



BUILDING MARKHAM'S  
FUTURE TOGETHER



# New Provincial Blue Box Program Changes

General Committee  
February 20, 2018

# Background

- The Waste Free Ontario Act, represents the greatest change to the Blue Box recycling program since 1989
- Legislation shifts financial responsibility for the Blue Box recycling program from municipalities to product stewards
- A steward is any Ontario company that supplies products that are recycled in the Blue Box
- Product stewards are represented by Stewardship Ontario
- Stewardship Ontario released a new Blue Box Plan on December 19, 2017 and Ministry of the Environment approval is expected after the Provincial Elections in 2018.

**Legislation aims to shift the costs to deliver these programs from property taxpayers to consumers with recycling program costs imbedded in product pricing**



# So Who is Stewardship Ontario?

Thousands of Companies including:



# Key Objectives of the Blue Box Plan

The Minister of the Environment issued a letter to Stewardship Ontario directing them to develop a new Blue Box Plan that:

✓ Preserves the residential Blue Box program and improves environmental outcomes

✓ Increases Provincial diversion to 75%

✓ A seamless transition – uninterrupted collection services to residents

✓ Avoid disruption of existing contracts

✓ Expand and harmonize a province wide list of items accepted in the blue box

✓ No negative impact to existing Blue Box curbside recycling services



# Draft Blue Box Plan – Transition Process



- A. Determine catchment area and transition year**
- B. Determine blue box content**
- C. Baseline Recycling Program**
- D. Municipality has 3 options to transitions**

- A. Eliminate 400 municipal recycling contracts in 5 years**
- B. Both collection and processing contracts are part of the transition plan**
- C. York Region Processing Impact**

**The timing shown in the presentation is based on the December 19, 2017 draft plan which could shift due to approval by Minister only expected after provincial election**



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## A. Catchment Areas

- Stewardship Ontario has proposed a catchment system to coordinate the transition of municipalities to the new system
  - based on geography, transportation corridors, existing infrastructure, the status of curbside collection and processing contracts, and the amount of available blue box material
- Each catchment area will be given an eligibility date for which year (i.e. 2020-2025) the communities within that catchment will be able to transition. The catchments and their eligibility year will only be known during the two-year preparation phase.

**Municipality is to first provide SO “intention to transition” in 2018**

**Municipality can then decide to transition or not after catchment area and year is known**

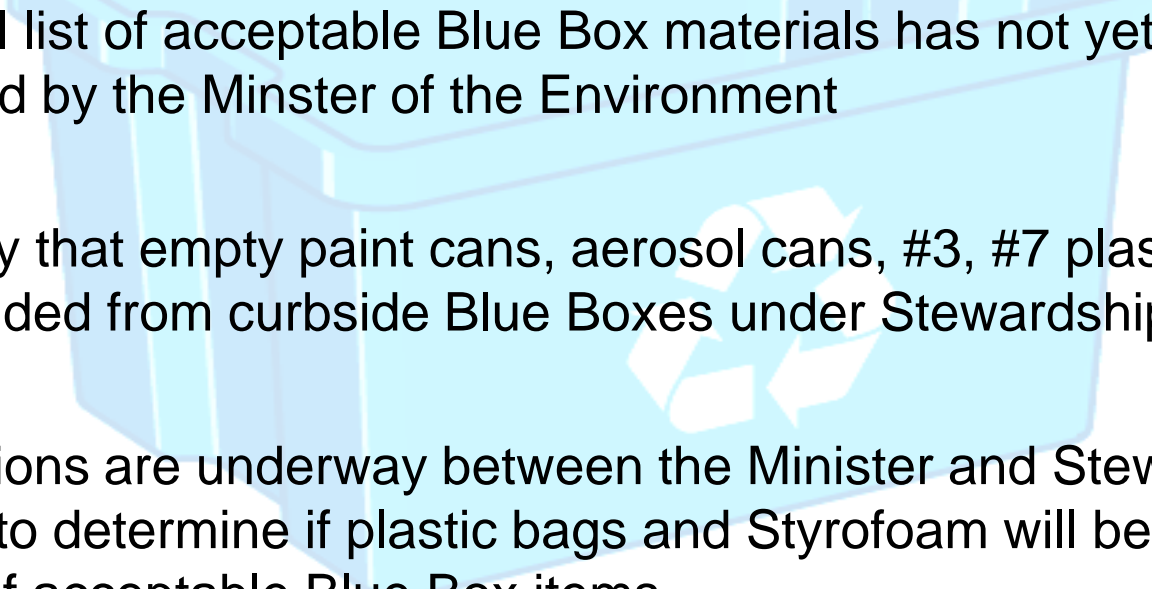


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## B. Blue Box Acceptance List

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- The final list of acceptable Blue Box materials has not yet been approved by the Minister of the Environment
  - It is likely that empty paint cans, aerosol cans, #3, #7 plastics may be excluded from curbside Blue Boxes under Stewardship Ontario
  - Discussions are underway between the Minister and Stewardship Ontario to determine if plastic bags and Styrofoam will be added to the list of acceptable Blue Box items.

**A Standardized province-wide program and education campaign will reduce confusion. This will be very helpful as people move from one area of Ontario to another.**



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## C. Baseline Recycling Program

- Stewardship Ontario will pay for a baseline program including: Blue Box collection, multi-res, depots and public space/parks
- Markham currently offers special collection services that would be over and above a base line program and would not be funded by SO: supermail box, BIA, assisted collection services

## D. Municipal Options

### **OPTION #1 – Act as the collection contract administrator on behalf of Stewardship Ontario**

- A municipality can transition to receive up to 100% funding for a baseline program and act as contract manager on behalf of Stewardship Ontario
- Municipality would continue to deal with residents directly. Resident will experience minimal collection impact, with residents being unaware of changes beyond program material additions and removals
- If a municipality wants to transition but has a long term collection contract, Stewardship Ontario will pay a benchmark rate or a municipality can attempt to break their long term contract

## D. Municipal Options

### **OPTION #2 “Hand over the keys” to Stewardship Ontario**

- A Municipality can opt out of the Blue Box program delivery altogether
- Stewardship Ontario would issue public tender for a collection contractor to deliver the program to residents
- Residents would call the Stewardship Ontario contractor about Blue Box collection issues
- Eliminates all Blue Box costs for the municipality

## D. Municipal Options

### **OPTION # 3 “Stay the course” - Do not transition**

- Municipalities are not required to transition to the new Blue Box program
- Municipalities can continue to deliver their current Blue Box services
- Under this option, Stewardship Ontario would pay 50% of the Municipal Blue Box program to the municipality
- Similar to current WDO funding arrangement - in the 2017 budget year, Markham received \$1.285M in funding from WDO



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## D. Municipal Options

- Options #1 and #2 both reduce the cost burden to municipalities for delivery of the Blue Box program.
- Option #1 provides the least disruption to residents as the system remains the same with the exception of a possible change in mix of recyclables collected.
- Option #3 is the least disruptive for residents, but provides the lowest amount of funding at 50% of program costs.

**Staff support Option #1 – Markham to transition to the new 100% Blue Box funding model as soon as possible and acting as the contract manager to ensure excellent customer service standards are maintained for Markham residents.**



## York Region Processing Impact

- York Region is a 2 tier waste management system governed by the Regional Municipality of York Act 1990
- Local municipalities have jurisdiction and pay for collection
- York Region has jurisdiction over and pays for transfer, processing / disposal
- Stewardship Ontario has indicated it plans to transition the over 70 municipal processing facilities across Ontario to attain further efficiencies

**Markham and York Region waste management staff will continue to work collaboratively to coordinate the transition process with a goal of reducing any negative impacts.**

# Recommendation and Next Steps

- Recommendation:
  - THAT the report entitled “New Provincial Blue Box Program Changes” be received
- Next Steps:
  - Staff will be seeking Council approval of “intention to transition” after Minister of the Environment approval of new Blue Box Plan is approved
  - Staff will present a separate report outlining current city collection contract impacts (current Miller Waste Contract expires November 2018)