



2024 Operations Plan

Approved: December 18, 2023

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Origin

The Continuous Improvement Fund (CIF or, the Fund) commenced operations on May 1, 2008, as part of Ontario's Blue Box Program Plan (BBPP).

The BBPP fulfills the specific directives of the Ontario Minister of the Environment's program request letter to Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO) dated September 23, 2002. The letter required the establishment of a waste diversion program for Blue Box (BB) waste under a shared responsibility model in which the funding and operation would be divided between municipalities and the companies generating BB waste.

CIF was established under Section 6.6 of the BBPP to deliver the Minister's requirement that proposed funding rules for the waste diversion program include funding performance incentives to encourage program efficiency and effectiveness.

CIF is a committee of the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority (RPRa, or the Authority), previously known as Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO). It operates under a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signed by the other program partners:

- Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO),
- Stewardship Ontario (SO), and
- The City of Toronto.

1.1.1 Mandate

CIF's original mandate was to support cost containment initiatives through:

- direct funding,
- technical support, and
- training designed to aid local communities and program stakeholders in the development and implementation of best practices including technological and market-based solutions that lead to program improvements.

1.1.2 Mandate Shift to Accommodate Transition & Windup

On August 15, 2019, the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks issued letters to RPRa with a directive to begin the transition of the BB Program from a shared responsibility model to a full producer responsibility model. The letters included a direction to RPRa to end the CIF as soon as practical and prior to December 31, 2025.

To that end, CIF developed and consulted on a windup plan (CIF WUP) that was part of the broader BBPP Windup Plan (BBPP WUP). RPRa approved the BBPP WUP, which included the CIF WUP, in December 2020. Specifically, the approved CIF WUP directs CIF to:

- deliver transitional and program support services to local community program operators until December 31, 2023,
- cease public operations on December 31, 2023, and
- complete its administrative wrap up by June 30, 2024, unless a decision is made to extend operations by one year, subject to the availability of sufficient funds to do so.

1.1.3 Annual Operation & Governance During Transition & Windup

The approval of the CIF WUP meant that subsequent Operations Plans would be consistent with the dates, timelines, and objectives outlined in the CIF WUP, and that a new governance structure be implemented to reflect its evolving mandate.

To that end, in 2021, two new committees were formed:

- The CIF Transition Services Committee (TSC), whose primary responsibility is to a) develop annual priorities and budgets for CIF transitional and program support services and b) provide oversight over the delivery of these services.
- The CIF Windup Committee (WUC), who has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with the CIF WUP.

1.2 Special Considerations for the 2024 Operations Plan

Background: CIF One Year Extension & 2024 Activities Feedback from Stakeholders

In March 2023, a resolution was passed by the CIF Governance Committees approving the 2023 Full-Year Operations Plan, under which CIF is currently operating. The approval allowed for the consideration of a one-year extension, under which CIF would continue operations into 2024 with a windup in the first six months of 2025. To that end, CIF's 2023 operating budget was approved with sufficient reserve fund balance to permit operations in 2024.

The resolution directed CIF staff to gather feedback from various stakeholders on:

1. specific activities/projects that would be needed under a CIF 2024 Operations Plan (and that would be incorporated in a Draft 2024 Work Plan), and, subsequently,
2. the need for a one-year extension of CIF operations into 2024.

Summary of Feedback on Support for a One-Year Extension

During July 2023, CIF staff solicited feedback on a 2024 Draft Work Plan from large stakeholders including the Regional Public Works Commissioners of Ontario (RPWCO), Municipal Waste Association (MWA), AMO, and the City of Toronto. Feedback from the large stakeholders was incorporated into a Revised 2024 Draft Work Plan.

The Revised 2024 Draft Work Plan was presented and/or emailed to the CIF Transition Working Group (TWG) subcommittees and the First Nation (FN) TWG for their feedback. TWG members

indicated support for all projects and activities in the Revised 2024 Draft Work Plan. No comments were received from the FN TWG.

CIF then requested that large stakeholders send letters indicating their support or non-support for a one-year extension of CIF operations. Individual communities who are not members of a stakeholder group were requested to send emails indicating their support, directly to CIF.

Letters or emails indicating support for a one-year extension were received from:

- RPWCO
- the City of Toronto
- MWA
- AMO
- 10 individual communities
- 1 consultant (representing 10 small Northern Ontario communities)
- 6 FN communities.

One FN community was undecided, stating that CIF support was appreciated but they were unsure if it “has made much of a difference” for their community. They added that “any community that is less involved in the process generally would find the CIF very helpful to understand what is going on for them”.

The results of the feedback process indicated almost unanimous support for the one-year extension of CIF operations from those who participated in the feedback process, along with strong support for the activities and projects to facilitate transition support in 2024.

In August 2023, CIF staff presented a “Preliminary Report Regarding Feedback on Support for a One-Year Extension of CIF” to the CIF Governance Committees. Based on the strong support for the Revised Draft 2024 Work Plan and the near unanimous support for an extension indicated by stakeholders, the Governance Committees directed CIF staff to formulate a recommendation for a final decision at their September meetings.

In September 2023, CIF staff presented a recommendation to the Governance Committees to approve a one-year extension of the CIF to continue operations into 2024 and to complete the administrative activities associated with the windup in the first six months of 2025. The recommendation was approved by the TSC on September 26 and the WUC on September 28.

CIF staff were directed by the Governance Committees to complete another round of consultation on the Revised 2024 Draft Work Plan and prepare the 2024 Operations Plan.

2.0 2023 in Review

In June 2021, Ontario Regulation 391/21: Blue Box was filed, which subsequently established the transition of the BB Program to full producer responsibility. With this, the primary focus/activity for the CIF became supporting local communities through the transition process. These efforts were formalized through the delivery of a series of TWG subcommittees.

2.1 Longstanding CIF Services

Through 2023, the CIF continued the delivery of long-standing, ongoing services such as the online Fundamentals of Recycling course, the CIF Price Sheet, and the Cooperative Container Procurement Program. To prepare for the windup of the CIF at the end of 2024, some of these services were discontinued.

2.1.1 Fundamentals of Recycling Course

Since 2017, CIF has offered a free, nine-module online Fundamentals of Recycling course. The objective of the course was to provide information and insight to support key decisions related to planning, implementing, and operating a BB program. The course totaled 21 to 28 hours and included: legislation, markets, processing, collections, P&E and policies.

However, in 2023, CIF saw a drop in registrations, largely due to the BB transition. In November, CIF decided to end the online course. Communities will be notified of this service ending in December through a CIF Bulletin and the CIF website. Table 2.1 below depicts the number of registrants and course completions over the past three years.

Table 2.1 Fundamentals of Online Recycling Course Participation

Course Year	# Registered	# Completed/Passed
2021	18	10
2022	20	14
2023	8	5

2.1.2 CIF Price Sheet

The CIF Price Sheet is discussed in section 2.2.5 below.

2.1.1 Cooperative Container Procurement Program (CCPP)

Since 2009, CIF has offered a Cooperative Procurement Program to provide Ontario municipalities and FN communities the opportunity to purchase blue boxes, recycling carts, and reusable bags at fixed prices secured through a competitive tender process. Participants in the CCPP retain their individual corporate status and are responsible for contracting arrangements directly with suppliers.

In 2021, a request for tenders (RFT) was issued and four vendors were selected to continue the CCPP. At the time, CIF included two one-year extensions to continue this program until the end of 2024. Due to the number of transitioned communities opting to remain involved in the BB

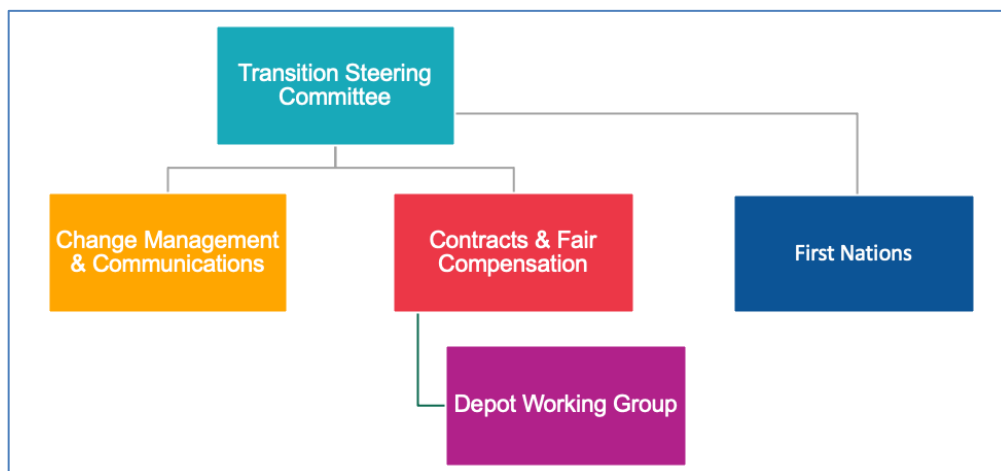
program until December 31, 2025 and the high number of communities with a 2025 transition date, vendors were contacted in November and asked if they would like to action the final one-year extension. Both BB vendors, Nova Products and Gracious Living, and the reusable bag vendor, Multi-Bag, agreed to the one-year extension. However, the recycling cart vendor, IPL Ltd., was unable to participate in one more year of the CCPP. CIF will be notifying communities of this service update at the beginning of December through CIF Bulletins and updates to the CIF website.

2.2 Transition Working Groups (TWGs)

The TWGs were launched in mid-2021 and initially consisted of five subcommittees organized around key technical BB operational functions. In addition to information sharing, each subcommittee develops research and project ideas as well as plans to support transition efforts province-wide. CIF funds both the research and project initiatives.

In May of 2023, the *Data Monitoring and Reporting* and *Post Collections* subcommittees were disbanded because all their projects were completed. The members agreed to join the *Contracts & Fair Compensation* subcommittee. Figure 2.1 below depicts the revised TWG subcommittee structure.

Figure 2.1 May 2023 Revised Transition Working Group Structure



Sections 2.1.1 through 2.1.6 detail project work undertaken in 2023 through each TWG subcommittee.

2.2.1 Change Management & Communications Subcommittee

This subcommittee has 44 participating subcommittee members representing 27 municipalities who help to develop a common set of tools and resources for use by program operators, province-wide, to keep decision makers, team members, stakeholders and the public apprised of key transition details and developments.

Transition Plan Implementation Checklist, Supports & Resources

In 2023, a checklist was created to assist staff in identifying key messages needed to ensure robust communication plans for key internal and external stakeholders. This checklist is used by staff to identify a) who will be impacted, b) in what ways, and c) the policies, procedures or promotions that need to be developed to ensure a smooth transition.

The checklist covers a variety of topics such as collection/operations, administration, and promotion and education (P&E). Additionally, the checklist provides best practices, samples, templates and case studies to help staff find answers. Three versions of the checklist have been developed and circulated to communities through CIF Bulletins and the CIF Transition Portal.

Non-Eligible Sources Workshop

Non-eligible sources (e.g., small commercial businesses in downtown cores, municipal buildings) have been serviced historically by municipal and FN BB programs. Per the new regulation, however, producers are not obligated to collect from these sources. To meet the needs of local communities who currently collect from non-eligible sources, research was undertaken in 2022 and a five-step online workshop was delivered to aid in planning for ongoing service delivery or discontinuation of service.

In 2023, updates were made to workshop materials to reflect new learnings and additional session deliveries were offered. Similar to the 2022 workshop, communities were sorted into specific groups for curbside or depot service to ensure the unique needs of each were met. Attendance results are shared in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2 Non-Eligible Sources Workshop Delivery Results

Session Focus	Delivery Dates	Total Attendance Statistics
Curbside	April 11 & 12, 2023 April 25 & 26, 2023 May 3 & 4, 2023	72 staff representing 59 communities
Depot	April 19 & 20, 2023	18 staff representing 17 communities

2.2.2 Contracts & Fair Compensation Subcommittee

This subcommittee has 121 members representing 76 municipalities. Meetings provide a forum to exchange information, identify common challenges, and develop potential resolutions.

Community Cooperation Tools & Resources

In late 2022, work was initiated on a set of tools and resources to help encourage cooperation between local communities and Producer Responsibility Organization's (PRO) for the delivery of BB service. The project's original intent was a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to be used between local communities and the PROs, or their administrators. Its objective was to

identify key areas of common concern and provide sample clauses to help minimize disruption and confusion for residents during and after the transition period. A draft of this MOU was circulated to key stakeholders including the PROs. After receiving feedback that the Common Collection System (CCS) Administrator, Circular Materials, was not prepared to sign the MOU, an alternative approach was needed.

The alternative approach chosen is a letter that communities can use to communicate expectations for key service delivery details not addressed by the regulation or the PROs' BB service provider agreements for the CCS (e.g., routing of resident calls, litter clean up and onboarding of newly constructed residences and facilities).

The CIF, in partnership with M3RC and a legal consultant, prepared the letter for local communities to send to various BB program stakeholders (e.g., PROs, Reverse Logistics Group and their contractors) about expectations for effective management of key program service delivery details under a BB producer responsibility framework.

The letter can be modified to fit local circumstances and facilitate good faith cooperation in coordinating important program service delivery details. The letter is accompanied by an introductory memo providing a project description and guidance on its use.

Both the letter and memo were circulated to communities through a CIF Bulletin and posted on the CIF Transition Portal.

By-law Review

Local communities were seeking additional solutions to ensure effective coordination of all diversion programs. By-law clauses are currently being developed by a law firm and will be circulated to communities in the coming months, along with a memo noting the sensitive approach that should be taken when enacting by-laws related to the BB program. The by-law clauses are based on areas of concern expressed by opt-out communities and may be enacted after consultation with the community's legal team if expectations for service delivery are consistently not being met.

Upon completion, the by-law clauses and memo will be circulated through a CIF Bulletin and posted on the CIF Transition Portal.

2.2.3 Depot Subcommittee

This subcommittee has 128 members, representing 75 municipalities. Meetings provide a forum to develop potential resolutions for the unique issues facing depot program operators (e.g., P&E for depot BB programs).

Non-Eligible Source Field Study

A month-long field study project was initiated in 2022 with the municipality of Dysart et al at two of its staffed BB depots to test methodology gleaned from the CIF Non-Eligible Sources Collection Planning Workshop. The study was able to provide learnings for communities to consider when gathering data to determine how many non-eligible sources are using the depot program, the financial considerations applicable to a community providing BB collection to non-eligible sources in separate bins post transition, and the operational tasks associated with supplying additional bins designated for non-eligible source material.

The field study project was completed in May of 2023 and a report accompanied by templates (i.e., visitor count monitoring sheets and a reference checklist) was circulated to communities through a CIF Bulletin and posted on the CIF Transition Portal.

Depot Leasing Support

Some depot-only communities may not want to continue depot collection service for BB materials post-2025. However, a PRO may be interested in continuing operations for residential BB material at these depot sites. As a result, communities may want to consider leasing a portion or the entirety of their depot(s) to a PRO or PRO service provider.

To support municipalities in this endeavour, CIF developed a guidance document and workshop designed around key considerations involved in leasing a depot (e.g., liability/risk management considerations, responsibilities of parties, and payment terms) as well as alternatives to leasing. Since the concept of leasing could be applied to other materials under producer responsibility programs (i.e., used tires, waste electronic & electrical equipment and hazardous & special products), the guidance document and workshop addressed the applicability of depot leasing to other materials.

Three workshops were delivered in November of 2023. Resources were circulated to workshop participants and posted on the CIF Transition Portal. Workshop attendance results are shared in Table 2.3 below.

Table 2.3 Depot Leasing Workshop Delivery Results

Delivery Dates	Total Attendance Statistics
November 16, 2023 November 21, 2023 November 28, 2023	48 staff representing 43 communities

Convenience Depot Support

As of 2026, producers no longer have a regulatory obligation to maintain and fund BB collection at depots in communities where all residents receive curbside BB collection. Under this scenario, communities will need to decide whether to continue, modify or end BB collection at their convenience depots.

To assist communities in planning for potential convenience depot changes, CIF developed a series of materials including: a convenience depot planning guide, a decision tree, and a cost and valuation tool. Additionally, a workshop was delivered to:

- walk communities through the resource,
- assist in determining the financial and service implications of decisions,
- prepare for council recommendations, and
- plan for procurement and communications.

Three workshops were delivered in October and November of 2023. Resources were circulated to workshop participants and posted on the CIF Transition Portal. Workshop attendance results are shared in Table 2.4 below.

Table 2.4 Convenience Depot Workshop Delivery Results

Delivery Dates	Total Attendance Statistics
October 24, 2023 November 08, 2023 November 09, 2023	68 staff representing 50 communities

2.2.4 Data Monitoring & Reporting Subcommittee

This subcommittee had 28 participants, representing 18 municipalities. From January to May, 2023, this subcommittee helped vet transition related data management projects as described below.

Municipalities as Producers

CIF liaised with RPRA to clarify the thresholds at which municipalities are required to register as a producer. Initial work was undertaken in 2022 on a Blue Box Producer Calculator to assist communities in determining a) if their revenue is greater than the \$2M threshold, and b) if the weight of their products or paper supplied into the market reached the established level at which material tracking and reporting requirements take hold and producer obligations apply.

In April 2023, the Blue Box Producer Calculator was approved by RPRA and accompanied by an eight-page instruction document. RPRA approved the calculator for use by municipalities for the reporting periods ONLY for 2021 (2020 data) to 2024 (2023 data), noting that CIF would need to update the paper generation rate with six new datasets and seek approval for municipalities to use the Calculator in 2024 (2023 data).

RPRA approved a paper generation rate only and stipulated that other material categories, such as plastics, glass, metal, and beverage containers, must be manually determined by municipalities. The Calculator and instructions were circulated to municipalities through a CIF Bulletin and posted on the Transition Portal.

In May, upon request by municipalities, CIF staff facilitated four 60-minute working sessions to review producer obligations and work through the calculator in real time. Workshop attendance results are shared in Table 2.5 below.

Table 2.5 Blue Box Producer Calculator Online Working Session Delivery Results

Delivery Dates	Total Attendance Statistics
May 15, 2023 – 10am to 11am May 15, 2023 – 1pm to 2pm May 23, 2023 – 1pm to 2pm May 24, 2023 – 11am to 12pm	73 staff representing 65 municipalities

The calculator was approved for use in 2024 on November 20, following the submission of an updated paper generation rate. Both the Calculator and instructions were subsequently updated and circulated to municipalities through a CIF Bulletin and posted on the Transition Portal.

In 2025, the Blue Box Producer Calculator will no longer be available. Instead, an Extended Guidance Document and a Supply Data Gathering Tool will be made available. These resources are intended to assist municipalities in a) determining a process to gather supply data; and b) confirming annually if they are a producer, to ensure compliance with the Regulation.

- **The Extended Guidance Document** details background information along with best practices for gathering producer supply data including examples of materials a municipality may supply to Ontario consumers. Instructions for using the Supply Data Gathering Tool are also included.
- **The Supply Data Gathering Tool** tracks total material supply generated by each internal department or entity affiliated with a municipality. This tool consists of two Excel programs, one to track paper supply with each department and the other to summarize the data submitted by all departments. The tool has been tested with four municipalities.

Both the Extended Guidance Document and the Supply Data Gathering Tool will be completed and circulated to municipalities in December, following approval from RPRA, through a CIF Bulletin and posted on the CIF Transition Portal.

Waste Audits

Baseline BB performance metrics (e.g., capture, contamination, BB materials in the other waste streams) are needed to help municipalities determine their ongoing level of engagement (e.g., whether to become a service provider or whether to implement a P&E initiative to correct for BB materials in the other waste streams).

CIF and Stewardship Ontario (SO) Waste Composition Audit Series

The Year 7 CIF and SO Waste Composition Audit Series was initiated in Q4 2022 and completed in Q3 2023. Results of the Audit Series will be communicated through a Year 7: 4-Season Residential Waste Composition Study Results (2022/23) report, that will be posted in the [CIF Centre of Excellence](#) upon completion.

Analysis of Current and Forecasted Capture and Contamination Rates

CIF engaged a third-party consultant to conduct an analysis of current BB material capture and contamination rates under the BBPP as well as forecasted rates under the new regulation. Specifically, the analysis looked at audits of single and dual stream collection streams in single family, multi-family, and depot programs. The consultant analyzed data from 2020, 2021, and 2022, totaling 107 individual datasets.

Two observations of the study were that a) estimated BB material contamination is currently higher than allowable contamination under the new regulation and b) capture rates for current BB material (at the point of collection) are higher than capture rates for BB materials that will be designated under the new regulation. The capture rate data will improve in the future once new materials are included in the BB program. This analysis was presented to the TWG subcommittees on January 19, 2023, and the presentation was posted on the CIF Transition Portal.

Waste Composition Audit Guideline

As a result of the sunset of the BB transition and the Municipal Datacall, communities will have less information and insights on whether recycling efforts are improving within their individual communities. Therefore, composition audits of waste/litter and organics streams may be the only way for municipal governments to:

- measure whether various producer responsibility programs are working as intended,
- identify what potential issues may arise (e.g., new materials that should be considered for designation), and
- provide data for waste management planning.

To assist communities with these concerns, CIF is developing a guidance document for conducting standardized waste audits that allow for:

- a) generation of comparable data between municipalities,
- b) gauging whether provincial producer responsibility programs are achieving their desired outcomes,
- c) measuring the impact that material designations under consideration might have, and

- d) assessing whether federal and provincial objectives are being met (e.g., waste reduction & diversion targets, food reduction targets, zero plastic waste targets and/or litter reduction targets).

This guidance document is expected to be completed at the end of 2023 or within the first quarter of 2024. Once completed, the document and related materials will be circulated to communities through a CIF Bulletin and posting to the CIF Transition Portal.

2.2.5 Post Collection Subcommittee

This subcommittee had 26 participants representing 14 municipalities. From January to May, 2023, this subcommittee focused on information sharing and post collection asset planning through open discussions during subcommittee meetings. Additionally, this subcommittee vetted the CIF Price Sheet and alternative analysis.

Price Sheet & Price Sheet Alternative Analysis

In 2023, as the PROs assumed responsibility for many of Ontario's material processing facilities, the number of contributors to the CIF Price Sheet declined, as expected. It had been previously decided that when the number of contributors fell below a minimum threshold, CIF would terminate its publication.

In preparation for this, CIF hired a consultant to compare the CIF Price Sheet to another post-consumer commodity pricing index to determine if it could be a suitable alternative. The results and recommended next steps are described below.

CIF Price Sheet Analysis

An analysis was initiated to allow for the CIF to understand how the CIF Price Sheet had historically tracked against secondary market indices from 2019 to 2022 to determine whether a viable alternative exists. This analysis was completed in February 2023 and vetted by the *Post Collections* subcommittee. It details a comparison between the CIF Price Sheet and Secondary Markets Pricing (SMP), an alternative source of individual commodity pricing.

The analysis concluded that a viable alternative to the CIF Price Sheet is available, however differences in individual commodities would need to be accounted for along with assessing the overall impact. This information would need to be communicated to service providers.

CIF was able to arrange with SMP to provide new monthly individual commodity pricing and to create a composite index using SMP commodity pricing. However, as the year has progressed, the minimum threshold was not met, subsequently leading to the continuation of the Price Sheet without SMP data. This may change, however, for the December Price Sheet that is circulated in January of 2024. If this occurs, communities will be notified through a CIF Bulletin and the CIF website.

A CIF Bulletin was circulated in March 2023 with the analysis report and signaling that the CIF Price Sheet would end in December 2023.

2.2.6 First Nation Subcommittee

This subcommittee currently has 21 participating subcommittee members representing 15 FN communities. The subcommittee meets monthly to discuss FN transition related issues. Additionally, CIF liaises regularly with RPRA staff to ensure CIF has up to date information relating to meeting content. This membership continues to grow as FN communities receive more direction from the Ministry and RPRA.

Customized Transition Resources

In 2023, the CIF offered dedicated outreach to FN communities through presentations as well as subcommittee and one-on-one Zoom meetings. The following resources were developed and circulated in 2023 to FN communities through CIF Bulletins and a dedicated First Nation Transition Portal.

Webinar & Presentations

CIF delivered a webinar on July 19 to introduce and explain:

- the BB regulation and transition process,
- key players and their roles,
- available transition options, and
- the supportive role that CIF can play.

The webinar included presentations from RPRA, Ontario First Nations Technical Services Committee and Circular Materials.

A total of 13 individuals representing 12 FN communities attended the webinar.

CIF was also invited to present at the Ontario First Nations Technical Services Corporation's Blue Box Transition Information Session on August 22.

First Nation Blue Box Transition Portal

The First Nation Blue Box Transition Portal provides information and resources to help communities understand the new BB program and transition process. Invitations to access the portal were sent to subcommittee members in October 2023. This portal provides a convenient location for FN-specific BB transition information including Q&A developed by members of the subcommittee, a Blue Box Information & Costing Tool, the Blue Box Backgrounder, presentations, links to contact information for key stakeholders as well as notification of important dates. The Portal will be updated regularly as new resources are created or shared.

Blue Box Backgrounder

CIF customized a PowerPoint presentation entitled “Blue Box Backgrounder” to help FN communities navigate producer responsibility, the legislative framework, key players’ roles and responsibilities, concepts/terms, engagement processes, eligible and non-eligible sources, service standards, and more. The backgrounder is a flexible communications tool that can be customized as needed and is intended for use by community staff, committee/council members and band members.

Following initial review by RPRA staff and FN subcommittee members, the Backgrounder was circulated to communities in November through a CIF Bulletin and posting on the First Nation Transition Portal. The Backgrounder will continue to be updated as new information becomes known.

Blue Box Information & Costing Tool

A Blue Box Information & Costing Tool was developed to help staff gather relevant program and costing information needed to complete the RPRA transition report and aid in engaging with the CCS Administrator. This tool was tested by two FN communities and finalized in October 2023. It was circulated to FN staff through the First Nation Transition Portal and during one-on-one meetings.

3.0 2024 Operations Plan

The overall objectives of the 2024 Operations Plan are to:

1. Continue supporting local communities during transition to the full producer responsibility framework, specifically regarding a) decision making (opt-in/out), b) understanding contract offers and the financial implications, c) learnings from communities that transitioned in 2023 and from 2023 CIF projects and d) budgets, operations, approvals and communications.
2. Provide technical support to M3RC regarding learnings from BB projects that can be applied to other waste streams.

In addition to new initiatives, the 2024 plan will allow CIF to continue:

- Ongoing delivery of long-standing CIF services such as its website resources and CCPP
- Wrap up of remaining projects
- Engagement with local communities through one-to-one outreach and the TWG subcommittees meeting series (i.e., written updates and Zoom meetings occurring in alternating two-week intervals)

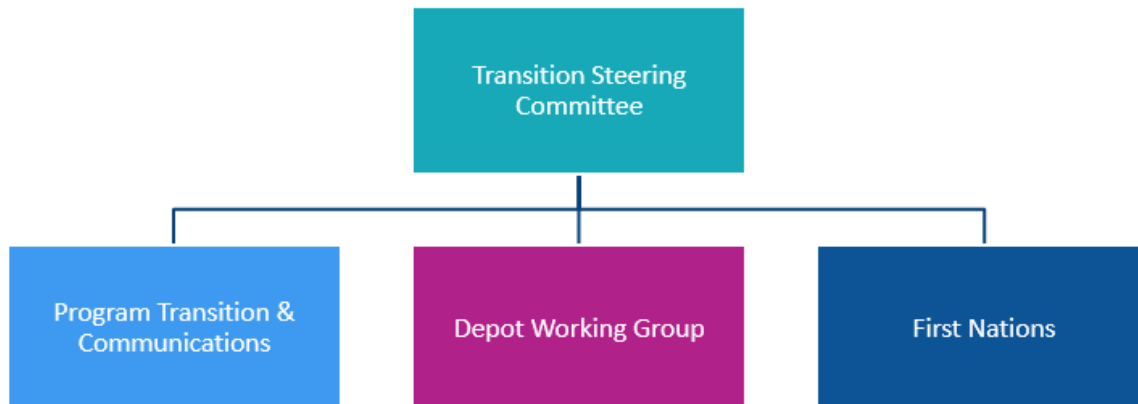
3.1 Transition Working Groups (TWGs)

Consultations occurred over the months of July and November 2023 with community stakeholders (i.e., individual municipalities, CIF TWGs, MWA, M3RC, and RPWCO) regarding the development of the 2024 Work Plan. The deliverables outlined in this section reflect their feedback and are organized around the TWG structure.

Projects managed through the TWG structure are first vetted by the steering group (CIF and M3RC staff) and then assigned to a subcommittee. The subcommittee is responsible for scope refinement and project oversight including monitoring progress and approving final deliverables before they are shared more broadly with local communities across the province.

At the end of 2023, the *Change Management & Communications* subcommittee, and the *Contracts & Fair Compensation* subcommittee agreed to combine under a new *Program Transition & Communications* subcommittee.

Figure 3.1 November 2023 Revised Transition Working Group Structure



Additional projects not listed here may be launched throughout 2024 provided they are vetted by the steering group and related subcommittee to determine their value and feasibility for implementation before the end of the operating year.

3.1.1 Program Transition & Communications Subcommittee

The *Program Transition & Communications* subcommittee project list includes:

- Communication Planning Tools (Checklist) & Resources (P&E)
- Non-Eligible Source Supports
- Medium/High Density Building Code Improvements
- Public Space Coordination for 2026
- Impact of Potential Beverage Container Deposit-Return System (DRS)
- Litter Audit Support and Analysis
- Sale of Municipally Owned Containers
- Curbside Projects

Communication Planning Tools (Checklist) & Resources (P&E)

<i>Context</i>	Some communities have decided to provide services for the producers and are now seeking transition planning supports for the next steps. Additionally, there may be P&E messages that the PROs are not required to develop or obligated to address. As a result, the onus of this messaging is on community staff.
<i>Deliverable 1</i>	<p>In 2023, a checklist tool was developed to assist staff in identifying key transition related messages to communicate to internal and external stakeholders. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who will be affected internally (e.g., departmental/interdepartmental staff, senior leadership, councils) and externally (e.g., contractors, residents, business customers)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what will be affected (e.g., policies, operational practices, by-laws) • how various external stakeholders and operations will be impacted • what key messages, information, or direction needs to be communicated and to whom • when and how key messages should be communicated <p>Continued refinement of the Checklist Tool will occur in 2024 to meet the objectives outlined above. Additions to the tool will reflect transition learnings and 2026 considerations.</p>
<i>Deliverable 2</i>	Develop sample P&E templates (print, web, and social media) to inform residents about the transition process as well as post-transition ‘need to knows’ to assist staff in addressing change management.

Non-Eligible Source Supports

<i>Context</i>	Many communities provide BB collection services to small non-eligible sources (e.g., in downtown areas) in order to offer efficient collection services and enhance diversion performance. Post-2025, some Councils may direct staff to examine the costs and logistics of continuing to offer recycling collection services to non-eligible sources. To that end, CIF will develop a variety of resources to assist staff with assessing options for non-eligible source material.
<i>Deliverable 1</i>	Additional deliveries of the Non-Eligible Source Planning Workshops will aid communities in planning for ongoing service delivery or discontinuation of service. The material will be updated to reflect new learnings and will include a discussion on the operational challenges and best practices for collecting from mixed use properties (i.e., eligible source and non-eligible sources in the same building).
<i>Deliverable 2</i>	Create a database of private BB processing sites to determine the local non-eligible source processing options and/or develop a report on the gaps in service availability for non-eligible source material.
<i>Deliverable 3</i>	<p>Some communities may find it difficult to find a collector, hauler and/or processor for their non-eligible sources’ materials given low quantities collected and lack of local service providers. It is also expected that the costs for this service will increase beyond residential program costs, given the limited economies of scale in the quantities to be collected (i.e., quantities are too small to earn the same ‘bulk pricing’ rates achieved through the residential BB program).</p> <p>To establish adequate service options under this scenario, CIF will look at past projects to develop a cooperative procurement process (e.g., RFP templates, contract clause considerations) that can enable communities within a catchment area to jointly seek bids through Non-Eligible Source Cooperative Procurement efforts.</p>

Medium to High Density Building Code Improvements

<i>Context</i>	Due to the increased construction of medium to high density buildings, some communities have concerns about the proper design of waste collection systems.
<i>Deliverable</i>	To address concerns that communities have for approving waste collection in new eligible sources, a report will be developed that identifies changes to the provincial building codes and planning act, to ensure that waste, recycling, and organics systems in medium to high density buildings are properly designed. Additionally, CIF will develop best practices for standard clauses that can be inserted in municipal development agreements.

Public Space Coordination for 2026*

<i>Context</i>	As outlined in O. Reg. 391/21: Blue Box, starting in 2026, new regulatory requirements take effect for public spaces. Questions remain around collection coordination, bin locations (e.g., parks, transit), the design of bins and compensation.
<i>Deliverable</i>	CIF may develop a guidance document to assist communities in planning for these public space changes, as some public space sites will be the responsibility of the producers, and some will be the responsibility of the local community.

**This project may need to be restructured or replaced with the project below.*

Impact of Potential Beverage Container Deposit-Return System (DRS)

<i>Context</i>	The possibility exists that a Provincial DRS for all beverage containers could be implemented.
<i>Deliverable</i>	CIF may gather learnings from other jurisdictions with DRS (e.g., BC) to identify the impacts on communities (e.g., scavenging, public space receptacles, depot sites, communications).

Litter Audit Support & Analysis

<i>Context</i>	Litter audits can assist communities in determining the level of litter generation in all areas. Communities may also want to focus on BB litter audits during the transition period to establish a baseline that can be used to monitor PROs' efforts as well as communicate expectations regarding BB litter prevention.
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<i>Deliverable 1</i>	<p>CIF will conduct broad litter research to support M3RC initiatives. This research would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review litter studies that have been done by Ontario municipalities • Identify the percentages of litter that are BB materials including differences between types of Ontario communities • Extrapolate litter management costs across the Province using available litter management cost data to determine the impact on municipal governments • Identify best practices to measure and prevent litter
<i>Deliverable 2</i>	CIF will identify best practices for conducting BB litter audits and estimation of costs for collecting BB litter.

Sale of Municipally Owned Containers

<i>Context</i>	As a continuation of the Post Collection Asset Valuation project completed in 2022, communities are seeking discussion and guidance regarding the use of community owned collection containers by the CCS Administrator's contractors. Communities will need to determine whether to sell the containers to a contractor.
<i>Deliverable</i>	CIF will facilitate a small working group consisting of municipal staff and consultant experts, if needed, to discuss consideration of container asset value and potential options and/or best practices. The working group discussions will be compiled into a guidance document for other communities to utilize in making decisions on collection containers.

Curbside Projects

<i>Context</i>	Curbside communities may have requests for new projects to address unique challenges that arise in 2024, as a result of the transition.
<i>Deliverable(s)</i>	To be determined

3.1.2 Depot Subcommittee

The *Depot* subcommittee project list includes:

- Post-2025 Depot Contract Negotiation Support
- Depot Projects

Post-2025 Depot Contract Negotiation Support

<i>Context</i>	New contracts for depot-only services required post-2025, may entail new service parameters (e.g., staffing at all depots, expanded materials requiring additional bins, and changes to hours of operation). Alternatively,
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	communities may want to consider leasing depot space to contractors to manage BB materials from eligible sources.
<i>Deliverable</i>	As communities go into contract discussions there may be an opportunity for renegotiation of terms and conditions. Lessons learned from other jurisdictions, local communities and CIF's 2023 Depot Leasing Supports Project will be documented and shared to assist communities in their BB post-transition contract discussions.

Depot Projects

<i>Context</i>	Depot communities may have requests for new projects to address unique challenges that arise in 2024, as a result of the transition.
<i>Deliverable(s)</i>	To be determined

3.1.3 First Nation Subcommittee

The FN TWG subcommittee project list presently is limited to Resource Development.

Resource Development

<i>Context</i>	FN communities have unique needs and parameters outlined in O.Reg. 391/21: Blue Box. FN staff will need to be informed and prepared to make BB program transition decisions.
<i>Deliverable</i>	<p>CIF will create customized resources to meet these needs. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPRA liaison work • An additional webinar on fundamentals of transition • Maintaining the FN Transition Portal, FN TWG subcommittee, and sharing of transition learnings • Outreach to FN communities not on the transition list to inform them of opportunities, post-2025 • FN Transition Checklist (e.g., questions to consider when transition planning and reviewing agreements)

3.2 Projected Project Timelines

During the consultation on CIF 2024 projects and activities that took place in July and November 2023, projected timelines were shared with stakeholders as detailed in Figure 3.2 below. CIF staff will work towards completing all 2024 projects on budget and on schedule.

Figure 3.2 2024 Projects & Activities Timelines

Projects and Activities	2024			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Communication Planning Tools (Checklist) & Resources (P&E)				
Non-eligible Source Supports				
Med/High Density Building Code Improvements				
Public Space Coordination for 2026	TBD			
Impact of Potential Beverage Container Deposit-Return System (DRS)				
Litter Audit Support & Analysis				
Sale of Municipally Owned Containers				
Curbside Projects	TBD			
Post-2025 Depot Contract Negotiation Support				
Depot Projects	TBD			
FN Resource Development				

4.0 2023 Budget and Forecasted Year-End

This section presents CIF's 2023 budget and forecasted year-end. The major line items in CIF's annual budget are described below:

Contributions to the CIF

The Contributions to the Fund consists of:

- 1) Interest income earned from funds held in the CIF's bank account, and
- 2) Community contributions: Datacall penalties (i.e., late Datacall submission penalty fees paid by reporting programs that are redirected to the CIF as income).

Transition Project Support

Transition Project Support includes all transition-related CIF projects approved in each budget year.

Transfers to AMO for M3RC

These are funds transferred to AMO's Municipal Collective Transition Fund (MCTF) to pay the costs incurred by the Municipal Resource Recovery and Research Collaborative (M3RC).

Municipal Disbursement

Municipal disbursement refers to the disbursement of surplus CIF Funds back to Ontario communities.

Administration

CIF Administration costs include contract costs for the Managing Director, Project Manager, administration staff person, communications services, office, and committee expenses, plus CIF related costs incurred by RPRA.

Table 4.1 below shows a comparison between CIF's approved 2023 budget and forecasted 2023 year-end expenditures.

Table 4.1 CIF 2023 Approved Budget and Forecasted Year-end Expenditures

	2023 Approved Budget	2023 Y/E Forecast	Variance
Contributions to the CIF	\$0.20M	\$0.58M	\$0.38M
Administration	(\$0.65M)	(\$0.34M)	\$0.31M
Transfers to AMO to fund M3RC	(\$0.50M)	\$0.00M	\$0.50M

	2023 Approved Budget	2023 Y/E Forecast	Variance
Municipal Disbursement	(\$2.00M)	(\$2.00M)	\$0.00M
Windup Admin Budget Projection	(\$1.00M)	\$0.00M	\$1.00M
Transition Project Support	(\$0.90M)	(\$0.18M)	\$0.72M

Explanations for the variances between the approved 2023 budget and forecasted year-end expenditures are as follows:

- Forecasted contributions to the CIF reflect higher than expected interest rates
- Forecasted Administration costs are lower due to the departure of the part-time salaried CIF Managing Director in January 2023 and the full-time salaried CIF Managing Director in April 2023
- No transfers will be made to AMO for M3RC in 2023 as AMO has sufficient funds to cover M3RC expenses
- No windup administration costs in 2023 due to the one-year extension of the CIF
- Forecasted 2023 Transition Support costs are below the approved budget due in part to:
fewer projects undertaken due to the focus on preparing the 2023 full-year operations plan in the first quarter and succession search for CIF Managing Director in the second quarter; and 2) the use of internal project support consultants totalling approximately \$200K, which was included in the 2022 budget

5.0 2024 Operations Plan Budget

The following section sets out spending projections for the 2024 Operations Plan Budget. Table 5.1 below compares the proposed 2024 Administration and Transition Support Budget to the 2023 Budget.

Table 5.1 Proposed 2024 Administration and Transition Support Budget

Item	2023 Approved Budget	2024 Proposed Budget
CIF Administration	\$545,000	\$352,000
Office and Administrative Expenses	\$15,000	\$15,000
Legal and Professional Services	\$20,000	\$20,000
Communication Services	\$40,000	\$30,000
Committee Expenses	\$20,000	\$11,000
RPRA Fees	\$10,000	\$30,000
Administration Sub-total	\$650,000	\$458,000
Transfers to AMO for M3RC	\$500,000	\$0.00
Transition Support	\$900,000	\$552,000
Municipal Disbursement	\$2,000,000	\$0.00
Total	\$4,050,000	\$1,010,000

Explanations for the variances between the 2023 approved budget and the proposed 2024 budget are as follows:

- CIF Administration costs will be lower in 2024 based on lower forecasted 2023 costs and accurate 2024 contract amounts for CIF staff.
- Communication Services costs are projected to be \$20,000 in 2023; 2024 costs estimated to be \$30,000 due to communications expenses related to the CIF windup.
- Projected 2023 RPRA fees are \$24,000; fees have been increased to \$30,000 in 2024 to accommodate additional work by RPRA related to the CIF windup
- Final Municipal Disbursement will occur upon financial reconciliation of the Fund in 2025
- AMO has sufficient reserve funds to pay M3RC expenses in 2024
- 2024 Transition Support funding is based on a draft workplan and estimated project budgets

Table 5.2 Proposed 2024 Transition Support Budget*

Item	2023 Approved Budget	2024 Proposed Budget
Data Monitoring & Reporting Support (closed)	\$150,000	-
Contracts & Fair Compensation Support (closed, now part of new Program Transition & Communications)	\$150,000	-
Post Collection Support (closed)	\$100,000	-
Program Transition & Communications (new – formally Change Mgmt & Communications)	\$325,000	\$435,000
Depot Support	\$100,000	\$57,000
First Nation Support	\$75,000	\$60,000
Total	\$900,000	\$552,000

**For individual 2024 Transition Support project budget estimates see Appendix 2*

Table 5.3 below shows CIF's forecasted 2023 and 2024 year-end bank balances based on the proposed 2024 budget.

Table 5.3 Forecasted 2023 & 2024 Year-end Bank Balance

	2023 Forecasted	2024 Forecasted
CIF Opening Bank Balance	\$10.97M	\$8.67M
Contributions to the CIF	\$0.58M	\$0.47M
Administration	(\$0.34M)	(\$0.46M)
Transitional Support	(0.54M)	(\$0.55M)
Transfers to AMO for M3RC	(\$0.00M)	(\$0.00M)
Municipal Disbursement	(\$2.00M)	(\$0.00M)
Forecasted CIF Closing Bank Balance	\$8.67M	\$8.13M

6.0 Projected CIF 2025 Windup Budget

The projected 2025 windup budget is shown in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1 Projected CIF 2025 Windup Budget and Municipal Disbursement

	2023 Forecasted Y/E	2024 Proposed Budget	2025 Projected Windup Budget
CIF Opening Bank Balance	\$10.97M	\$8.67M	\$8.13M
Contributions to the CIF	\$0.58M	\$0.47M	\$0.31M
Administration	(\$0.34M)	(\$0.46M)	(\$0.20M)
Third-Party Windup Review & Financial Audit			(\$0.04M)
Transitional Support	(\$0.54M)	(\$0.55M)	(\$0.00M)
Transfers to AMO for M3RC	(\$0.00M)	(\$0.00M)	(\$0.00M)
Municipal Disbursement	(\$2.00M)	(\$0.00M)	~(\$8.20M)
CIF Projected Closing Bank Balance	\$8.67M	\$8.13M	\$0.00

Notes: Assumptions made for the projected 2025 windup budget are as follows:

- 2024: Contributions to CIF include 2024 estimates of interest and the remaining balance of the AMO CIF administration reserve;
- 2025: Contributions to the CIF include estimates of interest and the remaining balance of the AMO waste diversion and windup reserves;
- The costs for the Third-Party Windup Review and Financial Audit are preliminary estimates; and
- The Municipal Disbursement amount will be determined upon final financial reconciliation and closure of the Fund.

The [CIF WUP](#) approved in December 2020, and an updated Administrative WUP (shown in Appendix 3) will be adhered to as the CIF conducts windup activities.

Appendix 1: 2019-2023 CIF Financial Statement

The following table summarizes financial statements received from Stewardship Ontario. It shows invoiced expenditures received to date but does not include outstanding commitments on open grants and other outstanding liabilities.

2019-2023 CIF Financial Statements

Income Sources	Year ended	Year ended	Year ended	Year ended	As of
	Dec. 31,	Dec. 31,	Dec. 31,	Dec. 31,	Sept. 30,
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	(Actual)	(Actual)	(Actual)	(Actual)	(Actual)
Cash Forward	\$19,807,154	\$17,553,275	\$14,965,065	\$12,713,937	\$10,974,697
Income Sources					
Municipal Contributions	\$3,122	\$26,556	\$0.00	\$44,616	\$13,984
Interest	\$412,493	\$223,063	\$131,938	\$262,286	\$426,149
Other					
Total Income	\$415,615	\$249,619	\$131,938	\$306,902	\$440,133
Expenditures					
Administration	\$572,094	\$466,572	\$408,285	\$332,847	\$184,090
AMO Admin Reserve Balance	-\$74,858	\$216,918	-\$232,545	\$153,968	-\$111,722
RPRA Fees	\$21,808	\$7,173	\$4,337	\$29,012	\$17,171
Project Support	\$63,365	\$130,146	\$56,437	\$91,490	\$57,000
Best Practices	\$923,616	\$618,050	\$866,619	\$908,084	\$581,826
Centre of Excellence	\$1,163,469	\$398,968	\$279,934	\$30,759	\$3,355
AMO Transfer	\$0.00	\$1,000,000	\$0.00	\$500,000	\$0
Municipal Disbursement			\$1,000,000		\$2,000,000
Total Expenditures	\$2,669,494.00	\$2,837,827	\$2,383,066.39	\$2,046,160	\$2,731,720
Year End Fund Balance	\$17,553,275	\$14,965,065	\$12,713,937	\$10,974,679	\$8,683,093*

*Fund balance as of September 30, 2023

Appendix 2: Individual 2024 Project Budget Estimates

The following table provides initial budget estimates for each CIF project initiated and completed in 2024.

Projects	Subcommittee	Estimated Budget
Communication Planning Tools (Checklist) & Resources (P&E)	Program Transition & Communications	\$15,900
Non-eligible Source Supports	Program Transition & Communications	\$61,600
Medium/High Density Building Code Improvements	Program Transition & Communications	\$56,500
Public Space Coordination for 2026	Program Transition & Communications	\$28,300
Impact of Potential Beverage Container Deposit-Return System (DRS)	Program Transition & Communications	
Litter Audit Support & Analysis	Program Transition & Communications	\$50,900
Sale of Municipally Owned Containers	Program Transition & Communications	\$1,200
Curbside Projects	Program Transition & Communications	\$28,300
General Outreach & Project Support	Program Transition & Communications	\$192,300
Post-2025 Depot Contract Negotiation Support	Depot	\$28,500
Depot Projects	Depot	\$28,500
FN Resource Development	FN Transition Working Group	\$60,000
	Total Transition Project Support	\$552,000

Appendix 3: Updated Administrative Windup Plan

The Administrative WUP, approved in the 2023 Full Year Operations Plan, has been updated to reflect new timelines and tasks. The updated list of tasks associated with windup of the CIF is summarized in Table 6.2 below. CIF staff will lead the windup planning process in close consultation with RPRA.

Tasks listed in the table below will be refined through consultation with RPRA, SO, AMO, and the City of Toronto. CIF staff will report progress on the finalized tasks at CIF Governance Committees meetings from September 2024 until the windup of the CIF.

An updated estimated budget of \$0.24M has been established for windup activities in the first half of 2025. This will cover the cost of staff salaries, professional fees for services such as a financial audit and a review of the CIF Windup Report, as needed. The windup budget will be refined as administrative needs become better understood and quantified.

Table 6.2 Windup Implementation Work

#	Objective / Tasks	Description	Timeline
1	Project Closures	Existing Roster Management Close out existing projects	Ongoing
2	Financial Reconciliation & Admin Windup Budget Refinement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly reporting to CIF committees & coordination with RPRA on formal reconciliation Further refinement of the estimated Administrative Windup Budget 	Ongoing
3	Inventory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create list of all CIF assets & resources Create list of all CIF current contracts, funding agreements, and projects 	Ongoing progress reporting to RPRA
4	Third-Party Windup Review & Financial Audit	As referenced in Table 6.1, a third-party windup review and financial audit will occur in 2025 (after operations cease in 2024). The windup review will ensure CIF has completed all steps outlined in the WUP. The financial audit will ensure the transparency of all financial transitions.	Complete in Q1/Q2 2025.
5	Transfer of Resources & Assets as well as Disbursement of Funds	Transfer of Resources & Assets Arrangements will be made to make resources available on an ongoing basis to Ontario communities where possible. CIF has physical, data, and intellectual assets, these will be managed through	Complete transfers in Q1/Q2 2025.

#	Objective / Tasks	Description	Timeline
		<p>the parameters set in the CIF WUP (section 7, page 24, 25, 26).</p> <p>Disbursement of Funds</p> <p>Disbursement of remaining funds to eligible communities will be determined upon final financial reconciliation and closure of the Fund.</p>	Between Q1 and Q2 2025.

CIF staff are to adjust the timeline, found in the figure below, as needed. Changes to the timeline will be reported through updates to the CIF Governance Committees.

The timeline in the figure below was updated from the 2023 Full Year Operations plan and depicts a windup at the end of 2024.

Figure 6.1 Windup Plan Timeline – 2024 Revised

Task	2023				2024				2025	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
CIF Operations										
CIF project closures										
Program & transition support										
Administrative Tasks										
Transfers to AMO for M3RC										
First transfer of surplus CIF funds to communities										
Financial reconciliation (updates to governance/ RPRA at scheduled meetings)										
CIF 2024 extension decision			Sep. 26/28 2023							
Submission of audited financial summary of CIF account										
Final transfer of surplus CIF funds to communities										
Closure of CIF to the public										
Administrative windup (e.g., transfer of assets)									No later than June 30, 2025	
CIF termination										30-Jun-25