

### Environment And Climate Review

The EPR regulation is aligned with the City's 25-year Waste Strategy to rethink, minimize and eliminate waste. Transferring the cost of recycling product and packaging waste to the producer creates an incentive to rethink how products are created, packaged and recycled, thereby providing an incentive to minimize waste and the need for waste processing. This ultimately leads to reduced greenhouse gasses.

A study of British Columbia's EPR system estimates that in a single year, B.C.'s EPR program recovered \$46 million worth of materials and reduced greenhouse gas emissions by over 200,000 tonnes (CO<sub>2</sub>e).<sup>1</sup> Beyond less packaging and recycling, EPR is intended to lead to more efficient use of resources, as well as improved product design and manufacturing in support of a circular economy.<sup>2,3</sup> The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment has said that EPR is essential to achieving zero plastic waste.<sup>4</sup>

The new EPR Regulation defines what materials are recyclable and the required recovery rate for producers through collection and processing. A difference between EPR Regulation requirements as well as the contamination rates allowed for under PRO contracts versus the City of Edmonton's current recycling program could present a short-term risk of confusion for the recycling collection customer. This could lead to an increased rejection rate for recycling and more landfill waste until there is clarity about the specifics of the new program. Proactive communication (as suggested in the Next Steps in the main body of the report) could help to mitigate this risk.

In addition, in order to assess the performance of the EPR Regulation and alignment with the City's waste strategy, Administration could consider continued monitoring of waste diversion rates. This would support potential future education and advocacy efforts.

If the City continues to participate in recycling programs (from both the collection and processing perspectives), there may be environmental benefits.

- The City Plan and the City's Energy Transition Strategy includes direction to transition the City fleet to zero carbon emissions by 2040. The PROs and other collection providers may not have similar commitments, meaning higher community emissions than if the City is the collection provider.

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<sup>1</sup> British Columbia Department of Environment and Climate Strategy, [Advancing Recycling in B.C. Extended Producer Responsibility Five-Year Action Plan](#) 2021-2026

<sup>2</sup> WRI, [Opportunities of Circular Economy](#), 202.

<sup>3</sup> Govt. of Canada, [Circular Economy](#), accessed Sep. 20, 2024.

<sup>4</sup> Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, [Canada-Wide Action Plan On Zero Plastic Waste Phase 1](#), 2019

## Attachment 1

- While the City would have reduced environmental risk if it no longer processed HSP materials, there is a risk that the new processing facilities may not have the same standards as the City's existing environmental management system framework (Enviso), potentially impacting Edmonton as a community. Having HSP waste processing within the City's operational control provides greater awareness and the ability to actively manage the environmental risk.

### **Key Links to City Plan**

3.4.2.3 Encourage Edmonton's businesses to become climate resilient and achieve emissions-neutral operations.

### **Key Links to the 25-year Waste Strategy**

The Waste Strategy seeks a new path through:

- A commitment to a system that continuously improves and rethinks waste (so that products and packages are designed to lessen or eliminate waste at the outset), reused in beneficial ways and repurposed as feedstock within a circular economy.

Section 2.1.4 Participate in strategy development, along with the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association as well as other municipalities to develop and advance an Extended Producer Responsibility policy framework that can be recommended to the Province of Alberta (CR\_6363 Extended Producer Responsibility - Information Update on March 22, 2019).