends analysis (e.g., service requests, response times, forecasting)
  - Continuous improvement
  - Develop Customer Service Requests/online self-service issues and opportunities

# Public Space Recycling



**The City will have no control over public space recycling bin location, design, placement, or service frequency**

**Public Space Recycling becomes eligible source in Toronto as of January 1, 2026.**

## **Blue Box Regulation obligations:**

- Provide 7,000 – 7,500 collection bins (quantity determined by population-based formula in Regulation)
  - ❖ Toronto has 15,000 parks and streetside recycle bins now
- Bins must be appropriate for the public space, including size, durability and signage
- Repair/replace bins within 1 week of notification from City
- When located in a park or playground, the bin must be located near entry/exit points or where people congregate
- Public complaints for overflowing bin to be managed by producers

# Public Space Recycling (cont'd)

## Future of Blue Bin Program

- Details of Circular Materials' public space recycling program are still unknown
- Engage Circular Materials in negotiations for the City to provide collection services for City-owned public space bin locations (parks, streetside bins), subject to the following terms and conditions:
  - ❖ No financial penalty for contamination
  - ❖ Receive at a minimum full cost recovery
  - ❖ Blue Box Material must go through City Transfer Stations
- Report back to Council on outcome of negotiations
- If the City is not successful in negotiations for a collections service provider agreement:
  - ❖ Staff will explore selling City-owned parks recycle bins to Circular Materials
  - ❖ Existing street litter bins will be relabelled as garbage

**Thank you!**