

## Staff Report

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**Report To:** Operations Committee  
**Report From:** Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services  
**Meeting Date:** January 18, 2024  
**Report Code:** OP-24-002  
**Subject:** Recycling Convenience Depot Miller Transfer Station

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### Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report OP-24-002 respecting Recycling Convenience Depot - Miller Transfer Station, the Operations Committee recommends that City Council:

1. Approve financial contributions toward the convenience depot at Miller Transfer Station until at least the end of the Blue Box Transition Period of December 31, 2025; and
2. Direct staff to negotiate a cost-sharing agreement with Georgian Bluffs and the Municipality of Meaford.

### Highlights:

- Following unsuccessful negotiations between Miller Waste and Circular Materials, Circular Materials has officially declined to accept recycling material from the Miller Waste Transfer Station convenience depot. Miller Waste is now required to transport the recycling material collected at the Transfer Station to their Pickering facilities monthly, significantly increasing costs.
- In response, Miller Waste is requesting an annual contribution of approximately \$21,000 to cover a portion of the operational cost of the convenience depot. City staff intend to approach Meaford and Georgian Bluffs to discuss cost-sharing.
- Currently, non-eligible sources not designated for curbside pickup can deliver their material to the Miller Waste Transfer Station recycling

convenience depot. The recycling convenience depot collected approximately 150 tonnes of recycling last year. Keeping the recycling convenience depot will allow non-eligible sources to continue to take their recycling there, post-blue box transition.

### **Strategic Plan Alignment:**

This report supports the delivery of Core Service.

### **Climate and Environmental Implications:**

This supports the objectives of the City's Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan by strengthening the resiliency of City infrastructure or services.

### **Previous Report/Authority:**

[OP-23-014 Blue Box Transition Opting Out](#)

### **Background:**

On July 1, 2023, the City opted out of curbside residential blue box collection for eligible sources, and Circular Materials assumed responsibility for the service. At that time, the City entered into an agreement with Miller Waste to continue to collect recyclables from non-eligible sources, including businesses and commercial entities where curbside recycling collection was already offered. The agreement with Miller Waste expires on December 31, 2025, coinciding with the end of the curbside collection transition period across Ontario.

Now that the transition period has begun, Circular Materials prohibits adding any new sources of recycled materials to the approved non-eligible list for curbside collection. To this end, Staff have been proactive when reviewing and commenting on multi-residential site plan applications exceeding six units and all non-residential developments by advising that applicants must make arrangements with a private contractor for recycling removal in conformance with current legislation. The same criteria apply to garbage disposal.

Post-transition (January 1, 2026), each existing non-eligible source that the City has provided recycling collection services and CMO has agreed to continue until the end of the transition period would be required to arrange

for recycling materials disposal with a private contractor unless municipalities continue to cover these costs or make other arrangements.

City staff may begin to gain more insight at the Grey County Waste Community of Practice/Working Group in mid-February. The strategy for collecting non-eligibles after the transition date will be among the key discussion points.

Non-eligible sources not designated for recycling collection can deliver their material to the Miller Waste Transfer Station recycling convenience depot. Despite being primarily viewed as a service for residential users, it services a noteworthy number of businesses, collecting approximately 150 tonnes of recycling in 2023.

Miller Waste charges residents dropping off recyclables at the Transfer Station a \$5.00 fee. This fee is intended to assist in covering the costs associated with maintaining the bins at the facility and addressing instances where individuals falsely claim to have recycling only but also dispose of garbage.

## **Analysis:**

During the blue box transition, given that Miller Waste is a private business providing recycling bins for convenience at their Transfer Station, Miller Waste was responsible for negotiating with Circular Materials to continue to accept the recycling material at Circular Materials' approved recycling facility.

There was optimism that Circular Materials would permit this material to be transported to the approved facility in Mount Forest alongside the curbside residential and approved non-eligible materials. Unfortunately, Circular Materials will not accept the material. As such, Miller Waste's only option is to transport it to one of its processing facilities in Pickering once a month. This option incurs a significantly higher cost than if Circular Materials had accepted the material.

In mid-December, Miller Waste and City staff met regarding Circular Materials' denial of the request. Miller Waste staff inquired if the City would contribute to the costs associated with the continued operation of the convenience depot. Miller Waste is proposing an annual contribution of approximately \$21,000. This amount is calculated at \$140/tonne plus HST, based on a collection total of roughly 150 tonnes for 12 consecutive months from December 2022 to November 2023. All additional costs related to

operating the plant, including wages, bins, overhead, and transportation, will be covered by Miller Waste. The initial agreement would be in place until the blue box transition ends on December 31, 2025.

Staff will explore collaborations with our neighbouring municipalities, Meaford and Georgian Bluffs, aiming to share the annual \$21,000 cost and provide recycling solutions for their non-eligible entities, as their residents and businesses also have access to the facility.

Maintaining the convenience depot at the Transfer Station will provide an option post-transition where non-eligible sources can take their recyclables. Significant capital costs and Ministry approvals are associated with this type of facility, so preserving the recycling depot becomes critical not only for current needs but also as a strategic option for businesses post-transition, considering the substantial investment required to establish a similar facility.

### **Financial Implications:**

Staff have budgeted an annual amount of \$60,000 for a non-eligible recycling collection for 2024. While the usual monthly costs hover around \$3,500, provisions have been made for potential fluctuations. This allocation is designed to handle these types of circumstances.

### **Communication Strategy:**

A joint communication plan with Miller Waste will need to be developed if Council does not support jointly funding the recycling convenience depot at the Transfer Station including a City issued public notice.

### **Consultation:**

District Manager of Miller Waste Systems.

### **Attachments:**

None.

### **Recommended by:**

Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services

Chris Webb, Manager of Engineering Services

**Submission approved by:**

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services, at [hjennen@owensound.ca](mailto:hjennen@owensound.ca) or 519-376-4440 Ext 3223.