

## Report to Council

**Report Title:** Blue Box Transition Update 3

**Prepared By:** Nicholas Schnurr, Director of Operations

**Department:** Operations - Waste Management

**Date:** June 24, 2025

**Report Number:** WM2025-08 **File Number:** C110P

**Attachments:**

---

### Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number WM2025-08 - Blue Box Transition Update 3, prepared by Nicholas Schnurr, Director of Operations for information purposes.

### Report:

#### Background:

Ontario's Blue Box recycling program is undergoing a legislated shift to a full producer responsibility model under the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016 and Ontario Regulation 391/21. This transition—being managed by Circular Materials Ontario, a Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO)—removes municipalities from operational and financial responsibility for Blue Box services.

Effective December 31, 2025, the Municipality of Brockton will no longer operate local Blue Box depots, including the Walkerton Recycling Depot cardboard bins. All municipal recycling depots will be permanently closed as producers move toward standardized curbside collection models under the provincial framework. The closure aligns with Ontario's phased transition, which will be completed by December 31, 2025.

Under the Blue Box Regulation, producers of packaging, paper products, and packaging-like materials are now fully responsible for collection, management, and funding of recycling services. The goal is to:

- Promote product design for recycling.
- Provide consistent collection services across Ontario.
- Reduce financial pressure on municipal budgets.

The transition, which began in 2023, is part of a broader strategy to build a circular economy in Ontario. As of January 1, 2026, all eligible residences will receive Blue Box collection directly coordinated by Circular Materials or another PRO.

## **Recent Regulatory Amendments (ERO 025-0009)**

On April 23, 2025, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks proposed key amendments to the Blue Box Regulation in response to unforeseen cost pressures:

**Postponement of Recovery Targets:** Recovery targets for core materials (paper, metal, glass, rigid plastic, and beverage containers) would be delayed by five years, allowing time for system efficiencies.

The ministry is proposing to clarify that producers are responsible for collecting all blue box waste generated at a school to ensure that no loss of service for other users of school buildings.

**Withdrawal of Planned Service Expansion:** The planned expansion of Blue Box services to more schools, long-term care homes, and multi-residential units is proposed to be cancelled to limit future cost escalation.

These changes do not impact the scheduled depot closures or current residential curbside collection but reinforce the need for streamlined service delivery across Ontario.

There is no operational change to Brockton Blue Box collections as a result of the proposed amendments.

The comment period on <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/025-0009> remains open until July 4, 2025.

### **Local Implications for Brockton**

**Depot Closures:**

Effective December 31, 2025, all recycling depots in Brockton will be permanently closed, including:

The Walkerton Recycling Depot, which is open 24/7 for cardboard drop-off. An increased service level will be offered by allowing residents to dispose of cardboard at the curbside, along with all other recyclables.

These closures are required under the new regulatory framework and were determined in coordination with Circular Materials Ontario. After the closure, only curbside Blue Box service will be available to residential households.

**Service Continuity:** Curbside Blue Box collection will continue uninterrupted for residential only, with an increased level of service.

**No Immediate Change in Schedule:** Residents should continue to follow the 2025 Blue Box/Recycling Schedule.

**Materials:** Residents should continue using 'lipped' bins and ensure materials are clean and sorted appropriately. Residents can continue to use their existing bins for recycling.

Industrial, Commercial & Institutional (IC&I) Sector remains outside the scope of the Blue Box program and must arrange private recycling services. However, based on amendments noted below all school users will be included (childcare).

Withdrawal from planned service expansion may affect future development in Brockton depending on the type of units that are being constructed. New apartment buildings and long-term care homes would not be

covered. This would not affect any existing service of current facilities. The new Eastridge apartments are also serviced by a private contractor and would not be affected by the proposed changes.

Other Municipal Facilities:

All the Community Centres, works shops, Firehall, Municipal Office will be required to arrange and pay for recycling services.

Communications Strategy

An enhanced public awareness campaign is underway and will include:

Notice of Depot Closures: Posted on municipal website, Brockton Buzz, and social media.

A dedicated webpage and FAQ section will be published to help residents adjust to these changes.

Financial Implications

Cost Savings: The end of municipal responsibility for Blue Box collection, depot operations, and education will result in reduced waste management expenditures but will have departmental costs associated with recycling pick up.

Short-Term Costs: One-time costs may include signage removal, public notices, and depot decommissioning. These costs will be minimal and not have any major impact on the operations budget.

Next Steps

Action Item	Target Date
Launch public awareness campaign	July–August 2025
Confirm post-transition service schedule	September - October 2025

Analysis:

The closure of all municipal recycling depots and the full implementation of producer-led curbside collection marks a significant shift in how recycling is managed in Brockton and across Ontario. While change may require short-term adjustment, the transition promises long-term environmental and financial benefits. The Municipality of Brockton remains committed to supporting residents through effective communication and collaboration with Circular Materials.

Strategic Action Plan Checklist:

What aspect of the Brockton Strategic Action Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?	
• Recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision	Yes
• Recommendations contribute to achieving Heritage, Culture, and Community	N/A
• Recommendations contribute to achieving Quality of Life	Yes
• Recommendations contribute to achieving Land Use Planning and the Natural Environment	N/A
• Recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Development	N/A
• Recommendations contribute to achieving Municipal Governance	N/A

## **Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:**

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective? Yes

Cost savings will be realized in the 2026 budget for BASWR services as a result of legislative changes to put the responsibility of recycling on producers. However, there will be added departmental costs for recycling pick up.

### **Reviewed By:**



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

---

### **Respectfully Submitted by:**



Nicholas Schnurr, Director of Operations

### **Reviewed By:**



Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer