

June 3rd, 2026

Dear Members of Infrastructure and Environment Committee

Re: Expansion of Ontario’s Deposit Return Program

Ontario operates a successful deposit return system for alcohol, seeing an average of 75 percent of all empties returned to Beer Stores each year. The deposit return provides a consumer incentive to consciously recycle.

This system must be expanded to include all beverage containers. Ontario is one of Canada’s only provinces without a deposit-return program for non-alcoholic beverages. As a result, Ontario has the lowest beverage container recovery rate in Canada—at roughly 50% of containers being recycled.

Other provinces such as Alberta, British Columbia, and Nova Scotia have an expanded deposit return program and see recovery rates 50% higher than Ontario.

The Ontario government proposed expanding the deposit return program to include non-alcoholic containers in 2023 but has yet to do so.

The City of Toronto must join Peel Region, the City of Waterloo, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative in urging the Ontario government to immediately implement a deposit-return program for non-alcoholic beverage containers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Councillor Perks recommends that:

1. City Council request the City Manager to send a letter of support to the Province of Ontario, asking to immediately implement a deposit-return program for non-alcoholic beverage containers;
2. City Council request the City Manager to send a copy of this letter to the Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario; the Hon. Todd McCarthy, Minister of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks; and all Region of Peel MPPs.

Sincerely,

Councillor Gord Perks
Ward 4, Parkdale-High Park



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