

Assisted Waste Collections Program

ISSUE

Relocating curbside solid waste roll-out carts to and from the collection location can be problematic, and in some cases, impossible for residents with physical limitations. The City of Saskatoon (City) currently offers a limited program to residents to assist with rolling out their curbside collections. Saskatoon residents who are not currently part of the program have expressed the need for a similar service to provide equitable service to all residents.

This report provides recommendations for expansion of the *Assisted Waste Collection Program*.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services recommend to City Council that the Assisted Waste Collections Program be expanded as outlined in this report.

BACKGROUND

In 2007, the City moved from having 300-gallon communal back lane garbage collection, to each residence having their own individual roll-out cart. Because of this change in service model, there was a one-time-only offer to residents with physical limitations who met a pre-defined acceptance criterion to receive assistance from waste collections staff to roll out their carts for collection. This Special Needs Garbage Collection program was intended to be phased out as existing residents moved from their homes.

In 2018, the City hosted an engagement workshop to obtain feedback for revision of the program. The results of this engagement are attached to this report in Appendix One. The following key values were proposed, for the design and delivery of a potential future program:

- Transparency and openness of program offered;
- Fairness (of eligibility and access);
- Equity (in level of services and cost);
- Affordability (conscious of constrained incomes); and
- Coordination (between service providers).

In February 2020, Administration presented the *Accessibility Considerations for Curbside Solid Waste Collection* decision report to the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services. Three options were presented, and the following was resolved:

“That the Administration proceed with Option 3 to initiate a project to identify alternatives to expand the accessible Citywide curbside (single-

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The expanded *Assisted Waste Collections Program* will address the barriers residents currently have regarding relocating their roll-out cart to and from the collection location on collection day. The revised program would include assistance relocating the black (garbage), blue (recycling) and eventually green (organics) carts to the collection location from a predetermined location on the residents' property. The Administration recommends maintaining the existing arrangements for provision of this service by the same provider as the regular collection service (City of Saskatoon for black and green carts, Loraas for blue carts).

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process that involves completing an application and providing a qualified health care practitioner's assessment of the applicant's condition. Applications will be available online and on paper. Applications will be reviewed by an independent occupational therapist, hired by the City, to confirm eligibility for the program. The specific requirements to be eligible for the program will be determined by the occupational therapist on a case-by-case basis with the primary determination being the inability of all residents of a dwelling to roll out their carts for collection. The application process is visually outlined as an attachment in Appendix 2.

The City's website will be updated with revised information that reflects the changes to the program. The program will be promoted through collaboration with not-for-profit organizations, Access Transit Saskatoon, and other health services, to inform residents who would most benefit from the service. Following review of applications, residents will be notified of their eligibility and those approved for the program will receive communications informing them of the requirement to contact the City should their situation change where they no longer require this service.

Upon enrollment in the program, a representative from Waste Stream Management will meet with the resident to coordinate and document the location of the carts and any other pertinent information. This information will be provided to Loraas Recycle so that the service can be provided consistently for all types of carts. Depending on the circumstance, Loraas Recycle may also need to visit the home prior to providing the service.

The *Assisted Waste Collections Program* will also be provided to qualified residents for their curbside organics (green) cart when that program is implemented in spring of 2023.

The 212 existing users will continue to receive the service and will not be required to submit a new application. The launch of the expanded program is not expected to disrupt or change service levels for existing participants.

To ensure that residents enrolled in this program remain eligible, regular audits will be performed. Collections staff will document any concerns they notice in the field to the program administrator to follow up with the resident. Dwellings enrolled in the program that have changed ownership or changed billing information will be reviewed to confirm eligibility.

The intent for this revised program is to begin accepting applications in the third quarter of 2022 and begin providing service for new locations in early 2023.

At this time, no considerations are proposed for individuals with short term physical limitations that would otherwise make them eligible for the program. The *Assisted Collections Program* is intended to be a long-term solution in providing equitable waste collection to residents who meet the criteria.

Many other jurisdictions throughout Canada offer similar programs. Appendix 3 details the results of a benchmarking initiative investigating similar programs in other municipalities. These program features were considered in preparing the expanded program outlined in this report.

A Triple Bottom Line (TBL) review was completed to enhance the *Assisted Waste Collections Program* in achieving more Triple Bottom Line outcomes. The revised program offers significant social improvements for residents living with physical limitations for a marginal increased cost to the City and slight increase in GHG emissions. Key benefits and impacts include:

- **Environmental** – The expanded program will be offered to all waste streams (garbage, recycling, organics) to minimize the potential for improper waste disposal and missed collections for households that are unable to move their carts. Expanding the number of households in the program will increase the number of rear loader collection trucks required to operate the service, which may result in a marginal increase in greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Social** – Households who are eligible for the service will receive assistance, the program provides equitable waste collection for all residents and allows those with physical limitations the freedom to continue living independently in their homes. There is no additional financial barrier to accessing the program as regular waste collection fees will cover the cost of this service, quality of life is improved by reducing the risk of potential falls and lifting injuries to those who are susceptible.
- **Financial** – The expanded program could create efficiencies in delivering the service through economies of scale, improving route and program management; and allowing those with physical limitations to use waste services more easily and reliably. Serving more households will increase the operational costs while also providing value to more residents who are eligible at the same cost as other waste collection services.
- **Governance** – Expanding the service abides by the City's value of People Matter; demonstrates continuous improvement in waste collection services; all applicants will be assessed based on the same eligibility criteria for a fair and transparent registration process, which remedies current limitations.

The following are further considerations as the program is developed and implemented, and potential future improvements:

- the program should have clear and concise eligibility criteria with an easy-to-use application process developed with participant needs in mind;
- conducting engagement in the future would help to ensure the service continues to meet participants' needs; and
- future investment in more environmentally efficient collection trucks would reduce fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

Administration will ensure that appropriate measures are in place to protect the privacy of all applicants who have applied for this service.

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Table 1: Assisted Collection Annual Funding

Year	Budget	Purpose
2022	\$50,000.00	Program development and initiation, Occupational Therapist services
2023 +	\$120,000.00	Additional equipment rentals, staffing, program improvements

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Other implications of expanding this service are minimal.

Administration is finalizing an Administrative Procedure outlining how this program will be operated. Stakeholders at the City and its service partners will be informed of the changes in the process. Applications will be available in the third quarter of 2022, and the service will commence in early 2023.

1. Accessible Waste Collection Workshop Summary
2. New Participant Registration Flow Chart
3. Benchmarking Results

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