

Multi-Unit Garbage - Service Review and Next Steps

ISSUE

Administration has completed a review of the current service model for multi-unit garbage. This was undertaken in parallel with work to develop the multi-unit organics program. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of findings from the garbage service review and outline next steps for completion and implementation of a revised multi-unit garbage strategy.

BACKGROUND

Engagement with stakeholders was carried out and a report with findings went to City Council on September 10, 2018: [Multi-Unit Residential Proposed Changes to Waste Management – Engagement Results](#). Multi-unit garbage was one of the topics included in this engagement. During engagement, areas of improvement for garbage and recycling were identified to be considered during the development of a multi-unit organics program.

The [Solid Waste Program Funding Models: Implications and Considerations for Change](#) report from 2021, provides an overview of solid waste program funding model considerations that relates to multi-unit garbage. In 2024, funding for curbside garbage collections moved from property taxes to become utility funded.

CURRENT STATUS

There are approximately 40,000 habitable units at 900 sites in Saskatoon that receive multi-unit waste services (2024 data). The City of Saskatoon (City) provides a weekly garbage collection to multi-units (apartments and condominiums) primarily using metal bins, funded through property taxes. All multi-units are eligible for weekly garbage collections provided that they meet the [Waste Collection Design Guidelines](#). Property owners, managers or condominium associations obtain their own metal bins and can apply for a grant to offset the costs of the bin. Multi-units may also choose to contract services privately. Approximately 82% of multi-units receive service from the City while 18% have private contracts for garbage service. Multi-units typically will contract private collections services if they do not meet the Waste Collection Design Guidelines or because they require a higher level of service.

The multi-unit sector will likely experience changes in how waste is managed over the next several years. Multi-unit recycling may be included as a residential recycling program that will transition to a provincially managed Full Extended Producer Responsibility program for household packaging and paper products. The addition of organics diversion is also in progress and will add a second diversion stream to multi-unit properties.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

A review of multi-unit garbage was completed to help ensure services are aligned with the needs of the multi-unit sector and to identify areas for improvement. Appendix 1 –

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Multi-Unit Garbage - Background and Service Review provides a background of multi-unit garbage programs and further details on the service review. Service levels, cost, and other waste services (current and future) were looked at as part of the analysis.

An important consideration of the multi-unit sector is the various types and sizes of multi-unit properties. Each property has unique site considerations and servicing needs. The service review looked at different property types and developed a list of recommendations to help address the unique needs of the multi sector.

Appendix 1 includes detailed recommendations for five areas of change and improvement that will be considered as part of the revised multi-unit garbage strategy.

Table 1 provides a summary:

Table 1 – Revised Multi-Unit Garbage Strategy

Finance
Look at options to remove multi-unit garbage from property tax. Explore moving multi-unit garbage from property tax to a direct billing - per unit or variable service pricing per container.
Service Levels
Investigate additional service offerings (such as additional collections, waste area cleaning, premium services etc.) and look at a pricing model that accurately reflects costs of providing service.
Waste Design Guidelines and Property Engagement
Update and explore further design regulations or guidelines for solid waste storage in new multi-unit residential properties to align with changes. Look at ways to better engage developers and property managers to improve waste collection servicing at new and existing properties.
Asset Management
Review the Multi-Unit Dwelling (MUD) Metal Garbage Bin Grant. As part of the review explore a service model that includes City ownership and maintenance of metal bins and other containers for multi-unit service.
Route Optimization
Ensure future route planning utilizes new technologies and is completed regularly to ensure routes are optimized for customer satisfaction and efficiency.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Future cost and financial implications will be brought forward in future reporting.

NEXT STEPS

Future work for multi-unit garbage is divided into three phases. Phase 1 (2025/2026) will look at business cases and decisions required to implement the multi-unit garbage strategy. Phase 2 (2026/2027) will look at developing a detailed implementation plan. If approved by City Council, Phase 3 (2028/2029) is when implementation of the changes will occur.

APPENDICES

1. Multi-Unit Garbage: Background and Service Review

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