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Agenda
Operations Committee

November 20, 2025, 5:30 p.m.

City Hall - 808 2nd Avenue East - Council Chambers

The public can attend meetings in person. Meetings will also be livestreamed on the City's Council and Committee webpage. If there are technical issues with the livestream that can't be fixed within 15 minutes, the meeting will continue, and a recording will be available later, on the webpage or by contacting the City Clerk. People who can't attend the meeting in person for Public Forum, should send their comments to the Recording Secretary one business day before the meeting. These comments will be shared with members and included in the updated agenda.

Pages

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. CALL FOR ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

2.a City Manager Re: Town of Blue Mountains Correspondence - Changes to Blue Box Recycling for Non-Eligible Sources — 3

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

4.a Minutes of the Operations Committee meeting held on October 16, 2025 — 5

5. DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

5.a Deputation from Barb Wakeford Re: Harbour House Condominiums Driveway Access

6. PUBLIC FORUM

7. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FOR WHICH DIRECTION IS REQUIRED

There are no correspondence items being presented for consideration.

8. REPORTS OF CITY STAFF

8.a Environment

8.a.1 Report OP-25-040 from the Supervisor of Environmental Services Re: Collection of Non-Eligible Sources Post Blue Box Transition December 31, 2025 Follow-Up — 9

8.b Engineering

None.

8.c Public Works

None.

8.d Transit

None.

8.e Water and Wastewater

None.

9. MATTERS POSTPONED

There are no matters postponed.

10. MOTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE WAS PREVIOUSLY GIVEN

There are no motions for which notice was previously given.

11. CORRESPONDENCE PROVIDED FOR INFORMATION

There are no correspondence items presented for information.

12. DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

13. NOTICES OF MOTION

14. ADJOURNMENT

The Town of The Blue Mountains
Council Meeting

Title: Councillor Ardiel Notice of Motion Re: Blue Box Recycling

Date: Monday, November 10, 2025

Time: 8:41 PM

Moved by: Councillor Ardiel

Seconded by: Councillor Porter

WHEREAS Blue Box recycling in The Blue Mountains will change, on January 1st, 2026, a new province-wide Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) will take over Ontario's Blue Box residential recycling collection and shifting responsibility from municipalities to the producers of plastic and packaging. The Blue Mountains need to focus on hiring the not-for- profit group called Circular Materials Ontario that take will over the handling of our Blue Bin recycling;

WHEREAS the County of Simcoe has engaged the not-for-profit group called Circular Materials Ontario who run the program with Emterra handing pickup;

WHEREAS Council should be involved in discussions now on how these changes will affect small businesses, not-for-profit businesses, and institutions such as our churches;

WHEREAS Grey County should be involving all nine municipalities to speak about the broader picture in waste management and look towards consolidating waste in the bigger picture involving all nine municipalities in Grey County;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Town of The Blue Mountains directs staff to forward this resolution to the eight other municipalities in Grey County and encourages the other eight municipalities with vested interests in Blue Box recycling to consider working together with all Grey County municipalities for their Blue Box materials for the Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (ICI) locations

YES: 6 **NO: 0** **ABSENT: 1**

The motion is Carried

YES: 6

Deputy Mayor Bordignon, Councillor Ardiel, Councillor Hope, Councillor Maxwell, Councillor McKinlay, Councillor Porter

NO: 0

ABSENT: 1

Mayor Matrosovs

Minutes

Operations Committee

October 16, 2025, 5:30 p.m.
City Hall - 808 2nd Avenue East - Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Chair Scott Greig Vice Chair Carol Merton Member Donald Anderson Member Arlene Blue Indoe Member Robert Droine Councillor Brock Hamley (via video) Member Michele Hawkins Councillor Suneet Kukreja
MEMBERS ABSENT/REGRETS:	Member Mike Crone
STAFF PRESENT:	Tim Simmonds, City Manager Lara Widdifield, Director of Public Works and Engineering Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services Christina McLean, Recording Secretary

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Greig called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. CALL FOR ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

There was no additional business.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

4.a Minutes of the Operations Committee meeting held on September 18, 2025

OP-251016-001
Moved by Vice Chair Merton

"THAT the Operations Committee approves the minutes of the meeting held on September 18, 2025."

Carried.

5. DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

5.a Deputation from Joan Harris Re: Transit Route to Harrison Park

Joan Harris, Chair of the Harrison Park Senior Centre Board, provided a deputation on transit opportunities into Harrison Park, noting accessibility and safety concerns for seniors, youth and visitors.

In response to a question from Committee, the Supervisor of Environmental Services noted that the transit study identified that a direct route into the park would increase the length of the route by approximately 2 km, or 15 minutes, and that another option outlined in the study was a seasonal shuttle with annual costs of approximately $25,000 to $50,000, depending on the span of service.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Harris noted that the Senior Centre has not considered options for cost-sharing for the service at this time. She added that this service would benefit many users in addition to the Senior Centre, such as visitors of the restaurant and other park amenities.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Jennen noted that routes will continue to be monitored, with opportunities for review in the future.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Widdifield noted that the transit study is available on the website and is accessible to the committee and public to view.

Vice Chair Merton noted that the Community Fund or other micro grant initiatives may be an avenue for the Senior Centre to consider.

6. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no questions or comments from the public.

7. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FOR WHICH DIRECTION IS REQUIRED

There were no correspondence items presented for consideration.

8. REPORTS OF CITY STAFF

8.a Environment

8.a.1 Report OP-25-037 from the Supervisor of Environmental Services Re: Collection of Non-Eligible Sources Post Blue Box Transition December 31, 2025

The Supervisor of Environmental Services provided an overview of the report.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Jennen noted that the elimination of collection from non-eligible sources as outlined is a way for producers to save costs based on the volume of materials these sources (industrial and commercial properties) produce.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Widdifield noted that this is a provincial response to producers finding that recycling collection and processing is expensive, a burden which municipalities have carried for years.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Jennen noted that the pickup dates in option 1 as outlined in the report are based on the source's location within the City. She added that option 2 outlines different dates for sources that use carts and those that use recycling bags or boxes.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Jennen noted that City staff collect garbage in the downtown if it is left at the curb outside of regular collection dates, and that By-law staff attempt to identify who garbage belongs to when possible.

In response to a question from Committee, the City Manager noted that many of the non-eligible sources are located within the River District, and that there is currently a high non-compliance rate for waste pickup in the River District, even with the higher level of weekly waste pickup. He added that the risk of staying with the status quo is that the recycling will be included with garbage and the City will have to bear the cost of disposal.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Widdifield noted that there has been a campaign through AMO on the matter, which did not result in any major changes.

OP-251016-002
Moved by Councillor Hamley

"THAT in consideration of staff report OP-25-037 respecting Collection of Non-Eligible Sources Post Blue Box Transition December 31, 2025, the Operations Committee recommends that City Council direct staff to bring forward an additional staff report to the November 20, 2025 Operations Committee meeting, including additional information respecting costing and possible funding options."

Carried.

8.b Engineering

None.

8.c Public Works

None.

8.d Transit

None.

8.e Water and Wastewater

None.

9. MATTERS POSTPONED

There were no matters postponed.

10. MOTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE WAS PREVIOUSLY GIVEN

There were no motions for which notice was previously given.

11. CORRESPONDENCE PROVIDED FOR INFORMATION

11.a City of Owen Sound - Committee Applications Now Open

Chair Greig provided an overview of the correspondence, noting that Committee applications are now open until November 7, 2025, and that more information can be found at Owensound.ca/CommitteeVacancies.

12. DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

There was no additional business.

13. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no notices of motion.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The business contained on the agenda having been completed, Chair Greig adjourned the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

Staff Report

Report To: Operations Committee

Report From: Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services

Meeting Date: November 20, 2025

Report Code: OP-25-040

Subject: Collection of Non-Eligible Sources Post Blue Box Transition December 31, 2025

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report OP-25-040 respecting Collection of Non-Eligible Sources Post Blue Box Transition December 31, 2025, the Operations Committee recommends that City Council:

1. Select Option 1, 2 or 3 as outlined in the report;
2. Direct staff to include Option 1, 2, or 3 in the 2026 Mayor's Budget; and
3. Direct staff to bring forward a by-law to execute Option 1, 2 or 3.

Highlights:

- Council direction is required. Given the limited timeframe, staff have identified three options to provide non-eligible properties with time to transition to alternative recycling arrangements: temporary funding through the general levy, extending collection for up to six months, or allowing drop-off at the Miller Waste Transfer Station.
- Longer-term options such as special levies, user fees, or inclusion in the River District budget require additional analysis and are better suited for future consideration.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

Strategic Plan Priority: Green City.

Climate and Environmental Implications:

This supports the City's Climate Mitigation Plan objective to reduce waste produced at City facilities by reducing packaging, reusing items and diverting waste from landfills, including the diversion of organic waste.

Previous Report/Authority:

OP-22-033 Blue Box Transition

OP-23-014 Bue Box Transition Update – Opting Out

OP-24-002 Recycling Convenience Depot Miller Transfer Station

OP-24-010 Recycling Convenience Depot at Miller Transfer Station – Follow-up Report

OP-25-037 Collection of Non-Eligible Sources Post Blue Box Transition December 31, 2025

Background:

At the Operations Committee meeting on October 16, Staff provided an update on the status of non-eligible recycling collection from Producer Responsibility Organizations (PROs). Circular Materials, representing the PROs, had previously proposed allowing a limited amount of non-eligible source recycling—up to 2% of eligible sources—to be included in the program. However, on October 1, 2025, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks confirmed that PROs would not offer a co-mingled opportunity for eligible and non-eligible sources after December 31, 2025.

Starting January 1, 2026, Council will need to decide whether to cover these costs, which could be up to three times the City's current expenses. Alternatively, affected businesses will have to arrange for private collection or use the Miller Waste transfer station at their own cost.

Following this update, the Operations Committee requested that staff prepare a follow-up report outlining potential cost-recovery scenarios for affected users if Council approves continuing curbside recycling collection for non-eligible sources. The Committee also asked for cost estimates for alternative options, such as providing cardboard collection solely in the downtown area.

Analysis:

Based on the review of all available options, staff recommend that Council select one of the following three options:

Option 1 – Fund Through the General Levy

Option 2 – Continue Collecting Non-Eligible Materials for up to 6 Months

Option 3 – Use of Recycling Depot at Miller Waste Transfer Station

These three options are considered the most practical short-term solutions. Each would allow non-eligible sources to maintain continuity of recycling service while providing affected businesses with sufficient time to secure private waste and recycling contracts.

Selecting one of these options would also avoid the administrative, financial, and legal challenges associated with implementing new funding mechanisms, such as special levies, user fees, or BIA-based cost-recovery models.

It is not possible to precisely determine the amount of recycling generated by non-eligible properties under any of the outlined options; however, based on available information, Miller Waste and City staff estimate the volume to be between 1 and 2 tonnes per week.

An email was sent to businesses and property owners in the River District on November 10, notifying them of the proposed changes and inviting them to complete a short survey. The results indicate that the types of materials collected are relatively balanced, with cardboard representing the highest proportion, though only slightly. Many responses from downtown businesses expressed disappointment that this change could occur, and several expressed concern that eliminating recycling services could lead to increased litter in the downtown area. There also seemed to be a sentiment that they already pay enough tax, and any additional fee would reduce the viability of their business.

Option 1 – Fund Through the General Levy

Description:
The City could continue to fund the collection of non-eligible materials through the general tax levy as part of its overall 2026 waste management operating budget. This approach would maintain consistency in the collection schedule, allowing non-eligible sources to continue participating in waste diversion efforts without disruption.

However, this method spreads the cost across all taxpayers, including those who do not receive the service. If this option is selected, Staff will negotiate with the current waste collection contractor to execute a change order to the existing waste collection contract.

Pros:

- Provides consistency and simplicity in the short term.
- No disruption to non-eligible sources currently receiving curbside collection.

Cons:

- Spreads the cost across all taxpayers, including those who do not receive the service.

Estimated Cost:

- All non-eligibles: **$120,000 - $145,000**
- Results in an additional annual cost of **$10.92** to the average residential property (based on $120,000).

Option 2 – Continue Collecting Non-Eligible Materials for Up to 6 Months

Description:
Extending the collection of non-eligible recyclable materials for up to an additional six months would give affected properties time to arrange private recycling services. This approach could either apply to all non-eligible sources city-wide or be limited to the River District.

If this option is selected, Staff will negotiate with the current waste collection contractor to execute a change order to the existing waste collection contract.

Pros:

- Allows time for affected properties to transition to private collection.
- Two or more business owners may be able to share a pickup service, depending on the type and volume of recyclable material and the contractor's policies.

Cons:

- Temporary measure.
- Adds short-term costs to the City.

- May lead to illegal dumping of recyclables, creating additional cleanup work and disposal costs for City staff once the 6 months have ended.
- After the transition period has ended, this may result in more recyclables being placed in the waste stream, as not all businesses may arrange private collection.

Estimated Cost:

- (a) River District only: $5,010-$6,905/month (4 weeks)
- (b) All non-eligible properties: $9,585-$11,480/month (4 weeks)

<u>Option 3 – Use of Recycling Depot at Miller Waste Transfer Station – for a 3-6 Month Term</u>

Description:

The City could consider entering into an agreement with Miller Waste to allow non-eligible sources to drop off recycling at the Miller Transfer Station at no cost for a three to six-month trial.

Non-eligible sources would need to register and sign a disclaimer, which would be reviewed by the City's solicitor and Miller Waste's counsel if applicable. The disclaimer would confirm that only recycling materials will be accepted at no charge, and that garbage mixed with recycling would be subject to normal disposal fees.

Free access would be limited to locations currently receiving curbside collection service. No new non-eligible properties would be added. Any misuse, such as improper disposal or abuse of access privileges, would result in the termination of free drop-off rights.

A three to six-month trial for the depot service would allow the City and Miller Waste to evaluate the program's effectiveness. Results will inform whether to continue, possibly under a registration-and-cost-recovery model for businesses.

If approved, staff will present a follow-up report before the end of the trial period with results and recommendations.

If this option is recommended, Staff will bring forward a bylaw to authorize the Mayor and Clerk to sign an Agreement with Miller Waste.

Pros:

- Provides a practical solution for smaller generators.
- Allows continued recycling access at minimal cost.

Cons:

- Not ideal for large-volume recyclers.
- Requires registration, legal review, and compliance oversight.
- Requires the business owner to transport the recycling to the depot, which may not be convenient and is not necessarily environmentally friendly if it is a dedicated trip.

Estimated Cost:

- (a) 3 month $8,500 - $16,900
- (b) 6 month $16,900-$33,800

Option 4 – Special Charge or User Fee

Description:
A special charge or user fee, as outlined under Section 391 of the Municipal Act, 2001, could be implemented to recover the cost of recycling collection directly from the businesses that utilize the service. This approach could either apply to all non-eligible sources city-wide or be limited to the River District.

A user fee could be established through a fees and charges by-law. This fee could be a flat rate or tiered based on the number of businesses or containers collected. To comply with Ontario Regulation 584/06, the City must ensure that the fee reflects actual cost recovery for a defined service and is not treated as a tax.

Pros:

- Charges only those who receive the service.
- Allows adjustments based on usage levels or property type.
- Provides a sustainable and transparent long-term funding model.

Cons:

- Would take longer to implement.
- Requires detailed cost tracking, coordination with the contractor, legal review, and development of a separate billing process. The administration of staff time to manage these components would also be significant.

Estimated Cost:

Best suited for planned implementation in the medium term, i.e. after Option 2 or 3, to allow time to complete the necessary background and administrative work.

Option 5 – Special Levy for River District

Description:
Under the Municipal Act, 2001, a municipality can establish a special levy to cover the costs of a specific service provided solely to a certain area. This levy would apply only to properties within that defined area.

To establish a special levy, the municipality must:

1. Clearly define the service and ensure it is delivered differently than in other areas.
2. Identify the geographic area where the service is provided.
3. Determine and document the costs of the service in the annual budget.
4. Obtain Council approval through the annual budget and by-law processes.

The special levy is based on property values in the service area, rather than a flat fee. It must be clearly defined geographically and comply with the Municipal Act. Poorly designed or area-wide levies may not meet legal requirements and could lead to financial or legal issues.

Implementing a special levy in the River District area would likely result in an average increase of approximately $250 per property; however, the distribution of these costs would be highly uneven. The largest increase—over $1,500—would apply to a property that does not currently participate in the curbside collection program. If this property were included in the levy, it might incentivize the business owner to cancel their private waste collection contract and join the municipal program. This change could significantly increase the total tonnage collected, raising overall program costs and putting additional financial pressure on all participating properties.

In addition to the extreme case above, several other properties that would pay the most under this model already have private waste collection contracts, meaning the overall cost to those owners would be much higher relative to the benefit received.

Pros:

- Applies only to properties within the defined service area.

Cons:

- Costs would vary widely between properties.
- Could encourage some properties to cancel private waste contracts and join the municipal program, increasing costs for all.
- Some of the high-paying properties already have private waste contracts, increasing inequity.
- Poorly designed levies may create legal or financial risks.

Estimated Cost:

- Average increase of approximately **$250 per property**.
- Highest increase: **over $1,500** for a property not currently receiving curbside collection.

<u>Option 6 – Include Cost in the River District Budget</u>

Description:
In this scenario, the annual cost of approximately $65,000 would be included in the River District's operating budget and collected through the existing Business Improvement Area (BIA) levy applied to commercial properties in the River District only.

The BIA levy, like the Special Levy, applies to a defined geographic area but applies only to properties in the business tax class. Some businesses already have private recycling contracts; if they cancel and join the municipal program, it could increase volumes, raise costs, and put additional financial strain on all participating properties.

The 2026 draft BIA budget was presented to the River District Board in September, with a public consultation meeting on November 26 before Council submission. While the additional charge may not be implemented in 2026, it could be considered in the 2027 River District budget.

Pros:

- Recognizes the service as a benefit to River District members.
- Allows River District members to determine continuation or alternatives.

Cons:

- Adds cost burden to River District businesses.
- Some high-contributing businesses already have private waste contracts, increasing their costs relative to the benefit received.
- Increased participation could raise overall program costs.

Estimated Cost:

- Approximately **$65,000** annually, but would be recovered by BIA levies.

Option 7 – Cardboard Collection in the River District Only

Description:
The Operations Committee suggested that Staff obtain a quote for cardboard collection specifically for the River District area. Cardboard accounts for the largest share of recyclable materials generated by local businesses, as many goods and supplies are packaged in corrugated cardboard.

Pros:

- Focuses on the largest recyclable material type generated locally.

Cons:

- Limited to cardboard only and excludes other recyclables.
- May lead to illegal dumping of other recyclables, creating additional cleanup work and disposal costs for City staff.

Estimated Cost:

- **$29,500** plus additional costs for City staff time and tonnage fees.

Option 8 – Bag Tag or Coloured Bag

Description:
A bag tag or coloured bag system could be implemented to recover some costs for recycling collection, applying only to properties within the River District. Non-eligible sources would be required to purchase bag tags or coloured bags from City Hall or other designated locations.

Compliance with the existing downtown garbage bag tag program is very low, raising concerns about effectiveness. Materials left out without tags or identification would be difficult to trace, requiring City staff to collect and dispose of them, increasing workload and costs. Cost recovery from this program would likely remain minimal.

Pros:

- Provides a method for partial cost recovery.
- Limits the program to a defined area.

Cons:

- Low compliance expected based on existing garbage bag tag experience.
- Would increase staff workload and disposal costs for untagged materials.
- Administrative effort required to manage and sell tags or bags.
- Although, the exact cost for the bag tag or coloured back is unknown, it would likely need to be higher than a garbage bag tag to help offset expenses. These additional costs could reduce the incentive to recycle.

Estimated Cost:

- Approximately **$65,000**, plus costs for tags/bags, sales, and administration. Cost recovery dependent on participation**.**

Option 9 – Discontinuing Non-Eligible Recycling Collection

Description:
Ending recycling collection for non-eligible sources could provide short-term savings but would likely lead to increased tipping fees and reduced compliance with recycling requirements. Businesses may dispose of recyclables with garbage to avoid private collection costs and because it's easier, increasing the City's overall waste management expenses.

Pros:

- Eliminates direct program and collection costs.

Cons:

- Risk of illegal dumping and increased cleanup and disposal costs for City staff.
- Higher landfill tonnage and tipping fees.
- Reduced compliance with recycling regulations and by-laws.
- Increased workload for City staff and reduced service efficiency.
- Undermines the City's waste diversion and environmental goals.

Estimated Cost:

- Potential short-term savings offset by increased cleanup, transfer station tipping fees, and staff costs over time.

Municipal Comparisons:

- **Georgian Bluffs:** Unknown at this time.
- **Grey Highlands:** Unknown at this time.
- **Hanover:** Discontinued all non-eligible curbside collection.
- **Municipality of Meaford:** Continuing with curbside collection for non-eligibles for a one-year term.
- **Saugeen Shores:** No longer providing curbside collection; non-eligibles can drop off recycling at the landfill with no additional fees.
- **The Blue Mountains:** Continuing with curbside collection for non-eligibles.
- **Township of Chatsworth:** Unknown at this time.
- **West Grey:** Continuing with curbside collection for non-eligibles.

Financial Implications:

Staff have included a placeholder of $60,000 in the draft 2026 operating budget, consistent with the allocations provided in the 2024 and 2025 budgets for non-eligible recycling.

Option 1 – Fund Through the General Levy
The City would continue curbside collection for non-eligible properties, funded through the general tax levy.
Estimated cost: $120,000 - $145,000 annually.
Financial impact: Adds approximately $10.92 to the average residential property tax bill (based on $120,000).

Option 2 – Continue Collection for Up to 6 Months
The City could extend collection temporarily to allow time for non-eligible properties to transition to private recycling services.
Estimated cost: $5,010 -$6,905 per month for the River District only, or $9,585 – 11,480 per month city-wide.
Financial impact: A short-term cost of approximately $30,060 to $69,000 depending on service area.

Option 3 – Use of Miller Waste Recycling Depot
The City could enter an agreement with Miller Waste to allow registered non-

eligible sources to drop off recycling at no charge.
Estimated cost: $8,500 - $16,900 for a 3 month period, $16,900-$33,800 for a 6 month period
Financial impact: Cost can be accommodated within the draft 2026 waste management operations budget; may include additional administrative and legal setup expenses.

Communication Strategy:

Due to the short turnaround time, staff have issued a notice by email to non-eligible sources in the River District. Once Council has made its decision, City staff will notify each business currently receiving cart-based collection to advise them of the next steps.

Consultation:

- Peter Fries, Municipality Tax Equity Consultant
- Director of Corporate Services
- Manager of Corporate Services
- Owen Sound Tax Collector
- Miller Waste
- Members of the Municipal Waste Association

Attachments:

None.

Recommended by:
Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services
Lara Widdifield, Director of Public Works and Engineering

Submission approved by:
Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services at hjennen@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 Ext 3223.