

**Subject: Curbside Waste Diversion Policy Implementation Plan and  
Operational Readiness Update**

**File Number: ACS2024-PWD-SWS-0002**

**Report to Environment and Climate Change Committee on 21 May 2024  
and Council 29 May 2024**

**Submitted on May 9, 2024 by Shelley McDonald, Director, Solid Waste Services,  
Public Works Department**

**Contact Person: Nichole Hoover-Bienasz, Program Manager, Long Term  
Planning, Solid Waste Services, Public Works Department**

**613-580-2424 x25145 / Nichole.Bienasz@ottawa.ca**

**Ward: Citywide**

**Objet : Politique sur le réacheminement des déchets déposés en bordure de  
rue : Compte rendu sur le Plan de mise en œuvre et sur les  
préparatifs opérationnels**

**Numéro de dossier : ACS2024-PWD-SWS-0002**

**Rapport présenté au Comité de l'environnement du changement climatique**

**Rapport soumis le 21 mai 2024**

**et au Conseil le 29 mai 2024**

**Soumis le 2024-05-09 par Shelley McDonald, directrice, Services des déchets  
solides, Direction générale des travaux publics**

**Personne ressource : Nichole Hoover-Bienasz, gestionnaire de programme,  
Services des déchets solides, Direction générale des travaux publics**

**613-580-2424 x25145 / Nichole.Bienasz@ottawa.ca**

**Quartier : À l'échelle de la ville**

## **REPORT RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**That the Environment and Climate Change Committee recommend that Council:**

1. **Receive an update on the City-wide communications and engagement plan and operational readiness plan in advance of the firm three-garbage item limit being implemented on Monday, September 30, 2024;**
2. **Approve leveraging the administration of the Yellow Bag Program to accommodate households exceeding three garbage items on any given garbage collection week, based on direction from City Council on June 14, 2023 through Motion no. 2023-16-06, and following consultation with the Solid Waste Planning Council Sponsor's Group;**
3. **Direct staff to consult with property owners and delegates to explore tailored approaches to mitigate enforcement challenges faced by collections staff for properties with common pad collection and properties with two or more units receiving curbside waste collection services and delegate the authority to staff to take the steps necessary to pilot tailored approaches with willing owners, as outlined in the report, and report back to Council on progress in 2025; and,**
4. **Receive the results of the Third-Party Review of data used to inform the Curbside Waste Diversion Policy report, appended as Document 1.**

#### **RECOMMANDATION(S) DU RAPPORT**

**Que le Comité de l'environnement et du changement climatique recommande au Conseil municipal :**

1. **de prendre connaissance du compte rendu sur le Plan de communication et de mobilisation de l'ensemble de la collectivité et sur le Plan des préparatifs opérationnels en prévision de l'application, à partir du lundi 30 septembre 2024, de la limite ferme de trois articles à jeter;**
2. **de donner son approbation pour étendre le Programme de sacs jaunes aux ménages qui déposeront plus de trois articles à jeter pendant les semaines de collecte des ordures, d'après la directive donnée par le Conseil municipal le 14 juin 2023 dans la motion n° 2023-16-06 et suivant la consultation du Groupe de conseillers parrains pour la planification des déchets solides;**
3. **de demander au personnel de consulter les propriétaires d'immeubles et les délégués afin de se pencher sur les approches personnalisées à adopter pour enrayer les difficultés de l'application des règlements que**

**doit affronter le personnel chargé de la collecte des déchets pour les propriétés qui ont un point de collecte commun et pour les propriétés de deux logements ou plus qui ont droit aux services de collecte des déchets en bordure de rue et déléguer au personnel le pouvoir de prendre les mesures nécessaires pour mettre à l'essai les approches personnalisées avec les propriétaires disposés à le faire, selon les modalités exposées dans ce rapport, et rendre compte au Conseil municipal, en 2025, des progrès accomplis;**

- 4. de prendre connaissance des résultats de l'examen indépendant des données qui ont servi à éclairer le rapport relatif à la Politique sur le réacheminement des déchets déposés en bordure de rue et reproduit ci-joint dans la pièce 1.**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

On June 14, 2023, City Council carried [Motion no. 2023-16-06](#) to amend the staff recommendation brought forward as part of the Curbside Waste Diversion Policy Report ([ACS2023-PWD-SWS-0003](#)). The purpose of this report is to respond to this motion by providing members of Council with:

- An overview of the extensive City-wide communications and engagement plan and operational readiness plan in advance of the implementation of the firm three-garbage item limit, which will be effective **Monday, September 30, 2024;**
- Provide the feasibility of leveraging the administration of the existing [Yellow Bag Program](#) for small businesses to cost effectively provide residents with an option to deal with extra waste generated periodically that exceeds the three-garbage item limit on a collection week; and,
- Report on the findings of the independent third-party review, conducted in response to Council direction to verify the data used to inform the development of the City's Curbside Waste Diversion Policy recommendation.

### *Communications and Engagement Plan*

A comprehensive communications and engagement plan has been developed to support increasing program success and diversion program participation once the three-garbage item limit is implemented. The plan includes evidence-based tactics based on

data and insight from previous market research, which identifies distinct audience segments based on attitudes and knowledge about waste diversion in Ottawa.

The communications and engagement plan will be rolled out in four phases:

1. Phase 1: Pre-implementation (June 2023 to June 2024)
  - Looks to increase visibility of solid waste programs to residents and promotes the Waste Collection Calendar, tips on how to sort your waste, and how to obtain a green bin, promoting circular economy events (repair workshops) and other Solid Waste programs.
2. Phase 2: Informational (May 2024 to October 2024)
  - Ensure curbside residents are aware of the program changes, including instructions for proper set-out and awareness of flexible options (i.e. Special Considerations). This will include a mailout to all curbside residents, paid advertising, information videos, Councillor kits (including key messages, FAQs, content and graphics), media interviews, and social media.
3. Phase 3: Waste diversion education (June 2024 to March 2025)
  - Promotion of existing recycling programs (recycling and green bins, HHW events, Take it Back!), waste diversion tools and resources, and information on illegal dumping.
4. Phase 4: Reminder (November 2024 to February 2025)
  - Extensive promotion and advertising placement will continue during this phase. Communications will be adapted as required based on resident participation.

In addition to the advertising and promotion, extensive outreach activities will be held to inform Ottawa residents. This will include door-knocking and education to support residents and encourage participation in diversion programs, with targeted support in low diversion neighbourhoods and areas of the city with higher garbage set-out rates. Outreach will also take place at community events in areas with low diversion rates, and presentations will be available at schools, community and equity deserving groups as per Council directive (materials and educational videos captioned in up to nine languages).

## *Operational Readiness Plan*

As with any major policy change, significant program planning is required to prepare residents and staff. Based on experiences of other municipalities and the City of Ottawa's experience implementing bi-weekly garbage collection (2012) and expanding the Green Bin Program (2019), the items outlined below were identified as point in time risks which staff have considered and developed internal measures to manage:

### City efforts to mitigate historically challenging cases

#### 1. Monitoring curbside set-outs

The approach to monitoring proper curbside set-outs will focus primarily on supporting residents as they adjust their waste disposal habits to align to the new set-out limit, emphasizing education with a graduated transition to addressing instances of non-compliance to include not collecting incorrectly set out garbage. What to expect through the transition period is outlined below and will last three months:

- **October:** All garbage items at the curb are collected, even if the limit is being exceeded. Collection staff to record and leave a custom non-compliance tag indicating the limit and how to properly participate in waste diversion programs;
- **November:** For households exceeding the three-garbage item limit, collection staff to record and leave one item behind with custom non-compliance tag;
- **December (regular process):** Only three garbage items to be collected, and the non-compliance tag affixed to garbage items left behind. Collection operators will continue to document cases of improper set-out and escalate for review and follow-up by a Solid Waste Inspector.

#### 2. Illegal dumping

Cases of illegal dumping will continue to be managed by the City, and residents can report by calling 3-1-1 or [Ottawa.ca](https://ottawa.ca). Under the new policy, additional temporary resources were approved by Council through the 2024 budget to support with monitoring illegal dumping in parks and address the anticipated increase in illegal dumping on private property through the transition period. Illegal dumping is expected to trickle off after three to six months of the new policy being in place when paired with an enhanced temporary monitoring program.

#### 3. Monitoring set-outs at multi-unit locations

Properties with more than one unit generally set their waste at the curb in a designated collection location, which is a common curbside waste collection practice within the industry. This has historically presented challenges for collection operators under a firm item-limit policy as it is difficult to decipher the number of units at each stop and how many items should be collected to ensure compliance with the set-out limit. As is the case today, staff anticipate challenges in enforcing proper garbage set-outs to continue at these properties under a firm three-garbage item limit policy as collection operators cannot distinguish what each unit is setting out.

Properties that have between two and six units, or properties with common pad locations make up just over 17 per cent of units serviced under the curbside collection contract. In the short term, instances with improper set-outs at these properties will be managed on a case-by-case basis and outreach staff will provide targeted and enhanced communications in the lead-up to the policy change. Waste collection staff will be asked to identify problematic locations for enhanced education and monitoring.

Pending Council approval, staff will explore options to mitigate enforcement challenges faced by collections staff at these properties to make it easier to monitor program compliance. Staff will work with property owners and delegates to determine appropriate and proven approaches to implement the three-garbage item limit for properties with common pad collection and properties with two or more units receiving curbside waste collection services, and report back to Council on progress in 2025.

#### Flexible options to complement the three-garbage item limit

As a way to offer flexibility to residents who produce additional unavoidable waste, outlined below are flexible options to be in place once the three-garbage item limit is implemented:

1. Yellow Bag Program (pending Council approval):

Staff determined that it is feasible to leverage the existing Yellow Bag Program for curbside households to purchase and set out additional bags above the three-garbage item limit. Following consultation with the Solid Waste Planning Council Sponsor's Group, it was determined that recommending this option would offer flexibility for residents on weeks they require additional garbage items to be set out.

The proposed expansion can operate within existing resources, and should Council approve, staff will conduct a program review a year following implementation once actual bag sale volumes are known. Bags will be sold in four-packs for \$17.60 plus tax

(\$4.40/bag plus tax) as per pricing approved by Council in the 2024 budget. Yellow bags will continue to be sold in all seven Client Service Centres, ten Home Hardwares, and one BMR. Staff are working with Recreation, Cultural and Facilities Services to explore selling bags at select recreation facilities in wards across the city that are currently underrepresented.

## 2. Special Considerations Program (SCP):

Under the current SCP, diapers and incontinence products are accepted and are collected on the off week of garbage for registered households. The expanded program will allow the following items to also be collected: casts, catheters, colostomy bags, disposable pads, gloves, masks, gowns, aprons, dialysis waste (tubing, filters, disposable towels, and sheets), gastric and nasal tubes, IV bags and tubing, and used dressings. Needles, sharp items, and blood-saturated items will not be accepted as part of this program. Participating residents will continue to follow the current registration process, which must be completed annually to continue receiving service.

## 3. Agriculture Exemption Program:

To provide flexibility for agricultural properties with unavoidable farm waste, staff commissioned a survey in December 2023 to collect self-identified information on waste volumes, disposal habits, and participation in diversion programs. Among the 1,260 agriculture properties with residential homes receiving curbside waste collection services from the City, 304 properties participated in the survey (24 per cent response rate).

Based on feedback received, staff developed an exemption to allow agriculture properties receiving curbside garbage collection to set out unlimited unavoidable farm waste from April 1st to May 31st each year. Waste collection staff will be provided with a list of eligible properties, avoiding the requirement for properties to register. Collection will be dependent on participation in the City's other waste diversion programs.

### *Third Party Review of Data Used to Inform the Curbside Waste Diversion Policy*

Through [Motion no. 2023-16-06](#), staff were directed to undertake an independent third-party review to verify the data used to inform the development of the City's Curbside Waste Diversion Policy recommendation.

It was determined that the data used to inform the staff recommended curbside waste diversion policy were appropriate, reasonable, in line with industry best practice, and used qualified waste management consultants to collect said data. Financial

projections, excess garbage tonnage calculations, and operating and capital costing were deemed reasonable, and recommended to be updated annually. Staff agree with the recommendations, many of which are planned or underway. The complete Waste Data Independent Review is appended to this report as Document 1.

## RÉSUMÉ

Le 14 juin 2023, le Conseil municipal a adopté la [motion n° 2023-16-06](#) pour modifier la recommandation déposée par le personnel dans le cadre du rapport de la Politique sur le réacheminement des déchets déposés en bordure de rue ([ACS2023-PWD-SWS-0003](#)). L'objectif du présent rapport consiste à donner suite à cette motion, en donnant aux membres du Conseil municipal :

- une vue d'ensemble du vaste plan de communication et de mobilisation de toute la collectivité ainsi que du plan des préparatifs opérationnels en prévision de la mise en œuvre de la limite ferme de trois articles à jeter, qui prendra effet le **lundi 30 septembre 2024**;
- de l'information sur la possibilité de valoriser le [Programme de sacs jaunes](#) existant pour les petites entreprises afin d'offrir économiquement aux résidents une option permettant de traiter les déchets supplémentaires générés périodiquement au-delà de la limite de trois articles à jeter pendant les semaines de collecte;
- un compte rendu sur les constatations de l'examen tiers indépendant, mené pour donner suite à la directive du Conseil municipal afin de vérifier les données consultées pour éclairer l'élaboration de la recommandation relative à la Politique de la Ville sur le réacheminement des déchets déposés en bordure de rue.

### *Plan de communication et de mobilisation*

Nous avons mis au point un plan complet de communication et de mobilisation pour permettre d'accroître le succès du programme et d'augmenter la participation au programme de réacheminement lorsque la limite de trois articles à jeter sera mise en œuvre. Le plan prévoit des tactiques fondées sur les statistiques probantes et inspirées des données et de l'éclairage apportés par la précédente étude de marché, qui fait état de segments distincts dans le public cible d'après les attitudes et la connaissance du réacheminement des déchets à Ottawa.

Le plan de communication et de mobilisation se déroulera en quatre phases :



1. Phase 1 : Travaux préalables à la mise en œuvre (de juin 2023 à juin 2024)
  - Tâcher d'accroître le rayonnement des programmes de gestion des déchets solides auprès des résidents et promouvoir le Calendrier de collecte des déchets, en plus de donner des conseils sur le tri des déchets et sur les démarches à accomplir pour obtenir les bacs verts, en faisant la promotion des événements de l'économie circulaire (ateliers de réparation) et des autres programmes de gestion des déchets solides.
2. Phase 2 : Information (de mai à octobre 2024)
  - S'assurer que les résidents qui habitent sur le bord de la rue connaissent les changements apportés au programme, ainsi que les instructions à suivre dans la dépose des déchets, et faire connaître les options flexibles (soit le Programme spécial de collecte des déchets). Il faudra adresser de l'information par la poste à tous les résidents qui habitent sur le bord de la rue, diffuser des publicités payantes, tourner des vidéos d'information, préparer les trousseaux d'information des conseillers municipaux (dont les messages clés, les FAQ, le contenu et les graphiques), tenir des entrevues avec les représentants des médias et diffuser de l'information sur les réseaux sociaux.
3. Phase 3 : Information sur le réacheminement des déchets (de juin 2024 à mars 2025)
  - Promouvoir les programmes de recyclage existants (bacs de matières à recycler et bacs verts, dépôts d'un jour des déchets ménagers dangereux et programme Rapportez-les!), les outils et les ressources pour le réacheminement des déchets, ainsi que l'information sur le déversement illicite des déchets.
4. Phase 4 : Rappel (de novembre 2024 à février 2025)
  - Poursuivre les vastes efforts de promotion et de publicité durant cette phase. Les communiqués seront adaptés au besoin en fonction de la participation des résidents.

Outre la publicité et la promotion, nous exercerons d'importantes activités de rayonnement pour informer les résidents d'Ottawa. Nous irons frapper aux portes et donnerons de l'information pour aider les résidents et les encourager à participer aux

programmes de réacheminement; nous ciblerons les quartiers dans lesquels les taux de réacheminement sont faibles et les secteurs de la ville qui comptabilisent des taux plus élevés de dépôt des déchets en bordure de rue. Nos efforts de rayonnement se dérouleront aussi à l'occasion des événements communautaires dans les secteurs dont les taux de réacheminement sont faibles, et nous présenterons des exposés dans les écoles, dans la collectivité et aux groupes méritant l'équité, conformément à la directive du Conseil municipal. (Les documents et les vidéos éducatifs et informationnels seront sous-titrés dans neuf langues.)

### *Plan des préparatifs opérationnels*

Comme dans tous les changements majeurs à apporter aux politiques, il faut consacrer à ce programme d'importants travaux de planification afin de permettre aux résidents et au personnel de se préparer. D'après l'expérience vécue dans d'autres municipalités et dans la Ville d'Ottawa dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre de la collecte des déchets toutes les deux semaines (2012) et de l'expansion du Programme de bac vert (2019), nous avons constaté que les points exposés ci-après constituent des risques ponctuels, dont le personnel a tenu compte pour élaborer des mesures internes de gestion.

### Efforts de la Ville pour maîtriser les cas traditionnellement difficiles

#### 1. Surveillance du dépôt des déchets en bordure de rue

L'approche à adopter dans la surveillance du dépôt des déchets en bordure de rue pour s'assurer que les déchets sont déposés en bonne et due forme visera essentiellement à aider les résidents à adapter leurs habitudes dans l'élimination des déchets pour qu'elles cadrent avec la nouvelle limite fixée pour le ramassage des déchets, en mettant l'accent sur l'information et en menant une transition graduelle pour tenir compte des cas de non-conformité, y compris les cas dans lesquels la Ville ne ramasse pas les déchets incorrectement déposés. Nous décrivons ci-après ce à quoi nous nous attendons dans cette période de transition, qui durera trois mois :

- **Octobre** : Tous les articles déposés sur le bord de la rue sont ramassés, même si leur nombre dépasse la limite fixée. Le personnel chargé de la collecte des déchets doit relever les cas de non-conformité et apposer des étiquettes de non-conformité rappelant la limite fixée et les formalités à respecter pour bien participer aux programmes de réacheminement des déchets;
- **Novembre** : Pour les ménages dont le nombre d'articles dépasse la limite de trois articles, le personnel chargé de la collecte des déchets relèvera les cas de

non-conformité et laissera un article sur le bord de la rue, sur lequel il apposera une étiquette de non-conformité personnalisée;

- **Décembre (processus normal)** : Seulement trois articles seront ramassés, et des étiquettes de non-conformité seront apposées sur les articles non recueillis. Le personnel chargé de la collecte continuera de relever les cas de non-conformité et de les porter à l'attention d'un inspecteur des déchets solides pour examen et suivi.

## 2. Déversement illicite des déchets

La Ville continuera de gérer les cas de déversement illicite des déchets, et les résidents pourront les signaler en appelant au 3-1-1 ou sur le site [Ottawa.ca](http://Ottawa.ca). Dans le cadre de la nouvelle politique, le Conseil a approuvé, dans le budget 2024, de nouvelles ressources temporaires pour permettre de surveiller le déversement illicite des déchets dans les parcs et pour se pencher sur l'augmentation prévue des déversements illicites sur le domaine privé pendant la période de transition. Le nombre de déversements illicites de déchets devrait baisser après une durée de trois à six mois suivant la mise en place de la nouvelle politique, de concert avec l'amélioration du programme de surveillance temporaire.

## 3. Surveillance des déchets déposés sur le bord des rues dans les immeubles à logements multiples

Les propriétaires et les locataires des immeubles à logements multiples déposent généralement leurs déchets sur le bord de la rue dans les points désignés pour la collecte; il s'agit d'une pratique courante, dans l'industrie, pour la collecte des déchets en bordure de rue. Cette pratique comporte généralement des difficultés pour les préposés à la collecte dans le cadre d'une politique prévoyant une limite ferme pour les articles à déposer, puisqu'il est difficile de connaître le nombre de logements à chaque point d'arrêt et le nombre d'articles à ramasser pour veiller à respecter la limite fixée. Comme c'est le cas à l'heure actuelle, le personnel prévoit des difficultés en continuant de faire appliquer les formalités à respecter dans la dépose des déchets sur le bord des rues dans ces immeubles dans le cadre d'une politique prévoyant une limite ferme de trois articles à jeter, puisque les préposés à la collecte ne peuvent pas faire la distinction parmi des déchets déposés par le propriétaire ou le locataire de chaque logement.

Les immeubles dont le nombre de logements est compris entre deux et six ou ceux qui ont un point de collecte commun représentent à peine plus de 17 % des logements

servis dans le cadre du contrat de collecte des déchets en bordure de rue. À court terme, les cas dans lesquels les formalités ne sont pas respectées dans ces immeubles seront gérés individuellement, et le personnel chargé des efforts de sensibilisation publiera des communiqués ciblés et rehaussés en prévision de l'application de la nouvelle politique. On demandera au personnel chargé de la collecte des déchets d'indiquer les points problématiques afin d'améliorer l'information et la surveillance.

D'ici à ce que le Conseil municipal donne son approbation, le personnel se penchera sur les options permettant de résoudre les difficultés d'application du personnel chargé de la collecte dans ces immeubles afin de faciliter la surveillance de la conformité au programme. Le personnel travaillera en collaboration avec les propriétaires d'immeubles et les délégués pour déterminer les approches confirmées à adopter afin de mettre en œuvre la limite de trois articles à jeter dans les immeubles qui ont un point de collecte commun et dans les immeubles de deux logements ou plus qui ont droit aux services de collecte des déchets en bordure de rue de la Ville, et en rendra compte au Conseil municipal en 2025.

#### Souplesse des options pour assurer l'appoint de la limite de trois articles à jeter

Afin d'offrir de la souplesse aux résidents qui produisent des déchets supplémentaires inévitables, nous exposons ci-après des options souples à mettre en place lorsque la limite de trois articles à jeter sera mise en œuvre :

##### 1. Programme de sacs jaunes (d'ici à ce que le Conseil donne son approbation) :

Le personnel a déterminé qu'il est possible de miser sur le Programme existant de sacs jaunes pour les ménages qui déposent leurs déchets sur le bord de la rue, afin de leur permettre d'acheter et de déposer des sacs supplémentaires au-delà de la limite de trois articles à jeter. Après avoir consulté le Groupe de conseillers parrains pour la planification des déchets solides, nous avons constaté qu'en recommandant cette option, on pourrait offrir de la souplesse aux résidents pendant les semaines où ils doivent déposer sur le bord de la rue des articles supplémentaires à jeter.

L'expansion proposée de ce programme peut être assurée à même les ressources existantes, et si le Conseil municipal donne son approbation, le personnel de la Ville procédera à un examen du programme une année suivant sa mise en œuvre lorsqu'il connaîtra le volume réel de sacs vendus. Les sacs seront vendus en paquets de quatre au prix de 17,60 \$, taxe en sus (soit 4,40 \$ le sac, taxe en sus), selon les prix approuvés par le Conseil municipal dans le budget 2024. Nous continuons de vendre les sacs jaunes dans les sept Centres du service à la clientèle, dans 10 établissements

Home Hardware et dans un établissement BMR. Le personnel se penche actuellement, en collaboration avec la Direction générale des loisirs, de la culture et des installations, sur la vente des sacs dans certains établissements récréatifs dans les quartiers de tout le territoire de la ville qui sont actuellement sous-représentés.

## 2. Programme spécial de collecte des déchets (PSCD)

Dans le cadre du programme actuel, les ménages inscrits peuvent déposer un sac de couches ou de produits d'incontinence pour le faire ramasser dans la semaine suivant la collecte des ordures. Le programme étendu permettra aussi de ramasser les articles suivants : les plâtres, les cathéters, les poches pour colostomie, les compresses, les gants, les masques, les blouses de protection et les tabliers jetables, les déchets de dialyse (tubulures, filtres et serviettes et draps jetables), les sondes gastriques et nasales, les sacs et tubulures pour perfusion intraveineuse, de même que les pansements souillés. Les aiguilles, objets contondants et articles saturés de sang ne seront pas acceptés dans le cadre de ce programme. Les résidents participants continueront de suivre le processus actuel d'inscription, auquel ils doivent se soumettre chaque année pour continuer d'avoir droit à ce service.

## 3. Programme d'exemption de l'agriculture

Pour offrir de la souplesse aux agriculteurs propriétaires qui produisent des déchets agricoles inévitables, le personnel a commandé, en décembre 2023, un sondage pour recueillir de l'information autoévaluée sur le volume des déchets, les habitudes dans l'élimination des déchets et la participation aux programmes de réacheminement. Parmi les 1 260 propriétés agricoles dont le logement a droit aux services de collecte des déchets en bordure de rue de la Ville, 304 agriculteurs propriétaires ont participé au sondage (ce qui donne un taux de réponse de 24 %).

En s'inspirant des commentaires qui lui ont été adressés, le personnel de la Ville a mis au point une exemption afin de permettre aux agriculteurs propriétaires qui ont droit aux services de collecte des déchets en bordure de rue de déposer un volume illimité de déchets agricoles inévitables chaque année dans la période comprise entre le 1<sup>er</sup> avril et le 31 mai. On remettra au personnel chargé de la collecte des déchets la liste des propriétés admissibles, ce qui leur évitera d'avoir à s'inscrire. La collecte sera indépendante de la participation aux autres programmes de réacheminement des déchets de la Ville.

*Examen indépendant des données consultées pour éclairer la Politique sur le réacheminement des déchets déposés en bordure de rue*

Dans la [motion n° 2023-16-06](#), le Conseil municipal demande au personnel de mener un examen tiers indépendant afin de vérifier les données consultées pour éclairer l'élaboration de la recommandation relative à la Politique sur le réacheminement des déchets déposés en bordure de rue.

On a déterminé que les données utilisées pour éclairer la politique recommandée par le personnel pour le réacheminement des déchets déposés en bordure de rue étaient appropriées, vraisemblables, qu'elles concordaient avec les règles de l'art de la profession et qu'elles ont été recueillies en faisant appel à des experts-conseils compétents dans la gestion des déchets. Les projections financières, les calculs du tonnage des déchets excédentaires et le calcul des frais d'exploitation et des dépenses en immobilisations ont été jugés raisonnables, et on a recommandé de les mettre à jour chaque année. Le personnel de la Ville est d'accord avec les recommandations, et nombre d'entre elles devraient être mises en œuvre ou le sont déjà. Le lecteur trouvera ci-joint, dans la pièce 1, le texte complet de l'Examen indépendant des données sur les déchets.

## **BACKGROUND**

On June 14, 2023, City Council approved [Motion no. 2023-16-06](#) to amend the staff recommendation brought forward as part of the Curbside Waste Diversion Policy Report ([ACS2023-PWD-SWS-0003](#)) to amend the current garbage limit (six items bi-weekly) to reflect a firm limit of three garbage items to be set-out every two weeks. This item limit will apply to both garbage and/or bulky items, as detailed in the [Solid Waste Management By-law \(No. 2012-370\)](#). This motion also directed staff to explore leveraging the administration of the City's existing [Yellow Bag Program](#) for small businesses to offer flexibility to residential households who may exceed the garbage limit on occasion, and provide options for garbage limit exemptions for agricultural properties. Further, Council approved [Motion no. 2023-18-17](#) at the following Council meeting on July 12, 2023 to reintroduce staff's recommendation to expand the current [Special Considerations Program](#) to include additional unavoidable waste.

Once in place, the new policy will allow households serviced under the City's curbside collection contract to set out three garbage items every two weeks. A garbage item can be a garbage bag, a 140 litre container or bulky item that is set-out within the size and weight parameters outlined in the Solid Waste Management By-law (No. 2012-370).

Households that currently place their garbage in a container may continue to place multiple smaller bags within. There will continue to be no limit to how much material residents can divert through properly sorted blue and black and green bin programs, offering an additional incentive to fully participate in those programs and practice more sustainable waste management habits.

Ottawa is amongst the most permissive municipalities in Ontario when it comes to curbside waste collection. While diversion rates have generally been improving over the past 14 years as Ottawa residents responded to the implementation of various Council approved policies, program changes, education and outreach campaigns, the curbside household diversion rate remains below the rate of comparator municipalities across Canada, at 54 per cent in 2023. Despite industry best practice being to regularly monitor waste program performance and make diversion policy recommendations to promote increased participation in waste reduction and diversion programs, Ottawa's last curbside garbage policy change was updated and implemented in 2012. Implementation of a new waste diversion policy aligns with Provincial legislation and municipal initiatives to potentially increase the City's waste diversion rate, helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with the presence of organics in landfill, and supports turning more waste into new products and resources.

### **Efforts to Reduce Waste to Landfill**

The City owns and operates the Trail Waste Facility Landfill which is an important City asset. Air space continues to be consumed daily and every decision made on waste reduction and diversion has implications on the life of the asset. As previously shared in the Draft Solid Waste Master Plan ([ACS2023-PWD-SWS-0005](#)) received by Council in December 2023, if changes aren't made to waste disposal habits, the Trail Waste Facility Landfill could reach capacity between 2034 and 2035. Siting and developing a new landfill or implementing an alternative residual management technology can take up to 15 years and cost the City and taxpayers between \$350 and \$500 million dollars. Future disposal options will continue to require community participation in waste diversion programs to comply with Provincial regulations and reduce the amount of unnecessary waste being processed as garbage.

Council has adopted several program enhancements over the past 14 years to reduce waste to landfill, increase the city-wide waste diversion rate and program participation, and encourage more sustainable waste management habits:

### *Weekly Green Bin collection*

In April 2007, Council approved the establishment of a source-separated organics program in the City of Ottawa, one of the first full curbside programs in Ontario. In 2010, the Green Bin program was rolled out to residents as a weekly collection service, serving as an alternative way to dispose of household organic waste. This provided residents with weekly collection of food and organic waste to keep this material out of the landfill and put it to use as compost and other beneficial products. It also supported the City in achieving higher waste diversion targets. The response by Ottawa residents to the implementation of the Green Bin program supported a city-wide waste diversion rate increase of seven per cent.

### *Shift to bi-weekly garbage collection*

In 2012, the most recent waste policy came into effect – shifting garbage pickup from weekly to bi-weekly. Other service levels approved as part of the Solid Waste Service Level Review report ([ACS2011-ICS-ESD-0002](#)) included weekly Green Bin collection, weekly leaf and yard waste collection, bi-weekly collection of Blue and Black Box on alternating weeks, bi-weekly garbage collection, and bi-weekly Special Considerations Program for registered residents to collect diapers and incontinence products, which alternates with garbage collection week.

Although that shift was met with frustration and hesitation, residents have adjusted and the City has seen an increase in participation to the organics and recycling programs which has helped to prolong the life of the Trail Waste Facility Landfill. The tonnage of annual garbage collected following the change to bi-weekly garbage collection decreased as residents started to use their green, blue and black bins more consistently, and this change resulted in a five per cent increase to the city-wide diversion rate.

### *Expanded Green Bin to accept plastic bags and dog waste*

On March 28, 2018, Council approved a major policy enhancement to expand items accepted in the green bin starting July 2, 2019 ([ACS2018-PWE-GEN-0003](#)), to include plastic bag liners as a way to reduce the “yuck factor” – which was identified by residents as one of the top barriers to participating in the program – and the disposal of dog waste into the green bin.

As outlined in the Source-Separated Organics Program Update report in May 2021 ([ACS2021-PWE-SWS-0001](#)), the city-wide waste diversion rate increased an additional



three per cent after the implementation of the Green Bin Program Enhancements, which is in line with original projections for the estimated impact of this program change. The program changes were also coupled with a comprehensive year-long communications, education, and outreach strategy to maximize awareness in the community to increase program participation. While this was not the implementation of a new curbside policy, it had an indirect impact on the waste stream as it allowed residents flexibility to dispose of additional items in the green bin, rather than in their garbage.

### *Solid Waste Master Plan*

Later this year, staff will present the Final Solid Waste Master Plan (Waste Plan) for Council approval. The Waste Plan will provide the overall framework, direction and goals for solid waste management, diversion and reduction over the next 30 years. When the Waste Plan Roadmap report was approved by Council in 2019 ([ACS2019-PWE-GEN-0007](#)), component projects were identified to be worked on concurrent to the Waste Plan's development to supplement the Waste Plan and ensure momentum on key Solid Waste files continued in the short term, including the recommendation of a curbside waste diversion policy to reduce waste to landfill, increase participation in waste diversion programs and to move the City closer to achieving Provincially legislated organics diversion targets. Increasing waste diversion from landfill in the short-term (five-year horizon) was identified as a priority by Ottawa City Council, residents, and stakeholders.

Each new policy or policy enhancement which has been introduced has had a positive impact on our waste diversion rate. Industry best practice indicates that policies need to be regularly reviewed and updated in order to see and encourage improvement in community waste diversion participation.

### **Implementation of Existing Solid Waste Programs**

In addition to implementing policy enhancements to support efforts to divert waste from landfill, the City has introduced alternative programs in recent years to offer additional solid waste services to the community as a way to accommodate special circumstances and unavoidable waste:

#### *Yellow Bag Program*

The City's [Yellow Bag Program](#) was initiated by Council in 2005 as part of the Integrated Waste Management Master Plan ([ACS2005-PWS-UTL-0008](#)), which directed Solid Waste Services to deliver collection services through a Yellow Bag Program to

“non-residential establishments” that met eligibility criteria. This program was intended to be administered on a full cost recovery basis to provide waste collection services for small non-residential properties (small businesses) to receive curbside waste collection service levels.

Following feedback from the business community and meeting with the Business Advisory Committee, staff further consulted with the community and provided an implementation update to Council in 2006 through the Yellow Bag Program for Non-Residential Establishments ([ACS2006-PWS-UTL-00010](#)). This plan emphasized the need for the new program to support the City’s recycling programs. By doing so, participants would not only benefit from the cost effectiveness of the program but enhance the City’s waste diversion programs and save valuable landfill space. The Yellow Bag Program was rolled out in June 2006.

In response to the service level changes to curbside garbage collection in 2011, amendments to the Solid Waste Management By-law were approved by Council in 2012 ([ACS2012-COS-ESD-0023](#)) to reflect those changes. This amended the definition of the Yellow Bag Program, as it reads today, as “a curbside collection program for small eligible Industrial, Commercial and Institutional establishments that use specific yellow garbage bags approved by the Deputy City Manager.”

Under the current program for small businesses, this optional program offers bi-weekly curbside garbage and blue / black box recycling collection for small non-residential establishments such as small retailers, daycares and community organizations. There are currently 300 small businesses registered for the Yellow Bag Program where participants place the distinctive yellow garbage bags at the curb for collection. The yellow bags identify the stop for the waste collection operators, and the sale of the bags recovers the cost of this non-profit program.

Since the charge to the participant is only on the waste portion of the service, there is an incentive for participants to maximize their participation in recycling programs, so they are not required to purchase as many yellow bags.

### *Special Considerations Program*

The current curbside collection service levels for curbside households were approved by Council in 2011 and implemented on October 29, 2012. One service level approved as part of the Solid Waste Service Level Review report ([ACS2011-ICS-ESD-0002](#)) included a bi-weekly Special Considerations Program for diapers and incontinence products, with collection to take place on the week alternating with garbage collection.

The Special Considerations Program was established as a result of feedback received through the 2011 Service Level Review stakeholder review process to accommodate residents requiring collection of diapers and incontinence products on the weeks without scheduled garbage collection. Under the current program, participating households can place one bag of diapers and/or incontinence products out for collection on the alternating week from garbage collection.

As part of the motion which approved the new curbside waste diversion policy, Council directed staff to provide Committee and Council with a comprehensive implementation and communication plan to commence as soon as possible and in advance of the proposed implementation date. The discussion section of this report outlines the different components which support the rollout of the new policy.

## **DISCUSSION**

This report serves three distinct purposes:

1. Provide an overview of the extensive City-wide communication and engagement plan and the operational readiness plan, highlighting how the City has prepared its operations and processes in advance of the implementation of the firm three-garbage item limit, which will be effective ***Monday, September 30, 2024***.
2. Provide Council with the feasibility of leveraging the administration of the existing Yellow Bag Program for small businesses to cost effectively provide residents with an option to deal with extra waste generated periodically that exceeds the three-garbage item limit on a collection week, as directed by Council through [Motion no. 2023-16-06](#).
3. Report on the findings of the independent third-party review, conducted in response to Council direction to verify the data used to inform the development of the City's Curbside Waste Diversion Policy recommendation.

As outlined in the June 2023 [Curbside Waste Diversion Policy](#) report, the average garbage set-out for curbside households is 2.1 garbage items bi-weekly, with 85 per cent of household set-outs being three or less garbage items, meaning approximately 15 per cent of households will need to adjust their waste disposal habits to adhere to the amended policy of three garbage items bi-weekly.

This section of the report will outline the communications and engagement plan that has been built on industry best practices to educate and prepare residents for the policy

change to go into effect and highlight the operational readiness of the City to implement, monitor and report on the success of the policy once in place.

### **Communications and Engagement Plan**

Recognizing that the implementation of a firm three-garbage item limit is the first garbage-specific collection policy change since the shift to bi-weekly garbage collection in 2012, strong communications and community outreach are required and will be in place to guide residents through the policy change and support a successful rollout. The plan will focus on maximizing resident awareness of the program change, how to properly participate in the program, and provide support for households adjusting waste disposal habits. A communications toolkit will be circulated for members of Council to share through their communications channels to share key messages to maximize reach with residents.

The communications and engagement plan was informed by lessons learned from previous campaigns, including the shift to bi-weekly garbage collection in 2012, and the expansion of the Green Bin program to accept plastic bag liners and dog waste in 2019. The plan has been developed to support increasing program success, improve diversion program participation and includes evidence-based tactics based on the City's previous campaigns to best reach residents.

Objectives included in the strategy aim to ensure all residents receiving curbside garbage collection are aware of the new garbage limit and what constitutes proper set-out at the curb. This includes building awareness of other program changes including the agricultural exemption and the expanded Special Considerations Program. The campaign will also encourage residents to maximize their participation in all existing recycling and diversion programs (green and blue/black bins, Take it Back!, Household Hazardous Waste events), as well as promote the tools and resources to assist residents to divert more waste, including the Waste Explorer, Collection Calendar app, and waste diversion tips and other helpful information on [ottawa.ca](http://ottawa.ca).

#### *Audience and Messaging*

Key audiences for the communications and engagement plan include the following:

1. All residents receiving curbside garbage collection, including multi-unit properties and common pad locations;
2. Residents living in areas with lower waste diversion rates;

3. Owners/operators of properties eligible to participate in the Agriculture program; and,
4. Residents whose first language is neither English nor French.

In addition, audiences will be broken down into distinct segments, as identified in the [2018](#) and [2020](#) market research. Every aspect of the campaign will be informed by the data and insights of the market research that categorized audiences based on attitudes and knowledge about waste diversion in Ottawa.

This program change will impact all curbside households – not just those who routinely exceed the garbage limit and do not regularly participate in diversion programs. This means that regardless of knowledge and attitudes about waste, residents will need to receive the same basic information about the program change in plain and simple terms. To ensure the City-wide information campaign is appropriate for a wide range of audiences, messaging explaining the need for the program change will be neutral and fact-based.

Further, there will be elements of the plan that focus on promoting waste diversion and supporting waste disposal habit change which has been informed by market research. Considering the new garbage item limit is higher than the citywide average, it will still accommodate a fair amount of material set out at the curb as garbage, meaning further waste reduction will only be achieved if residents are 1) motivated to generate less waste and recycle more and 2) follow through with actions to reduce waste.

#### *Phased Approach*

The communications and engagement plan is being rolled out in four phases, as highlighted below:

##### Phase 1: Pre-implementation (June 2023 – June 2024)

- Intention is to make solid waste programs more visible to residents ahead of the launch of a City-wide campaign;
- Includes communication materials launched in late 2023 and early 2024 to promote the Waste Collection Calendar, tips and interactive quiz and contest on how to sort your waste, and how to obtain a green bin, promoting circular economy events (repair workshops) and other Solid Waste programs; and,

- This phase also includes the communications for the 2023 and 2024 Council and committee decisions on the three-garbage item limit.

Phase 2: Informational campaign (May 2024 – October 2024)

- Detailed information about the service change will be communicated during this phase. Messaging will address the following questions:
  - What is the change? Why is the change necessary?
  - When will it happen?
  - What are the benefits of participating?
  - What happens if you do not participate?
  - What about illegal dumping?
  - How can the City assist residents this process?
- There will also be instructions for proper set-out, how to register for expanded Special Considerations Program and agricultural exemptions;
- Tactics will include a mailout to all residents receiving curbside collection, paid advertising and information videos in multiple languages, Councillor kits (with FAQs, content and graphics), media interviews, promotion on the City's advertising assets such as digital screens, and social media; and,
- Dedicated community outreach activities.

Phase 3: Waste diversion education (June 2024 – March 2025)

- Like in Phase 1, promotion of existing recycling programs (recycling and green bins, HHW events, Take it Back!), waste diversion tools and resources, will address illegal dumping.

Phase 4: Reminder (November 2024 – February 2025)

- Continued placement of informational campaign with paid advertising and on free/owned assets and communications channels. Communications will be adapted as required based on resident participation.

### *Outreach Activities*

Communications activities will be supplemented with a three-month community outreach program which was built based on lessons learned and successes achieved through the Green Bin program changes outreach strategy, which included deployment of an in-community waste diversion outreach team. Community outreach activities include Curbside Education Ambassadors (CEA), who will provide door-knocking and education to support residents and encourage participation in diversion programs, with targeted support in low diversion neighbourhoods, communities with common pad collection and areas of the city with higher garbage set-out rates.

Outreach will also take place at various community events in communities with low diversion rates and virtual or hybrid presentations will also be available (in real-time or pre-recorded) with schools, community and equity deserving groups as per Council directive. To address the Councillor King [motion No. 2023-16-08](#) at the Council meeting on June 14, 2023, the communications and engagement plan focuses on education and outreach first in communities where there is currently a lower diversion rate in the curbside waste diversion program. Communities are being identified using the results of the city-wide set-out study, through front line staff experience, and staff will also reach out to Councillors offices to identify unique areas within their communities. In addition, targeted outreach will include communications in up to nine languages to maximize the reach of the campaign in the leadup to the policy change being in effect.

The plan will expand the educational campaign to schools and community housing by identifying barriers and challenges under current programming and look to identify and address concerns. Further, information about the program changes will be distributed to the four Community and Social Service community offices around the city. The communications and outreach team will be connecting directly with members of Council, environmental and internal stakeholders, schools, equity deserving groups, the general public, as well as other community organizations, to provide a suite of education resources such as door-to-door outreach in pre-identified neighbourhoods, booth presentations, and information sessions in various wards.

### *Performance Measurement*

As detailed above, the communications and engagement plan is designed to be a multi-phased campaign that began in 2023 and will ramp up three months prior to program implementation with policy specific messaging and will continue until Q1 2025. With a campaign of this magnitude, it is imperative that staff are reviewing performance

measurements on a continual basis so that adjustments can be made to the campaign as necessary. For this reason, the communications and engagement plan has been designed to be scalable, flexible and adaptable based on ongoing performance measurement and emerging issues, recognizing the nature of this policy change requires a shift in waste disposal habits to promote more sustainable waste management practices.

In order to get a full understanding of the success following implementation of the new curbside waste diversion policy, the communications and engagement plan itself needs to be monitored and measured, as do changes to the diversion rate. The statistics and data gathered on the communication and outreach strategy will allow staff to ensure that the campaign is reaching its intended audiences. This will be monitored through impressions, email opening rates, video retention rates, clicks, 311 calls, comments on social media, and outreach interactions with residents.

### **Feasibility of Leveraging Yellow Bag Program**

Included in the motion to approve the firm three-garbage item limit was a direction to staff to explore the feasibility of leveraging the existing Yellow Bag Program for small businesses to permit curbside residents to purchase additional bags on weeks they require flexibility to put out additional garbage items.

Through the City's extensive [public engagement in 2021](#) on the policy options explored through this project, respondents were asked to select their preferred option for a curbside waste diversion policy. Engagement included a panel survey of 1,000 respondents (representative sample) and a comprehensive online public survey which received over 20,000 responses. The top rationale for respondents selecting a partial Pay-As-You-Throw model was the flexibility offered by the program in allowing households to set-out additional garbage above the limit if needed (versus a firm limit that does not permit additional waste to be set out for collection), similar to how the Yellow Bag Program would be leveraged.

Staff determined that it is feasible to leverage the existing Yellow Bag Program for residential households as an option to purchase and set out additional bags above the three-item garbage limit, and staff believe this can be done within existing resources. Following consultation with the Solid Waste Planning Council Sponsor's Group, it was determined that recommending this option would offer flexibility for residents on weeks they require additional garbage items to be set out (ex. move ins/outs, family deaths,



after holidays/celebrations, rooming houses with larger set-outs, multi-generational households, etc.).

Should Council approve, staff would include the Yellow Bag Program element as part of the fulsome program review following program implementation once actual bag sale volumes are known and reassess resource requirements and report back to Council as directed in 2027. If approved by Council, bags will continue to be sold in four-packs for \$17.60 (\$4.40/bag plus tax) as per pricing approved by Council in the 2024 budget for yellow bags, which is based on full cost recovery of distributing the bags, collecting them and landfilling the waste. The initial supply of extra bags will be absorbed through the existing capital funds approved by Council in the 2024 budget for the implementation of the new policy change.

Today, Yellow Bags are sold in all seven Client Service Centres (CSC), ten Home Hardware's, and one BMR. These locations are not distributed equally throughout Ottawa, some wards are overrepresented while others have no representation. Should Council approve leveraging the existing Yellow Bag Program for curbside residential households, staff recommend expanding sales locations to fill existing location gaps. The majority of current retailers are in agreement to continue sales under an expanded program. Staff are working with CSCs and Recreation, Cultural and Facilities Services with exploring selling bags at select recreation facilities in wards across the city that are currently underrepresented. A map highlighting existing and proposed locations is appended to this report as Document 2. Libraries were explored as a sales location option but were deemed operationally unfeasible by the Ottawa Public Library, as they are not properly set up.

Additionally, Community and Social Services (CSSD) has agreed to participate in a pilot which would provide them with bags on site at their four Community Service hubs to distribute bags as required by residents who currently receive City services at these locations and may need to obtain bags. Solid Waste Services will provide bags to each location, and CSSD will track how many bags are distributed quarterly as a way to measure program participation.

Should Council wish to leverage the existing Yellow Bag program to accommodate curbside households, the program would not immediately be expanded to include online sales due to the high cost of mailing (estimated \$4.73 per four-pack) and the anticipated impact on staff resources for order management and fulfillment. Once staff have reviewed bag sales and required resources after one year, in addition to resident feedback, further recommendations would be considered to include expanding to more retail locations through a formal Request For Proposal procurement process, and then

allowing staff time to explore the most cost-effective online ordering solution (i.e. in-house or contracting out) prior to expanding to a more fulsome program.

## **Operational Readiness Plan**

### *Curbside Set-out Monitoring*

The approach to administer the new policy will be critical to achieve reduction of waste going to landfill and increase the waste diversion rate in the City, as identified by industry research and experiences of other municipalities that have implemented new curbside waste diversion policies. Staff are recommending an enhanced, phased-in implementation approach that focuses first on resident education with a graduated transition to addressing instances of non-compliance which would include not collecting incorrectly set out garbage. This approach is based on municipal best practice toolkits published by the [Continuous Improvement Fund](#). This will include maximizing use of existing diversion programs, and adherence with the container size and weight limits outlined in the Solid Waste Management By-law.

The approach to monitoring improper curbside set-out will be initiated with a gradual, phased-in approach, lasting approximately three months. It will be important to allow flexibility to notify and educate those not complying in a positive way to support shifting disposal habits to align with the new policy. Through conversations with other Ontario municipalities that have implemented curbside diversion policies, they indicated that a gradual implementation proved to be effective in educating the community on a new policy through the transition period.

During the collection cycles in October (the first phase of the transition period), set-outs not in compliance with the new policy (those that exceed three garbage items at the curb) will continue to receive garbage collection in the traditional manner. However, collectors will record addresses and leave behind a notification in the form of a custom reminder pamphlet to advise residents of the program requirements and how to properly participate. This will be shared with Solid Waste Inspectors and the outreach team for more targeted outreach. Given that the garbage will be collected, the pamphlet would be left on a blue or green bin. If no such containers are left at the curb, the waste collection operator would be instructed to record the address for follow up by a Solid Waste Inspector or outreach staff to provide education material.

Through the collection cycles in November (the second phase of the transition period), non-conforming households would be recorded by collection staff and receive notification by receiving the pamphlet reminder affixed to one rejected non-compliant

garbage item, while the remainder are collected. Finally, through December collection cycles (the third and final phase of the transition period), only three items would be collected at the curb, and the non-compliance pamphlet would be affixed to garbage items left behind.

This strategy assists to reinforce the new policy and not risk losing the positive momentum and participation while minimizing the negative burden on those that have yet to shift their disposal habits or are unaware of the changes.

Once the transition period is complete, the ongoing approach to monitoring curbside set-outs will have the driver of the waste collection vehicle documenting the non-complying address, which will allow the City to keep record of non-complying households to allow proper follow up, including targeting education and outreach and to measure program success. The role of the contractor will be to leave waste at the curb that is in violation of the amended Solid Waste Management By-law and follow the escalation process as required to allow Solid Waste Inspectors to ensure instances are properly tracked, monitored, and addressed by speaking with the residents.

The ongoing approach to monitoring proper set-outs will be critical to the program's success in achieving waste reduction to landfill and increased waste diversion. This is supported by industry research and experiences of other municipalities and was the most supported approach according to [public engagement](#). When asked to rate the level of agreement with common enforcement approaches, 61 percent of public survey responses and 67 per cent of panel responses agreed or felt neutral with the City not collecting incorrectly set out garbage.

Through the 2024 budget process, two permanent Solid Waste Inspectors were identified as a pressure to support curbside collection, intended to focus on education and application of the new curbside policy.

### *Monitoring Illegal Dumping*

Illegal dumping refers to the improper disposal of waste in a place where the waste was not generated. In the case of the curbside waste diversion policy being updated, it refers to household waste being disposed of in public spaces such as waste receptacles on private property, parks and ditches. When this occurs, public health concerns may arise should proper cleanup not occur in a timely manner, and remediation in response to illegal dumping can be a costly service to the City.

A temporary increase in illegal dumping is anticipated with any updates to curbside waste collection, which tapers off in the first three to six months with proactive monitoring, education, and enforcement. Educating residents identified as illegally dumping waste and enforcing the City's by-laws for those continuing to illegally dump in high-volume areas was a strongly encouraged approach shared by other municipalities that have implemented new curbside diversion policies.

The enhanced communications campaign around illegal dumping will have an emphasis on operations (convenient disposal), communications (information as prevention), and enforcement as a last resort. Messaging will aim to raise awareness around the economic, environmental and health risks of illegal dumping, complemented by a call to action based on what residents should do when they come across materials that have been dumped illegally. In addition to paid advertising and social media, Councillor kits will be developed to ensure elected officials are well equipped to share the City's messaging through their own communications channels.

The City currently manages cases of illegal dumping, and residents can report instances by calling 3-1-1 or online at [Ottawa.ca](http://Ottawa.ca). Under the current model, when cases of illegal dumping are reported, it is reported to By-law and Regulatory Services (private property, parks and other public spaces) or Roads Services (roadside), and response time is dependent upon staff resourcing and capacity. A priority system is used to determine how quickly an officer must respond to a call from immediate to 96 hours depending on the information provided. Various investigation techniques are used such as witness accounts, sorting through waste, video footage if available, license plate information, regular patrols by Officers. By-law and Regulatory Services and Roads Services work together to remove the illegally dumped waste which is then disposed of at the Trail Waste Facility Landfill.

In addition, the City collects waste from 1,004 parks year-round and an additional 59 parks seasonally. This includes the collection of approximately 3,000 waste bins across the city. The updated approach to monitoring illegal dumping in public spaces will shift the responsibility to Parks collection staff for monitoring and Solid Waste Inspectors for escalation and follow up with residents. If illegal dumping is found, Parks collection staff in Solid Waste Services will escalate the call to a Solid Waste Inspector, who would go on-site, search for identifying information, document findings and begin the escalation process. This would begin with a Notice of Violation if staff can identify where the waste was generated, and graduate to fines for repeat offenses, and would take the discarded waste with them for proper disposal. Staff will continue to work closely with partners in Service Ottawa to ensure the various service units are properly tracking instances of

illegal dumping to monitor trends to ensure effective communications tactics are developed.

The addition of two temporary resources were identified as part of the 2024 budget process to support with the monitoring of illegal dumping in parks through the transition period, and an additional two temporary resources allocated to By-law and Regulatory Services to support enhanced enforcement of illegal dumping on private property (ex. commercial properties). Illegal dumping is expected to trickle off after the first three to six months of the new policy being in place, when paired with a temporary monitoring program. Upon the rollout of the new policy, information sessions will be held with Solid Waste collection staff, and Inspectors to outline the new process and clarify roles and responsibilities to keep our public spaces clean and ensure residents are aware of the new program.

Service requests submitted in relation to illegal dumping instances will be monitored to track frequency within the first year of program implementation as a way of measuring trends for future program reviews and adjustments as required.

#### *Monitoring Proper Set-out at multi-unit locations*

Properties which have between two and six units, or properties with common pad locations generally set their waste at the curb in a designated collection location, which is a common curbside waste collection practice within the industry. This has historically presented challenges for collection operators under a firm item-limit policy as it is difficult to decipher the number of units at each stop and how many items should be collected to ensure compliance with the set-out limit. As is the case today, staff anticipate challenges in enforcing proper garbage set-outs to continue at these properties under the three-garbage item limit policy as collections operators cannot distinguish what each unit is setting out.

Across the City of Ottawa, there are approximately 7,500 properties (approximately 28,000 units) which have more than one residential unit and less than seven units; including duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, fiveplexes, and sixplexes, and an additional 735 properties (approximately 25,000 units) receiving common pad collection, representing about 17 per cent of units receiving waste collection under the curbside collection contract. Figure 1 below illustrates an example of a set-out for a duplex, and Figure 2 shows an example of a location receiving common pad waste collection.

Figure 1: Example of garbage set-out at a duplex location



Figure 2 - Example of common pad collection location



Legal and registered properties with multiple units will be able to set out three-items per unit on a bi-weekly basis (i.e. a property with three units can set out up to nine garbage items), to align with the curbside garbage rate per unit. Single family homes with basement apartments or coach homes will be entitled to set out three-items collectively on a bi-weekly basis as they pay one curbside garbage rate for the entire property.

Pending Council approval of the Yellow Bag Program being leveraged to include curbside properties, residents would be able to purchase yellow bags on collection weeks they require additional items to be set-out at the curb for collection. Given that 85 per cent of all curbside garbage set outs are three garbage items or less bi-weekly, staff do not anticipate major issues at properties with multiple units, however there will be pockets across the city where challenges exist today that will likely continue.

In the short term, instances with improper set-outs at multi-unit properties will be managed on a case-by-case basis and outreach staff will provide targeted and enhanced communications in the lead-up to the policy change. Staff will work with property managers and/or delegates to identify potential solutions to ongoing challenges. Waste collection staff will be asked to identify problematic locations for enhanced education and monitoring once the new limit is in place as a way to maximize awareness and participation in waste programs.

Subject to Council approval, staff will explore and execute longer term options to mitigate enforcement challenges faced by collections staff at these properties to make it easier to monitor program compliance. As a first step, staff will work with property owners and their delegates to determine appropriate and proven approaches to implement the three-garbage item limit for properties with common pad collection and properties with two or more units receiving curbside waste collection services, engage in pilot projects with willing properties and report back to Council on progress in 2025.

#### *Expansion of the Special Considerations Program*

The City operates a Special Considerations Program (SCP) which offers eligible residents the ability to set out one garbage bag or container of diapers and incontinence products for collection on the off week when garbage is not collected. This program started in 2012 alongside the introduction of bi-weekly garbage collection as a result of concerns raised by residents. At the City Council meeting on July 12, 2023, [Motion no. 2023-18-17](#) was moved to reintroduce the staff recommendation to expand the Special Considerations Program to include additional unavoidable waste that was highlighted by residents through [public engagement](#) in 2021.

Residents will continue to register annually for the program and waste will be collected on the off week of their garbage collection. While the program expansion will continue to allow one garbage bag or container of diapers/incontinence products and other specified unavoidable waste for collection on the off week when garbage is not collected, staff will work with applicants on a case-by-case basis if their unique

circumstances require additional set-out above the one additional bin/bag on the off week of regular garbage collection.

The expansion of the SCP is to encompass certain previously excluded waste, to accommodate residents that have unavoidable waste on the off week of garbage collection that cannot be discarded within the three-item garbage limit. Listed below is an overview of items that are currently listed as accepted, followed by a list of items which will be accepted as part of the expanded program.

Items currently accepted in SCP:

- Diapers; and,
- Incontinence products.

Item to be accepted in the expanded SCP:

- Casts;
- Catheters;
- Colostomy bags (empty and rinsed);
- Disposable pads;
- Gloves, masks, gowns, and aprons;
- Dialysis wastes (tubing, filters, disposable towels, and sheets);
- Gastric and nasal tubes (empty and rinsed);
- IV bags and tubing (empty and rinsed); and,
- Used dressings.

Items which will continue to be excluded from the SCP as they are considered hazardous waste and require specialized disposal:

- Needles;
- Sharp containers; and,
- Blood-saturated items.



All residents within the City of Ottawa who generate special consideration items and require additional garbage collection must go through the proper registration process to receive collection, which can be completed either through [ottawa.ca](http://ottawa.ca) or by calling 3-1-1. During registration, residents would continue to acknowledge and accept a disclaimer, which serves as an understanding that the program exclusively covers items specified in the SCP. This will only apply to residents that are participating in waste diversion programs. Residents also recognize that including additional items not covered by the SCP can result in disqualification from the program. Annual registration is required to continue receiving service.

Trends in registration or increase in participation as a result of the expanded program will be monitored and considered as part of program reviews to support any future amendments to the Special Considerations Program.

#### *Agriculture Exemption Program*

Given the inherent nature of farm properties and their potential for generating additional unavoidable farm waste, in excess of the upcoming three-garbage item limit, Council directed staff to develop an exemption option for these properties. This exemption aims to allow farm properties with residential homes receiving curbside garbage collection services to dispose of additional unavoidable farm waste, which may include non-recyclable packaging materials, bale wrap and feed bags. It will allow agriculture properties receiving curbside garbage collection to set out unlimited unavoidable additional farm waste to be set out for collection during a designated period. This will only apply to agriculture properties with residential homes that are participating in waste diversion programs.

There are approximately 1,260 agriculture properties with residential homes that receive curbside waste collection services from the City. Staff commissioned a survey in December 2023 to collect self-identified information on waste volumes, disposal habits, and participation in diversion programs to develop an informed exemption program that aligns with the unique needs of farm property owners in the community. A summary of results are outlined below:

- 24 per cent response rate (304 properties);
- Waste generated by season was among the most relevant factors for additional unavoidable waste volume with Spring at 61 per cent, followed by the Summer (60 per cent), Fall (59 per cent), and Winter (43 per cent);

- 60 per cent of agricultural properties self identified as setting out over the three-garbage item limit due to unavoidable waste that cannot be recycled through existing programs;
  - Just under three per cent of properties that self identified as setting out over three-items of waste bi-weekly self identified that they do not participate in recycling programs;
  - Approximately 25 per cent of properties that self-identified as setting out over three-items of waste bi-weekly self-identified that they do not participate in the Green Bin Program;
- Unavoidable waste identified included bale wrap, feed bags, and packing material.

Based on the feedback received, staff have developed an exemption policy to allow agriculture properties receiving curbside garbage collection to set out unlimited unavoidable farm waste from April 1 to May 31 each year. The expectation will be that additional waste accumulated throughout the year can be disposed of at no additional cost during that time. Farms also have the option of disposing additional waste free of charge at the Trail Waste Facility Landfill per Council approved policy. There will be no registration requirements, instead, waste collection staff will be provided with a list of agriculture properties to indicate that they can collect additional garbage items on the designated collection days. Collection will be dependent on participation in the City's other waste diversion programs. If participation is not occurring with the other waste diversion programs, collections staff will not collect waste and will follow the same protocol as regular residential curbside collection (i.e. informational pamphlet).

Through future updates to the City's Take it Back! Program, staff will explore opportunities for retailers/industry partners to take back bale wrap, feed bags, and other non recyclable farm related packing material as a potential means to limit these items from going to landfill.

#### *Additional Bin Delivery*

With the goal of increasing waste diversion efforts in the community, staff have been preparing their operations in anticipation of the new item limit coming into effect. Recognizing the opportunity for an increase in overall participation in recycling and Green Bin programs, staff expect an influx of requests for new bins. To prepare for this, a budget pressure of \$235K was approved by Council through the 2024 budget in

advance of the new item limit being implemented. The City intends to maintain its commitment to deliver a requested recycling and green bins within 21 days and staff are confident they can fulfill any influx in requests within this timeframe.

### **Transition Preparation**

In advance of the program being launched, work has been underway to develop processes to have in place through the transition period, to ensure staff are prepared to support residents as they adjust to the new policy while tracking progress and program success.

Staff anticipate an initial increase in the number of residential complaint calls, both to 3-1-1 as well as Councillors' offices, when the new policy is first launched when negative program pressure is expected to be at its highest. It will be imperative for the City to be proactive to prepare messaging in response to these inquiries. A Councillor Toolkit will be developed and shared with all members of Council to enable promotion in their respective wards, which will include key messaging, FAQs and social media content to support and educate residents. While complaints may appear overwhelming at the onset, staff have learned from previous policy changes as well as that experienced by other municipalities that this will taper off after the first few collection cycles.

To prepare for the anticipated increase in public inquiries and complaints, Solid Waste Services has remained engaged with staff in Service Ottawa to ensure proper messaging has been developed for 3-1-1 agents in response to calls.

### **Third Party Review of Data Used to Inform the Curbside Waste Diversion Policy**

As part of [Motion no. 2023-16-06](#), staff were directed to undertake an independent third-party review to verify the data used to inform the development of the City's Curbside Waste Diversion Policy recommendation. Staff issued a memorandum to members of Council on November 9, 2023 titled [Third Party Review of data used to inform the draft Solid Waste Master Plan](#) (SWMP) to report on the findings of this independent review specific to the SWMP. This section of the report and Document 1 serves as a follow up, speaking specifically to the Curbside Waste Diversion Policy data review. The objective of the independent review was to verify if:

- All City-provided data to inform the Curbside Diversion Option (CDO) report were complete and calculated in-line with municipal best practices;
- All assumptions made in the CDO's technical documents are reasonable to support the project team's recommendations;

- The methodologies used to interpret the data are appropriate for the purposes of informing the CDO; and,
- All data and conclusions are accurate.

It was determined that overall, the data and documents used to inform the staff recommended curbside waste diversion policy were appropriate, reasonable, in line with industry best practice, and used qualified waste management consultants to collect said data. Financial projections, excess garbage tonnage calculations, and operating and capital costing were deemed reasonable but are recommended to be updated annually.

Recommendations as part of this review include repeating set-out study over a four-season period and refining and updating the cost estimates to implement a policy change. Staff agree with the recommendations of the report, with many of the recommendations already planned for implementation or underway. The complete Waste Data Independent Review is appended to this report as Document 1.

## **Next Steps**

### *Communications and Outreach*

Industry best practices state that communicating a major municipal program change should roll out three to six months prior to the change going live. As such, communication activities have already begun and will ramp up in the four months leading up to program implementation, as outlined earlier in this report. Pending Council approval to leverage the Yellow Bag program to include curbside residential households, staff will be prepared to launch the City-wide communications campaign in June, with communications ramping up after Labour Day weekend in the lead up to the policy change being effective as of September 30, 2024. Staff are confident that should Council approve leveraging the administration of the Yellow Bag program, that the lead time will be sufficient to make bags available at designated retail locations, as outlined in this report, to support the successful launch of the program.

### *Updates to the Solid Waste Management By-law*

Per the Council direction through Motion no. 2023-16-06, authority was delegated to the General Manager of the Public Works Department to make the related amendments to the Solid Waste Management By-law No. 2012-370 to implement the changes to the curbside collection policy. These changes will go into effect once the policy is implemented and will be updated on Ottawa.ca.

Should any additional By-law amendments be required, staff will include recommendations through the Solid Waste Management By-law Review, to be tabled at Environment and Climate Change Committee in Q4 2024. This report will seek Council approval to repeal and replace the existing Solid Waste Management By-law (2012-370), with an updated By-law to ensure alignment between the City's current strategic, legislative, and operational objectives in the delivery of Solid Waste Services.

### *Policy Performance Reporting*

With approval of the city-wide garbage limit being set above the current average garbage set-out, the change in diversion rate may not yield the estimates modelled by Dillon Consulting through the development of the original staff policy recommendation. In response, staff have developed performance measures to track participation in diversion programs to monitor trends in tonnage reduction, instances of illegal dumping, and an increase in participation in alternative programs such as the expanded Special Considerations Program and purchasing additional bags to set out on garbage collection day. Through annual reporting on the Solid Waste Master Plan, staff will provide Council and the public with updates on the outcomes of the policy change and diversion trends. To align with industry best practice, and as directed by Council, staff will conduct a full program review in 2027 with potential recommend amendments as required to help further increase diversion efforts as residents continue to adjust their waste disposal habits. This will follow the transition of the provincial Blue Box Program to individual producer responsibility and implementation of the new collection contract, both taking place in 2026, allowing time for the new policy to roll out and give residents a few years to alter their waste disposal habits to adapt to changes at the curb.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with the report recommendations.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal impediments associated with Committee and Council's receipt of this report for information.

### **COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)**

This is a City-wide report.

### **ADVISORY COMMITTEE(S) COMMENTS**

There are no advisory committee comments for this report.

## **CONSULTATION**

Extensive consultation took place with members of Council, members of various stakeholder groups, and Solid Waste subject matter experts to develop the Communications and Outreach Strategy and operational readiness plan for the launch of the three-item garbage limit.

## **ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

Changes to Ottawa's curbside waste diversion policy will be implemented in accordance with the [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation \(IASR\)](#) of the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#), (AODA) in addition to the City's [Accessibility Design Standards \(ADS\)](#), where applicable.

The current Special Considerations program will continue, allowing one garbage bag or container of diapers/incontinence products if circumstances require its collection on the off week of regular garbage collection. Additionally, based on public feedback provided during consultations, the expansion of this program to also allow non-hazardous medical waste collection on these off weeks will greatly benefit many people with disabilities and older adults across the city. While the program expansion will continue to only allow one garbage bag or container of diapers/incontinence products and non-hazardous medical waste for collection on the off week when garbage is not collected, staff will work with applicants on a case-by-case basis if the need to collect larger quantities are identified.

Staff will continue to engage with stakeholders, including the Accessibility Office and the Accessibility Advisory Committee, to receive feedback in the leadup to program implementation and engage with stakeholders with disabilities to help identify and mitigate barriers and challenges from a cross-disability perspective and understand the unique needs and feedback from residents with disabilities, and support reducing or eliminating barriers and challenges faced by these residents.

## **ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The recommendations documented in this report are consistent with the City's [Comprehensive Asset Management](#) Program objectives. The implementation of the Comprehensive Asset Management Program enables the City to effectively manage existing and new infrastructure to maximize benefits, reduce risk, and provide safe and reliable levels of service to community users. This is done in a socially, culturally,

environmentally and economically conscious manner. Waste diversion programs divert recyclable material, food, organic and leaf and yard waste from the Trail Waste Facility Landfill, helping extend its life, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions and supporting circular economy solutions by turning waste into useful products.

## **CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

All efforts to increase solid waste diversion, particularly of organic material, aligns with the Energy Evolution Strategy. It is notable that the Energy Evolution Strategy assumed the then-proposed provincial organics landfill ban would come into effect. Given that plans for this ban have been deferred, any additional community and City efforts support increasing organics diversion will slowly work toward the goal of meeting the ambitious target of 98 per cent organics diversion.

As an added benefit, the communication and engagement plan is anticipated to increase public awareness regarding recycling and organics programs, to encourage behaviour change in resident disposal habits. Providing residents with information will reinforce awareness regarding the importance of waste diversion, which will encourage residents to be more proactive and intentional about waste disposal in public spaces as well, contributing positively to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in the city of Ottawa.

## **DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY IMPLICATIONS**

On June 14, 2023, City Council approved [Motion no. 2023-16-06](#) to amend the staff recommendation brought forward as part of the Curbside Waste Diversion Policy Report ([ACS2023-PWD-SWS-0003](#)). A clause of this motion included the below:

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that authority be delegated to the General Manager of the Public Works Department to make the related amendments to the Solid Waste Management By-law No. 2012-370 to implement the changes to the curbside collection policy, as outlined in this motion.*

Work is underway to make amendments to the Solid Waste Management By-law to reflect the updated three-item garbage limit once it is effective on September 30, 2024.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

A key goal upon implementation of the firm three item garbage limit will look to increase participation in waste diversion and recycling programs, supporting municipal and provincial targets to divert organic waste. Any increase in the diversion rate as a result

of this policy would help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and limit waste being sent to the Trail Waste Facility Landfill.

## **INDIGENOUS, GENDER AND EQUITY IMPLICATIONS**

Communicating a major change to a core City service such as garbage collection requires targeted outreach and the provision of communications in languages other than English and French. Key pieces of the informational campaign, including some advertising and outreach materials, will be available in the following languages: Arabic, Farsi, Somali, Spanish, Turkish, Anishinaabemowin and Inuktitut.

EnviroNics data will help to inform the execution of the communications plan to ensure new and existing multilingual resources and guides on waste diversion are distributed to the areas of the city with a high concentration of residents whose first language is among those listed above.

Information about the program changes will be distributed to the four Community and Social Services community offices around the city. Further, Community and Social Services has agreed to participate in a pilot which would provide them with yellow bags on site at their four hub sites to distribute bags as required by residents who currently receive City services at these locations and may need to obtain bags. The communications and outreach team will also explore hosting information sessions at these facilities to reach the communities they serve (i.e. older adults, low-income residents, immigrants, new Canadians, and persons with disabilities).

The outreach strategy focuses on education and outreach first in communities where there is currently a lower diversion rate in the curbside waste diversion program. Communities are being identified using the results of the city-wide set-out study and through front line staff experience.

The statistics and data gathered on the communication and outreach strategy will allow staff to ensure that the campaign is reaching the distinct audience segments, in particular in low participating areas. This will be monitored through impressions, email opening rates, video retention rates, clicks, 311 calls, comments on social media, and outreach interactions with residents.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

This report outlines all risks and mitigation measures.

## **RURAL IMPLICATIONS**



Per [Motion no. 2023-16-06](#), approved by Council on June 14, 2023, staff were directed to develop a process through implementation planning to accommodate agricultural properties receiving curbside collection services to be permitted to dispose of additional unavoidable farm waste, so long as they are actively participating in waste diversion programs. The approach to the exemption program for designated agricultural properties is outlined in the Discussion section of this report.

### **TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

The implementation of a firm three item garbage limit aligns with the proposed [2022-2026 Term of Council priority](#): a city that is green and resilient. Outcomes that support this priority include:

- Reducing emissions associated with the City's operations and facilities; and,
- Increasing waste reduction and diversion.

### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Document 1: Waste Data Independent Review (Curbside Waste Diversion Policy)

Document 2: Yellow Bag Sale Locations

### **DISPOSITION**

Upon Committee's receipt of this report, staff will commence with the implementation of the communications and outreach strategy plan and the implementation of the three-item garbage limit.