



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Public Works Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	July 13, 2017
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Waste Free Ontario Act, 2016, Discussion Paper: Addressing Food and Organic Waste in Ontario (PW17056) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction:

Not Applicable

Information:

This Information Report provides an overview on the Ontario Government's "Discussion Paper: Addressing Food and Organic Waste in Ontario" ("Discussion Paper"). This document was posted on the Environmental Registry (EBR) for review and public comment.

Background:

The Ontario Legislature proclaimed the Waste-Free Ontario Act, 2016 on November 30, 2016. Waste Free Ontario Act includes two Acts: (1) Waste Diversion Transition Act (WDTA) and (2) Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act (RRCEA). Over the next few years, the Ontario Government will be introducing strategies and regulations to support the WDTA and RRCEA in order to transition the Province's existing waste diversion programs to a new producer responsibility system which will require producers to have greater responsibility for managing waste generated as part of their manufactured products.

On February 28, 2017, the Ontario Government approved its "Strategy for a Waste-Free Ontario: Building the Circular Economy". The Strategy's purpose is to set out an action plan to support the RRCEA in order to increase waste diversion in Ontario. A key

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SUBJECT: Waste Free Ontario Act, 2016: Discussion Paper: Addressing Food and Organic Waste in Ontario (PW17056) (City Wide) - Page 2 of 4

component of the Strategy is to introduce measures to reduce the amount of food and organic waste being disposed in Ontario. According to the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, approximately one third of Ontario's total waste stream is made up of food and organic waste based on waste materials generated from residential sources, industries, commercial, and institutional sectors. Adopting measures to reduce the amount of food and organic waste sent to disposal would help to minimize environmental consequences such as greenhouse gas emissions.

Discussion Paper Overview

The Discussion Paper allows the opportunity for the public to provide input on the development of the Province's Food and Organic Waste Framework. The Food and Organic Waste Framework includes two main components: (1) the Food and Organic Waste Action Plan which includes actions to be taken by the Province; and (2) a policy statement under the RRCEA which provides direction to the Province, municipalities, industries, commercial properties and institutional sectors concerning food and organic waste.

The Food and Organic Waste Framework includes several actions to achieve the following objectives:

- Reduce the amount of food that becomes waste;
- Remove food and organic waste from the disposal stream;
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by avoiding food and organic waste being landfilled;
- Increase accountability of responsible parties concerning food and organic waste; and
- Enhance promotion and education concerning food and organic waste.

The scope of the Food and Organic Waste Framework will consider several methods to reduce food and organic waste, which include:

- Food waste reduction - Reducing the amount of edible food that becomes waste will be a priority in Ontario. Decreasing food waste would help to reduce the economic and environmental factors associated with food waste production throughout the supply chain. There is increased attention throughout North America and globally concerning the importance of food waste prevention among all sectors including food producers, retailers, and customers. Within the City's "Hamilton Food Strategy", Council provided support for food waste management actions which foster innovation to reduce food waste through diversion and composting, and education. Staff is currently reviewing best practices to deal with food waste through food literacy, education, and other opportunities in order to develop the City's food waste

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SUBJECT: Waste Free Ontario Act, 2016: Discussion Paper: Addressing Food and Organic Waste in Ontario (PW17056) (City Wide) - Page 3 of 4

management actions. Additional information on Hamilton's food waste strategy will be shared with Council through an upcoming staff report.

- Organic waste diversion - The City of Hamilton, as well as many larger sized municipalities in Ontario currently offers green bin programs for residential properties to divert food and organic waste from disposal. The Ontario Government is considering opportunities to encourage organic waste diversion for other sectors including multi-residential properties, industrial, commercial and institutional properties. Potential tools to support organic waste diversion may include a disposal ban to prohibit organic waste from disposal and educational programs to increase participation in green bin programs.
- Supporting food and organic waste processing capacity – With the greater focus to reduce food and organic waste from disposal, the Province may need to develop additional organic waste processing capacity to handle the organic waste generated within Ontario. This may involve providing support for existing organic waste processing facilities by reducing regulatory burden for facilities with low risk, and offering assistance for new facilities, partnerships, or pilot projects.
- Stimulating end-markets for food and organic waste – The Ontario Government will need to consider support for the development of viable markets for the end-products generated through the organics processing facilities, such as compost and other soil amendments.

Public Consultation

The Discussion Paper is available through EBR #013-0094 for public comment from May 31, 2017 to July 30, 2017. Staff reviewed the Discussion Paper in consideration of potential impacts to the City's waste management services and the City's Food Strategy. Future provincial policies and regulations concerning food and organic waste will affect the City's operations, particularly related to policies affecting the City's composting facilities, organic waste collection services, and potential bans on food and organic waste from disposal.

Council members interested in reviewing the EBR posting and/or submitting comments are asked to contact staff by July 29th.

Subject to Council's input and comments, staff is planning to submit the comments in Appendix A attached to Report PW17056 on the City's behalf to the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change through the EBR posting prior to the July 30th EBR submission deadline.

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Next Steps

Staff will continue to follow-up on the Waste Free Ontario Act's progress and will work with municipal groups and other stakeholders to provide the Province with comprehensive comments on the Waste Free Ontario Act and associated regulations and policies. Additional information will be provided to Council once further details are shared by the Ontario Government.

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Appendix A – Discussion Paper: Addressing Food and Organic Waste in Ontario