

Halton Hills Response to Reducing Waste and Litter in Our Communities: Discussion Paper

1. How best can the province coordinate a day of action on litter?
 - a. Support local grass roots cleanup initiatives: Issue a proclamation for a provincial “day of action on litter” in the spring, provide logos and brands to community groups, offer central coordinating and reporting web-portal for participants to get organized and report their actions and results.
2. What do you or your organization do to reduce litter and waste in our public spaces?
 - a. We offer recycling at Town-owned public facilities
 - b. We offer organics recycling at certain Town-owned buildings
 - c. We coordinate a litter pickup day for employees
 - d. We coordinate a litter pickup day for community members
 - e. We provide information to residents on waste reduction
 - f. We implement the zero waste initiative across the organization
3. What role should the province play to facilitate this work?
 - a. Offer a centralized coordinating web-based portal for participants and organizations
4. What and where are key hotspots for litter that you think should be addressed?
 - a. Recyclables being blow out of blue bins from high winds– introduce blue bags
 - b. Organics bins in all fast food restaurants for patron waste
 - c. Organic bins at grocery stores for spoiled food
 - d. Construction/demolition waste
5. How do you think litter can best be prevented in the first place?
 - a. Extended producer responsibility
 - b. Education to Ontarians
6. Where is access to diversion and disposal particularly limited?
 - a. Fast food restaurants offer recycling but most do not offer organics
 - b. Any publicly accessible venue or facility that does not currently have tri-sorting (waste/organics/recycling)
7. How can the province best help the public participate in waste reduction and diversion activities?
 - a. Standardize all public and private waste management systems into 3 streams (recycling, organics, waste)
 - b. Use consistent graphics and messaging (similar to the universally recognized no smoking signs)

8. How can the province facilitate better diversion in lagging areas, such as multi-unit residential buildings?
 - a. After 30 years of various forms of public engagement around recycling and diversion, areas that are lagging in waste diversion at this day in age are principally doing so for economic reasons i.e. landfilling is less expensive and less labour intensive than recycling. This suggests that market-based instruments could be effective at eliminating the incentive to send all waste to landfill, and we recommend that the Province work with industry and municipalities to explore and determine appropriate policies and programs to ensure that recycling and organics becomes the lower cost choice for businesses and multi-residential buildings.
9. What types of initiatives do you think would result in effective and real action on waste reduction and diversion for the IC&I sectors?
 - a. Implement a landfill tipping fee surcharge that would be used to fund the expansion of provincial recycling and organics processing capacity; provide waste diversion salary grants to businesses so they can hire waste diversion staff, standardize waste management systems across the province, implement extended producer responsibility, and consider landfill bans for certain types of easily diverted waste categories with strong secondary markets for diverted materials.
10. What role do you think regulation should play in driving more waste reduction and diversion efforts from the IC&I sectors?
 - a. Potentially a strong and prominent role as the current system is privately operated and has not succeeded in increasing the amount of diversion in the last few decades because the costs of landfilling are less expensive than recycling. Regulations that regulate or ban certain types of waste could be effective, but we recommend that a system that places a surcharge on ICI landfill tipping fees and increases the cost of landfilling vis a vis diversion but does not restrict landfilling would be just as, if not more effective than regulating the IC&I sector because it would enable the province to generate revenue to expand the waste management system in Ontario without impacting the ability of business leaders to do what is best for their companies.
11. How can we get accurate information on waste reduction and diversion initiatives in the IC&I sectors?
 - a. Mandatory reporting by the waste hauling companies at the landfill/recycling depot weigh scales.
12. What do you think about a province-wide program for the recovery of clothing and textiles?
 - a. We think it is a great idea so long as it leverages existing textile recycling efforts such as those being undertaken by Goodwill Industries Canada which employ persons with disabilities to recycle and process textile waste into value added products (garage rags, car door insulation etc.)

13. How do you think the Blue Box Program could best be transitioned to full producer responsibility without disrupting services to Ontario households?
 - a. By continuing to have municipalities operate their blue box programs and requiring that industry provide funding to support the program based on their actual sales volumes and expected waste per-unit sold. The funds generated could then be used to enable municipalities to enhance their recycling programs, and the industry fee would provide manufacturers with a positive incentive to increase the recyclability of their products.
14. Should it transition directly to producer responsibility under the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016 or through a phased approach?
 - a. Whichever option provides the best assurance of a seamless transition.
15. When do you think the transition of the Blue Box Program should be completed?
 - a. As soon as a seamless transition can be ensured.
16. What additional materials do you think should be managed through producer responsibility to maximize diversion?
 - a. Plastic films and bags
 - b. furniture
 - c. diapers
 - d. mattresses
 - e. household appliances
17. How can we make it easier for the public to determine what should and should not go in the Blue Box?
 - a. Standardize the recycling system across Ontario and require the use of consistent graphics and visuals for all recycling and organics receptacles.
18. How should the province implement the transition process of its existing programs to producer responsibility without interrupting service?
 - a. Through close collaboration with municipalities that manage waste in Ontario.
19. What can be done to increase the safe rescue and donation of surplus food in Ontario?
 - a. Introduce a program that incentivizes/requires generators of surplus food to donate them to local homeless shelters and community food banks.
20. What role do you think government and industry can play in raising education and awareness on the issue of food waste?
 - a. Launch communications campaigns that focus on the increased costs/taxation impact and lost job opportunities that landfilling food entails vs. composting.

21. Do you think the province should ban food waste? If so, how do you think a ban would be best developed and implemented?
- We believe that a ban on food waste would extend the lives of our existing landfills and reduce greenhouse gas emission while supporting job creation. However as part of a ban food waste, we recommend that the province support the expansion of the curbside green cart organics pickup programs across Ontario and the introduction of programs or requirements to ensure the participation of the ICI sector in the food waste ban while minimizing costs and disruptions on businesses.
22. What do you think is the most effective way to reduce the amount of plastic waste that ends up in our environment and waterways?
- We believe that the problem of plastic waste is largely due to the low cost of producing single-use plastics and the high cost of recycling them which disincentivises the establishment of an ethic of conservation in producers and consumers and leads to an oversupply and over use of single use plastics. Therefore, we suggest that a combination of initiatives such as a standardized recycling program, a sustained public education campaign, extended producer responsibility for plastic films/bags and/or a ban on single use plastics would likely be required to achieve a substantive impact.
23. What role do you think the various levels of government should play in reducing plastic waste?
- Federal level: national standards for plastic packaging, plastic product recyclability, etc.
 - Provincial level: standards for municipal recycling programs, funding to support municipal recycling program enhancements, securing markets for plastic waste collected by municipalities, communications and public education.
 - Municipalities: operating effective and efficient recycling programs, communications and public education.
24. Would you support and participate in shoreline and other clean-up projects to keep our waterways and land free of plastic waste?
- The municipality has been and organizing a community clean-up day for the last 10 years and continues to do so.
25. Would a ban on single-use plastics be effective in reducing plastic waste?
- Yes, although the introduction of extended producer responsibility may be just as effective and we recommend that it be studied as an option alongside the single use plastics ban.
26. What are your views on reducing plastic litter through initiatives such as deposit return programs?
- The deposit return system works extremely well for alcohol beverage containers in Ontario and in other Provinces such as Alberta which has a deposit system in place for all alcohol and non-alcohol beverage containers and we therefore support such initiatives.
27. How do you think compostable products and packaging should be managed in Ontario?
- They should be given a distinct and easily recognizable visual identity so as to create an obvious distinction between them and non-compostable products – i.e. require that all single use compostable forks be coloured green.

28. Should producers of compostable products and packaging be held responsible for the management and processing of their materials?
- Yes unless the compostable products are designed to be composted in existing municipal facilities. For example, certain compostable products will only break down in indoor composting facilities but will not in outdoor windrow facilities which creates confusion on the part of the consumer as to whether a compostable item can actually be processed by their municipality and increases processing costs for the municipality.
29. What role do you think standards and facility approvals should play in the proper management of compostable products and packaging?
- A major role as the voluntary deployment of organics collection points at publicly accessible privately-owned facilities has been very low to date.
30. What role do you think chemical recycling and thermal treatment should have in Ontario's approach to managing waste?
- We believe that chemical recycling and thermal treatment can potentially play a prominent role in Ontario's waste management system. Several technologies such as syngas have advanced from the experimental pilot stage to full scale deployment (i.e. Edmonton) over the last decade while others such as wet and dry anaerobic digestion have matured and can be now be procured through turn-key suppliers. We also believe that the main factor that will determine the success of these technologies is their cost vs. alternative processing methods.
31. What types of waste materials do you think are best suited for thermal treatment?
- Syngas plants: plastics, paper and dried plant material.
 - Dry anaerobic digestion: wet organic plant material and food waste.
 - Wet anaerobic digestion: manure.
32. How can we clearly and fairly assess the benefits and drawbacks of thermal treatment?
- Through a 5 phased process:
 - Determine waste composition: understand the nature and volume of organic waste throughout the province.
 - Explore various thermal technologies: compare technology maturity, market readiness, cap ex, op ex, operational complexity, revenue generation potential, feedstock requirements, markets for residuals, etc.
 - Match optimal technologies with feedstock sources
 - Develop a thermal treatment deployment plan in collaboration with municipalities
 - Develop collaborative arrangements with partners to build, own, operate, and maintain thermal treatment facilities.
33. How can we maintain air standards and waste management requirements in addressing these obstacles?
- By prioritizing low-emissions thermal and chemical treatment technologies, regulating emissions and implementing practical emissions control systems.

34. How can we best work with municipalities and stakeholders to integrate new soil reuse rules and other best practices into operations quickly, and to continue to develop innovative approaches to soil reuse and management?
- By undertaking collaborative local stakeholder engagement processes that involve the producers, processors and end-users of excess soils, as well as municipalities, conservation authorities and residents, and is informed by a comprehensive best-practices research component.
35. What changes to the approvals process do you think would best facilitate a reduction in waste going to landfills?
- Introducing a requirement that all new landfills be constructed with onsite waste diversion, waste separation and value-added waste processing technologies. Doing so would reduce the amount of waste at the point of entry, provide numerous local jobs, and extend landfill service life.
36. What type of end-markets for resources from waste do you think Ontario is best positioned for?
- Mixed glass used as an aggregate in pavement
 - Ethanol produced through syngas plants
 - Biogas generated through digestion
 - Organic residuals as fertilizers
 - Recovered metals
37. How do you think municipalities should be given more of a say in the landfill approvals process?
- Ideally municipalities would be given the authority to decide whether landfills are in their community's best interest and if so, to govern their placement through the land use designation process.
 - An alternative approach could be for the province to engage a number of municipal Councils of an area that the province is contemplating a new landfill in a collaborative solutions-based dialogue to identify an optimal host and determine incentives to benefit the host community.
38. Of all the initiatives detailed in this discussion paper, what do you think should be a priority for early action?
- Single-use plastics ban
 - Food waste ban
 - Extended producer responsibility
39. How do you think Ontario can best maintain its competitiveness and growth while reducing the amount of waste going to landfill and litter in our communities?
- Through a comprehensive approach that involves a combination of market-based instruments and programs that make diversion and value-added processing the obvious and lower cost choice for Ontarians and businesses.
40. How do you think we can make Ontario a leader in waste reduction and diversion once again?
- By working with manufacturers to reduce the waste footprint of their products and making waste diversion and recycling less expensive than landfilling.