

### Curbside Organics Program: Cart Size

#### ISSUE

While the standard cart size for the launch of the Curbside Organics Program has been determined, consideration for alternate size options is required for townhouse complexes and other property types that have a small or no yard. For these properties, a 360 L cart may be too large given the configuration of the site, and individual residences may have little or no yard waste. Additionally, some properties contract out yard care maintenance and are not responsible for the disposal of their yard waste.

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services recommend to City Council that the criteria outlined in this report be used to determine which properties are eligible for a smaller cart size as part of the initial deployment of the Curbside Organics Program in 2023.

#### BACKGROUND

All properties that are eligible to receive curbside garbage (black cart) service (individual carts) are intended to be included in the Curbside Organics Program. This includes some townhouse complexes and/or multi-family properties. Other multi-unit residential properties will be included in the Multi-Unit Organics Program, which will be developed and piloted in 2022-2023. Container requirements for properties in this program will be determined as part of this work.

At its [January 10, 2022 meeting](#), SPC on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services received a report for information that provided an update on the Curbside Organics Program. The report indicated that a 360 L (96 gal) cart would be the standard cart size for the program. Details on cart specifications can be found in Appendix 1.

Concerns have been raised by some residents in townhouse properties related to the lack of need for a 360 L cart due to the following circumstances:

- Their property layout only has a communal yard and the property or condo board contracts out yard maintenance;
- Little or no yard waste is produced at the individual level; and
- Units are often adjoining with other units and space for storing carts is limited, as is space for collections.

#### DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

In order to address these concerns, the feasibility of providing a smaller cart size for certain types of properties was investigated. An initial review showed that there are approximately 3,500 curbside service addresses in 150 townhouse complex properties (unique sites) with no individual yard. This is about 4.7% of the total number of service addresses planned in the Curbside Organics Program.

Diversion of organic materials from the waste stream remains the primary goal of the Curbside Organics Program. Data from the *2019 4-Season Waste Composition Report* showed that the curbside residential garbage stream had about 28% Yard Waste and 25% Food Waste and Organics<sup>1</sup>. Given this information, it can be assumed that a property without yard waste will have much less organic material in their green cart and lower cart capacity needs.

While a standard cart size of 360 L is still recommended for the curbside program, the Administration recognizes the need for a smaller cart size of 240 L (64 gal) for those properties where it can be determined that there is little or no yard. The Administration is recommending that the following criteria would be used to determine which properties involved in the curbside program would be eligible for a smaller cart size as part of the initial deployment:

- Properties that have a property code that identifies it as a townhouse complex;
- All habitable units on the site must, upon visual inspection, have little or no yard area that individual habitable units are responsible for maintaining. If they do have a small yard, the average yard size of all units on the site would need to be less than 500 sq ft; and
- Proof of a service contract for yard maintenance of a communal yard will be used as supporting documentation.

The Administration recognizes that there may be single-family dwellings and other property types that may also prefer a smaller cart size due to their property configuration or composting habits. Accommodating individual preferences as part of the initial deployment creates significant complexities from a planning and operational aspect that could result in delays to the initial deployment of the program.

As part of the planning for variable waste utility model for curbside garbage (black cart) program in 2023, the Administration will further explore the option of offering a smaller cart size for organics to all households that want it and make a recommendation based on demand, cost, and operational considerations.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Cost savings on the purchase price of carts would be around \$25,000 to \$30,000 based on an initial purchase of 3,500 240 L carts. These savings would likely be offset by complexities requiring additional resources for deployment of varying cart sizes. The fixed monthly organics utility rate would stay the same for every service address, as there are no significant operational cost savings for a smaller cart size. Further, the current organics utility project does not provide capability for a variable rate due to schedule constraints in implementing the billing software for the launch in 2023.

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<sup>1</sup> 2019 City of Saskatoon Waste Characterization Study – Summary Report, AET Group Inc., Feb 3, 2020

## **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

### Operational Impacts

The vehicle fleet that the City is planning to use for the Curbside Organics Program would have the capability to collect both the 240 L and 360 L cart sizes. Procedures would be developed for tracking and managing the additional cart size.

### Procurement

The current Request for Proposal (RFP) includes the provision for both 240 L and 360 L carts. Public procurement is underway, and a decision is needed prior to award of a contract to ensure procurement timelines are not delayed and accurate cart numbers can be ordered.

### Education and Communication Plan

An Education and Communication Plan is being developed for the Curbside Organics Program. The plan will include the messaging and tactics to communicate which properties will be receiving a smaller cart size and the rationale for the decision.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Following direction from City Council, Administration will proceed with finalizing the review of properties and plan deployment of carts accordingly. The cart procurement RFP will also be awarded.

## **APPENDICES**

1. Cart Specifications

### Report Approval

Written by: Daniel Mireault, Project Manager

Reviewed by: Akinniyi Akinpelu, Senior Project Management Engineer  
Brendan Lemke, Director of Water and Waste Operations

Approved by: Angela Gardiner, General Manager, Utilities and Environment