

SMART LIVING

YORK REGION'S INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT MASTER PLAN



November 2013

Community Environmental Centres and
Public Drop-off Facilities Strategy





Community Environmental Centres and Public Drop-off Facilities Strategy

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	<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the Region is well prepared and equipped to develop an additional facility if required. • Advocate for Reuse, Recycling and Diversion in York Region. • Increase overall reuse and diversion in the Region through incentives. • Determine municipal support for additional drop-off service • Test the viability of repurposing aspects of the CEC's to provide a broader range of opportunities and services to the community 	<p>Targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended that the detailed need assessment for this area be carried out in 2014. Should the assessment conclude there is no additional need for drop-off services in the central portion of the Region, it is recommended that the needs assessment then be updated every five years.
	<p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of the role of drop-off facilities in York's waste management system. • Distinction between two categories of facilities: a) Drop-off Depots and b) Community Environmental Centres, in recognition of the diversity of community settings within York Region. • Development of guiding criteria and principles applicable to the development strategy for each of the two types of facilities. • A flexible approach to infrastructure planning and deployment to adapt to community needs and the changing waste management landscape. • Establishment of a step-wise development framework consisting of; a) needs assessment, b) business case rationale, and c) facility development; and, • Recommendations focused on rationalizing the existing facilities as well as any future facilities, all within the framework of guiding criteria and principles. 	

1.0 Introduction

The strategy for development of Community Environmental Centres and public drop-off facilities is a component of York Region's first Integrated Waste Management Master Plan, also known as the SM4RT LIVING Plan. The Plan establishes the planning framework and strategic direction for waste management in York Region for the next 40 years and builds on the Region's position as a waste management leader, focusing on driving waste reduction and reuse while maximizing recycling and energy recovery from the materials that remain.

Primary objectives of this strategy are to:

- Ensure the Region is well prepared and equipped to develop an additional facility if required
- Advocate for Reuse, Recycling and Diversion in York Region
- Increase overall reuse and diversion in the Region through incentives
- Determine municipal support for additional drop-off service
- Test the viability of repurposing aspects of the CECs to provide a broader range of opportunities and services to the community

This strategy presents background information regarding: the role drop-off facilities can fulfill in waste management systems, reviews the evolution of Community Environmental Centres in York Region and elsewhere, summarizes key issues and lessons from York Region's early experiences in developing Community Environmental Centres and outlines the principles and processes to guide future development of waste drop-off facilities in York Region.

2.0 Background and Trends

2.1 Waste Drop-off Facilities

In general terms, drop-off depots are used to:

- Provide a way to manage materials that cannot be incorporated into curbside and at-source collection and management programs
- Enhance access to waste management services through established hours of operation
- Separate different types of materials for diversion or disposal

Historically, drop-off facilities were often located at transfer stations or landfill sites and focused primarily on providing a location where residents could dispose of residual waste and bulky materials. In some communities, particularly more densely populated urban centres, this approach was expanded to provide a geographically distributed network of drop-off depots. This approach improves access to services and reduces drive-times for clients. Drop-off

facilities essentially provide a location for segregation and “bulking” of certain types of materials for more efficient transportation.

Drop-off facilities incorporating enhanced services and functions are often referred to as Community Environmental Centres, Community Recycling Centres or other similar terminology reflecting the heightened role of such facilities. For the purpose of this report, the term “Community Environmental Centre” refers to all such facilities.

In recent years there has been a shift toward drop-off facilities supporting a broader suite of diversion opportunities that provide a point of interaction with the community. In Ontario, this shift has been seen primarily in larger urban centres. Expanded recycling and re-use services are now available at facilities such as: Toronto’s Solid Waste Drop-off Depots, Peel Region’s Community Recycling Centres, Hamilton’s Community Recycling Centres, Halton Region’s Waste Management Site and London’s Enviro Depots along with York Region’s own Community Environmental Centres. Many municipalities moved to establishing these more broadly focused, diversion support depots in response to public input, well in advance of corresponding provincial initiatives targeting diversion of specific material types (i.e. household hazardous wastes and waste electronics). As stewardship and extended producer responsibility programs advance, Community Environmental Centres can also provide locations for collection of materials targeted under those programs (i.e. waste electronics, tires, household hazardous waste etc.).

Dependent upon specific facility rules and regulatory approvals, the range of materials managed at these types of facilities often include:

- Selected target materials and products which can be swapped, re-purposed or re-used:
 - Excess construction and home decorating materials
 - Household consumer products with remaining useful life (i.e. small appliances, dishes, clothing, sports equipment etc.)
- Recyclables including:
 - Blue box materials
 - Styrofoam packaging
 - Scrap metal
 - Tires
 - Clean fill
 - Drywall
 - Wood (unpainted/untreated)
 - Batteries
 - Large metal appliances
- Cooking oil
- Leaf and yard waste
- Waste electronics
- Household hazardous waste
- Residual waste

All of these materials are currently accepted at one or more of York Region's facilities.

Many of these enhanced drop-off facilities are also used as a point of contact with members of the community for:

- Promotion and education regarding waste management issues
- Distribution of blue boxes, green bins, backyard composters and other items

2.2 York Region's Community Environmental Centres

York Region has worked over the past several years to develop its Community Environmental Centres to provide residents with convenient alternatives that supplement curbside waste management services and recycle materials.

Implementation of a network of public waste drop-off facilities was initiated by York Region in 2002/2003, in response to the closure of the "Small Vehicle Transfer Station" at the Keele Valley Landfill in Vaughan (Clause 2 of Report No. 4 of the Solid Waste Management Committee as adopted by York Regional Council on June 27, 2002). The primary need was to replace access to services that had previously been available at the Keele Valley Landfill, reduce potential illegal dumping and create an incentive for additional recycling, source separation and diversion.

A detailed screening, evaluation, selection and public consultation process was undertaken to identify two sites in the southern and southwestern portions of the Region. This challenging process spanned more than three years and concluded with identification of the McCleary Court and the Elgin Mills Road locations as two of the preferred sites. York Council received formal requests from Vaughan and Richmond Hill to construct Community Environmental Centres within those communities (Clause 3 of Report No. 5 of the Solid Waste Management Committee as adopted by York Regional Council on September 22, 2005).

Concurrent with the siting process and in response to feedback received, key concepts for design and operation of the planned drop-off facilities evolved from the prior approach of the basic "Small Vehicle Transfer Station," to the more enhanced "Community Environmental Centre" concept.

The Community Environmental Centre concept endorsed by Regional Council (Clause 3 of Report No. 1 of the Environmental Services Committee as adopted by York Regional Council on January 22, 2009.) includes the following considerations:

- "One-stop" location for access to waste management services
- Easily accessible
- Consistent program service delivery
- Safe for users, staff and contractors
- Convenient and supportive of a positive user experience

- Reflective of the priorities of the Region's waste management hierarchy
- Flexible approach to design to suit the site and surrounding vicinity
- Attractive aesthetic appearance

In the Joint Waste Diversion Strategy developed collaboratively by the nine local municipalities and York Region in 2006 and updated in 2009, implementation of Community Environmental Centres was identified as a priority initiative. The Joint Waste Diversion Strategy also suggested the following as guiding principles for siting of Community Environmental Centres:

- Accessible – within 20 km radius
- Sited collaboratively by the Region and the local municipalities
- Meet the needs of the community
- Enable opportunities for future diversion initiatives
- Collaboration with community organizations
- Opportunity to inform and instruct on waste management practices
- Flexible siting and design

York Region's Community Environmental Centres are designed with sufficient space and material handling capacity to accommodate local public participation in re-use and recycling, as well as anticipating the potential growth of the community. Additionally, based on the Council-mandated focus on servicing York Region's residents, receipt of materials from commercial clients at the Community Environmental Centres was intended to be minimal. Council has endorsed the use of Community Environmental Centres by small businesses not effectively serviced by waste haulers.

The following summarizes key information observed from York Region's initial period of operation of Community Environmental Centres:

- Surveys completed at the McCleary Court and Elgin Mills Community Environmental Centres in 2010 and 2012, respectively indicate a high level of customer satisfaction
- Local public participation at the McCleary Court Community Environmental Centre was lower than expected but has since increased
- Local public participation at the Elgin Mills Community Environmental Centre was greater than expected
- Commercial business participation comprises close to 50 per cent of site users
- Construction and demolition waste represents a higher proportion of input material than envisioned

Overall operating costs for Community Environmental Centres have proven to be higher than anticipated, due in part to the high costs of managing construction and demolition materials. The shift in material input, resulting in a higher than anticipated proportion of construction and demolition materials illustrates the impact dynamic waste market conditions can have on facilities such as York Region's Community Environmental Centres. In response to these dynamic conditions and lessons learned, the Region has made adjustments to its initial business

approach to pricing and operations for its Community Environmental Centres (Clause 3 of Report No. 1 of the Environmental Services Committee as adopted by York Regional Council on January 22, 2011, & Clause 4 of Report No. 7 of the Environmental Services Committee as adopted by York Regional Council on September 20, 2012) including the following:

- Incorporation of weigh-scales for residual waste, where feasible, and move to a weight based fee structure
- Incorporation of household hazardous waste collection at the McCleary Court and Elgin Mills facilities
- Adjustment of facility user fees with a focus on improving cost recovery, particularly on high cost materials, such as construction and demolition wastes

3.0 Environmental and Social Implications

The basic rationale for implementing drop-off facilities is to provide convenient alternative access to solid waste management services. By providing residents with more ways to access diversion programs, drop-off facilities are expected to contribute to diversion of additional materials that might otherwise be disposed as garbage.

Enthusiastic and effective participation are key elements supporting diversion achievements. It is widely recognized that convenience is one important aspect contributing to participation in diversion while awareness and economics also play significant roles. Community Environmental Centres add an element of convenience, create an opportunity to raise awareness and can use fee structures to encourage diversion.

Due to their larger size serviced population, Community Environmental Centres can also provide a convenient location to pilot new, innovative and alternative diversion initiatives. Collection and recycling of cooking oil and polystyrene foam (i.e. Styrofoam) packaging materials are examples of new diversion initiatives at drop-off facilities.

The waste management landscape in Ontario is rapidly evolving. Extended producer responsibility is currently the subject of a very active and dynamic policy analysis going on throughout the province. The outcomes of this analysis have not yet been determined, however it is fair to say the debate on extended producer responsibility will undoubtedly influence the roles and responsibilities various stakeholders play in waste management into the future. Ensuring CECs provide convenient access to residents and incorporate flexible design that can be adjusted to meet the needs of residents will be critical to ensuring future EPR programs are successful at CECs. In addition to providing a location for piloting innovative diversion campaigns as noted above, Community Environmental Centres could also provide a base location for leasing of space to partner organizations or private sector waste service providers engaging in diversion activities.

While the McCleary Court and Elgin Mills CECs were designed to include partnership opportunities with Goodwill and Habitat for Humanity, future facilities will likely not

incorporate this in the design. Operational challenges with the staffing of these charitable locations and an increased focus on reuse within the community are factors in this program change.

4.0 Facility Development Strategy

Facility development strategy provides a framework to:

- Evaluate the needs of existing drop-off facilities
- Plan for deployment of potential future facilities
- Identify and incorporate services and functions to meet the needs of the community
- Balance operational and economic constraints with current needs and future growth

A key element in this strategy includes recognition that the award-winning Community Environmental Centre concept, while important and effective in terms of providing access to a wide range of diversion opportunities, is also costly to construct and operate. The Community Environmental Centre model differs from more basic drop-off depots in terms of location in more densely populated urban centres, larger size and the suite of services and features included.

To support the principles of cost effectiveness and economic sustainability, this strategy recognizes that it may not be practical or desirable to deploy a full Community Environmental Centre model in all cases. This strategy outlines an approach to meet primary service level objectives of a geographically distributed network of drop-off depots, with potential enhancement and expansion of facility services and functions to meet community growth needs. This approach is consistent with the current mix of urban and rural areas that make up York Region, while taking into consideration future trends for growth and population densification.

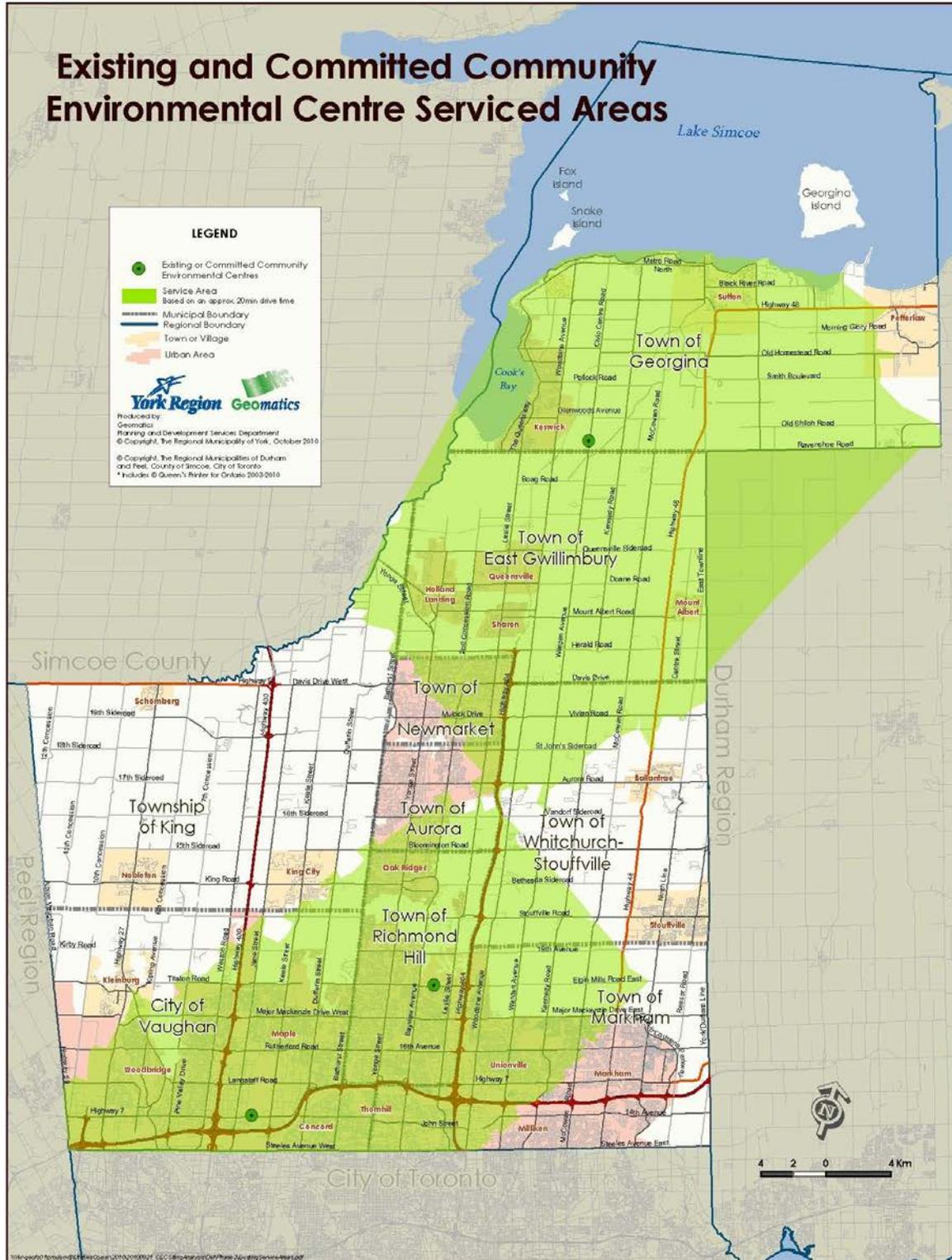
The following sections describe:

- Geographic (i.e. drive time) and service population criteria to trigger further detailed assessment of the need for a facility
- The rationale for potential deployment of two different types of drop-off facilities and guiding principles defining the two types of facilities
- Preparation of a business case rationale to confirm the type of facility to be deployed and establish plans for development and operation of the facility

4.1 Facility Locations

As illustrated in Figure 1 excerpted from the January 2011 Council Report (Clause 3 of Report No. 1 of the Environmental Services Committee as adopted by York Regional Council on January 22, 2011), the estimated 20 minute drive-time zone (based on posted speed limits) from the McCleary and Elgin Mills Community Environmental Centres suggests that reasonable service coverage exists for a large part of the southern and eastern portions of Vaughan, all of Richmond Hill and the western portions of Markham and Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Figure 1: Existing and Committed Community Environmental Centre Serviced Areas



In the context of the northern portion of the Region, the estimated 20 minute drive-time zone based on posted speed limits from the Georgina Transfer Station suggests that adequate drop-off service coverage is available for the area encompassing Georgina, East Gwillimbury and portions of Newmarket and Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Growth and the changing profile of the local community have significantly increased residential use of the Georgina Transfer Station in recent years. While the location of the Georgina Transfer Station provides service area coverage, the design of the facility is based on an older, industrially focused transfer station model, which is not ideal for extensive use by residential customers. This has created some operational challenges in terms of management of materials and traffic. To address these issues, the Region is currently developing plans to upgrade the Georgina Transfer Station to be more consistent with the current local community profile and customer base, using the guiding criteria and principles presented in Section 4.2. In overview, the Region's upgrades to the Georgina Transfer Station will address the following:

- Facilities to accept drop-off of bulky recyclables (i.e. clean wood, drywall etc.)
- Traffic flow and safety improvements using a bin wall to keep facility customers in a separate area from the larger waste hauling service vehicles while unloading and loading
- Efficient tailoring of the facility design and features to align with the needs of the local community through:
 - Recognition that re-use opportunities are currently fulfilled by organizations within the local community and do not need to be duplicated at the drop-off depot
 - Space allocations that support piloting and/or future acceptance of other types of materials
- Expedite ability to proceed with upgrades to Georgina Transfer Station by maintaining the facility footprint within appropriately zoned lands, while also avoiding need to acquire adjacent, potentially contaminated lands

Regional staff will be developing detailed plans for upgrading the Georgina Transfer Station as the project progresses.

Estimated drive-times exceed the 20 minute criteria for most of King and portions of Vaughan (north-west), Aurora, Newmarket and Whitchurch-Stouffville. Based on current population distribution, these areas would not be considered appropriate candidates to support development of Community Environmental Centres. The 20 minute drive time (based on posted speed limits) criteria could potentially be achieved through deployment of two additional drop-off depots; one located in the west central portion of the Region and one located in the east central portion of the Region. Further considerations regarding deployment of drop-off facilities should be based on a more detailed assessment of need (see below) and development of a supporting business case rationale as described in Section 4.3.

Space limitations have been identified as a constraint at the Region's Markham Household Hazardous Waste Depot on Rodick Road. The Region is considering a number of options to allow for an increase to the size of Markham's depot. Given that the Rodick Road location lies within the 20 minute drive-time zone (based on posted speed limits) of the Elgin Mills Community Environmental Centre, consideration could be given to re-location of the Markham Household Hazardous Waste Depot to the east central portion of the Region and evaluation of the criteria and principles outlined in Section 4.2 to determine whether the facility should be re-established as a drop-off depot or a Community Environmental Centre given potential service overlap with Markham's community depots.

It is recommended that a detailed assessment of drop-off service needs and drive-times be conducted for the zone identified above, encompassing most of King and portions of Vaughan (north-west), Aurora, Newmarket and Whitchurch-Stouffville. This assessment should include:

- Surveys of residents in the area in question to determine if there is a desire for improved access to drop-off services
- Surveys of customers using existing facilities to evaluate client demographics, actual service areas and drive-times
- A more detailed assessment of current and projected service populations and drive-time zones as data availability on traffic patterns and travel times in peak hours becomes available
- Discussions between the Region and the local municipalities to gauge municipal support for development of drop-off facilities in these central areas

If the need for additional drop-off service coverage is confirmed in these areas, preparation of a business case rationale should be commenced as outlined in Section 4.3. If a supportive business case can be demonstrated, facility development should then proceed with the cooperation and collaboration of the local municipalities based on the high-level guiding criteria and principles listed in Section 4.2.

4.2 Facilities

For the purpose of a strategy, it is recommended the following two categories of drop-off facility be recognized and defined:

- A. Drop-off depot
- B. Community Environmental Centre

Drop-off depots are smaller and more focused on basic services and will therefore be less costly to build and operate. Community Environmental Centres are larger, provide a broader range of service offerings, are better able to accommodate demands of a larger service population, include more community support amenities and are more costly to build and operate.

The guiding criteria and principles suggested in this strategy are intended to support future re-development of a drop-off depot into a Community Environmental Centre, if warranted by population growth and densification increasing local service demands.

The fundamental approach in this strategy is recognition of the differences between these two types of facilities and deployment of each type of facility in a manner that best fits the community context. A development strategy based on two categories of facilities provides an economical approach to achieve the benefits of a geographically distributed network of drop-off facilities, while anticipating and allowing for community growth and expansion of service needs in the long-term.

Drop-off Depot

Drop-off depots are intended to meet the basic needs of the community in providing an alternative mode of access to waste management services, while allowing for future expansion to accommodate growth and changing needs.

The following summarizes high-level guiding criteria and principles recommended as the primary basis for development of drop-off depots:

- Supported by the community:
 - Requested by the local municipality
 - Sited collaboratively by the Region and the local municipality
- Conveniently accessible network of facilities:
 - Site location to be more than 20 minute drive-time (weekend-peak daytime hours) from other permanent drop-off facilities operated by the Region or local municipalities
 - Population of more than 50,000 persons and less than 200,000 persons located within the service area defined by the above referenced 20 minute drive-time zone
- Material acceptance tailored to integrate with other services available locally (i.e. local municipal depots, private sector depots, retailer take-back etc.); this may include acceptance of some or all of the following materials:
 - Recyclables including:
 - Blue box materials
 - Scrap metal
 - Tires
 - Clean fill
 - Drywall
 - Wood (unpainted/untreated)
 - Batteries
 - Large metal appliances
 - Leaf and yard waste (subject to further consideration)
 - Waste electronics

- Household hazardous waste
- Residual waste
- Primary facility design and operating criteria:
 - Minimum developable site area of approximately three hectares, including:
 - Two hectares for initial Drop-off depot
 - One hectares to provide flexibility for future re-development into a Community Environmental Centre, if warranted
 - Safe for users, staff and contractors
 - Reflective of the priorities of the Region's integrated waste management hierarchy
 - Incorporate weigh-scales and weight based fee system
 - Establish consistent operating hours of service
 - Target service population and participation rates
 - Define needs for limits on quantities of certain types of materials if warranted as a control mechanism
 - Incorporate "good neighbour" measures into facility design, including consideration of potential traffic, noise and visual impacts
 - Compliance with all applicable regulatory requirements
 - Facility infrastructure and equipment, including:
 - Staff facilities (office, attendant booths and washrooms)
 - Roads, on-site parking, gates and signage
 - Material receipt and transport containers
 - Material and container handling equipment
 - Site landscaping
 - Site services, (gas, electricity, telephone, internet, water, sewage and storm water management)

The approach to planning, siting and design of these facilities needs to be flexible enough to accommodate the basic principles and guidelines listed above, while also allowing for adjustment to respond to community and/or site specific needs.

While leaf and yard waste is not currently accepted at many of York Region's drop-off facilities, it is recommended this approach be reconsidered and potentially piloted at more of York Region's facilities. With the notable exception of grass clippings, leaf and yard waste materials are accepted at most public drop-off facilities in the surrounding GTA communities.

Acceptance of leaf and yard waste at the Region's drop-off facilities would be expected to contribute to increased use of the facilities and increased diversion. Should this be reconsidered, modifications to the projections in the Leaf and Yard Waste Strategy and projections should also be undertaken.

Community Environmental Centre

The concept for future Community Environmental Centres is intended to build on the role of the drop-off depot and fill an expanded role supporting diversion and additional recycling (however, not in a manner that would compete with existing private and/charitable organization initiatives and facilities), as well as being a platform for promotion and education on waste management.

The following summarizes high-level guiding criteria and principles recommended as the primary basis for development of future Community Environmental Centres:

- Supported by the community:
 - Requested by the local municipality
 - Sited collaboratively by the Region and the local municipality
- Conveniently accessible network of facilities:
 - Site location to be more than 20 minute drive time (weekend-peak daytime hours) from other permanent drop-off facilities operated by the Region or local municipalities
 - Population of more than 200,000 persons located within the service area defined by the above referenced 20 minute drive-time zone
- A “one-stop” location for access to all waste management services including:
 - Promotional and event-based opportunities to support re-use and re-purpose
 - Recyclables including:
 - Blue box materials
 - Styrofoam packaging
 - Scrap metal
 - Tires
 - Clean fill
 - Drywall
 - Wood (unpainted/untreated)
 - Batteries
 - Large metal appliances
 - Space allocation for future expansion to accommodate additional and pilot materials
 - Leaf and yard waste (subject to further consideration)
 - Waste electronics
 - Household hazardous waste
 - Residual waste
- Primary facility design and operating criteria:
 - Minimum developable site area of approximately three hectares
 - Safe for users, staff and contractors
 - Reflective of the priorities of the Region’s integrated waste management hierarchy
 - Incorporate weigh-scales and weight based fee system

- Consistent operating hours of service with target service population and participation rates to support five-days per week operation
- Define preferred role of private sector commercial users, address in facility capacity design and implement corresponding rules/fees
- Incorporate “good neighbour” measures into facility design including consideration of potential traffic, noise and visual impacts
- Compliance with all applicable regulatory requirements
- Facility infrastructure and equipment to include, subject to property footprint:
 - Education and promotion facilities
 - Staff facilities (office, attendant booths and washrooms)
 - Roads, on-site parking, gates and signage
 - Material receipt and transport containers, with spare areas allocated for future and pilot materials
 - Material and container handling equipment
 - Site landscaping
 - Site services (electricity, telephone, water, sewage and stormwater management)

The following table summarizes some of the primary features and distinctions of drop-off depots and Community Environmental Centres.

Table 1: Primary Features and Distinctions

Drop-off Depot	Community Environmental Centre
Requested by the local municipality Sited collaboratively	Requested by the local municipality Sited collaboratively
Location more than 20 minutes’ drive (weekend-peak daytime hours) from other permanent drop-off facilities operated by the Region or local municipalities	Location more than 20 minutes’ drive (weekend-peak daytime hours) from other permanent drop-off facilities operated by the Region or local municipalities
Population of more than 50,000 persons and less than 200,000 persons located within the service area	Population of more than 200,000 persons located within the service area
Minimum site area of approximately three hectares of developable area for potential future expansion to Community Environmental Centre is contemplated.	Minimum site area of approximately three hectares available for development
Basic infrastructure and facilities necessary for selected suite of materials and services	Infrastructure, facilities and features to accommodate larger set of materials and

	services. Sized to accommodate larger service population and traffic. Additional community support amenities such as education room(s).
Tailored services: Primary recyclables, leaf and yard waste, waste electronics, household hazardous, residuals	One stop shop: all depot services plus expanded recyclables, communications/education facilities
Facility operation: service population demand projected to support minimum 20 hours/week operation	Facility operation: service population demand projected to support 40 hours/week operation

Leaf and yard waste is accepted at drop-off facilities in most Greater Toronto Area municipalities outside of York Region, subject to certain material and size constraints and in some cases fees are applied. It is recommended that acceptance of leaf and yard waste at Regional drop-off facilities be considered and potentially piloted at more of York Region’s facilities. Acceptance of leaf and yard waste at the Region’s drop-off facilities would be expected to contribute to increased use of the facilities and increased diversion. Should this be reconsidered, modifications to the projections in the Leaf & Yard Waste strategy and projections should also be undertaken.

4.3 Business Case Rationale

Developing a sound business case rationale is an important component of planning for deployment of a drop-off facility and provides the basis for on-going performance assessment and adjustments to the operating business plan to meet changing conditions.

Key factors to be addressed in the business case include:

- Support of the local municipality in which the facility may be located
- Assessment of near and long-term service needs including access to other forms of similar services (i.e. local municipal depots and or events, private sector depots, material “take back” options etc.)
- Identification of appropriate facility type and decisions regarding incorporation of the high-level guiding criteria and principles as listed herein
- Target potential partnership opportunities
- Definition of the siting process
- Projection of input material types and quantities based on service area population, participating rates and experience at other facilities
- Determination of material handling requirements and material output destinations
- Legal contract requirements and procurement processes
- Preparation of a preliminary development program including resource needs and a budget estimate for planning, siting, approvals, engineering and design, construction and facility operation

- Revenue streams and funding needs
- Corporate approval requirements to proceed with implementation

A detailed operating plan should be prepared concurrently with preparation of the final design and tender package for a facility. The operating plan should expand on the approach developed in the business plan and provide additional details to address matters such as facility hours of operation, staffing requirements and roles/responsibilities and other matters that may need to be addressed. The operating plan should also define an appropriate time frame to be periodically reviewed, compared to actual operational performance and adjusted if necessary to suit changing or unanticipated conditions.

4.4 Outreach and Engagement

Outreach and engagement are key to any waste management initiative. In the context of drop-off depots and Community Environmental Centres, outreach and engagement efforts should be tailored to suit the pre-development and the operational phases of the lifecycle of a facility.

In the pre-development phase, outreach and engagement should focus on:

- Gauging and building public awareness of the potential development of a facility
- Providing a method to express comments and concerns
- Addressing concerns raised and building support for the project

During the operational phase, outreach and engagement efforts need to be continuous and should focus on:

- Building and maintaining a high and positive profile in the community
- Maintaining awareness among the community and potential partners regarding the variety of services available
- Telling the community of any changes to the services available
- Providing a mechanism for receiving and responding to feedback

Drop-off depots are more suitable to support some small, focused outreach and engagement efforts, such as promotional event days and targeted materials. Community Environmental Centres are better equipped for larger, longer-term initiatives, including educational tours to community groups or school classes, sales of backyard composters and numerous other opportunities.

4.5 Pilots and Demonstrations

It is widely recognized that convenience is one important aspect contributing to participation in diversion, while awareness and economics also play significant roles. Due to their larger size and larger service population, Community Environmental Centres can provide convenient locations to pilot new, innovative and alternative diversion initiatives. Pilot diversion programs are typically focused on collection of specific target materials (e.g. polystyrene, cooking oil etc.) or products that have reached the end of their useful lifespan (e.g. mattresses). The purpose of

conducting a pilot program would be to develop knowledge and information regarding diversion of target materials or products in terms of:

- Availability of the target materials or products within a given community
- Advantages and challenges with using Community Environmental Centres as the mode of collection
- Needs for receipt, handling, storage, transfer and transport
- Options for diversion
- Economics of establishing a long-term diversion program

To be effective, a pilot drop-off diversion program would need to cover a time frame long enough to establish awareness in the community and span any cyclical variations in the availability of the target material or product. The precise time frame necessary will vary depending on the target. For most materials or products, it is estimated that the pilot time frame would range from six months to one year.

By providing additional space and convenient access for larger service populations, Community Environmental Centres can be one vehicle providing a degree of flexibility to respond to changes that advancing stewardship and extended producer responsibility could potentially bring about. Community Environmental Centres could also provide an attractive location for potential partner organizations or private sector waste service providers to lease space for engaging in extended producer responsibility diversion activities.

Community Environmental Centres may also provide hub locations to encourage or undertake new SM4RT Living initiatives, such as material and product re-purposing projects, workshops and forums.

Drop-off depots are not anticipated to provide adequate space or the broad service population necessary to support extensive pilot and/or demonstration projects. There may be possible exceptions to this in terms of conducting short-term or event-based initiatives to meet a local community's needs, however this is not considered a primary focus for drop-off depot linkages to other SM4RT Living initiatives.

4.6 Linkages to other SM4RT Living Initiatives

The CECs play an important role in developing a strong integrated waste management system for the Region. The following lists the relevant strategies and additional opportunities for the CECs in implementing the SM4RT Living Plan for York Region.

- Repair and Reuse Strategy – Possible use of CECs and other municipal facilities as pilot locations for new diversion initiatives (EPR identified programming)
- Blue Box Strategy – Location for residents to bring additional recyclable materials
- Construction and Demolition (C&D) Strategy – CECs offer diversion opportunities for low volume construction and demolition waste

5.0 Implementation

The following provides an overview of the approach to implementation of this strategy.

5.1 Partnerships

The following lists partnerships to contribute to implementation of this strategy.

Table 2: Partnership Opportunities

Implementation Role	Primary Partnerships
Re-evaluation of Georgina Transfer Station Upgrades	York Region and Georgina
Detailed assessment of drop-off service needs and drive-times across the central portion of the Region	York Region, King, Aurora, Newmarket and Whitchurch-Stouffville
Potential re-location of the Markham Household Hazardous Waste Depot to the east central portion of the Region and re-establishment of the facility as a drop-off depot	York Region, Markham and Whitchurch-Stouffville
Preparation of a business case rationale for any proposed new or relocated drop-off facility	York Region and host local municipality
Public engagement and communications	York Region and local municipalities
Reuse activities	Goodwill, Habitat for Humanity, etc.
Use of facilities as community hubs	Municipal and community partners

5.2 Resources, Timeline and Targets

The following provides an outline of the resources (staff and financial) required, as well as a preliminary timeline for implementation, performance targets and monitoring.

Roles and Responsibilities

The proposed arrangement for the implementation of this strategy is as follows:

York Region:	Lead
Local Municipalities:	Supporter
Community Partners:	Supporter, and/or participant

Resources

Resources to complete the above referenced planning activities are assumed to be already allocated within the staff of the Region and the local municipalities, or can be accessed externally.

If a supportive business case can be demonstrated, proceeding with facility development would be expected to require access to additional resources (i.e. approvals, engineering, design, construction etc.) some of which may be available within the Region's forces and some of which may need to be accessed externally. The specific details of resource planning would be included as part of the business case rationale.

It is recommended that re-evaluation of the Georgina Transfer Station upgrades be completed prior to finalization of the design for the facility.

Performance Measurement

The overall Community Environmental Centre component of the system should be measured by:

- Increase in use of CECs based on increase in number of annual trips/visits per year
- Increase in tonnes/volume of materials diverted through CECs
- Results of Customer Satisfaction Surveys
- Total material managed, diverted and reused
- Number of active pilot programs/SM4RT Living initiatives at CECs
- Number of annual visits by residents/others to drop off donations at Regional facilities
- Volume of materials donated at Regional facilities

Timing

Appropriate timing for the other development elements of this strategy is best determined based on need. As the need for additional drop-off services spanning the central portion of the Region is not currently well understood, it is recommended that the detailed need assessment for this area be carried out in 2013. Should the assessment conclude there is no additional need for drop-off services in the central portion of the Region, it is recommended that the needs assessment then be updated every five years.

6.0 Key Benefits of this Strategy

The Community Environmental Centre and drop-off facilities strategy provides the following key benefits:

- Definition of the role of drop-off facilities in York Region's waste management system

- Distinction between two categories of facilities: a) Drop-off depots and b) Community Environmental Centres, in recognition of the diversity of community settings within York Region
- Development of guiding criteria and principles applicable to the development strategy for each of the two types of facilities
- Flexible approach to infrastructure planning and development to adapt to community needs and the changing waste management landscape
- Establishment of a step-wise development framework consisting of needs assessment, business case rationale, and facility development
- Recommendations focused on optimizing existing facilities, as well as any future facilities, all within the framework of guiding criteria and principles