



SERVICE LEVEL REVIEW FOR WASTE SERVICES

Council / Governance Issue

To review and provide recommendations for the Town's waste management program, focusing on the service level adjustments, and enhancements to existing waste collection and management systems.

Recommendation

That Administration prepares and amend the Waste Bylaw (18-16), the 2025 Rates and Fees Bylaw to reflect a service level change to every other week garbage pickup, cart size adjustments, fee reductions and other operational changes as outlined within this report by December 31st 2024 for a Q2 2025 roll-out.

Background and Considerations

Administration has explored waste service level changes in alignment with Council's affordability concerns and Utility Policy PS-A-2.0 objective to consider cost-effective and efficient delivery of public utility systems.

During the June 17, 2024 Governance and Priorities Committee meeting the following motion was made:

"That Administration be directed to bring back a report to the Governance and Priorities Committee regarding the financial implications and implementation plan for bi-weekly garbage pick-up, changes to standard cart sizes, and alternate day collection by the end of September 2024."

Utility Rates

Administration conducts an annual review of utility rates to ensure the continued viability of the waste management program. To guide the setting of these rates, an external service provider has updated the utility rate model. Draft rates, detailing the expected financial impacts of the recommended changes, are presented in the attached PowerPoint.

Refinements to these rates may occur as more information on Extended Production Responsibility (EPR) funding becomes available. Although the final rates will be presented within the 2025 Rates and Fees Bylaw, the draft rates were prepared using the best available current information. This ongoing review process ensures that utility rates remain fair, sustainable, and reflective of the actual costs of providing waste management services

If Governance and Priorities Committee and Council approves the recommended service level changes, it is projected that residents would see a 28-35% rate reduction in May of 2025 from anticipated inflated 2025 rates. The 35% reduction is outlined within the attached PowerPoint.

A 28% rate reduction will be seen by residents who currently receive a bundled rate for waste services.

Every other week garbage collection

In 2016, the Town Waste Solutions piloted an every other week garbage collection program in the Mountainview and Woodhaven neighborhoods to explore future opportunities for socially acceptable, economical, and environmentally friendly waste management practices. During the pilot, garbage carts were audited and it was found that there was minimal contamination in the blue (recycling) and green (organics) carts, even on weeks when garbage was not collected. Residents adapted quickly to the new schedule, complied with all requirements, and experienced minimal disruption.

Key Findings from the Pilot

- **Waste Reduction:** Garbage disposal rates were significantly lower in the piloted neighborhoods, recorded at 20 kg/HH/month compared to 28 kg/HH/month for the rest of the town.
- **Resident Support:** A post-pilot survey indicated that 63% of respondents supported bi-weekly garbage collection, provided they could select an adequate cart size.

Benefits of every other week Collection

The pilot demonstrated several benefits, which can be realized town-wide if bi-weekly garbage collection is implemented:

- **Cost Savings:** Reduced collection frequency lowers operational costs.
- **Environmental Impact:** Decreased garbage disposal and increased diversion of recyclables and organics. Reduction in greenhouse gases.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Streamlined waste management processes.

Administration is now recommending a program change to realize the benefits outlined above. Table 1 below shows the proposed changes in the number of pickup weeks.

Stream	Current service	New proposed service
Garbage	52	26
Organics	40	40
Recycling	52	52

EPR Impact

Council previously endorsed through joint municipal letter to the province support for Extended Production Responsibility (EPR) provincial regulation. EPR regulation places the financial responsibility for single use products, packaging and paper on manufacturers.

Administration is currently in discussion with the Producer Responsible Organization (PRO) for single use products, packaging and paper. Administration anticipates that after deliberation the

cost for cart recycling program will transfer to the PRO reducing the recycling bin costs to zero dollars in alignment with Council's affordability objectives.

Cart sizes and Operational Efficiencies:

The current 120L carts have either reached or are nearing the end of their operational life leading to increased damage, higher maintenance demands, and frequent complaints from residents. Collection crews also face operational inefficiencies due to materials often being left stuck in these smaller carts. To address these issues and enhance overall operational efficiency, it is recommended to standardize cart sizes, focusing on both capacity and collection frequency.

Recommendations for Operational Efficiency

Increase and Standardize Cart Size:

- Garbage Carts: Transition from 120L to a 240L standard size. This change will:
 - Maintain Capacity: Ensure that existing users have the same total capacity with every other week collection as they had with weekly collection, thereby maintaining service volume.
 - Operational Efficiency: Reduce the frequency of collection, which lowers operational costs and decreases the wear and tear on collection vehicles.
- Organics Carts:
 - Increase the standard size to 240L. This will:
 - Seasonal Capacity: Better manage seasonal surges in yard waste, especially during spring and fall when leaf and yard waste can constitute up to 64% of organic material.
 - Efficiency: Reduce the frequency of overflow issues, minimizing the risk of alternate cart contamination, or the need for additional collections/manual drop-off.
 - This change is proposed to be phased-in, over time recognizing limitations of waste operational reserves.
- Review and Optimize Cart Options:
 - 180L and 360L Carts: Given their low utilization (<10% over 12 years) and limited manufacturing options, these sizes will be phased out. This decision aligns with best practices and recommendations from the Continuous Improvement Fund, which advises against offering cart sizes with less than 10% household adoption.
- Recycling Carts:
 - Maintain the 240L size as the standard. This size is consistent with automated collection best practices and provides sufficient capacity for residents to manage their recyclables effectively.

Table 2 summarizes the current standard cart size and the recommended standard cart size based on the evaluation completed.

Material & Service Provider	Current Cart Sizes Available	Service Level	Recommended Standard Cart Size	Recommended Service Level
Garbage Collection	120L, 180L, 240L	Weekly collection (52/yr)	240L	Every other week (26/yr.)
Recycling Collection	240 L (240 L & 360 L)	Weekly collection (52/yr)	240L	Weekly (52/yr.)
Organics Collection	120L, 240L, 360L	Variable (40/yr.- weekly and every other week)	240L	Variable (40/yr.- weekly and every other week)

Operational Changes

This section is provided for informational purposes to help understand and reflect on community operational impacts. It should be noted that the implementation details and specific operational decisions are primarily an administrative responsibility. Several changes are anticipated to be rolled-out concurrently with the service level recommendation outlined above and discussed below:

- Alternate day collection
- Collection route changes

Alternate day collection

Alternate day collection schedules different collection days for different waste carts. This approach, utilized by multiple municipalities, addresses issues such as road congestion by reducing the number of trucks on the road compared to same-day collection for all waste streams. It also provides more space for parking and appropriate cart spacing, mitigating cart conflicts and congestion, especially in higher density neighborhoods.

Various models of alternate day collection were considered. One option selected is to collect blue and green carts on the same day, with black carts collected every other week. This method establishes a "diversion" day, emphasizing recycling and organics.

Collection route changes

The proposed changes in this report are designed to optimize collection routes. These changes aim to ensure adequate resources while enhancing service delivery. The following changes are recommended to achieve these outcomes:

- a) Update the collection areas to recognize growth and efficiencies

b) Adjust the collection days to align with the updated areas mentioned in point 'a'.

Implementation timing of these recommendations will be dependent on staff resources and priorities. It is expected that the implementation of any service level and operational changes will be a first priority.

Timeline

Table 3 outlines the proposed timeline set for the recommendations outlined above

Activity	Date	Roll-out
SLT	May 2024	
GPC	September 2024	
Cart purchase - (240L) garbage	Q4 2024	Q1 2025
Bylaw update	Q1 2025	
Community engagement	Q4 2024 to Q2 2025	April 1, 2025

Financial

The proposed recommended changes will require approximately \$0.6M for the purchase of garbage carts in 2025. An additional \$0.6M will be needed to fund the purchase of 240L organics carts at a future date. Purchasing of cart will be done through the waste reserves and if the service level changes are supported by GPC an 2024 budget amendment will be brought forward to council.

Extended Producer Responsibility and reduction of operating costs are expected to offset revue reduction in 2025 resulting in a balanced budget.

Current Policy or Bylaw Analysis

The Waste Bylaw (18-16) and Rates and Fees Bylaw will require an update if Governance and Priorities Committee endorses the recommended service level changes.

Municipal Comparisons

Municipal Comparisons are included in the attached PowerPoint.

CAO Comments

Committee direction is required. The EPR implementation has been fluid and changing and further refined information is expected shortly. Waste collection moving to bi weekly and the resultant cost savings to users will help with overall community affordability which was a key piece of feedback received in the budget.

Attachment(s)

1. Waste Services PowerPoint Presentation

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