

Alignment of Organics Opportunities with City Values

Environment

- An Organics Program constitutes a critical step in approaching our Waste Diversion targets and extending the life of the landfill. Given current assumptions, Administration estimates that this could extend the life by at least 8 years.
- Finished compost can improve soil quality, reduce runoff, and conserve water when used in residential, commercial, and City landscaping applications.
- Decreased organics in the landfill results in reduction in methane production (climate change implications) and other environmental benefits.
- There is potential to produce environmentally-preferred (green) energy when anaerobic digestion technology is used to process organic material.

Social

- There are cost implications associated with a new waste program affecting the affordability of civic services and potentially impacting lower-income residents' ability to pay. However, efficiencies from moving to a city-wide program from a subscription program may make it more accessible to all demographics (especially as compared to the true cost of the current subscription program).
- Curbside collection increases convenience compared to self-hauling to a depot (it is reasonable to expect 80-90% participation in a collection program vs 10-15% utilization of depots). Composting at home remains a viable option for those choosing to do so.
 - Composting at home should still be encouraged as a preferred practise.
 - Program design can consider preferences for number and size of cart(s) based on the size of the household and home composting interests.
- Facilities must meet Ministry of Environment standards for regulatory and environmental compliance.
- An Organics Program has a positive public image as demonstrated by preliminary results from a recent random-sample survey showing that 79% of residents somewhat or strongly support a city-wide organics collection program; 8% have no opinion; 13% oppose or strongly oppose; additionally Saskatoon is currently lagging behind other centres in this area, being one of only two cities (the other being Regina) that have no city-wide collections program for yard waste.

Financial

- An Organics Program is essential if considering the life cycle cost of the landfill as it is a critical component to deferring or eliminating the need for a new landfill, instead of passing on this environmental and financial burden to future

generations (Generational Rate Equity); as noted above, landfill life is estimated to be extended by at least 8 years with organics diversion.

- An Organics Program reduces the environmental and financial burden we pass on to future generations and contributes to positive steps in climate change mitigation. Diverting 78,000 tonnes of food and yard waste from landfills is estimated to reduce between 85,000¹ and 120,600² tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents (over \$850,000 in savings if a \$10/tonne price on carbon is instituted, please note that this would not all be diverted from the Saskatoon Landfill, so these savings would be shared).
- An Organics Program will have significant up-front costs and resource plans will need to be developed.
- Capital and replacement costs of assets such as carts, trucks and other equipment, and a facility need to be considered and weighed against other alternatives such as partnerships with commercial industry when making decisions.

¹ Source: Waste GHG Calculator (Environment Canada); Note that the results of calculations from this calculator are not intended for quantifying emission reductions, they serve only as a common basis for comparison.

² School Canyon Model used for the City of Saskatoon GHG inventory.