

Subject: Solid Waste Master Plan 2025 Annual Update

File Number: ACS2025-PWD-SWS-0007

Report to Environment and Climate Change Committee on 21 October 2025

and Council 12 November 2025

Submitted on October 9, 2025 by Shelley McDonald, Director, Solid Waste Services, Public Works Department

Contact Person: Rachael Jones, Program Manager, Long-Term Planning, Solid Waste Services, Public Works Department

Rachael.Jones@ottawa.ca

Ward: Citywide

Objet : Mise à jour annuelle 2025 du Plan directeur de la gestion des déchets solides

Numéro de dossier : ACS2025-PWD-SWS-0007

Rapport présenté au Comité de l'environnement du changement climatique

Rapport soumis le 21 octobre 2025

et au Conseil le 12 novembre 2025

Soumis le 2025-10-09 par Shelley McDonald, directrice, Services des déchets solides, Direction générale des travaux publics

Personne ressource : Rachael Jones, gestionnaire de programme, Planification à long terme, Services des déchets solides, Direction générale des travaux publics

Rachael.Jones@ottawa.ca

Quartier : À l'échelle de la ville

REPORT RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Environment and Climate Change Committee recommend that Council:

- 1. Receive the Solid Waste Master Plan 2025 Annual Update for information, including progress on high-priority Action Suites, outlined in this report**

and further detailed in Document 1 – Progress Update on Year One Actions;

2. Receive a detailed update on the Three-item Garbage Limit (Solid Waste Master Plan Action Suite 4: Enhanced Source Separation of Waste), outlined in Document 2 – Update on the Three-item Garbage Limit and Agriculture Exemption Program;
3. Approve the extension of the Agriculture Exemption Program to 2027, outlined in this report and further detailed in Document 2 – Update on the Three-item Garbage Limit and Agriculture Exemption Program; and,
4. Receive the results of the 2023/2024 Four-Season Waste Audit, which will inform future planning and performance measurement, for information.

RECOMMANDATION(S) DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité de l'environnement et du changement climatique recommande au Conseil municipal :

1. de prendre connaissance, pour information, de la Mise à jour annuelle 2025 du Plan directeur de la gestion des déchets solides, ainsi que des progrès accomplis dans les suites d'actions absolument prioritaires et conformément aux précisions reproduites dans la Pièce 1 – Compte rendu sur les interventions de la première année;
2. de prendre connaissance du compte rendu détaillé sur la limite de trois articles à jeter (suite d'actions 4 du Plan directeur de la gestion des déchets solides : Amélioration de la séparation des déchets à la source), conformément aux modalités exposées dans la pièce 2 (Compte rendu sur la limite de trois articles à jeter et sur le Programme d'exemption des propriétés agricoles);
3. d'approuver la prorogation, jusqu'en 2027, du Programme d'exemption des propriétés agricoles selon les modalités exposées dans ce rapport et conformément aux précisions reproduites dans la pièce 2 (Compte rendu sur la limite de trois articles à jeter et sur le Programme d'exemption des propriétés agricoles);

4. **de prendre connaissance, pour information, des résultats de la mission d'audit 2023-2024 sur les déchets pendant les quatre saisons, qui viendra éclairer la planification et la mesure du rendement.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Assumption and Analysis

The City of Ottawa's Solid Waste Master Plan (SWMP) was approved by Ottawa City Council ([ACS2024-PWD-SWS-0004](#)) in June 2024 and represents a comprehensive forward-thinking strategy to guide Ottawa's waste management system over the next 30 years. This 2025 Annual Update is the first formal update since the SWMP's approval and provides project status updates, detailed accounts of implementation efforts started to date, seeks approval for a specific program extension, and outlines next steps for 2026.

The SWMP was developed through an industry-recognized phased approach, informed by extensive and inclusive public and stakeholder engagement, comparative scans of best practices across Canadian municipalities, and technical analysis. It aligns with the City's Climate Change Master Plan (CCMP) and other strategic initiatives, and is structured around five key objectives:

1. Maximizing reduction and reuse
2. Maximizing recycling
3. Optimizing residual waste management and energy recovery
4. Advancing operational efficiency
5. Fostering a zero-waste culture

Key initiatives in Year One

In its first year, the SWMP made measurable progress across several high-priority [Action Suites](#). The implementation of the three-item garbage limit, which replaced the previous six-item curbside limit as carried by Ottawa City Council ([Motion no. 2023-16-06](#)), has already resulted in a notable reduction in waste tonnage. Garbage tonnages sent to landfill decreased by 15,000 tonnes in January – August 2025 compared to the same timeframe in 2024. The Agriculture Exemption Program, which allows unlimited farm waste to be set out for eligible properties, has been well received and is recommended for extension to 2027. This recommendation is based on a set-out study

conducted between Fall 2024 and Summer 2025 which confirmed year-round generation of agricultural waste, peaking in spring and summer. In 2025, a targeted survey to agricultural properties receiving curbside waste collection indicated that over 90 per cent of respondents produce unavoidable farm waste at some point during the year. If approved, staff would revisit the Agriculture Exemption Program in 2027 and seek further extension approval if and as required.

The Multi-Residential Waste Diversion Strategy ([ACS2022-PWD-SWS-0001](#)) has also generated significant uptake in organics diversion program use, with nearly one-third of the 1,050 targeted properties onboarded to the now-mandatory Green Bin Program for properties receiving City waste collections. Outreach efforts have been robust, with tailored support provided to property managers and residents, and early data indicates increased participation and reduced contamination.

Other initiatives launched in Year One include the expansion of waste diversion opportunities in parks and public spaces, the development of a Community Reduction and Reuse Action Plan and a feasibility study for waste-to-energy technologies. These efforts reflect the City's commitment to innovation, sustainability, and continuous improvement in waste management.

In addition to a progress update on SWMP action planning and implementation, this report also provides details on the 2023/2024 Four Season Waste Audit. The waste audit focused on determining the composition of both the garbage and green bin streams and providing information on the amount of contamination in the green bin stream.

A key finding from the waste audit is the significant opportunity that still remains to encourage use of the Green Bin Program. To measure the effectiveness and efficiency of individual SWMP actions, Solid Waste Services will conduct waste audits at key junctures throughout the SWMP to ensure data used for planning of actions is up to date and can inform future program and policy updates.

Public Consultation/Input

How engagement feedback has informed Year One

Feedback gathered during the development of the SWMP strongly informed the planning and implementation of Year One actions. Engagement with stakeholders revealed that prioritizing reduction and reuse initiatives is essential, and that behaviour change will be critical to the plan's success. In response, Year One has focused heavily

on reduction and reuse efforts, supported by targeted and expanded promotion and education.

For example, food waste reduction was a top priority for most participants during the SWMP engagement process. In alignment with this, the City launched a partnership with *Love Food Hate Waste* in July 2025—a nationally recognized campaign that offers residents practical tips and resources to minimize avoidable food waste. This initiative has been incorporated into broader outreach efforts and will expand in 2026 to include workshops and presentations at schools, libraries, and community centres.

The continuing role of engagement

Public and stakeholder engagement has played—and will continue to play—a vital role throughout the SWMP rollout. In summer 2025, an engagement series focused on reduction and reuse was conducted, and its findings are currently guiding the development of several new initiatives, including strategies for textiles and bulky waste diversion. Additionally, a Community Reduction and Reuse Working Group will be established by the end of 2025 to harness the knowledge and expertise of community groups leading related efforts, supporting the creation of future events and initiatives.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion were foundational to all engagement activities during the SWMP's development and remain central to its implementation. The plan was designed to reflect the diverse values, priorities, and lived experiences of Ottawa's communities, and ongoing efforts will continue to ensure these principles are prioritized throughout the rollout.

Financial Implications

Funding for the SWMP is identified within the Solid Waste Long Range Financial Plan (LRFP) which was approved ([ACS2024-FCS-FIN-0008](#)) alongside the SWMP in June 2024. This LRFP outlines the capital and operational funding required to implement the SWMP's actions while maintaining financial predictability for residents and ratepayers.

The financial implications of the SWMP are being carefully managed through phased implementation, strategic investments, and ongoing monitoring. Future annual updates will provide more detailed cost-benefit analyses as additional actions are rolled out and impacts are realized. Budget pressures and asks above and beyond the LRFP will be

identified through and sought during the City's annual budget process.

SYNTHÈSE ADMINISTRATIVE

Hypothèse et analyse

Le Plan directeur de la gestion des déchets solides (PDGDS), qui a été approuvé par le Conseil municipal d'Ottawa ([ACS2024-PWD-SWS-0004](#)) en juin 2024, fait état de la stratégie prospective complète adoptée pour guider le réseau de la gestion des déchets d'Ottawa dans les 30 prochaines années. Ce compte rendu annuel 2025 est le premier état des lieux formel établi depuis l'approbation du PDGDS et fait le point sur la situation du projet, comprend des comptes rendus détaillés des efforts consacrés à la mise en œuvre jusqu'à maintenant, vise à faire approuver une prorogation spécifique du programme et décrit dans leurs grandes lignes les prochaines étapes à franchir en 2026.

Le PDGDS a été mis au point dans le cadre d'une approche échelonnée par phases et reconnue dans l'industrie, qui a été éclairée par des consultations vastes et inclusives auprès du public et des parties prenantes, par des tours d'horizon comparatifs des règles de l'art parmi des municipalités canadiennes, ainsi que par une analyse technique. Ce plan cadre avec le Plan directeur sur les changements climatiques (PDCC) de la Ville et d'autres initiatives stratégiques et s'articule autour de cinq grands objectifs :

1. maximiser la réduction et la réutilisation;
2. maximiser le recyclage;
3. optimiser la gestion des déchets résiduels et la récupération de l'énergie;
4. promouvoir l'efficacité opérationnelle;
5. favoriser une culture de zéro déchet.

Les grandes initiatives de la première année

Nous avons accompli des progrès mesurables, dans la première année du PDGDS, pour l'ensemble des [suites d'actions](#) absolument prioritaires. La mise en œuvre de la limite de trois articles à jeter, qui a remplacé la précédente limite de six articles à déposer sur le bord de la rue, adoptée par le Conseil municipal d'Ottawa ([motion n°2023-16-06](#)), a déjà donné lieu à une importante réduction du tonnage de déchets. Le tonnage de déchets enfouis dans la décharge contrôlée a baissé de 15 000 tonnes

dans la période comprise entre janvier et août 2025 par rapport à la même période en 2024. Le Programme d'exemption des propriétés agricoles, qui prévoit que les propriétés admissibles peuvent déposer sur le bord de la rue une quantité illimitée de déchets agricoles, a été bien accueilli, et on recommande de le proroger jusqu'en 2027. Cette recommandation se fonde sur une étude qui a porté sur la collecte des déchets déposés sur le bord de la rue et qui s'est déroulée entre l'automne 2024 et l'été 2025, ce qui a permis de confirmer que la production des déchets agricoles durant toute l'année culmine au printemps et en été. En 2025, un sondage ciblé mené auprès des propriétaires de domaines agricoles dont les déchets sont ramassés sur le bord des rues a révélé que plus de 90 % des participants produisent des déchets agricoles inévitables à un moment ou à un autre de l'année. Si cette prorogation est approuvée, le personnel reverrait en 2027 l'exemption des propriétés agricoles et demanderait d'approuver une nouvelle prorogation, au besoin et dans les cas nécessaires.

La Stratégie du réacheminement des déchets des immeubles à logements multiples ([ACS2022-PWD-SWS-0001](#)) a aussi donné lieu à une forte participation au programme de réacheminement des matières organiques, puisque près du tiers des 1 050 propriétés ciblées ont adhéré au Programme désormais obligatoire des bacs verts pour les propriétés dont la Ville ramasse les déchets. Les efforts consacrés à la sensibilisation ont été vigoureux, et la Ville a apporté une aide sur mesure aux gestionnaires d'immeubles et aux résidents. Les premières données indiquent que la participation a augmenté et que la contamination a baissé.

D'autres initiatives lancées dans la première année ont consisté à étendre, dans les parcs et les espaces publics, les activités de réacheminement des déchets, à mettre au point le Plan d'action pour la réduction et la réutilisation des déchets dans la collectivité et à mener des études de viabilité sur les technologies de transformation des déchets en énergie. Ces efforts témoignent de la volonté d'innovation, de durabilité et d'amélioration continue de la Ville dans la gestion des déchets.

En plus de faire le point sur les progrès dans la planification des interventions et dans la mise en œuvre du PDGDS, ce rapport comprend des détails sur la Mission de vérification des déchets pendant les quatre saisons 2023-2024. Cette mission de vérification a essentiellement consisté à déterminer la composition des courants de déchets et de matières déposées dans les bacs verts et à donner de l'information sur l'importance de la contamination dans le courant des bacs verts.

Selon l'une des principales constatations posées dans la mission de vérification des déchets, nous avons encore énormément d'occasions d'encourager l'utilisation du

Programme des bacs verts. Pour mesurer l'efficacité et l'efficacité des différentes interventions du PDGDS, les Services des déchets solides mèneront des missions de vérification des déchets aux principaux points de jonction dans l'ensemble du PDGDS afin de s'assurer que les données utilisées pour planifier les interventions sont à jour et permettent d'éclairer les éventuels comptes rendus sur le programme et sur la politique.

Consultation et avis du public

L'éclairage apporté sur la première année par les commentaires exprimés dans les consultations

Les commentaires réunis pendant l'élaboration du PDGDS ont apporté un vif éclairage sur la planification et la mise en œuvre des interventions de la première année. La consultation des parties prenantes a révélé qu'il est essentiel de prioriser les initiatives de réduction et de réutilisation et que l'évolution des comportements sera décisive pour le succès de ce plan. En réaction, nous avons massivement priorisé, dans la première année, les efforts de réduction et de réutilisation, en nous en remettant à des campagnes de promotion et d'information ciblées et plus vastes.

Par exemple, la réduction des déchets alimentaires était une priorité absolue pour la plupart des participants pendant le déroulement des consultations qui ont porté sur le PDGDS. De concert avec cette constatation, la Ville a noué, en juillet 2025, un partenariat avec J'aime manger, pas gaspiller, dans le cadre d'une campagne de notoriété nationale qui permet d'offrir aux résidents des conseils et des ressources pratiques pour minorer le volume de déchets alimentaires évitables. Cette initiative, qui a été intégrée dans l'ensemble des efforts de sensibilisation, sera étoffée en 2026 et comprendra des ateliers et des exposés qui seront présentés dans les écoles, les bibliothèques et les centres communautaires.

Le rôle permanent de la consultation

La consultation du public et des parties prenantes a joué — et continuera de jouer — un rôle essentiel pendant toute la durée du déploiement du PDGDS. À l'été 2025, nous avons mené une série de consultations consacrées à la réduction et à la réutilisation, et les constatations servent aujourd'hui à guider l'élaboration de plusieurs initiatives nouvelles, dont les stratégies à adopter pour le réacheminement des textiles et des déchets encombrants. En outre, on mettra sur pied, d'ici la fin de 2025, le Groupe de travail sur la réduction et la réutilisation des déchets de la collectivité afin de tirer parti des connaissances et des compétences des groupes communautaires consacrés à des efforts assimilés, pour promouvoir la création d'événements et d'initiatives éventuels.

L'équité, la diversité et l'inclusion ont été fondationnelles dans toutes les activités de consultation dans le cadre de l'élaboration du PDGDS et restent essentielles à sa mise en œuvre. Le plan a été pensé pour rendre compte de la diversité des valeurs, des priorités et des expériences vécues des communautés d'Ottawa, et nous continuerons de tâcher de nous assurer que ces principes sont priorisés pendant toute la durée du déploiement.

Répercussions financières

Le Plan financier à long terme (PFLT) de la gestion des déchets solides, qui a été approuvé ([ACS2024-FCS-FIN-0008](#)) de concert avec le PDGDS en juin 2024, fait état du financement prévu pour le PDGDS. Ce PFLT décrit dans ses grandes lignes le financement à consacrer aux infrastructures et aux opérations pour mettre en œuvre les interventions du PDGDS tout en préservant la prévisibilité financière à l'intention des résidents et des contribuables.

Les répercussions financières du PDGDS sont attentivement gérées dans la mise en œuvre échelonnée par phases, dans les investissements stratégiques et dans la surveillance permanente. Les prochains comptes rendus annuels porteront sur des analyses plus circonstanciées des coûts et des avantages lorsque d'autres interventions seront déployées et que les impacts seront réalisés. On cernera et analysera, durant le processus annuel de budgétisation de la Ville, les pressions et impératifs budgétaires qui débordent le cadre du PFLT.

BACKGROUND

Solid Waste Services manages a highly integrated and complex waste management system that requires strategic planning, effective oversight, and innovative operations to provide safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible services to Ottawa residents. Although the City has not yet published projections for 2053, current growth trends suggest that the population could reach 1.5 million by that year. If this pace continues, it could lead to a 31 per cent increase in the volume of waste requiring collection, management, and disposal. Additionally, the City-owned and operated Trail Waste Facility Landfill (TWFL) is projected to reach capacity between 2034 and 2035, underscoring the urgent need for alternative long-term disposal solutions.

On July 10, 2019, City Council approved the Solid Waste Master Plan Roadmap Report ([ACS2019-PWE-GEN-0007](#)). This included approval for the scope and framework to develop a new Solid Waste Master Plan (SWMP) for the City of Ottawa and established a Council Sponsors Group to support Solid Waste Services through the development of

the plan. The scope of the SWMP includes curbside residential, multi-residential, parks and public spaces, City facilities and other non-City waste currently managed by the City.

In June 2024, City Council approved the Solid Waste Master Plan (SWMP) ([ACS2024-PWD-SWS-0004](#)), which provides the framework for how the City will manage and divert waste over the next 30 years while ensuring responsibilities for waste management services can be met in a sustainable way. Development of the plan was informed by public and stakeholder engagement and evidence-based data, while also considering the goals and objectives of other City strategic initiatives and plans, such as the Climate Change Master Plan (CCMP). The CCMP aims to improve the environmental impacts of Solid Waste Services classified under three CCMP categories: Diversion from Landfill, Renewable Natural Gas and Energy Production, and Fleet.

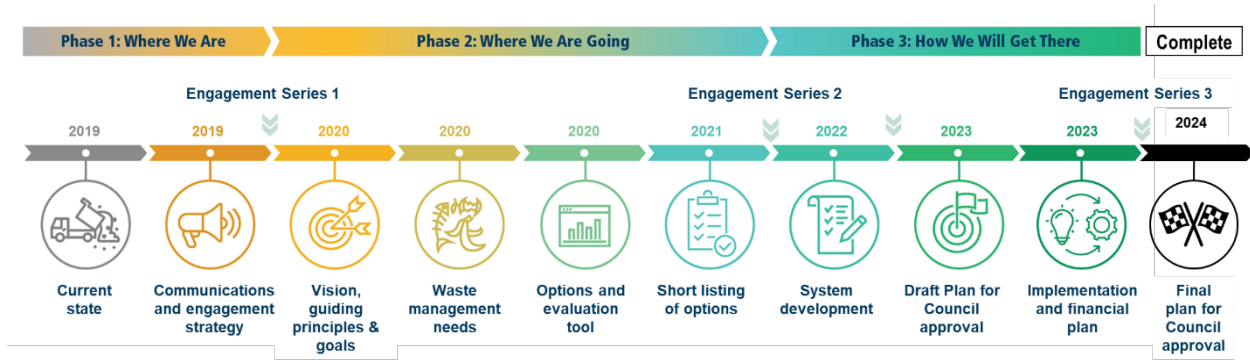
Phased Approach to Designing the Solid Waste Master Plan

The SWMP was developed using a phased approach:

- [Phase 1](#) - Where We Are At: Established baseline data and assessed the current state of Ottawa's waste system.
- [Phase 2](#) - Where We Are Going: Identified future needs and evaluated a long list of options using a triple bottom line framework.
- [Phase 3](#) - How We Will Get There: Finalized the recommended actions and implementation plan based on public and stakeholder feedback.

Each phase was informed by engagement, extensive research, comparative scans of municipal best practices, and technical analysis, and members of Council were kept apprised of the project's development through each major milestone.

Figure 1: SWMP Development Process



The SWMP outlines the framework and actions for the City to use to address the wide range of waste-related challenges and needs both currently and anticipated in the future. It ensures that this core, regulated service can be delivered in a safe and efficient manner over the next 30 years. The SWMP recognizes that there is no single solution to address the ongoing and future challenges within the waste industry. Addressing these issues requires a multi-pronged approach through a combination of regulation, collection management, technology, advocacy for change with upper levels of government and behavioural change in the public and in industry.

To meet Ottawa's waste management needs, 50 Actions were identified and grouped into 25 Action Suites to make up the SWMP. These Actions align with five key Objectives, which will guide progress toward the City's Zero Waste vision and the goals of the SWMP:

1. **Maximize the Reduction and Reuse of Waste:** Immediate implementation of these Actions (0–5 years) is recommended to minimize waste generation at the source. Reducing waste is cost-effective, conserves natural resources, and lessens the burden on disposal facilities.
2. **Maximize the Recycling of Waste:** Priority Actions in this category (0–5 years) focus on maximizing diversion from landfill. Enhanced recycling extends landfill life, lowers greenhouse gas emissions, and can create revenue opportunities to offset program costs.
3. **Maximize the Recovery of Waste and Energy and the Optimal Management of Remaining Residuals:** For waste that cannot be reduced or recycled, this Objective outlines short-, medium-, and long-term Actions (0–10+ years) to optimize landfill capacity and recover energy and materials from residual waste.

4. **Maximize Operational Advancements:** These Actions promote innovation and the adoption of new technologies to improve efficiency and reduce environmental impact across waste management operations.
5. **Develop a Zero Waste Culture Across the City:** Achieving Zero Waste requires community-wide engagement. Actions here aim to educate and empower residents, influence industry practices, and encourage widespread adoption of waste reduction and diversion behaviors.

The Action Suites in the SWMP are designed to be rolled out over short- (0–5 years), medium- (5–10 years), and long-term (10+ years) timelines within the 30-year planning period from 2024 to 2053. Council will review and approve these actions regularly throughout the plan’s duration. Together, they aim to drive community behaviour change, reduce landfill waste, increase recycling and reuse of valuable materials, and protect the capacity of the Trail Waste Facility Landfill (TWFL). This approach gives the City time to plan and implement its next solution for managing residual waste.

In tandem with the approval of the SWMP, Council also approved the Solid Waste Long Range Financial Plan ([ACS2024-FCS-FIN-0008](#)), which establishes a financial plan that considers current and upcoming capital needs for Solid Waste Services, to better prepare for the funding that will be required to address those needs, while providing financial predictability to residents and rate payers.

Additionally, various projects, referred to as component projects, were developed ahead of or alongside the Solid Waste Master Plan. Details of which can be found below.

Component Projects of the Solid Waste Master Plan

Two key projects were initiated prior to SWMP completion due to their significant waste diversion potential and evident opportunities to increase participation in existing City waste diversion programs.

Three-item Garbage Limit

On June 14, 2023, Ottawa City Council carried [Motion no. 2023-16-06](#) amending the staff recommendation from the Curbside Waste Diversion Policy Report ([ACS2023-PWD-SWS-0003](#)) to introduce a three-item garbage limit aimed at reducing landfill waste. Previously, the City had enforced a six-item limit since 2007—significantly higher than limits in many other Canadian municipalities, including neighboring communities. The new three-item garbage limit has helped decrease curbside garbage volumes and contributed to extending the lifespan of the TWFL.

The new policy took effect in September 2024 and applies to approximately 310,000 households receiving curbside waste collection, including those with shared collection points (commonly known as common pads). Residents who exceed the three-item garbage limit have the option to purchase yellow bags at participating retailers, with no restrictions on the number of additional items placed in these City-issued bags. Agricultural property residents participating in all waste diversion programs are also allowed to set out unlimited unavoidable farm waste without the need for yellow bags.

Multi-Residential Waste Diversion Strategy

In April 2022, Ottawa City Council approved the Multi-Residential Waste Diversion Strategy (MRWDS) ([ACS2022-PWD-SWS-0001](#)).

The Strategy consists of five Project Pillars to support increasing waste diversion in the multi-residential sector and was developed using extensive stakeholder engagement. The Strategy supports federal and provincial waste diversion targets and aligns with several projects and initiatives currently underway in the City of Ottawa.

In 2024, Council approved an implementation plan ([ACS2024-PWD-SWS-0003](#)) for onboarding all multi-residential properties currently receiving City collection service onto the Green Bin Program. This mandate affects approximately 1,050 properties that previously lacked organics diversion programs. An update on implementation can be found in the Discussion section of this report.

Trail Waste Facility Landfill

As mentioned above, the Trail Waste Facility Landfill (TWFL) is a key City asset and preservation of its airspace is a focus of the SWMP. Air space is consumed daily, and decisions made on waste reduction and diversion will have implications on the life of the TWFL. At the end of 2024, the TWFL had approximately three million cubic metres of capacity remaining and could reach capacity between 2034 and 2035 with status quo disposal rates. The SWMP includes various short and long-term initiatives to address the declining site life, which are outlined in this report. Through SWMP engagement, Solid Waste Services learned that preserving this asset by focusing on reducing the amount of waste requiring disposal and diverting as much avoidable waste as possible from the landfill, is a priority for Ottawa.

DISCUSSION

Through the June 2024 approval of the [Final Solid Waste Master Plan](#) (SWMP), Solid Waste Services committed to providing updates to Council on an annual basis to report

on progress and seek further approvals, as required. The purpose of this report is to provide:

- An overview on the progress of Action Suites that were identified as commencing planning and implementation in Year One of the SWMP, and next steps for 2026;
- A more detailed update on component projects that were approved by Council and planned or implemented in advance of the SWMP:
 - Three-item Garbage Limit
 - Multi-Residential Waste Diversion Strategy;
- Survey and set-out study results generated from [Motion 2023-16-06](#), regarding the Agriculture Exemption Program, and seeking approval on continuing the exemption until 2027 when the policy will be reviewed again;
- Results of the 2023/24 Four Season Waste Audit; and
- An update on progress towards targets, future monitoring processes and how data will continue to inform next steps.

The first year of SWMP roll-out reflects the vision, guiding principles, and goals outlined in the City's SWMP. The plan was built with community and stakeholder input, and the Year One update reflects the continued commitment to implement the Action Suites as prioritized in the SWMP. Beyond the foundational framework, this initial rollout also accounts for evolving community behaviours, the need for flexibility in addressing changing waste management challenges, and strong collaboration with residents, stakeholders, and partners to build on existing community efforts.

Year One Actions

The following section provides a summary of the work completed since the approval of the SWMP. A more detailed account of progress for each individual Action Suite is available in Document 1 – Progress Update on Year One Actions.

Waste avoidance, reduction and reuse

Waste reduction and reuse have been a central focus during Year One. This approach responds directly to feedback from SWMP engagement, aligns with the waste management hierarchy, and supports the preservation of landfill capacity while long-term residual waste management solutions are explored.

To help prioritize reduction and reuse initiatives, the City has developed a Community Waste Reduction and Reuse Action Plan. Informed by a public survey conducted through Engage Ottawa in summer 2025, the plan outlines practical strategies to strengthen, launch, or incentivize community-led waste reduction and reuse efforts. These include fostering new partnerships, optimizing the use of City resources and spaces, and offering financial support through subsidies, rebates, and grants. To support implementation, a Community Reuse and Reduction Working Group is currently being established.

Addressing food waste has been a priority throughout Year One, reflecting the strong interest and support expressed by participants during the SWMP engagement process. In addition, reducing food waste plays a direct role in cutting greenhouse gas emissions from landfill and advancing the City's climate objectives. A milestone reached in July 2025 was establishing a partnership with *Love Food Hate Waste*, a globally recognized organization that provides practical tips to reduce avoidable food waste at home. Through this partnership, the City is using research-backed content and professionally designed visuals to share with residents monthly, along with targeted campaign materials for focused efforts each spring and fall.

Other key waste reduction and reuse initiatives and events in 2025 include:

- Continued partnership with Ottawa Tool Library by supporting six Repair Cafes
- A drop-and-swap event which took place in September, in collaboration with Ottawa South Eco-Action Network.
- Textiles waste reduction efforts including collaborations with Algonquin College and CityStudio, promotion of reuse opportunities through the Waste Reduction and Education website, and a textiles mending event scheduled for October.

Maximizing the Recycling of Waste

Two key projects were initiated prior to SWMP completion due to their significant waste diversion potential and evident opportunities to increase participation in existing City waste diversion programs.

Three-item Garbage Limit

The three-item limit took effect in September 2024 and applies to approximately 310,000 households receiving curbside waste collection, including those with shared collection points (commonly known as common pads). Residents who exceed the three-

item garbage limit have the option to purchase yellow bags at participating retailers, with no restrictions on the number of additional items placed in these City-issued bags. Agricultural property residents participating in all waste diversion programs are also allowed to set out unlimited unavoidable farm waste without the need for yellow bags.

The first year of the three-item garbage limit rollout has been successful, with residents largely adapting to the new policy. The policy has helped decrease curbside garbage volumes and contributed to extending the lifespan of the Trail Waste Facility Landfill. Key indicators of this positive transition include:

- On average, fewer than 1 per cent of households exceeded the three-item garbage limit during their collection cycles;
- Fewer than 1 per cent of households, on average, received a courtesy tag for setting out oversized garbage containers;
- In Q3 2025, a decrease in excess waste tags was observed—a positive trend that will continue to be monitored as the policy enters its second year
- A measurable reduction in the volume of garbage delivered to the Trail Waste Facility Landfill.

The table below presents tonnage data since 2022, highlighting a steady decline. The drop in tonnages from January to August in 2025 compared to the previous year may be partly attributed to compliance with the new garbage limit. It is important to note that other factors, such as reduced consumption patterns influenced by economic conditions, also contribute to changes in waste generation rates. The observed reduction in waste tonnage has not been accompanied by a corresponding increase in incidents of illegal dumping.

Table 1: Waste Tonnage Trends

| Year | January-August Tonnage <i>(for 2025 reference)</i> | Full Year Tonnage |
|-------------|--|--------------------------|
| 2022 | 89,073 | 132,060 |
| 2023 | 84,815 | 126,640 |
| 2024 | 83,847 | 120,779 |

| | | |
|------|--------|---|
| 2025 | 67,785 | - |
|------|--------|---|

The Agriculture Exemption Program, introduced for residential agricultural properties receiving curbside collection, originally allowed unavoidable farm waste beyond the three-item garbage limit during April and May. In October 2024, Council extended the exemption through December 2025 to support further policy analysis.

A set-out study (Fall 2024–Summer 2025) confirmed year-round agricultural waste generation, peaking in spring and summer. Over 90 per cent of survey respondents reported producing unavoidable farm waste annually.

Staff recommend continuing the exemption until 2027, when Council will review the three-item garbage limit and potential enhanced source separation options. In the interim, staff will monitor program usage, improve communications with participants, and explore recycling opportunities for certain agricultural waste.

A detailed summary of the three-item garbage limit and Agriculture Exemption Program is provided in Document 2 - Update on the Three-item Garbage Limit and Agriculture Exemption Program.

Multi-Residential Waste Diversion Strategy

In April 2022, Ottawa City Council approved the Multi-Residential Waste Diversion Strategy ([ACS2022-PWD-SWS-0001](#)). The Strategy consists of five Project Pillars to support increasing waste diversion in the multi-residential sector and was developed using extensive stakeholder engagement. The Strategy supports federal and provincial waste diversion targets and aligns with several projects and initiatives currently underway in the City of Ottawa.

In 2024, Council approved an implementation plan ([ACS2024-PWD-SWS-0003](#)) for onboarding all multi-residential properties currently receiving City collection service onto the Green Bin Program. This mandate affects approximately 1,050 properties that previously lacked organics diversion programs. An update on implementation can be found in the Discussion section of this report.

Since mandatory implementation began, nearly one-third of the 1,050 properties have been onboarded to the green bin (as of September 2025), representing 306 properties and 22,061 residential units. To support onboarding, Solid Waste Inspectors and Environmental Education Assistants (EEAs) provide tailored implementation support, including site visits and resident outreach by distributing kitchen catchers and

multilingual educational materials, conducting lobby booths and door-to-door engagement, and performing quarterly waste audits to monitor progress and identify areas for improvement.

Performance highlights include:

- 69 per cent of all multi-residential buildings receiving City service now have a Green Bin program.
- 1,396 tonnes of organic material were collected from multi-residential buildings between January and July 2025, a 36 percent increase over the same period in 2024.
- 82 per cent of surveyed property managers reported that outreach was helpful and that residents were using the green bin.
- 85 per cent of audited properties showed less than 25 percent contamination in their organics stream.

In October, Solid Waste Services will launch a Multi-Residential Waste Reduction Ambassador Program. Waste Reduction Ambassadors are dedicated volunteers who inspire and support their neighbours in reducing waste, improving recycling and composting habits, and enhancing the natural environment around their homes. The program includes a suite of resources and activity ideas for ambassadors to implement in their communities. Suggested activities include, for example, hosting swap events, creating welcome packages for new residents, sharing green bin tips on social media groups, or setting up battery recycling boxes. Ambassadors will receive support, encouragement and recognition by Solid Waste Services staff.

A detailed summary of this initiative is provided in Document 3 – Update on the Multi-Residential Waste Diversion Strategy.

Additional significant progress has been made on several SWMP diversion actions, including:

- Council approval on September 24, 2025 of the [Parks Waste Collection and Diversion Strategy](#), which will introduce phased installation of three-stream waste receptacles (garbage, recycling, organics) in selected parks, organic waste bins in off-leash dog parks, and standardized waste bins in smaller parks, not serviced by the three-stream system. Implementation is planned to begin in 2026, with 48 parks in Year One and 100 more parks added every year until

2029.

- Council approval on June 25, 2025 of [a strategy](#) to continue with the HHW collection events, plan for micro-HHW collection events to serve as a pilot in 2026 and explore the implementation of multi-use depot(s) for HHW and other divertible waste that are being implemented as part of the actions outlined in the SWMP. Work is underway to plan and budget for the HHW collection events and the pilot micro-HHW collection events for 2026 through the annual budget process in Q4 2025.
- Completion of a network user survey in Summer 2025, which gathered staff feedback on current waste diversion practices throughout City facilities and operations and identified opportunities for improvement. This input will inform the next stages of the Waste Diversion Initiatives and Strategies at City Facilities action, with roll-out of the new program anticipated to begin in Q2 2026.

Maximize the Recovery of Waste and Energy and the Optimal Management of Remaining Residuals

While the SWMP prioritizes waste reduction and diversion, it acknowledges that some residual waste will remain and require management. Staff have completed initial work to evaluate long-term disposal capacity options for this remaining waste stream.

Concurrently, efforts began to explore opportunities for resource and energy recovery, in alignment with the SWMP's guiding principle of treating waste as a valuable resource.

Highlights of this work include:

- The June 2025 Council approval of the [Waste Management Technologies Feasibility Study](#). The study identified Scenario 2: WTE Incineration Facility and Scenario 1: Status Quo and Private Facilities as the top-ranked options for further evaluation. Scenario 3 and 4, which involved MWP either alone or in combination with WTE, were not recommended to advance due to low diversion potential and high costs.
- Advancement of a prefeasibility study to explore anaerobic digestion, which would allow for the generation of renewable natural gas (RNG) from organic waste. Recommendations will be presented to the Environment and Climate Change Committee in Q1 2026.
- Progress on the Landfill Gas Management Strategy that evaluates the financial and greenhouse gas implications of landfill gas management options. A report

will be brought forward to Environment and Climate Change Committee in Q1 2026 on the recommended option.

- Implementation of strategies to manage residual waste, such as the [ban on Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional \(IC&I\) waste](#) at the TWFL that commenced in July 2025. In addition, the use of private landfills for approximately one third of the city's annual residential garbage will go into effect on March 30, 2026. Further, the City is currently in the Terms of Reference (ToR) phase of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for landfill expansion, which details the scope of the project and defines how environmental, social and economic concerns will be studied.

Maximize Operational Advancements

This objective supports maximizing operational advancements through innovation and new technology to make operations more efficient and less impactful on the environment. While many of these actions will align with future collection contracts and operational requirements, work has been completed on the review of the Yellow Bag Program for Small Businesses. On September 24, 2025, Council approved the implementation of a revised [Yellow Bag Program for Small Businesses](#) that would include an annual registration process starting in 2026. Ahead of 2026, staff will establish an annual registration process, possibly implement the use of carts for recycling collection and revise the [Solid Waste Services By-law No. 2024-453](#) in accordance with the updated program.

Develop a Zero Waste Culture Across the City

Many of the integrated actions in the SWMP depend on meaningful changes in community behaviour to achieve their full impact. Beyond individual actions, realizing the SWMP's vision will require a broader cultural shift—one that embraces Zero Waste as a shared community norm across the city.

Comprehensive promotion and education strategies—extending beyond traditional communications—were implemented to support both the rollout of the three-item garbage limit and the onboarding of multi-residential properties to the Green Bin Program. These efforts will be further reinforced by initiatives developed through the behaviour change management strategy, ensuring that residents are informed, engaged, and empowered to adopt more sustainable waste practices.

In addition, the Circular Economy Strategy is a key initiative within the SWMP, designed to guide the City’s transition toward a zero-waste, circular future. A Circular Economy Committee comprising representatives from City departments, external organizations, and community partners will be formed to help advance the development of the roadmap in early 2026.

Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

To ensure the long-term success of the SWMP, continuous monitoring and evaluation are vital. While performance measures for individual actions were detailed in the preceding table, the following section highlights the mechanisms established to track overall progress toward SWMP targets. Through ongoing performance measurement, the City can identify areas for improvement, celebrate achievements, and maintain alignment with the SWMP’s goals, while also supporting related strategic plans such as the CCMP.

SWMP Targets

Municipalities have traditionally relied on diversion rates as benchmarks for planning future waste management systems. However, diversion rates often fall short in fully capturing the impacts of waste avoidance, reduction, and reuse efforts. To address this limitation, the SWMP has established targets focused on waste deposition and organics capture.

The targets outlined in Table 2 below form part of the final SWMP and are expressed both in kilograms per capita and as a percentage of food waste captured. These targets will be reviewed and updated during the SWMP’s five-year review cycle to incorporate new data, emerging technologies, and insights gained from implemented initiatives.

Table 2: SWMP Targets

| Measurement | 2024 Baseline | Short-Term: 2029 Target | Medium-Term: 2034 Target |
|---|----------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Total Waste Landfilled (kg/capita) | 181 | 154 | 139 |
| Total Food Waste Capture Rate | 41 per cent | 55 per cent | 61 per cent |

Year one of the SWMP rollout has shown a positive impact, with waste landfilled per capita decreasing from 82 kg (January–June 2024) to 73 kg for the same period in 2025. This early decrease suggests initial success of the Three-Item Garbage Limit. However, the overall food waste capture rate has remained largely unchanged, suggesting that further uptake of the Green Bin program has been limited so far.

Further insights into progress toward the targets, as well as information to support increased participation in the Green Bin program, will be gathered in the near term through several key initiatives, including:

- a city-wide curbside set-out study scheduled for Q4 2025;
- ongoing waste audits in multi-residential buildings; and
- a public behaviour market research study planned for early 2026, which will examine consumer motivations and identify strategies to encourage lasting behavioural change.

Findings from these efforts will inform the development of a city-wide green bin campaign in 2026. This campaign will target all sectors covered by the SWMP—curbside households, multi-residential buildings, city facilities, parks, and public spaces—and will go beyond standard promotion and engagement tactics. In early 2026, a Behaviour Change Management Strategy (SWMP Action Suite 24) will also be developed. Grounded in behavioural science, this strategy will support the Green Bin campaign by introducing new techniques to influence waste-related behaviours across the city.

In the longer term, more comprehensive data and measurable outcomes will be included in the 2026 annual update, as additional results and insights become available. Below are specific anticipated impacts that will be tracked as relevant SWMP action suites are implemented and maintained. All collected data will continue to serve as evidence to guide future education campaigns and inform the planning and implementation of SWMP actions.

Waste Reduction and Reuse

Proposed Waste Avoidance, Reduction, and Reuse initiatives are estimated to reduce landfill disposal by an estimated 2,750 tonnes over the first five years of the SWMP. This includes the reduction and reuse of bulky items, construction and demolition waste, electronic waste and textiles. There also remains a significant opportunity to target food

waste reduction, which is an emerging area of focus in the industry where little data is available.

Recycling of Waste

Proposed recycling initiatives are estimated to divert approximately 85,790 tonnes of additional waste from the landfill over the first five years of the SWMP. While the three-item garbage limit is anticipated to significantly impact diversion, the implementation of further multi-residential diversion efforts as well as actions in City facilities, parks and public spaces will continue to have an impact.

Landfill life

A key objective of the SWMP is to extend the lifespan of the TWFL beyond the 30-year horizon of the plan. Staff recognize that the City is at a critical juncture in terms of timelines and planning for the future of waste management. Recent policy approvals and implementation, including sending waste to private facilities, banning Industrial, Commercial and Institutional Waste from the TWFL, and implementing the three-item garbage limit, should have the potential to extend the life of the TWFL by six years, forecasting 2039-2041 as projected timeline for reaching capacity. Up to an additional fifteen years of landfill life could be realized should the landfill receive EA approval to be expanded within its current boundary, as outlined in the June 2025 [Waste Management Technologies Feasibility Study](#) report. These actions provide vital lead time for implementing a long-term solution, allowing for a new landfill or technology to be developed, assuming the above noted initiatives are successful in extending the life of the TWFL. These annual updates serve to track and confirm progress on the current diversion initiatives and actions that will support the overall goal of the SWMP.

Impact on Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Four key areas of the SWMP were developed to support the goals of the CCMP:

- Reducing, avoiding, and reusing waste
- Increasing organics waste diversion
- Generating renewable natural
- Transitioning to a zero emissions fleet

While it is still early in the plan's roll out to determine net landfill GHG reductions associated with the SWMP's Action Suites, it is worth noting the reduction, reuse and

recycling actions that have potential to reduce GHG emissions. The impact of these actions will be estimated on an annual basis, commencing with the Year Two annual report. The table below provides estimated emissions reductions associated with actions that divert waste from the landfill.

Table 3: Estimated GHG Emissions Reductions

| Year | Total Emissions Reductions (tonnes CO ₂ e) | | | | | Total emissions reduction (tn CO ₂ e) |
|----------------|---|------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--|
| | 1 Reduction and Reuse | 4 Curbside | 5 Multi-residential | 6 City facilities | 7 Parks and public spaces | |
| 2025 | 0 | 0 | -70 | 0 | 0 | -80 |
| 2030 | -40 | -1,070 | -930 | -450 | -140 | -2,630 |
| 2040 | -100 | -2,280 | -1,700 | -1,250 | -320 | -5,650 |
| 2050 | -140 | -2,770 | -2,020 | -1,630 | -380 | -6,940 |
| 30 year totals | -2,600 | -55,730 | -42,380 | -30,240 | -7,670 | -138,620 |

In addition, several SWMP actions that are currently undergoing planning/feasibility studies offer significant opportunity for the City to reduce GHG emissions, increase opportunities to lower community carbon emissions through the generation of renewable energy and generate new revenue streams that will help offset waste management costs. These action suites include Anaerobic Digestion, Increasing Separate Collection of LYW, Mixed Waste Processing, Waste to Energy, Landfill Gas Management Strategy and Working Towards a Zero Emissions Solid Waste Fleet. As these actions continue development, their impact on GHG emissions will be calculated.

Waste Audits

Waste audits are a key tool for tracking the performance of several actions under the SWMP. They play a critical role in evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of individual initiatives. To ensure data remains current and continues to inform program and policy updates, waste audits will continue to be scheduled at strategic intervals. Previous audits were conducted in 2018/2019 and most recently in 2023/2024.

Results of the 2023/2024 Four-Season Waste Audit

The 2023/2024 Four-Season Waste Audit was conducted to provide Solid Waste Services (SWS) with a comprehensive snapshot of the current state of the garbage and green bin waste streams. This study establishes a baseline at the outset of SWMP implementation and serves as a reference point for tracking progress over time. The data collected will help City staff identify trends, pinpoint areas for improvement, and measure the success of waste diversion efforts.

The waste audit was conducted from winter 2023 to fall 2024. Through the waste audit, the City obtained insight on the following waste streams and sectors:

- Single-family residential (curbside collection): garbage and organics
- Multi-residential properties: garbage and organics
- Yellow Bag Program for Small Businesses (curbside collection): garbage and organics
- Schools: organics

Analysis of the Fibre (black bin) and Glass, Metal, and Plastic (blue bin) streams were not included in the study due to the expectation that the City would have limited involvement in blue and black box recycling post 2026 as a result of the transition to Individual Producer Responsibility.

For purposes of this audit, the following terms will be defined as follows:

- Diversion Rate: Acceptable green bin (GB) material in the GB (total waste from both the GB and garbage streams)
- Maximum Achievable Diversion Rate: Acceptable GB material in the GB and garbage stream (total waste from both the GB and garbage streams)

Methodology

Waste from the green bin and garbage streams was collected over a two-week period during each of the four seasons, ensuring coverage of a full collection cycle. For single-family residences, 150 households were sampled, representing a diverse cross-section of demographics across the City's urban, suburban, and rural areas.

In the multi-residential sector, 20 properties were included in the study. To assess the Yellow Bag Program for small businesses, between 28 and 30 businesses were audited. Additionally, the City sampled between 7 and 21 schools that had previously registered for the Green Bin in Schools Pilot; at these locations, only the green bin stream was audited.

Summary of Findings

Table 4 summarizes the composition of the garbage stream by sector, representing the average materials found over four seasons. The data illustrates what is currently being sent to the Trail Waste Facility Landfill and identifies materials that could be diverted through existing waste diversion programs.

Across all sectors, the most prevalent divertible material in the garbage stream is organic waste accepted in the Green Bin program, accounting for 37 to 43 percent of the total. This highlights a significant opportunity to improve organic waste diversion and reduce the volume of landfill-bound material.

Table 4: Four-Season Summary of Composition of Garbage Streams

| | Green Bin (%) | Black Bin (%) | Blue Bin (%) | Waste Divertible through other Programs (%) | Non-divertible (Residual Waste) (%) |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--|--|
| Single Family Homes | 43% | 6% | 6% | 4% | 41% |
| Multi-Residential Homes | 39% | 8% | 8% | 6% | 39% |
| Yellow Bag Program for Small Businesses | 37% | 6% | 6% | 3% | 48% |

Table 5 below summarizes the green bin diversion and contamination rates by sector. It also indicates the maximum achievable diversion rate, reflecting the potential outcomes if resident participation is optimized.

The multi-residential sector recorded the lowest diversion rate at just four per cent, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to improve waste habits in this group. In contrast, the Yellow Bag Program for Small Businesses—operating under a Pay-As-You-Throw model—achieved the highest diversion rate of 58 per cent, suggesting that financial incentives may effectively encourage better waste sorting behavior.

Single-family homes demonstrated moderate performance, with a 37 per cent diversion rate. While this is higher than the multi-residential sector, it still indicates considerable opportunity to enhance organic waste diversion.

Contamination rates in the Green Bin remained relatively low across residential sectors, ranging from four per cent to nine per cent, suggesting that most residents participating in the program understand which materials are accepted. However, schools exhibited the highest contamination rate at 15 per cent, pointing to a need for improved education and resources in this sector.

Table 5: Four-Season Summary of Acceptable Green Bin Material Contamination, Capture, and Diversion Rates per Sector

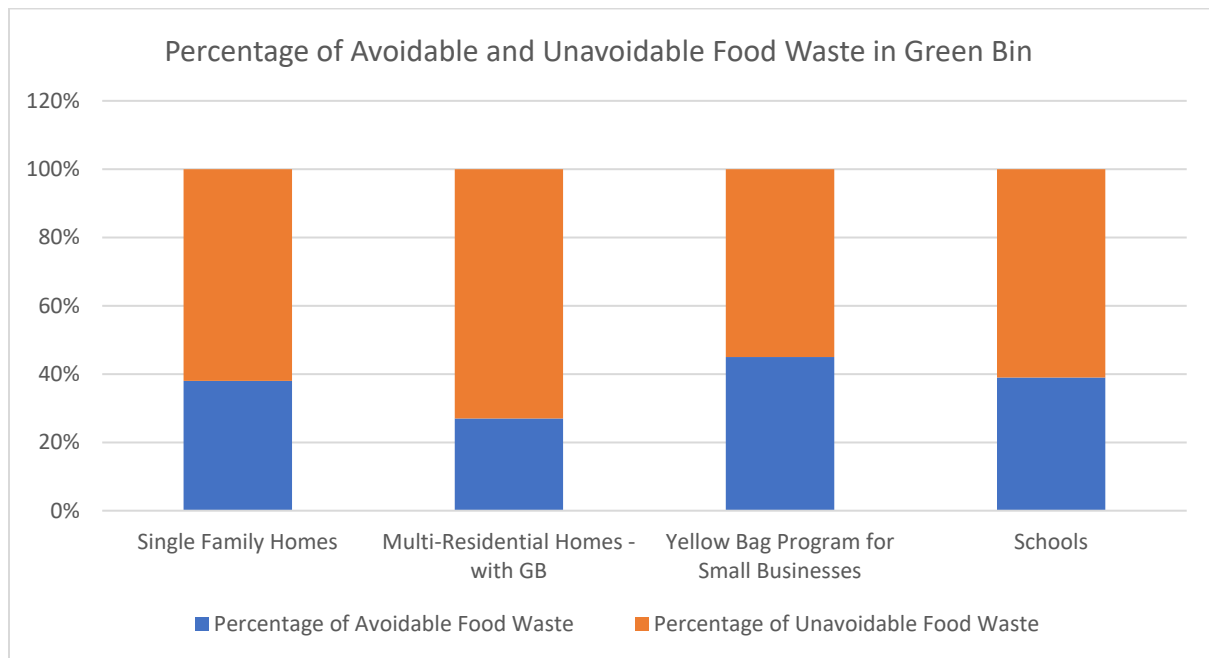
| | Diversion Rate (Percentage) | Maximum Achievable Diversion Rate (Percentage) | Contamination Rate (Percentage) |
|--|--|---|--|
| Single Family Homes | 37% | 64% | 4% |
| Multi-Residential Homes | 4% | 41% | 9% |
| Yellow Bag Program for Small Businesses | 58% | 72% | 3% |
| Schools | - | - | 15% |

As part of the waste audit, the composition of food waste in the green bin was analyzed to assess amounts of *avoidable* versus *unavoidable* food waste. Avoidable food waste includes items that could have been consumed or preserved, such as uneaten meals or

spoiled produce. Unavoidable food waste refers to habitually inedible components like peels, bones, and shells.

Figure 2 illustrates the ratio of avoidable to unavoidable food waste in the green bin by sector. While unavoidable food waste makes up the majority, avoidable food waste still accounts for 27 per cent to 45 per cent of the total. This highlights the need for increased education and awareness around food waste reduction. Monitoring this distribution over time will provide a measurable indicator of the effectiveness of the Food Waste Reduction Strategy and its impact on behavior change.

Figure 2: Percentage of Avoidable and Unavoidable Food Waste in Green Bin



Waste audits offer essential insights into disposal habits, the effectiveness of existing waste diversion programs, and help pinpoint priority areas for improvement. The 2023/2024 Four-Season Waste Audit establishes a baseline for tracking future progress in implementing SWMP actions. Notably, this latest audit highlights significant opportunities to enhance organics diversion in both single-family and multi-residential households.

Ongoing Engagement

As the City of Ottawa advances the implementation of its SWMP, ongoing engagement with residents, stakeholders, and internal partners will remain central to its success. Building on lessons learned through previous engagement series consultations, Solid

Waste Services will continue to build and foster meaningful dialogue and collaboration to ensure the SWMP reflects community values and priorities.

Continuing Role of the Solid Waste Planning Council Sponsors Group

The Solid Waste Planning Council Sponsors Group (CSG) will continue to provide vital strategic input, feedback, advice, and guidance to staff in developing and implementing SWMP actions.

The CSG represents the interests of the public and ensures staff are aware of current thinking and concerns in the community as it pertains to Solid Waste planning projects. Additionally, the CSG acts as Council-experts on various Solid Waste planning files, advocating for the work being done to better Ottawa's waste management system.

The CSG will continue to serve as a key advisory body, supporting the City in:

- Reviewing progress on SWMP implementation
- Providing feedback on emerging initiatives and priorities
- Acting as a conduit for community perspectives and concerns
- Strengthening transparency and accountability in decision-making

Waste Reduction and Reuse Working Group

As part of the SWMP's commitment to advancing waste reduction and reuse, Solid Waste Services will establish a dedicated Waste Reduction and Reuse Working Group by the end of 2025. This group will be composed of external stakeholders and guided by a Terms of Reference, which will be developed prior to finalizing membership. The Working Group will:

- Bring together community organizations and partners to share expertise in reuse and circular economy practices
- Co-develop strategies to strengthen waste reduction and reuse programs
- Support the implementation of actions outlined in the Community Waste Reduction and Reuse Action Plan

Circular economy engagement

The City will continue to champion circular economy principles through both internal collaboration and external engagement. Key actions include:

- Participating in cross-departmental committees to align municipal operations with circular economy goals
- Collaborating with external partners, including businesses, non-profits, and academic institutions
- Hosting forums, roundtables, and innovation labs to foster dialogue and co-develop practical solutions
- Showcasing circular economy initiatives as a central element of the Plan's implementation

Equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility

All SWMP internal and external engagement will prioritize and leverage the City's Equity Lens removing barriers to participation by:

- Creating space for Indigenous perspectives and priorities within reuse initiatives, respecting traditional knowledge systems and community-led approaches
- Offering multiple formats for engagement, including virtual, in-person, and asynchronous options
- Ensuring physical accessibility for all venues and events
- Providing plain language materials, with translation and interpretation services available to support Ottawa's multilingual communities
- Using flexible scheduling and communication methods to accommodate varying capacities, including those of volunteers, caregivers, and individuals with disabilities.

This approach ensures that initiatives are not only environmentally impactful but also socially inclusive, reflecting the diverse needs of Ottawa's communities.

Next Steps

The SWMP is a dynamic document designed to evolve alongside Ottawa's changing waste landscape. It will be regularly updated to remain aligned with City priorities, emerging legislation, and shifting public behaviours and disposal habits. Continued collaboration with both internal and external stakeholders will be essential, and public engagement will remain a core element throughout the planning and implementation of SWMP actions.

In 2026, a central focus will be on education, promotion, and behaviour change, particularly encouraging greater participation in the Green Bin Program and reducing avoidable food waste. The 2023/2024 waste audit and tonnage analysis revealed a significant ongoing opportunity to increase uptake of the green bin. A targeted education campaign, informed by a curbside set-out study scheduled for Q4 2025 and a public behaviour survey in early Q1 2026, will support these efforts.

Year Two will also involve the rollout of several additional SWMP initiatives, including enhanced waste diversion at special events and further expansion of the *Take It Back!* program. New opportunities to reduce and divert materials such as single-use plastics and construction and demolition waste will also be explored. These initiatives will require careful analysis of collection options, available alternatives, tracking systems, and viable end markets. Further actions aimed at improving waste diversion in the multi-residential sector will be introduced, along with potential new requirements for waste diversion in future developments.

Many of the actions planned for 2026 will depend on strong resident participation in waste reduction and diversion. The Behaviour Change Management Strategy will be instrumental in guiding these efforts, helping Ottawa move toward a community that embraces the principles of the waste management hierarchy.

Communications will be provided to Council later this year to share updates on the transition to Individual Producer Responsibility, including Councillor tool kits. Additional communication materials will be provided early in 2026 to support members of Council and residents on the 2026 curbside collection contract, which is scheduled to take effect at the end of March 2026.

Members of Council will also receive updates on key Actions and component projects of the SWMP, such as the Landfill Gas Management Strategy, in advance of the SWMP 2026 Annual Update legislative report. The Business Case on the Waste Management Technologies report will be brought to Committee and Council in Q1 2027, per Council

[Motion No. 2025-61-03](#). Other updates will be provided by ways of memorandum to Council on an as needed basis.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with the report recommendations in 2025. Financial implications for 2026 will be submitted as part of the 2026 budget process. The financial implications for years 2027 and onward are in line with the Solid Waste Services Long-Range Financial Plan 2025-2053 report (ACS2024-FCS-FIN-0008) that accompanied the Solid Waste Master Plan when approved by Council in 2024.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to approving the recommendations in this report.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

This is a City-wide report.

CONSULTATION

The development and implementation of the Solid Waste Master Plan (SWMP) has been guided by extensive public and stakeholder engagement, ensuring the SWMP reflects the needs of Ottawa residents. Consultation efforts have been ongoing throughout each phase of the SWMP and continue to inform the planning and execution of individual Action Suites. A comprehensive communications and engagement plan was developed to raise awareness among residents of the opportunity to participate in the survey(s) and to ensure residents and stakeholders were able to provide final input into the Action item's development.

Public consultation included engagement activities such as public surveys, online dialogue sessions, focus groups, open houses, pop-up events, workshops, and digital engagement through the Engage Ottawa platform. The public survey was provided in five languages, English, French, Arabic, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, as well supporting documents developed in 10 languages, English, French, Arabic, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, Inuktitut, Anishinaabemowin, Farsi, and Turkish. These efforts provided residents with multiple opportunities to share feedback on waste management priorities. Input received helped shape the final recommendations and continues to guide implementation.

In 2025, targeted engagement activities were conducted to support specific initiatives, including:

- A public survey on community reuse and repair initiatives to inform the Community Waste Reduction and Reuse Action Plan.
- Focus groups and outreach related to the Bulky Waste Diversion Strategy, with emphasis on accessibility and youth engagement.
- A Network User Survey to gather feedback from City staff on waste diversion practices in municipal facilities.
- Engagement with agricultural residents to assess the Agriculture Exemption Program. This included an online survey, door-to-door outreach via Environmental Education Assistants.

Solid Waste Services has worked closely with internal and external stakeholders, including:

- The Solid Waste Planning Council Sponsors Group (CSG), which continues to provide strategic input and community perspectives.
- Property managers and residents in multi-residential buildings to support onboarding to the Green Bin Program.
- Community organizations, such as the Ottawa Tool Library and Ottawa South Eco-Action Network, to co-host reuse and repair events.
- Ottawa Public Health, Public Information and Media Relations, and other City departments to align messaging and outreach efforts.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

The actions within the Solid Waste Master Plan are implemented according to the accessibility-related legislative framework consisting of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, (AODA) in addition to the City's Accessibility Design Standards (ADS), where applicable, as well as the City of Ottawa's Accessibility Policy.

Any promotional and educational campaigns related to the Solid Waste Master Plan will continue to include accessible formats and communication supports, including but not limited to, closed captioning on videos and alt-text on images. Additionally, any public-

facing web content regarding the Solid Waste Master Plan will conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA.

The City also recognizes that many people with disabilities in Ottawa live in multi-residential properties, due to the proximity of medical centres and other amenities, as well as the general accessibility of these units, such as wide accessible entryways and lobbies, access to elevators, and having barrier free access to all rooms in apartments. The City also recognizes that waste-disposal rooms in multi-residential buildings are small and often lack accessible features, such as automatic door openers, which can limit the ability of people with disabilities to independently dispose of their waste. As such, the City will continue to work with the property management sector to ensure success in the roll-out of the mandatory Green Bin program, as well as the Chute Closure/ Conversion to Organic Chutes Pilot Program at all multi-residential buildings. This will include encouraging property management groups to consider how their residents with permanent or temporary disabilities will access these services.

Additionally, the use of alternative collection containers, such as in-ground collection, front-end load containers, multi-stream containers, and waste bins with solar compactors will have accessibility features and improve the overall accessibility of waste collection in parks, public spaces and multi-residential buildings. Following approval of the recommendations outlined in the report, staff would continue engaging with partners, including staff in the Accessibility Office and the Accessibility Advisory Committee, as well as the wider community of accessibility-related stakeholders partners to receive feedback on the implementation, development, and delivery of services in the Plan. Continuing to engage with these community members with disabilities will help identify and mitigate barriers and challenges prior to implementation from a cross-disability perspective and understand the unique needs and feedback from residents with disabilities, thus reducing or eliminating barriers and challenges faced by these residents.

Some success of waste diversion can also be attributed to the Special Considerations program, allowing one garbage bag or container of diapers/incontinence products if circumstances require its collection on the off week of regular garbage collection. Additionally, the expansion of this program to also allow home healthcare waste collection on these off weeks greatly benefit many people with disabilities and older adults across the city in diverting additional waste from the landfill. While the program expansion will continue to allow one garbage bag or container of diapers/incontinence products and home healthcare waste for collection on the off week when garbage is not collected, staff continue to work with applicants on a case-by-case basis if the need to

collect larger quantities are identified.

Finally, throughout the implementation of the three-item garbage limit, staff have considered and provided individual accessibility-related accommodations to residents with disabilities. These accommodations are assessed on a case-by-case basis and staff continue to monitor feedback and requests to ensure no new barriers are created in the implementation of this program.

CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

The Solid Waste Master Plan (SWMP) directly supports the City's Climate Change Master Plan and Energy Evolution Strategy by advancing initiatives that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Key focus areas include waste reduction and reuse, increased diversion of organic materials from landfill, renewable natural gas (RNG) generation, and transitioning to a zero-emissions fleet.

Methane emissions from landfills—primarily produced by decomposing organic waste—are a major contributor to the City's GHG profile. To mitigate this, the Solid Waste team is exploring waste processing technologies such as anaerobic digestion, landfill gas management, and waste-to-energy solutions. These technologies are currently undergoing feasibility assessments to evaluate their environmental impacts, financial viability, and community support.

Full GHG impacts will be quantified with annual reporting. The SWMP provides a clear framework for reducing emissions, enhancing climate resilience, and supporting the City's long-term sustainability objectives.

INDIGENOUS, GENDER AND EQUITY IMPLICATIONS

The development of the Solid Waste Master Plan (SWMP) was guided by extensive public and stakeholder engagement, recognizing that waste management affects all residents and that inclusive participation is essential to implementing effective and equitable policies. Throughout each phase of developing the SWMP, the City prioritized meaningful input to ensure the plan reflects the diverse needs of the community.

To support the rollout of the SWMP, the City implemented a comprehensive Promotion and Education (P&E) strategy that went beyond traditional communications. This approach emphasized behaviour change, encouraging actions such as proper waste sorting, green bin usage, and overall waste reduction. Environmental Education Assistants (EEAs) were strategically deployed in areas with low diversion rates and high non-compliance to provide real-time education and support.

Looking ahead, the Long-Term Planning branch within Solid Waste Services will continue to expand opportunities for residents and community partners to shape SWMP initiatives through an equity lens. This commitment includes:

- Ongoing public consultations tied to specific action items
- Targeted outreach to equity-deserving communities
- Interactive engagement formats such as workshops, pop-ups, open houses, and digital tools like Engage Ottawa
- Transparent communication on how community feedback informs decision-making

Through these efforts, the City is ensuring that equity remains a cornerstone of its waste management strategy, building a more inclusive and sustainable system.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

All risks and associated mitigation measures have been outlined within the body of the report.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

To engage Ottawa's residential farming community, the City developed a targeted outreach strategy that included a ten-question survey focused on farm waste, seasonal trends, diversion practices, and opportunities for municipal support. The survey was promoted online via Engage Ottawa, through City channels, and in partnership with the Ontario Farming Association (OFA) and the NCC. It was also available by phone and email to ensure accessibility, resulting in feedback from 77 residents.

Environmental Education Assistants (EEAs) conducted door-to-door outreach across five rural wards, visiting 379 registered agricultural properties. This representative sampling achieved a 95 per cent confidence level and yielded feedback from an additional 143 residents.

Councillors were briefed and provided with outreach kits to support local engagement. In-person outreach at venues like the Cumberland Farmer's Market and OFA meetings further facilitated dialogue. These efforts provided Solid Waste Services with valuable insights into rural waste management challenges and community needs beyond the survey data.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The implementation of a firm three-item garbage limit aligns with the proposed 2022-2026 Term of Council priority: a city that is green and resilient. Outcomes that support this priority include:

- Reducing emissions associated with the City's operations and facilities; and
- Increasing waste reduction and diversion.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 – Progress Update on Year One Actions

Document 2 – Update on the Three-item Garbage Limit and Agriculture Exemption Program

Document 3 – Update on the Multi-Residential Waste Diversion Strategy

DISPOSITION

Upon Committee's receipt of this report, staff will continue scoping, planning and implementing the identified priority Actions of the Solid Waste Master Plan.