

Introduction

The County of Brant Council approved a new 25-year Solid Waste Management Master Plan (the Plan) on September 23, 2025, which will guide the county's waste collection, management, and reduction strategies through 2050. Developed in response to a growing population and evolving environmental regulations, the Plan provides a fiscally and environmentally responsible framework for the county's solid waste programs. It builds upon public engagement from the 2023 Garbage and Recycling Review and will act as a roadmap to meet the community's needs for the next quarter-century.

Key Drivers and Strategic Vision

The Plan's development is guided by key strategic drivers, including population growth, new provincial regulations, fiscal responsibility and a commitment to environmental stewardship. In early 2025, the residential Blue Box program transitioned to an extended producer responsibility model, shifting responsibility to product manufacturers. The Plan therefore focuses on all other aspects of solid waste management, identifying opportunities to improve service delivery, reduce costs and increase waste diversion. The Plan's overall goal is to ensure a sustainable and resilient waste management system that aligns with provincial guidance and regulations.

Implementation Timeline

The Plan is divided into three (3) distinct phases to ensure a phased and strategic implementation:

Short-Term (2025–2027): This phase focuses on foundational steps and initial program adjustments. Key actions include:

- Implementing new scalehouse software in 2026.
- Developing a comprehensive public promotion and education strategy in 2026.
- Reducing urban yard waste collection to six (6) times per year in 2027.
- Discontinuing the curbside Christmas tree collection program in 2028.
- Conducting waste audits for curbside collection and solid waste facilities in 2027.

Medium-Term (2028–2040): This phase involves more significant program planning and infrastructure changes. Key initiatives include:

- Developing and hosting waste management facility tours starting in 2028.
- Implementing a ban on recyclables in the curbside garbage stream in 2028.
- Planning and implementing an automated curbside collection system between 2032 and 2034.

- Planning and implementing an organic waste program between 2032 and 2034.
- Creating a long-term solid waste funding strategy.

Long-Term (2041–2050): The final phase focuses on sustaining progress and continuing to innovate in solid waste management. It will involve ongoing waste audits and other measures to maintain and enhance the county's waste diversion efforts.

Financial and Community Impact

The Plan is supported by detailed financial modeling, including operating and capital cost forecasts and a long-term funding strategy. This approach will allow for informed decision-making on program funding, cost recovery and program affordability while ensuring fiscal responsibility. By promoting waste diversion and implementing more efficient collection systems, the plan is expected to generate operational savings while providing environmental benefits.

Recommendations

Based on an extensive review of existing programs, best practices, and public feedback, County staff recommended the approval and phased implementation of 13 specific options. These options were evaluated based on their economic, social, and environmental impacts. Moving forward, all service level changes and associated financial implications will be presented to the Administration and Operations Committee or through the annual budget process for final approval.