

October 12, 2021

Ms. Lisa Trevisan
Director, Central Region
Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks
Place Nouveau
5775 Yonge Street, 8th Floor
Toronto, ON M2M 4J1

Ms. Kathleen O'Neill
Director, Environmental Assessments (Environmental Assessment Branch)
Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
135 St. Clair Avenue West
Toronto, ON M4V 1P5

Dear Ms. Trevisan and Ms. O'Neill:

**Re: Durham York Energy Centre Facility
Submission of the Regional Municipality of York Waste Diversion Program
Monitoring Plan (Environmental Assessment Condition 10) MOE File No.: EA-08-02**

The attached *York Region 2020 Annual Waste Management Report* is being submitted to satisfy the Durham York Energy Centre Environmental Assessment condition for diversion reporting. It has been submitted to the Energy-from-Waste Advisory Committee and posted on the [York Region website](#).

The report summarizes York Region's integrated waste management system; highlights the Region's waste reduction and diversion initiatives; provides our diversion rate, generation rate, and total tonnages of material collected and processed; and our progress towards the goals of the SM4RT Living Integrated Waste Management Master Plan (the SM4RT Living Plan).

The SM4RT Living Plan outlines the long-term direction for waste policy and programming in the Region. The SM4RT Living Plan continues to move York Region to a more sustainable circular economy that emphasizes waste reduction, repair, reuse, and resource recovery to improve economic and environmental outcomes. The Region has joined the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative (CCRI) Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Network offering opportunities to learn, network and exchange ideas on circular economy with 14 other Canadian municipalities across the country. As part of this initiative, the Region will be guided through the road mapping process to promote circular economy principles and solutions across the corporation, improving efforts to reduce and divert waste in the Region.

York Region Council and staff remain committed to sustainable waste management practices like energy-from-waste recovery which lowers greenhouse gas emissions, recovers metals, and reduces the volume of waste going to landfill. Despite the ongoing challenges of the pandemic, York Region in partnership with its nine local cities and towns, were able to pivot resources and continue to implement innovative waste programs while observing COVID-19 safety protocols. In 2020, the Region achieved 93% diversion from landfill, again exceeding the 90% goal established in the Regional Official Plan. Both York and Durham Regions continue to experience higher waste volumes

when compared to pre-pandemic tonnages, stressing the importance to work together to obtain the necessary approvals to increase processing capacity at DYEC, including our request for an emergency ECA amendment for 2021. This would allow the Regions to make use of the existing facility more efficiently while reducing the need to by-pass garbage directly to landfill. The DYEC is capable of processing up to 160,000 tonnes of garbage annually without requiring any modifications or additions to the existing equipment or the building.

York Region and its local municipal partners continue to be leaders in sustainable waste management in Ontario. Since 2012, the Region has ranked first in the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority's annual waste diversion for a large urban municipality. In 2020, York Region continued to collaborate with its local municipal partners to reduce blue box contamination through a two-phase, multi-faceted communication and curbside enforcement campaign. Phase one, developed and implemented by Region and local municipal staff, targeted COVID-19 PPE found in the blue box. This approach resulted in an increase in curbside enforcement and a reduction in PPE observed at the Region's Material Recovery Facility (MRF). The focus of phase two promotes recycling best practices across the Region.

The issue of litter due to single-use items such as take-out containers and cutlery, plastic bags and coffee cups remains a key concern in York Region. While the Region has invested in capital improvements such as the \$1.4M MRF upgrade implemented in late 2019 improving the Region's ability to market mixed paper within North America, other regulatory mechanisms are critical to reducing single use plastics that often end up in the blue box stream. York Region is hopeful the federal government's plan to implement bans on single use plastics, and the provincial government's plan to transition the Blue Box program to a full producer responsibility system are realized as both are critical actions to address problematic single use plastic materials and reduce litter.

As the Blue Box program transitions to full producer responsibility, the Region has embraced its role in ensuring the shift is seamless for our residents. Region staff continue to focus on preparing York Regional Council to make informed decisions as the process moves forward. We are looking forward to seeing the proposed rules by producers and trust that it will promote competition and have no negative impact to Ontario residents. As the intent of the regulation is to improve recycling and packaging design to achieve better environmental outcomes, we are looking forward to increased capture of packaging and paper products and therefore maximizing diversion from landfill.

While we are doing this reporting, we also note that the Regions will be looking to the Ministry to advise on the future content/format of this annual reporting requirement given the upcoming blue box transition to full producer responsibility is expected to reduce the ability for municipalities to report on the blue box diversion program. Other producer responsibility programs including tires, electronics and hazardous waste may also capture more materials through non-municipal collection points, further impacting the Region's overall diversion rate.

We trust that the attached report satisfies Environmental Assessment Condition 10 in the Durham York Energy Centre approval for annual diversion reporting. If you require additional information, please contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,



Laura McDowell, P. Eng.
Director, Environmental Promotion and Protection

LM/mm
Attachment

Copy to: C. Dugas, Manager, York Durham District Office, Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks
G. Anello, Director, Waste Management Services, The Regional Municipality of Durham
C. Raynor, Regional Clerk, The Regional Municipality of York
R. Walton, Regional Clerk, The Regional Municipality of Durham
Energy-From-Waste Advisory Committee

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