

Transition of the Blue Box Program to Extended Producer Responsibility: Preliminary Post-Transition Implementation Update

Date: February 10, 2026

To: Infrastructure and Environment Committee

From: General Manager, Solid Waste Management

Wards: All

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to respond to the direction received from City Council in November 2025 and from the Infrastructure and Environment Committee in December 2025 to provide a preliminary update on the post-transition implementation of the Blue Box Program's transition to Extended Producer Responsibility in January 2026.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager of Solid Waste Management Services recommends that the Infrastructure and Environment Committee receive the report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial impacts arising from the adoption of this report. The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on December 16 - 17, 2025, City Council adopted item MM35.34 entitled "Providing Circular Materials with Access to the City's Dual-Use Waste Collection Containers for the Collection of Blue Box Materials from Impacted Properties - by Councillor Paula Fletcher, seconded by Councillor Mike Colle", in which City Council authorized "the General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services to negotiate, enter into and execute an agreement with Circular Materials for the purpose of the

providing access to the City's dual-use waste collection containers for the collection of Blue Box Materials pursuant to Ontario Regulation 391/21: Blue Box, as amended, with the total term of the new agreement and each extension of an existing service agreement not to exceed ten (10) years, on terms and conditions, including receipt of payments from Circular Materials, acceptable to the General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services, and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor."

The City Council Decision document can be viewed at:

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.MM35.34>

At its meeting on December 4, 2025, the Infrastructure and Environment Committee adopted item IE26.2 entitled "Transition of the Blue Box Program to Extended Producer Responsibility: Preparation for January 2026 Collection". Amongst other decisions, the Committee requested the General Manager, Solid Waste Management Service report to the first Infrastructure and Environment Committee meeting in 2026 with an overview and analysis of the initial phase of the transition of Blue Bin collection.

The Infrastructure and Environment Committee Decision document can be viewed at:

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.IE26.2>

At its meeting on November 12 and 13, 2025, City Council adopted item IE25.2 entitled "Transition of the Blue Box Program to Extended Producer Responsibility: Post-Transition Plan". Amongst other decisions, City Council direct the General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services, to request Circular Materials to add additional trucks on City Collection days in January 2026 to ensure no disruption of service to residents and should Circular Materials not agree to this request to work with the Executive Director, Customer Experience and the Chief Communications Officer to include information on the request and refusal by Circular Materials in the City's communications about the Extended Producer Responsibility Transition, and report to the December 4, 2025, meeting of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee on the results.

City Council also requested the General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services, to report to the February 25, 2026, meeting of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee, with an update on the post-January 1st, 2026 implementation of Extended Producer Responsibility.

The City Council Decision document can be viewed at:

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.IE25.2>

At its meeting on April 23 - 24, 2025, City Council adopted item IE20.11 entitled "Changing the Night of Garbage Collection for the West-End (Ossington/Queen West/College Promenade Areas)". City Council directed the General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services to consider changing the garbage collection schedule for the west-end areas of Ossington Avenue, College Street, Dundas Street West and Queen Street West areas from Thursdays to off-peak evenings such as Monday or Tuesday, in order to support the upcoming patio season and enhance the overall experience for residents and visitors, and: a. engage and consult with local residents, businesses, the Ossington Business Improvement Area, the Queen West Business

Improvement Area, the Dundas West Business Improvement Area and the College Promenade Business Improvement Area to gather their input on whether this change would meet the community's needs; and b. report to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee, as needed, with any recommendations resulting from the consultations with residents, businesses and the Business Improvement Areas.

The City Council Decision document can be viewed at:

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.IE20.11>

At its meeting on April 17 and 18, 2024, City Council adopted item 2024.IE12.1 entitled " Post-Transition of the Blue Box Program to Extended Producer Responsibility and Results of District 2 Service Delivery Options Review". Amongst other decisions, City Council authorized the General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services to negotiate and enter into any service agreements or amending agreements with any Blue Box Program administrator, and/or their designate, for the City of Toronto to be contracted to provide services, based on terms and conditions outlined in Confidential Attachment 1 to the report (March 13, 2024) from the General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services, for the management of blue box materials at the City's transfer stations until December 31, 2035, on terms acceptable to the General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

The City Council Decision document can be viewed at:

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.IE12.1>

At its meeting on October 11, 2023, City Council adopted item IE6.3 entitled "Transition of Toronto's Blue Bin Recycling Program to Extended Producer Responsibility." Amongst other decisions, City Council supported the decision of City staff to not submit a bid in response to the Circular Materials' Request for Proposals for services to collect Provincially-regulated blue box material from residences and facilities as defined in Ontario Regulation 391/21: Blue Box in City of Toronto Districts, beginning January 1, 2026.

The City Council Decision document can be viewed at:

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.IE6.3>

COMMENTS

Background

The transition of the residential Blue Box Program to Extended Producer Responsibility occurred in two (2) phases: i) Transition phase: July 1, 2023 - December 31, 2025; and ii) Post-transition phase: January 1, 2026, onwards.

The City of Toronto successfully transitioned its Blue Box Program to producers on July 1, 2023. To ensure a seamless transition without disruptions or impacts to residents, and at the direction of City Council, Solid Waste Management Services negotiated a

transition phase agreement with Circular Materials¹ to provide recycling collection, transfer, haulage, and promotion and education services on behalf of producers until the end of the transition phase on December 31, 2025.

After reviewing Circular Materials' *Collection of Blue Box Material from Residences and Facilities Request for Proposals* (issued on August 23, 2023) it was decided that the financial, technological, and other risks were too great for the City to submit a proposal. However, staff did submit a proposal in response to *Circular Materials' Receiving Facility Request for Proposals* (issued on September 27, 2023) but the City was not awarded the contract. Despite these decisions, staff continued direct negotiations with Circular Materials regarding the City's potential involvement in the continuation of delivering recycling services beyond December 31, 2025, but these discussions were unsuccessful and Circular Materials declined the City's services.

On January 1, 2026, Circular Materials took responsibility for the operational and financial management of Blue Box Materials from eligible source locations² across Ontario. With the conclusion of the City of Toronto's transition phase agreement with Circular Materials on December 31, 2025, the City no longer has a role in managing these materials.

Post-Transition Phase

Preparations for Transition

In response to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks' announcement of the transition of the Blue Box Program to Extended Producer Responsibility in August 2019, a dedicated Extended Producer Responsibility Unit (the Unit) was established within Solid Waste Management Services to coordinate and lead the Division through associated provincial advocacy efforts, professional consultant procurement, City Council reporting, and business process and change management planning. The Unit worked collaboratively with skilled and knowledgeable subject matter experts and with Divisional partners, including Communications, Customer Experience, and Legal Services to prepare the City and its residents for post-transition program and service changes.

Since 2022, staff have also worked closely with Circular Materials in their capacity as the Common Collection System Administrator: i) to prepare for the transition phase (prior to July 1, 2023); ii) throughout the transition phase (July 1, 2023 - December 31, 2025); and iii) throughout 2025 to share best practices and ensuring operational preparedness for the post-transition phase.

Transitioning nearly 840,000 residences and other eligible sources to Extended Producer Responsibility has been a monumental undertaking for a city as large and

¹ Circular Materials is the Common Collection System Administrator and a Producer Responsibility Organization that advocates for its member producers and discharges their regulatory responsibilities, as defined in O. Reg 391/21: Blue Box, where applicable.

² Includes single-family households, multi-residential buildings, schools, long-term care facilities and retirement residences.

operationally complex³ as Toronto. For more than six (6) years, staff have undertaken extensive work to ensure a seamless transition for both residents and the Division's operations. Please see Attachment 1 for an overview of the actions taken by staff to ensure a smooth transition. Without such extensive preparatory work, the impact of the transition might have been far more disruptive.

Despite best efforts to anticipate and prepare for potential complications, and with the scale of the change, it is reasonable to expect some challenges as the program, staff, and residents adjust to the new state. This report provides an overview of the challenges experienced while also highlighting successes.

Collection Operations Optimization

City staff and fleet resources were to become unbalanced as a direct result of the transition of the Blue Box Program to Extended Producer Responsibility and Circular Materials' decision to not contract the City for curbside recycling collection services in 2026. Directed by City Council, a route optimization operational analysis was conducted, which determined that a switch in collection week for garbage and recycling for approximately 127,000 households in Districts 2 and 3 was deemed an operationally and financially worthwhile endeavour. On April 9, 2025, Circular Materials provided written confirmation that their contractor could accommodate this change when they took over operations on January 1, 2026.

Supplemental Recycling Collection

With the route optimization, impacted households would have had to wait more than two (2) weeks during early January 2026 without either garbage or recycling collection, depending on their collection schedule. The City felt it is unreasonable to require households to hold on to waste materials that long, especially after the holiday season. To prevent this from happening, the City developed a plan to provide supplemental garbage collection to impacted households in January 2026.

Under O. Reg. 391/21 - Blue Box producers have an obligation to collect blue box materials from residences at least every other week⁴. To ensure impacted residents did not have to hold onto their recycling for more than two (2) weeks, staff recommended to Circular Materials on October 15, 2025, to also provide supplemental recycling collection in January 2026. On November 25, 2025, after much discussion, Circular Materials confirmed that they would provide supplemental recycling collection to impacted households during the first collection cycle on January 2, 3, 6 and 7, 2026.

The supplemental garbage and recycling collection meant that impacted residents could put all three (3) waste streams (recycling, garbage, organics) at the curb for collection on the same day.

³ Complex due to density and geographical challenges (e.g. narrow streets, street parking, laneways, nights collection, Island collection, etc), diverse housing stock (single family homes, multi-residential buildings, townhouse complexes, cooperatives, residential units above commercial locations, etc.), new housing development, accommodations (dual bin, bag only, side door collection, 4 recycling bin sizes, etc.).

⁴ <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/210391#BK22>

Ahead of the schedule change, Circular Materials delivered postcards to the 64,000 impacted households to advise them of the supplemental recycling collection on their regular collection day between January 2 - 7, 2026. However, staff understand that some households did not receive this supplemental collection as was expected. Since residents are meant to call Circular Materials with all recycling related matters, staff are unable to determine the scale of the missed supplemental recycling collections.

Circular Materials' contracted call centre (operated by GFL Environmental Inc.) is closed on weekends and overnight on weekdays from 7:00 pm to 7:00 am, which prompted residents to call 311 Toronto about their bins not being collected. 311 scheduled additional staff in anticipation of higher call volumes, however the number of calls on January 2, 2026, exceeded expectations. The nature and complexity of calls also led to longer than usual handling times. Together, these factors reduced 311's service level to 73.3% on January 2, 2026, below the target of 80%. In addition to residents contacting 311 for their missed recycling collection, they expressed their frustration with not being able to reach Circular Materials.

On Friday January 9, 2026, staff understand that Circular Materials' contact centre reached capacity at times and residents received a busy signal. This had a spillover effect on 311, with residents calling when they couldn't reach Circular Materials. Call volumes to 311 that day were nearly twice the average, and service levels were negatively impacted.

City-Wide Recycling Collection

Although wards impacted by supplemental recycling collection accounted for most missed collection calls to 311, the City also received some missed recycling collection calls from wards not impacted by the schedule change (e.g. Wards located in Districts 1 and 4).

Resident calls to 311 continued to increase during the week of January 5 - 11, 2026 as residents continued to wait for their recycling collection from Circular Materials' contractor to occur. As Circular Materials worked to collect the missed addresses during the week of January 5 - 9, 2026, resident calls to 311 began to decrease during the week of January 12 - 18, 2026 as outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Percentage of Missed Recycling Collection Calls to 311 Toronto

	January 1 - 4, 2026	January 5 - 11, 2026	January 12 - 18, 2026	January 19 - 25, 2026	January 26 - 31, 2026
Total Calls	66	272	121	98	81
Missed Collection	46	201	70	51	40
% of Total Calls	70%	74%	58%	52%	49%

Supplemental Garbage Collection

As previously noted, the City also provided supplemental garbage collection to impacted households in Districts 2 and 3 in January 2026. Supplemental garbage collection and city-wide garbage and Green Bin organics collection have been operating well in 2026.

Customer Service Metrics

With the understanding that residential recycling calls would still be received by 311 Toronto in early 2026, Solid Waste Management Services staff worked with the Customer Experience Division to track and monitor the nature of calls received by 311 post-transition using a short survey conducted by Customer Service Representatives during related 311 calls. The survey tracks a range of blue bin concerns, such as missed collections, recycling bin issues (repair, exchange, missing, additional, and Circular Materials' bin sticker), service provider complaints, and general inquiries during the transition period. The City does not action these requests; the resident is transferred to Circular Materials' call centre for further support. The survey is reviewed by Solid Waste Management Services to understand the types of concerns that are being reported by residents regarding recycling, and where they occurred. The survey will continue until the end of Q1 2026 to support reporting during the transition period. After that point, 311 will manage all residential recycling-related calls in alignment with the standard process for handling general inquiries. As a result, reporting will shift to focus on overall call volumes rather than ward-level detail or issue-specific breakdowns. Please see Attachment 2 for detailed customer service metrics.

Solid Waste Management Services also established a Tier Two Call Centre to provide customer support, supplementary to support provided by 311, to impacted residents in Districts 2 and 3 experiencing collection challenges resulting from the switch in the garbage - recycling collection sequence at the beginning of January. Between January 1 and 16, 2026, only 18 inquiries were received and related to collection day, route mapping, missed collection, collection frequency and schedule. With such low call volumes, the operation of the dedicated call centre was discontinued on January 16, 2026.

Operational Observations in Locations Without Schedule Changes

Aside from the initial missed supplemental recycling collection in Districts 2 and 3, the transition has been relatively uneventful. Impacts to collection operations are mainly confined to Districts 2 and 3, in particular areas that underwent schedule changes. Operations in Districts 1 and 4 and Toronto Islands have been unremarkable. Collection from multi-residential buildings has also been relatively smooth, with only a few collection frequency matters requiring clarification and follow-up with Circular Materials, primarily multi-residential curbside customers that should be receiving weekly recycling collection that were not.

Residential units above commercial establishments that are collected at night have seen some challenges with differentiating between eligible (residential) and non-eligible (commercial) source recycling. Staff have continued to work closely with Circular Materials' service provider to ensure the correct materials are collected by the appropriate service provider and collection challenges have been improving.

On-Street Field Observations

Solid Waste Management Services had field crews monitor the progress of supplemental and regularly scheduled recycling collection from early January 2026. While field staff could not monitor each collection area in its entirety, their observations provide some insight into what residents were experiencing. The supplemental recycling collection that Circular Materials planned to offer to households affected by collection schedule changes in Districts 2 and 3 during the first collection cycle on January 2, 3, 6 and 7, 2026 was not implemented as communicated to residents by Circular Materials.

In many instances, it appears the supplemental recycling collection did not occur until the following week on residents' regular scheduled recycling collection. With the exception of January 2, 2026, Districts 2 & 3 received additional attempts the following two days and on January 7, 2026, District 3 was fully collected. The following table represents the percentage of supplemental recycling material that field staff estimated was collected in Districts 2 and 3.

Table 2: Supplemental Recycling Collection Field Observations Districts 2 and 3

	January 2, 2026	January 3, 2026	January 6, 2026	January 7, 2026
District 2	65%	10%	0%	10%
District 3	40%	60%	10%	100%

During the first scheduled supplemental collections for garbage and recycling in the impacted areas, field crews observed that a high percentage of residents had either set-out both garbage and recycling or they set-out the correct product. This suggests that they received and read the collection schedule change notice and/or their collection calendar that advised them of this change. After the supplemental collection period, staff continued to monitor these areas for garbage placed out on the wrong week and left notices and a collection calendar with residents, where required. From January 8-14, 2026, field staff left behind approximately 4,000 notices, which represents a 7% rate of notices left per impacted collection area (Districts 2 & 3).

With any new service provider, it takes time for crews to become familiar with collection days and routes and to collect in an effective and efficient manner. With the exception of supplemental recycling collection, recycling collections for each District were mostly completed on the scheduled day, but field observations noted that Circular Materials' contractor worked overtime to complete the routes. As January progressed, recycling collection continued to improve, and operations were generally completed within the expected service hours and on scheduled collection days.

Compliance with Provincial Regulatory Requirements

The City understands that overflow recycling (in clear bags) was not collected for some residents, though this was not the case for all households. Section 22 of *O. Reg 391/21: Blue Box* states that producers shall "collect, in a single day, all blue box material set

out for curbside collection at the residence" and the definition of "blue box receptacle" includes the use of a "bag" for collection. The City does not have any authority to monitor compliance with the Regulation; that responsibility falls within the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority's mandate.

Litter Abatement

Solid Waste Management Services delivers litter abatement and collection services across the city, specifically along major and minor arterial roads and collector roads. Waste, regardless of what stream it belongs in (i.e. organics, garbage or recycling), that is deposited on the ground is managed as litter and is disposed of as garbage.

Solid Waste Management Services does not manage litter along local roads nor conduct litter picking in residential neighbourhoods as residential streets and adjacent boulevards are not within the Divisions' litter-picking scope of service. If a litter concern is reported in a residential area, the service request is reviewed and routed to the appropriate division based on jurisdiction. Where the issue relates to litter or debris on the roadway and requires sweeping or mechanical cleaning, the request is typically assigned to Transportation Services, as roadway maintenance and sweeping fall under their mandate. Residents also have a legislated responsibility to maintain cleanliness adjacent to their properties.

Since Circular Materials assumed responsibility for residential recycling collection, staff have not seen a marked increase in litter-related service requests post-transition and litter operations have not been impacted. However, the Division will continue to monitor for any increase in unsecured blue box materials ending up as litter that requires additional hours or resources to manage. Staff will report back to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee in Q2 2026, as directed by Council, on this and any other operational impact the Division has seen since January 1, 2026.

Furthermore, the Division will conduct litter audits in public spaces in Fall 2026 and will compare the data against the same historical litter audits to determine if there is a measurable increase in recyclable materials. Gathering this data will assist in determining whether cost recover actions can be substantiated. Once the data is gathered and analyzed, staff will then investigate the potential to recover funding from producers to offset City costs to manage their packaging as litter. These audits occur every two (2) years during the fall. The last litter audit was conducted in Fall 2024. The 2022 Litter Audit Report can be viewed online at: <https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/recycling-organics-garbage/solid-waste-reports/>. Once the data is updated staff will then investigate the potential to recover funding from producers to offset City costs to manage their packaging as litter.

Transfer Stations

Staff anticipated that it would take until mid-January to haul the eligible source Blue Box Materials received at the City's transfer stations at the end of December 2025 to the processors. On January 2, 2026, the Division was asked by Circular Materials to suspend the haulage of Blue Box Materials for the week of January 5 - 9, 2026, due to a breakdown at one of the three processing facilities that Blue Box Materials is hauled to.

The City complied with this request, but operations had to be adjusted as Blue Box Materials became stockpiled at the City's transfer stations.

The haulage of Blue Box Materials to the other processing facilities was not impacted. However, the impacted processing facility that was temporarily suspended receives the majority share of recyclables, so the impact on the City's transfer operations was significant.

Blue Box Material were stockpiled at the City's transfer station locations that could accommodate the extra material, both in terms of physical capacity as well as ensuring compliance with provincial approvals. This required relocating some material from one transfer station to another, resulting in the double handling of material in some cases. Operations were adjusted to accommodate the request until January 12, 2026, when the impacted processing facility re-opened to receive blue box materials from the City.

Tonnages of garbage and organic materials received at transfer stations was monitored and compared to tonnages from January 2025 to observe if there was an increase in these material streams, which may indicate the inappropriate disposal of recyclables. However, tonnages have remained fairly consistent between 2025 and 2026.

Staff are also visually observing the contents offloaded by collection vehicles at transfer stations. No noticeable increase in recycling materials has been observed in the garbage or organics streams.

Furthermore, as part of the Division's curbside residential waste audits, staff will look for changes to the amount of recyclables in the garbage and organics streams and will report back, if required.

Contract Management

Two (2) contract management activities with Circular Materials have been undertaken by staff: i) transition agreement extension; and ii) working to negotiate and execute a dual use bin access agreement.

As a result of the request to delay hauling Blue Box Materials to Circular Materials' contracted material recovery facility, the transition agreement term end date required an extension to ensure the City's was under contract while completing its final obligations. The agreement term was extended to February 13, 2026.

In response to [direction](#) received from City Council at their December 16 - 17, 2025 meeting, the General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services executed a Letter of Intent with Circular Materials' Chief Executive Officer on December 19, 2025, to provide Circular Materials with access to the City's limited dual use bin assets for recycling collection. The Letter of Intent set out the terms governing the relationship on an interim basis pending the negotiation and execution of a longer-term Agreement.

City of Toronto and Circular Materials' Mobile Applications

Circular Materials' mobile application experienced some challenges after its launch, including: the wrong collection day or week for some addresses; missing addresses, identifying multi-residential curbside collection addresses with shared collection locations, and difficulty differentiating between different locations that have the same street name. City staff have been working with Circular Materials to assist in identifying and resolving these issues. To alert residents of these issues, Circular Materials posted a notification on their website while they worked to address the errors.

Based on feedback received from residents and challenges with Circular Materials' mobile application, the City is amending the joint recycling collection schedule agreement to include Circular Materials' recycling collection information in the TOwaste application and online lookup tool. Staff anticipate that recycling collection day information will be included in these City applications before the end of Q1 2026.

Other Ontario Municipalities

While not to the same scale, staff have noted media reports of some operational challenges resulting from transition in other Ontario municipalities, including in large municipalities such as Peel Region and the City of Ottawa. It appears the primary issues are resident confusion on who to call, resident difficulty in accessing customer service from Circular Materials and/or their collectors, concern that alcohol beverage containers are not being accepted as part of the Blue Box Program, and missed collections.

Communications Monitoring

Throughout January, the Communications Division monitored media coverage, social media and web statistics. In the first two (2) weeks of January, there was an initial increase in the number of media inquiries. Coverage mainly focused on missed supplemental recycling collections by Circular Materials' contractor. Additional inquiries to the City could be attributed to the increase in the number of stories (where other spokespersons were quoted) that spiked during the second week of January across various media outlets. The initial increase to the waste collection schedule web page is an annual occurrence while traffic to the main recycling web page decreased through the month of January.

Monitoring of sentiment on social media was generally negative with most of the commentary about confusion around missed recycling collection. Engagement was highest during the first week of January 2026. Statistics are outlined in table 3 below.

Table 3: Communications Monitoring Statistics

	January 1-4, 2026	January 5-11, 2026	January 12-18, 2026	January 19-25, 2026	January 26-31, 2026
# of media inquiries	2	7	5	3	1
# of media stories	40	150	18	20	7
Web stats for toronto.ca/recycling	Users*: 5,157	Users*: 6,064	Users*: 3,314	Users*: 2,339	Users*: 1,741

	January 1-4, 2026	January 5-11, 2026	January 12-18, 2026	January 19-25, 2026	January 26-31, 2026
(main recycling page)	Views**: 6,737	Views**: 8,048	Views**: 4,339	Views**: 2,955	Views**: 2,136
Web stats for waste collection schedules	Users*: 27,798	Users*: 31,327	Users*: 20,804	Users*: 15,188	Users*: 15,900
	Views**: 44,365	Views**: 48,171	Views**: 32,336	Views**: 23,667	Views**: 23,793
Social Media: comments and direct messages	63 (negative sentiment)	36 (negative sentiment)	31 (neutral to negative sentiment)	22 (negative sentiment)	21 (negative sentiment)
Social Media: Most common complaints	No recycling pick-up	Late recycling pick-up	Late pick-up for all streams (weather related)	Late pick-up for all streams (weather related)	Late pick-up for all streams (weather related)

*Users: a unique person (identified by browser/device/cookies) who visits the webpage

**Views: are counted when a webpage is loaded or reloaded (this could be same user that comes back multiple times)

Resident Inquiries

In addition to the Customer Experience Division receiving resident inquiries, Solid Waste Management Services also received an increase in inquires from residents and Councillor offices. During the first two (2) weeks of January 2026, the Division received 44 residential recycling inquiries regarding collection schedules, missed collections and financial savings from the City no longer operating the program.

Invitation to Circular Materials to Attend February 25, 2026 Meeting of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee

As directed by City Council at their November 12 and 13, 2025 meeting, staff invited Circular Materials on January 27, 2026, to deliver a presentation at the February 25, 2026 meeting of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee on the transition thus far.

New City of Toronto Mobile Application and web widget for Waste Management Information

Solid Waste Management Services is implementing a new City mobile application (app) for waste management information, which will replace the current TOWaste mobile app in 2026. The Division procured an off-the-shelf app from a third-party provider, Routeware Inc., under the product name ReCollect, for a five-year contract, which will include app maintenance and support.

The new app will provide residents with information on waste management including waste collection schedules for their address, the Waste Wizard, drop-off depot information and a waste sorting game. It will also offer the opportunity to provide customer feedback, optional waste set-out reminders (e-mail, phone), and the capability to be translated into multiple languages.

The ReCollect product also includes a web widget. The new web widget will replace the current online [Waste Wizard](#) and [Waste Collection Schedule lookup](#) tools on the public-facing website.

This new application is aligned with Solid Waste Management Services strategic goals of excellence in service delivery, and innovation and continuous improvement, as well as Technology Services' strategic pillars of technology modernization and engagement & innovation and the Corporate priority of a well-run City. It will deliver a better digital tool for Toronto residents to connect to Solid Waste Management Services and waste management education.

Nighttime Collections

As part of the current EPR transition and considerations for the upcoming 2026 CafeTO patio season, changes to night-time collection schedules in select service areas were reviewed. As part of the review operational readiness and experience from recent daytime collection schedule changes were considered. The review highlighted the need for additional operational stabilization along with continued coordination with Circular Materials prior to advancing any additional waste collection schedule changes.

Based on this operational review, including lessons learned on how the initial EPR transition was planned, rolled out, and managed, as well as challenges encountered during this initial implementation, no further changes are being pursued in 2026. Night-time collection schedule changes will be reviewed again in 2027, following a comprehensive operational review and continued engagement with Circular Materials.

Next Steps

Staff will continue to monitor operations and maintain communications with Circular Materials on new or ongoing issues related to the residential collection of Blue Box Materials over the next few months and will report back to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee and City Council in Q2 2026 when further information and data is available.

Furthermore, staff will provide an update to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee in 2027, when information becomes available, on the following matters:

- general observations from field staff related to recycling collection;
- any increase in recycling tonnes in the City-collected waste streams;

- the annual report issued by the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority⁵;
- advocacy efforts with the Province of Ontario for the expedited implementation of producer-funded recycling collection for all multi-residential buildings before 2031; and
- discussions with the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority regarding their planned approach to ensure producer compliance with O. Reg. 391/21: Blue Box.

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SIGNATURE

Matt Keliher
General Manager
Solid Waste Management Service

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Preparations for the Transition of Toronto's Blue Bin Program to Producers

Attachment 2: Customer Service Metrics

⁵ Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016, Section 44(1)
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/16r12#BK52>