

Strathcona County's Waste Management Roadmap Annual Update

Priorities Committee
October 17, 2023

Waste Management Roadmap

- Planning for the next 10 years of waste management in our community.
- It's a collective, community-wide commitment to rethinking waste and diverting from landfill.
- It prioritizes an expanded waste hierarchy: rethink, reduce, reuse, recycle, recover and residual, which moves the community towards a circular economy and leading practices in waste management.
- Approved by Council on September 14, 2021.



Vision and philosophies

Managing waste together:

Our community's commitment to rethinking waste

We are in this **together**;
everyone has a role to play.

...

Easy, **convenient** and understandable.

...

Equity and **flexibility** with positive
incentives that creates accountability.

...

Move towards a **circular economy**.

...

Be a **forward-thinking** community that has
leading practices in waste management.

...

Refocus on the **waste hierarchy**:

Rethink our use and design of materials
and move towards a closed loop model;

Reduce the amount of waste we generate;

Reuse what we can;

Recycle and compost into new materials;

Recover the remaining resources
to reinvest back into the economy; and

Residual disposal of actual waste—safely.

...

“TOGETHER WE VALUE WASTE AS A
RESOURCE AND ARE COMMITTED TO
RETHINKING OUR PRACTICES IN ORDER
TO MAKE STRATHCONA COUNTY THE
MOST LIVABLE COMMUNITY IN CANADA.”

Themes



WORKING TOGETHER

WASTE MANAGEMENT IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

Waste is generated by everyone, so we must acknowledge, engage on and increase awareness about the role that everyone plays.



BEYOND THE CURB

CREATING CONTINUITY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Waste generated in a community goes beyond the residential sector. County residents want the greater community to be more involved in formal waste diversion practices.



PLASTICS SOLUTIONS

PREVENTION, INNOVATION AND ADVOCACY

Plastic has become part of our daily lives, and many of these plastics are used only once and trashed. Recognition is increasing for the need to have better solutions in place to reduce plastics overall.

Themes

CONVENIENCE IS KEY

MAKING REDUCTION AND DIVERSION SIMPLE AND ACCESSIBLE

Ease and accessibility have a big impact on participation and performance in successful waste management strategies.



PROCESSING MATERIALS

FINDING OPPORTUNITIES AND VALUE IN WASTE

Processing plays an important yet mostly hidden role when managing waste in a community. Processing must be a deliberate focus of a program to ensure materials avoid land filling.

ASSESSING BEHAVIOURS

UNDERSTANDING DRIVERS AND WILLINGNESS TO CHANGE

Behaviour change is a consideration when developing waste management programs. Changes in behaviour not only affect waste diversion, but can also empower residents.



Themes



WASTE MATTERS

CONNECTING OUTCOMES & EDUCATING USERS

With a long list of items that are typically disposed of, understanding what goes where, why it's important to sort and what happens to the materials after collection is key to encouraging participation and connecting outcomes. Residents are eager for more education and information.



TOOLS FOR CHANGE

INCENTIVES AND COMPLIANCE

Waste characterization audits have confirmed that there is room for improvement in waste diversion, and that not all households are fully participating in the program. Financial incentives, positive reinforcement and compliance tools are all opportunities to increase rates of utilization.

TRACKING SUCCESS

COMMITMENT TO LEADERSHIP AND TARGETS

Strathcona County has a vision to be Canada's most livable community. The County should strive to remain a leader in waste management and look to improve results for the entire community.



Implementation framework

Setting the stage for implementation

- The Roadmap sets a forward-thinking path over the next 10 years of where we need to go or get to as a community generating waste.
- The implementation framework will guide the collective effort, actions and resources needed to fulfill the desired outcomes.

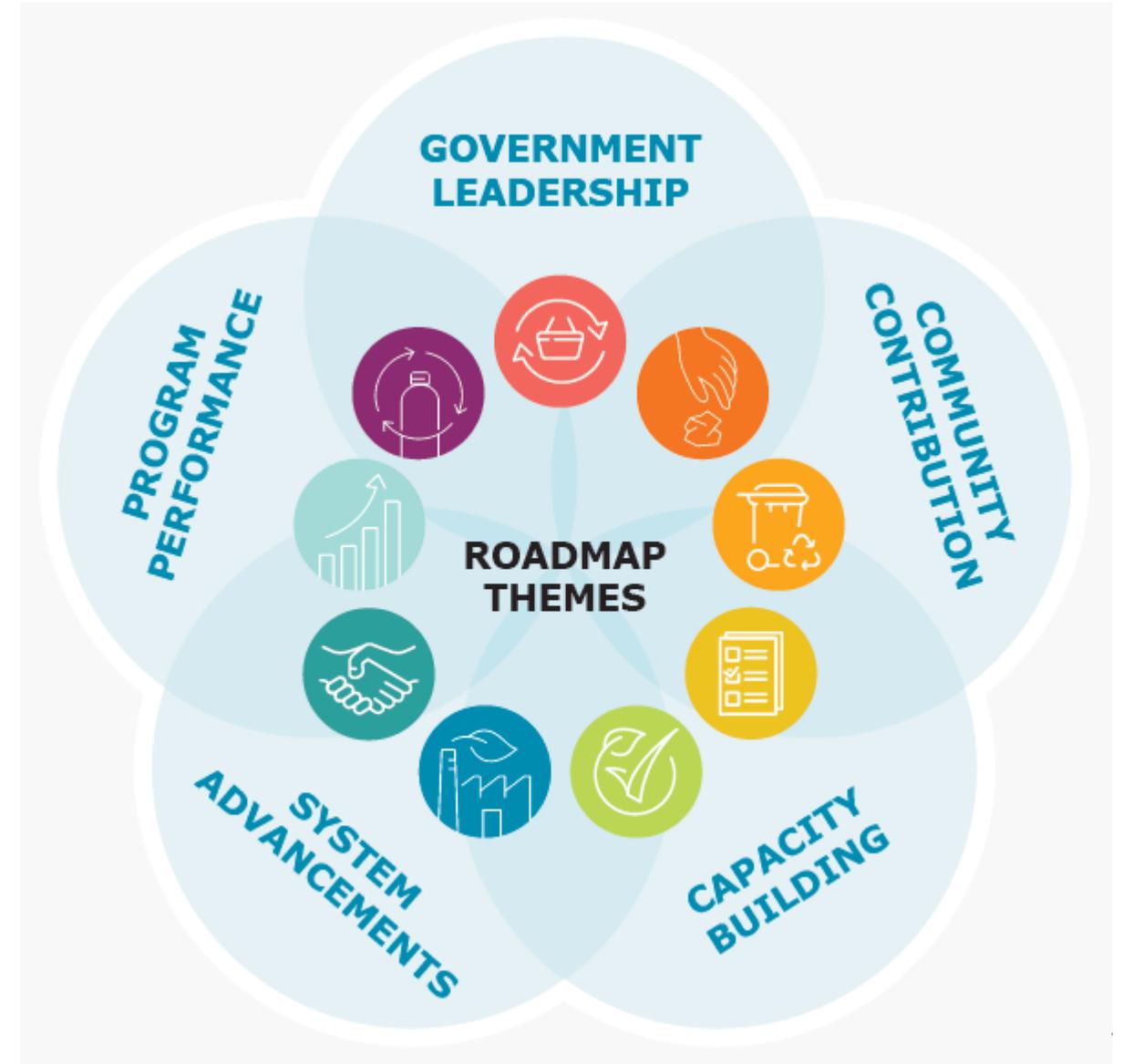
Key components of the implementation framework:

- *Ensure alignment to corporate and community priorities;*
- *Consider allocation of fiscal and human resources through business and budget planning process;*
- *Clarify roles, responsibilities, deliverables and timelines;*
- *Build informed and adaptable initiatives; and*
- *Allow for evaluation, refinements and reporting back.*

Implementation framework

Interconnected themes

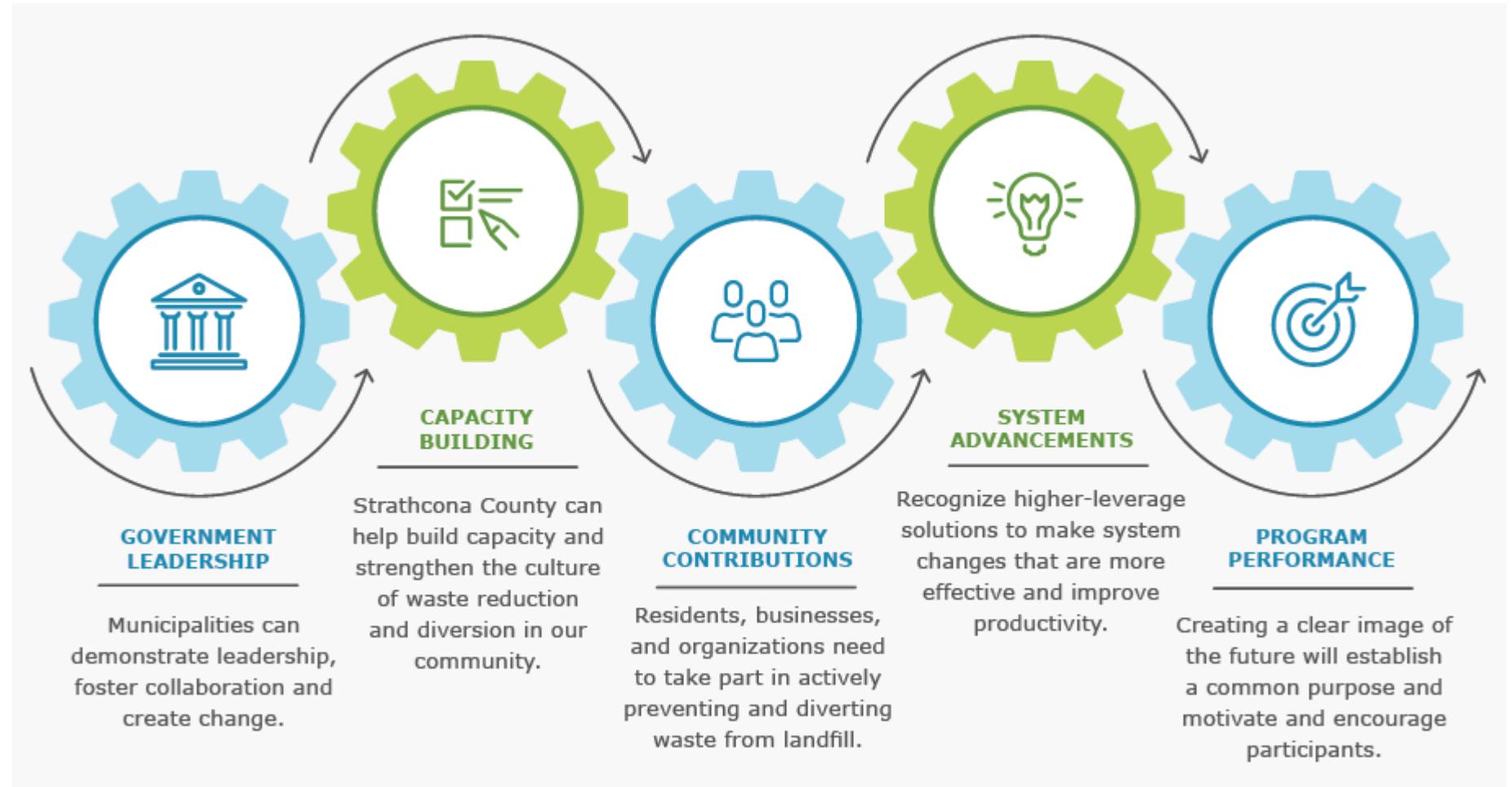
- In taking a holistic approach to our waste management system, it is expected that these themes have interconnections that support the identified outcomes in the Roadmap.
- These themes will serve to inform key growth areas to guide the actions over the next 10 years.



Implementation framework

Each **Key Growth Area**:

- Outlines the **opportunity** for growth.
- Shapes the **desired outcomes** to be realized.
- Proposes **prospective actions** to be taken.



2023 Actions

Initiatives	Update
Implementation of a 'pay as you throw' program with new rate structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched Sort & Save Initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Completed May 2023 ➤ Ongoing promotion and education
Reduction programming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revitalization of HodgePodge Lodge - Curbside textiles collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Operational February 2023 ✓ Collection pilot completed May 2023
Commercial waste diversion plan & pilot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ongoing through 2024, Plan 2025-2028
Prepare for implementation of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) by the province.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Regulatory Approval November 2023 ➤ Ongoing until April 2025
Revisit multi-family diversion practices for organics and recycling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Linked to EPR, 2024 Initiative
Regional collaboration – Organics Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In Progress



Sort & Save Initiative

- Launched May 2023
 - \$12 savings per month for a smaller (120 L) waste cart.
 - Over 1,350 households have opted for a smaller waste cart.
- Extra waste cart households
 - Increased to \$15 per cart per month.
 - Only saw a return rate of 7.5% (142 homes).
- Continue promotion and education
 - Anticipate higher uptake with EPR implementation.





Sort & Save Initiative

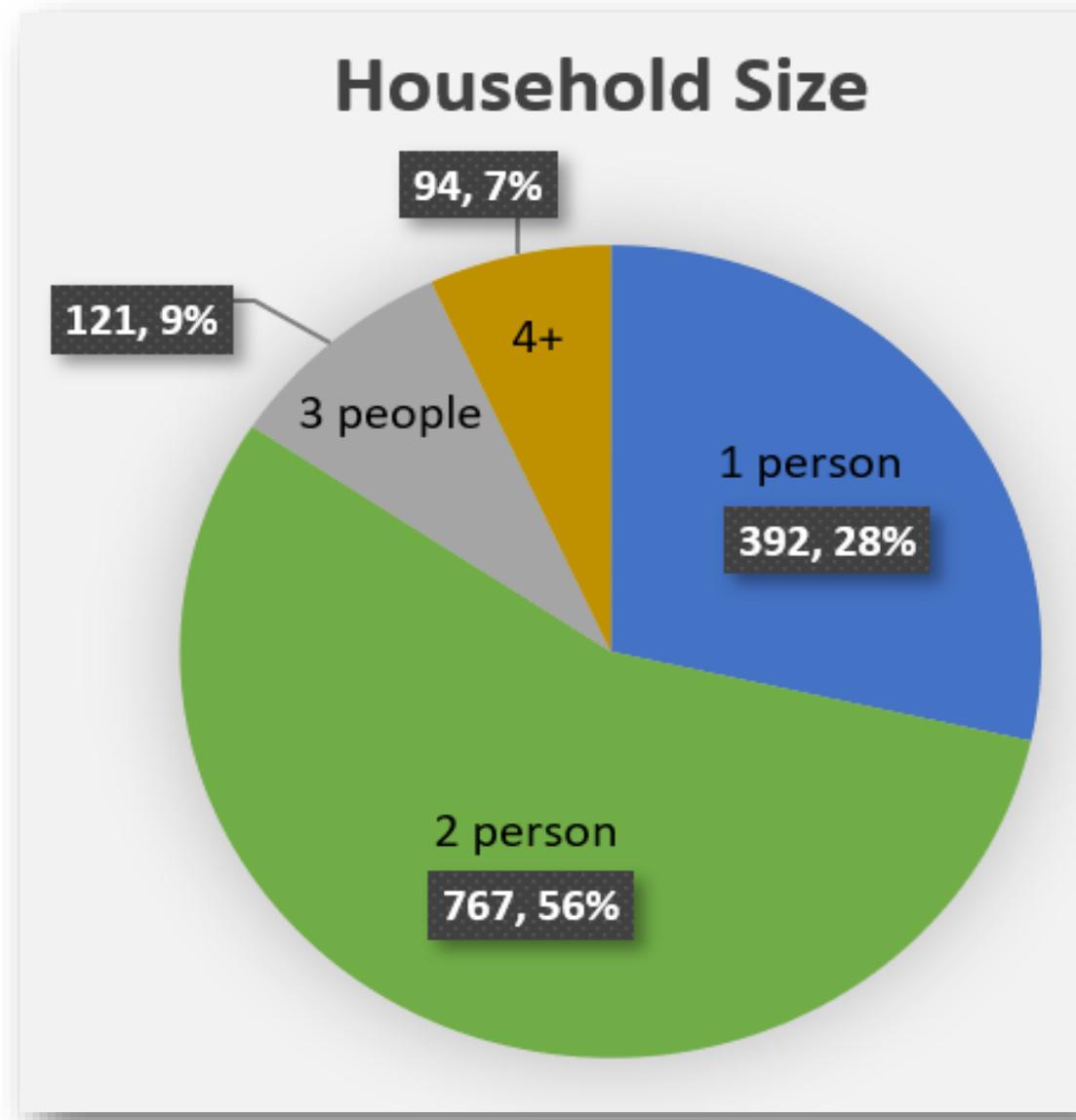
Description	Sort & Save Rate	2022 to April 2023 Rate	Change
Hamlets (biweekly waste, biweekly organics fall/winter, weekly organics spring/summer, weekly recycling)			
-Large waste, large organics	\$27.25	\$25.45	↑ \$1.80
-Large waste, small organics	\$26.25	\$24.45	↑ \$1.80
-Small waste, large organics	\$15.25	\$24.45	↓ -\$9.20
-Small waste, small organics	\$14.25	\$23.45	↓ -\$9.20
-Multi-family manual collection	\$25.15	\$23.35	↑ \$1.80
Rural (biweekly waste, biweekly organics year-round, weekly recycling)			
-Large waste, large organics	\$25.15	\$23.35	↑ \$1.80
-Large waste, small organics	\$24.15	\$22.35	↑ \$1.80
-Small waste, large organics	\$13.15	\$22.35	↓ -\$9.20
-Small waste, small organics	\$12.15	\$21.35	↓ -\$9.20
-Additional large waste (per)	\$15.00	\$7.00	↑ \$8.00
-Additional large organics (per)	\$7.00	\$7.00	-

\$12

\$12



Sort & Save Initiative



- 28% single households
- 56% empty nesters or senior couples
- 16% families
 - mainly families with pre-teen to young adults
 - 15% are young families with children under 4

Reduction programming



HodgePodge Lodge expansion

- Reopened in February 2023
- 174 tonnes of materials have cycled through to date



Reduction programming



HodgePodge Lodge expansion

- Repurposed and recycled content
 - Factory defects
 - Rejected imperfect orders
 - Scrap pieces
 - Salvaged furnishings



Reduction programming



Heart and Soul of the Lodge

- Over 60 volunteers support the Lodge and the flow of treasures through the building.
- Community partnerships with Robin Hood Society, Food Bank, Selections, Youth Justice Committee, Volunteer Strathcona, animal shelters, internal departments and more.



Reduction programming



More than just stuff!

- Creating connections in the community.
- Tour and workshop space for schools.
- Active social media page run by volunteers with 2,300+ users.
- Sharing of upcycling ideas.



Reduction programming



Textiles curbside collection

- 6.6% of our waste sent to landfill is textiles and reusable items.
- Piloted a curbside collection of clothing donations in May 2023.
- Collected 11,430kg of textiles for local charities.
- 20% of homes participated.
- Scheduling again for 2024!



of

Textile collection week

Thank You!



Thank you to everyone who participated in our curbside textile collection pilot as well as to GFL for donating their resources to collect the material. Over the week GFL collected **11,430kg of textiles!**

To learn more about textile donation in the County visit strathcona.ca/textiles.

Collaborations



Regional Solid Waste Collaborative

- Update to the action plan for 2023-2027
- Regional Data Strategy & Data Model Approved
- Organics Strategy Stakeholder Engagement
- Commercial waste characterization study



Regional Waste to Resources Discussion

- Exploring opportunities for waste to energy in the region

Joint procurement with school boards

- Procured waste, recycling and organics collection services jointly with both Elk Island public and catholic school boards for another 5-year term.



Commercial sector



Engagement key themes

- Participants acknowledged that the commercial sector needs to play a bigger role in waste management and that the County should take lead in assisting businesses.
- Future programs should be cost-effective, fair, consistent across the sector and beneficial to the entire community.
- Program should include incentives with a regulatory component; it should be phased in, simple and convenient to implement.
- Strathcona County should provide information, education recognition and resources.



Commercial sector



Organics Partnership and Pilot

- Partnering with Circular Innovation Council to launch a new institutional, commercial, and industrial (IC&I) food rescue and organic waste diversion pilot.
- Businesses that generate organic waste in Strathcona County will be invited to participate in a collective model for diverting food waste.
 - Voluntary and subsidized.
 - Food rescue will be redistributed to service agencies in the community.
 - Organics diverted to compost for regenerative farming practices.
- Utilities will work collaboratively with Economic Development & Tourism, Family & Community Services and Agriculture Services to make connections in the County.



Commercial sector



Next steps

- ✓ Utilities is repurposing a vacant position to hire a Commercial Waste Diversion Specialist; expect to be in place early 2024.
- ✓ Through learnings from the pilot, Utilities anticipates working on a more formal Commercial Strategy for 2025 - 2028.
- ✓ As required, elements may be brought forward through the annual budget process or may require regulatory amendments / approvals.

Annual program performance



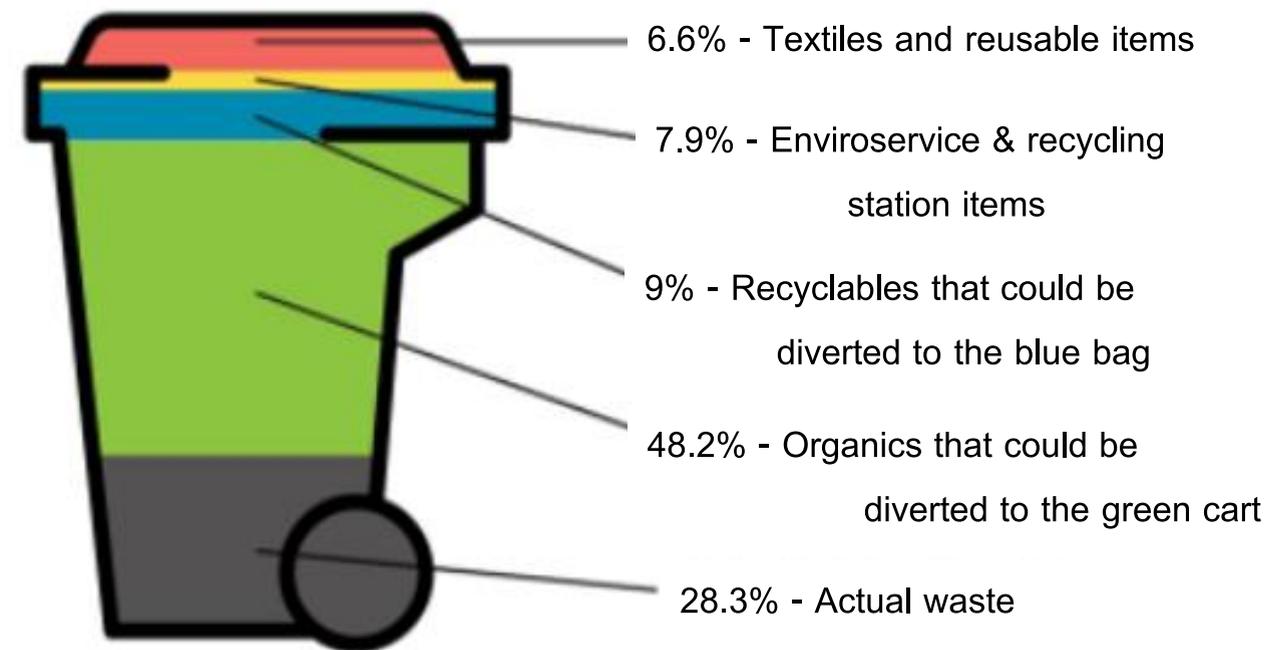
2022 Stats

- 57% diversion rate
- 434 kg sent to landfill per household per year
 - decrease of 18kg or 5%

2023 waste characterization

- Improvements to textiles and reusable items.
- Focus on organics in the waste cart.
- EPR should enhance acceptable recyclable list.

What's still going to the landfill from our black carts?



Annual Program Performance



Curbside auditing program

- 18,942 curbside audits completed
- 11,556 recycling inspections
- 4,791 gold stars
- 1,178 blue stars
- 0.85% green cart contamination rate
- 1 in 10 homes sort incorrectly their recycling





Extended Producer Responsibility

- EPR shifts the physical and financial responsibility of collecting, processing and recycling materials from municipalities to producers.
- It will increase the type and quantity of recycled products across the province as producers take responsibility for recycling the products they create—meaning fewer products end up in our landfills or disposed in other ways.
- EPR should reduce the financial burden for municipalities and taxpayers, which currently cover the costs of recycling products.
- It is a step towards creating an Albertan circular economy—as products that previously ended up in the waste stream are redirected and recycled into new products to be used again and again. This means more job creation, more economic investment, and larger economies.



Extended Producer Responsibility

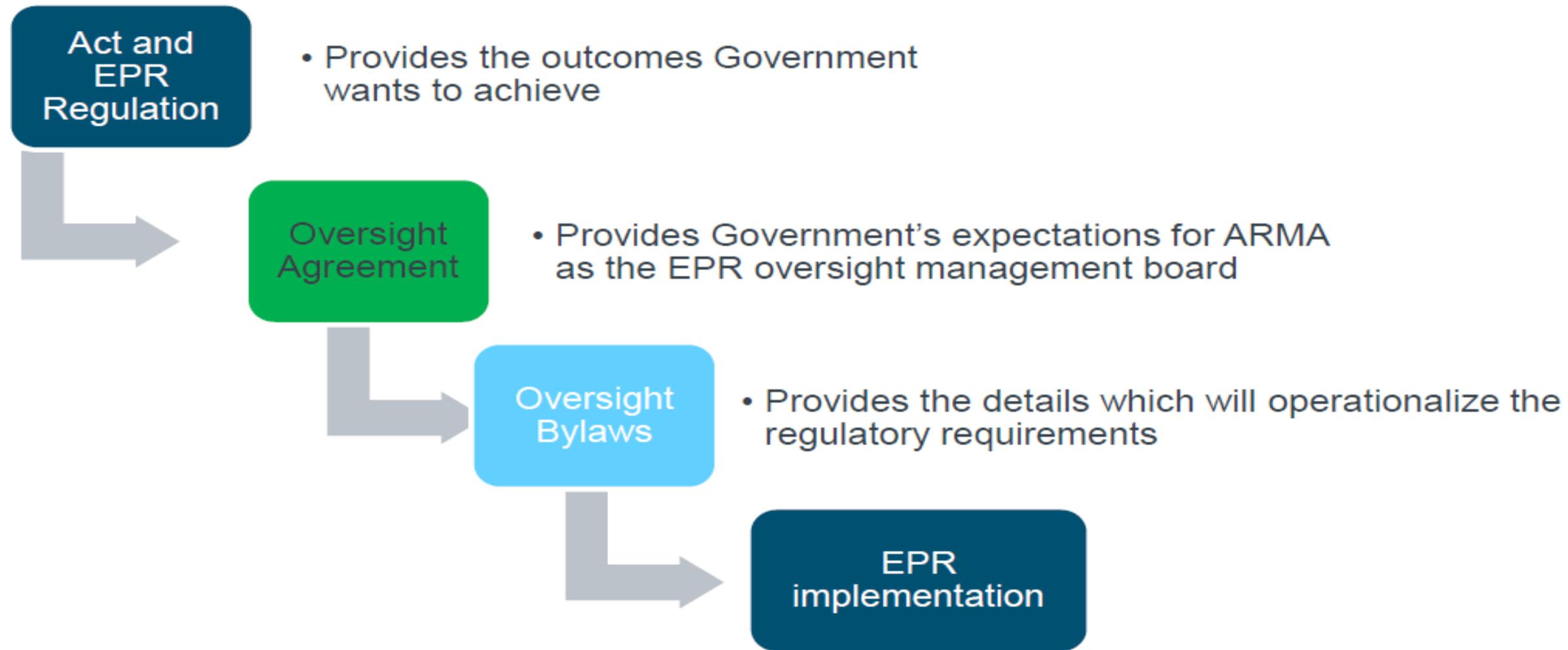
- EPR Regulation was passed on November 30, 2022.
- The Province has appointed Alberta Recycling Management Authority (ARMA) as the designated oversight body for EPR. This means they will be responsible for ensuring that regulated parties undertake their required roles in the system and achieve the results required by regulation.
- The entities responsible for implementing recycling collection services are called “Producer Responsibility Organizations” (PROs).





Extended Producer Responsibility

Framework and governance





Extended Producer Responsibility

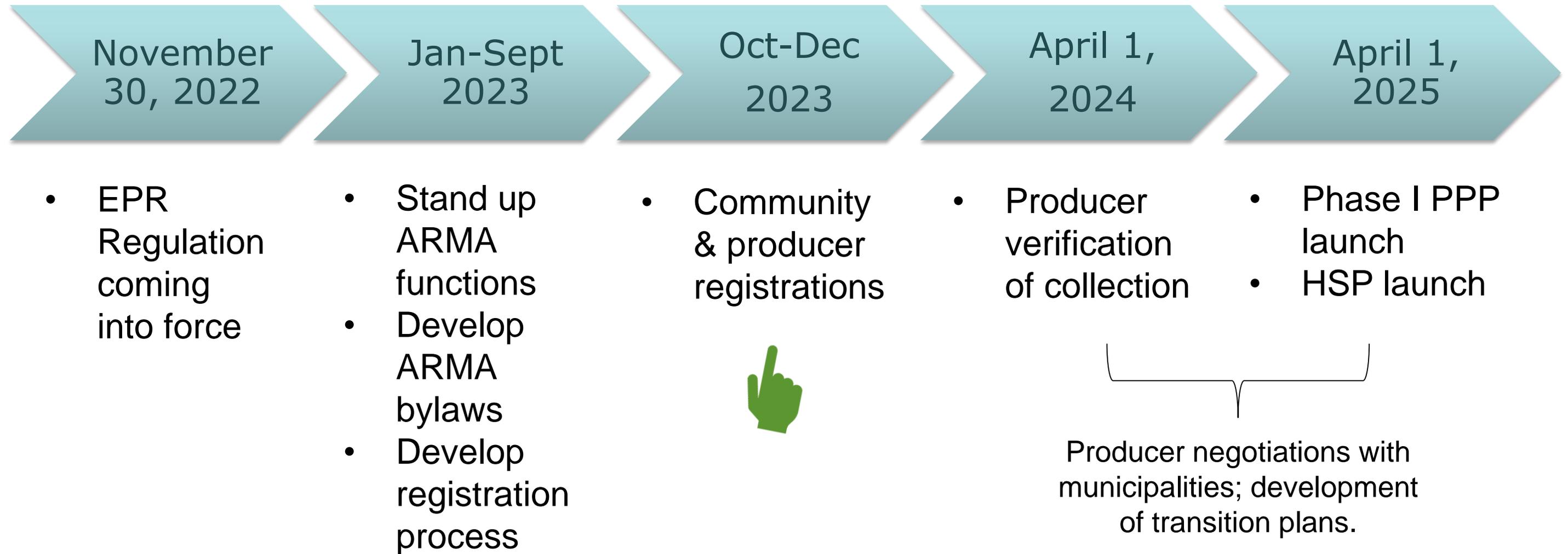
- Producers are required to provide common collection systems for packaging, paper and single-use products (PPP), and hazardous and special products (HSP).
 - Not all materials currently handled by municipalities in these categories are covered by the regulations.
 - The EPR regulations only apply to residential materials.
 - Multi-family Phase II – October 2026





Extended Producer Responsibility

Timeline





Extended Producer Responsibility

Municipalities' role

- Strathcona County will need to 'register' to become eligible to choose whether we want a PRO to design a collection system for our community.
 - This is not binding at this registration phase.
 - Municipalities who choose not to register by December 31st, 2023 will be delayed in receiving EPR services.
- Under the regulation, municipalities may also be considered producers as we distribute paper products to the residential community.
 - Strathcona County will be required to register in the system and depending on the quantity of these materials, may have to contribute financially to the system.



Extended Producer Responsibility

Service provision choices

- PROs will need to design a system and submit their plans to collect and manage designated materials. Municipalities will have two options:
 1. remain involved as a service provider to a PRO and would do so under a mutually agreeable, contractual relationship directly between the PRO and the municipality.
 - negotiate assets, service levels, promotion and education, customer service care, etc.
 2. can turn over recycling programs entirely to a PRO, who would then provide these services directly to residents.



Extended Producer Responsibility

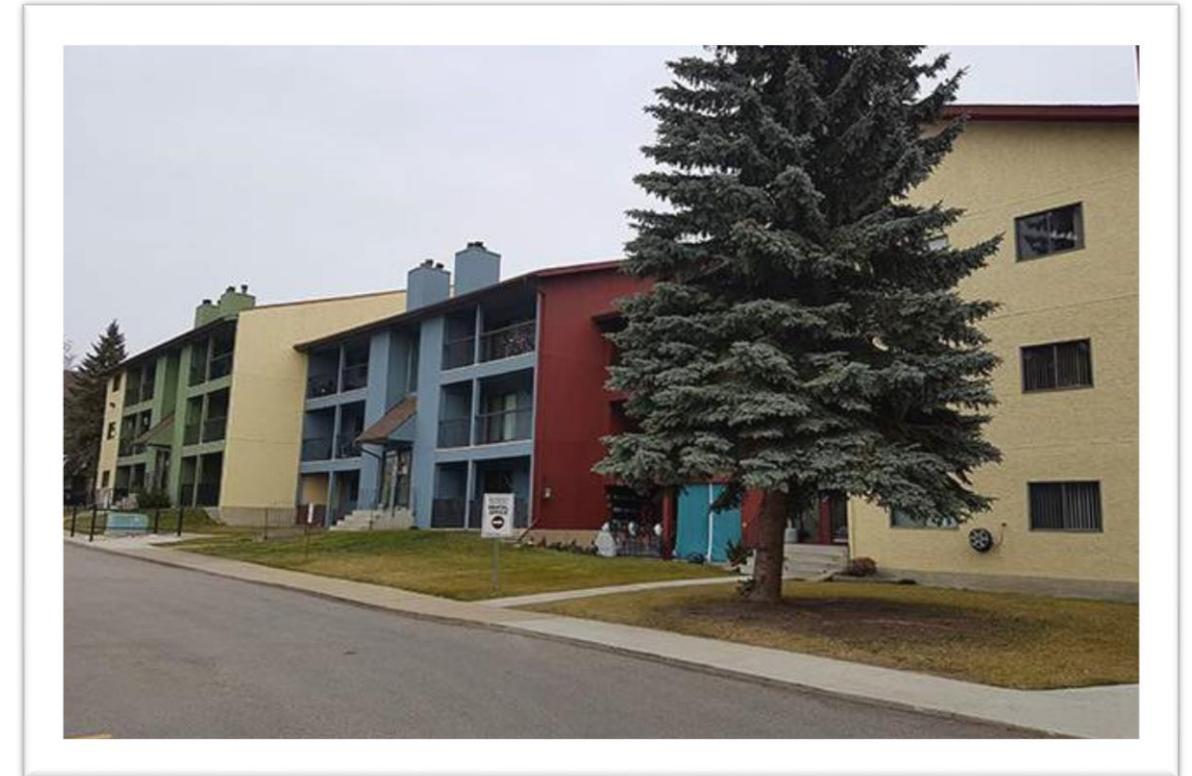
Next steps

- Administration will register as a community for both PPP and HSP programs and initiate our intent to participate in the EPR regulated system.
- Register as a producer in the system and determine whether the quantity of materials we distribute requires us to contribute financially to the system.
- As PROs roll out their plans, administration will assess our options and how they will affect operations and finances.
- Administration will return to Council in Spring 2024 with more information and recommendations on how to proceed.



Multi-family

- EPR Regulation only includes properties with existing collection from municipalities to be included in Phase I by April 2025.
 - This accounts for <20% of properties.
- Remaining multi-family properties will be included in Phase II of regulation and programs will need to be in place by October 2026.
- Utilities will explore opportunities to enhance diversion in multi-family properties in 2024-2025 to capture organic materials and prepare for EPR regulatory requirements.



What's next

Sort & Save

- Continue to promote Sort & Save Initiative

EPR

- Register with ARMA and contribute to Policy Advisory Council
- Return to Council with recommendations for participating in EPR.

Business Pilot

- Engage local businesses and service agencies to participate in pilot.
- Evaluate program and develop strategies and long-term plan.

Regional Work

- Continue work with Solid Waste Collaborative on Organics Strategy and support for commercial waste characterizations.
- Stay connected to regional conversations on waste to energy.

Questions?