

# Town council supports GreenCart in close vote

*But says no to giving Region full control of waste collection*

**By Melanie Hennessey**  
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Town council has said yes to the Region's GreenCart program for Milton but no to letting the Region have full jurisdiction over waste collection decisions.

In a narrow 6-5 vote Monday night, council endorsed the implementation of the GreenCart (like a recycling bin for kitchen scraps) program, subject to the Region reporting the results of the initiative one year after commencement.

This overturns the Town community services committee's verdict from earlier this month, when it voted against the GreenCart concept.

And in an almost unanimous vote — 10-1 — council passed a motion that calls for the Town to retain jurisdiction over the establishment of local waste collection service levels.

The jurisdiction issue comes about as a result of the Region's new waste collection program that's slated to start April 7. It will include weekly Blue Box and GreenCart collection and bi-weekly garbage collection with a six-bag limit.

Currently the Region is looking to the local municipalities to turn over full control for garbage collection decisions to help achieve waste diversion goals and extend the life of the landfill.

But in order for the change to take place, approval from three out of the four local municipalities is needed. Both Halton Hills and Oakville councils have already approved giving the Region full jurisdiction.

Now, the ball is in Burlington's court. The southern municipality will be dealing with the issue next month, said Town Engineering Services Director Paul Cripps.

If Burlington doesn't support the jurisdiction transfer, then the Region will have to negotiate with its waste collection contractor to deal with the individual levels of service for each municipality, explained Cripps.

Before Milton council made its decisions, it first heard from several local residents who expressed opinions both for and against the GreenCart and jurisdiction issue.

Gillian Earle of Milntongreen said the GreenCart would address the critical issue facing Halton — extending the life of the local landfill.

"This is of great benefit to Milton," she said. "The GreenCart is a viable solution."

She also voiced strong support for transferring jurisdiction to the Region, noting that waste management is a regional issue and its landfill has a limited lifespan.

Urban citizens Carol Gustafson and Jim Steeves shared similar sentiments.

But rural Miltonians Gary Ellis and Jim Harding contended that Milton should maintain the decision-making power

when it comes to waste collection service levels.

"With municipal control, the Region needs to consult with the municipalities in order to fully implement their proposals," Harding said. "This is the way it should be."

Ellis went on to deem the GreenCart "an expensive, feel-good program that has more to do with politics than waste management."

The GreenCart has become a contentious issue in the rural area as many of its residents say they already compost on their properties and don't see the need for the program.

But Ward 4 Councillor Wendy Schau said she doesn't see the needs of people in different parts of the community as being that different.

She pointed out the Region did a survey of garbage bag

contents in both the urban and rural areas and "they're virtually the same."

"I think the greatest need is to divert as much as possible (from the landfill)," she said.

She also voiced her support for turning over jurisdiction to the Region. But she seemed to be the only member of council who felt this way as others around the table came out against the power shift, like Wards 2 and 4 Councillor Colin Best.

"I'd like to have a little control still," he remarked.

Ward 3 Councillor Cindy Lunau shared similar sentiments, noting the further away jurisdiction gets, the more difficult it is to make a wise decision for local residents.

Ward 4 Councillor Paul Scherer also endorsed keeping waste collection decisions at the local level.

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