

Eastview Waste Collection Location Review

ISSUE

City Council directed the Administration to investigate the possibility of moving the primary waste collection location for the Eastview neighborhood from the back lane to the front street. The following provides a summary of the operational assessment and outcomes of engagement with residents of the Eastview neighbourhood.

BACKGROUND

The following inquiry was made by Councillor B. Dubois at the meeting of City Council held on June 26, 2024:

"That the Administration report back on the review process (including community engagement plan) and resources needed to undertake a pilot project for the conversion of the Eastview neighbourhood from rear lane to front street solid waste, recycling and organics cart collection. This pilot project would create an opportunity to evaluate the process in advance of the planned comprehensive review of the remaining rear lane collection locations throughout the city in 2025."

An [information report](#) to the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services on September 3, 2024, provided background information and details on a process to assess the change in location of waste collection and proposed engagement activities. Thereafter, City Council directed Administration to proceed with the pilot project.

CURRENT STATUS

The City of Saskatoon (City) collects waste from both the front street and back lane, with approximately 25% of properties collected in the back lane. Back lanes are difficult to maneuver with large equipment such as collection vehicles and back lane collections are typically less efficient, experience increased damage to property and equipment, degrade the condition of the back lane, and are more prone to illegal dumping, vandalism, and scavenging. Front street collection issues typically include conflicts with on-street parking and concerns about curb appeal and cart storage.

There are approximately 1,200 properties in Eastview neighbourhood that receive bi-weekly curbside garbage, organics and recycling collection. The neighborhood is collected predominantly in the back lane with a few exceptions where operational restrictions require collections in the front street.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The review included an operational analysis and engagement with the community in order to evaluate the preferred location for waste collection.

Waste Collection Operational Review

To evaluate the collection location in the Eastview neighbourhood, the Administration completed an operational review as outlined in Appendix 1. Nine criteria were used to compare the impact on collection operation. The back lanes in Eastview contain permanent obstructions, limited sight lines, maneuverability issues, and risks from snow and ice build up. The shoulders of back lanes as well as snow and ice can also cause issues for residents and collections vehicles with how carts are placed. These are all common issues with collections in the back lanes of Saskatoon. Eastview does not have overhead utilities, or significantly narrow lanes which reduces the risk of collecting in these back lanes.

The efficiency of waste collections depends on several factors such as, the neighborhood characteristics (lot size, hazards, on-street parking, road width, etc.), operator experience, set-out rates and the weather and road conditions. A recent analysis of GPS and set-out data indicates that there is approximately a 10-15% decrease in the amount of time taken to complete front street collections compared to back lane. Providing back lane collection can also necessitate additional snow plowing or snow removal in the winter, and the weight of the garbage trucks can lead to increased rutting, potholes and maintenance of alleys. The impact of rear lane collection on lane maintenance and associated costs will be reviewed in future city-wide collection location reporting.

Administration also reviewed available data on safety incidents and bylaw complaints as summarized below. Three safety incidents were recorded in the neighbourhood from 2022 to 2024. This include a collection vehicle getting stuck in the back lane and two incidents where large tree limbs were impacted by a collection vehicle. Forty-seven bylaw complaints were recorded in the neighbourhood from 2022 to 2024. Carts left out in the back lane after collections were the highest type of reported complaint. A neighborhood enforcement blitz for carts compliance was completed in the Spring 2017 and 26% (409) of carts were left on the public-right-way after their scheduled collection window. After reinspection this dropped to 15% (121) and after a third inspection 6% (12) of carts were left out and those properties were issued a notice of violation.

Reviewing the operational data available, some issues were noted including bylaw and safety concerns. Operational impacts comparing collection locations in the back lane and front street collection were considered minor in nature. Operations would benefit from moving the collection location from the back lane to the front street primarily from an efficiency perspective.

Engagement Process

A letter outlining proposed changes and dates for engagement activities were sent out the week of January 27th to all properties with active curbside services in the waste utilities. An Engagement Page on the City's website was created with information, a link to the survey and contact information for the City. A virtual open house was held on February 12th, where City staff presented information and allowed for questions and

feedback. The online survey was extended one week to accommodate additional feedback and closed March 6th.

Engagement Findings

In total there were 650 responses to the survey. After being sorted for redundancies and incomplete answers, 529 surveys were analyzed with 44% of households responding to the survey. A report of the engagement activities and findings is attached in Appendix 2 and is posted on the project's Engage page.

The results of the engagement activities indicate there is a clear preference for the Eastview neighbourhood to remain with back lane collection. Findings from the online survey indicated that 82% of residents did not want to change their collection location, while 15% said yes to a change in location and 3% had no preference. When asked why they did not want to change their collection location from the back lane, respondents cited convenience, established storage location for carts and impacts to curb appeal. Of the 15% who wanted a change in location to front street, reasons included snow build up in the back lane, convenience and perceived reduction of scavenging.

When asked, 86% of respondents indicated they are satisfied with their collection location. Only 12% of residents have experienced issues with back lane collection. These issues include concerns of cleanliness, scavenging, and service-level impacts.

Review Conclusions

The operational review of waste collection in the Eastview neighbourhood indicated a shift to front street collection has the potential for a small reduction in safety incidents, a 10-15% saving in time to collect, and some possibility of improved waste bylaw conformance. However, survey results indicate 86% of residents are satisfied with their current waste collection location. Based on these results, the Administration is not recommending a change to the waste collection location in Eastview. More specifically, the minor operational benefits of changing to front street collection are overshadowed by the strong preference from Eastview residents for the collection location to remain in the back lane.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The resources to undertake this review on a neighbourhood scale were funded through the operating budget within the curbside garbage and organics utilities. The costs to expand this work to a city-wide review will be quantified in a future report.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

This process helps guide the comprehensive collection location review that is planned for 2025. The engagement process had a high response rate and proved successful in identifying collection location preferences. A similar process, combining an operational review and community engagement, can be employed for future requests to review collection locations.

NEXT STEPS

No changes to the collection location for the Eastview neighbourhood are being recommended at this time.

Administration is preparing a further report back later in 2025, regarding a city-wide operations assessment of waste collection locations.

APPENDICES

1. Waste Collections Operational Assessment
2. Engagement Summary – What We Learned

Report Approval

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