
Special Needs Garbage Collection Service

Recommendation

That the report of the General Manager, Corporate Performance Department dated October 10, 2017, be received as information.

Topic and Purpose

This report provides information and costs for the existing special needs collection program and to identify potential options and considerations for expanding this service.

Report Highlights

1. The Special Needs Garbage Collection Service was implemented in 2007 as part of the garbage container conversion process in core neighbourhoods and was intended to be phased out.
2. The program is comprised of approximately 300 participants who are elderly or mobility challenged and require assistance with their collection carts. The program has not accepted any new applicants since inception; however, the Administration continues to receive requests for new applicants.
3. Since the special needs program was implemented, the number of households utilizing the service has decreased by approximately 100.
4. Costs to provide this service are estimated at \$490 per household. Funding for this service is provided through property taxes.
5. The marketing program approved in the 2016 Operating Budget has not yet been implemented, and will be implemented in late 2017.

Strategic Goals

This report supports the Strategic Goal of Quality of Life by refocusing on services that are of high importance to citizens and by developing age-friendly initiatives to enhance quality of life as people age.

Background

City Council at its 2016 Preliminary Business Plan and Budget meeting held on November 30 and December 1, 2015, considered the report Services and Accommodations for Seniors and Residents with Physical Limitations – Options and Possible Partnerships and resolved, in part:

- “2. That, Option 2, a marketing promotion campaign, like the Snow Angel Program, with a focus on neighbours helping neighbours with moving their garbage/recycle bins, including the establishment of a process for groups to be on a list for providing a low-cost fee for service in assisting with moving bins be approved, with an increase to the budget of \$12,000.”

The Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services, at its meeting held on September 11, 2017, considered the Waste Handling Levels of Service report and resolved, in part:

- “1. That at the next meeting of the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities & Corporate Services the Administration bring forward the past report on the special service garbage collection and other accessibility issues as they pertain to waste services, as well as any follow up to that report that may be available.”

City Council, at its meeting held on September 25, 2017, considered the Waste Handling Levels of Service report and resolved, in part:

- “4. That all other service level changes be considered during the development and implementation of waste utility options.”

The Services and Accommodations for Seniors and Residents with Physical Limitations – Options and Possible Partnerships report, dated November 30, 2015 is included as Attachment 1.

Report

Special Needs Garbage Collection Service History

The Special Needs Garbage Collection Service was established in 2007 during the garbage container conversion process, whereby, households were provided with individual rollout carts instead of communal waste bins in the back lanes. The service was established in response to concerns from residents who were unable to manoeuvre the rollout carts but were otherwise able to take out small bags of garbage. City employees were hired to roll out carts from private property, collect them with semi-automated rear-loading garbage trucks and then return the carts after collection.

The special needs service was originally intended only for residents who resided in the neighbourhood at the time of the conversion, and with the intent that these households would be phased out when new residents moved in. To be eligible for the program, the following criteria was established and confirmed through a site visit by the Customer Service Supervisor to ensure the resident:

- lived in a neighbourhood that underwent a conversion from communal waste collection to individual rollout carts;
- lived independently (without the benefit of family members);
- was frail due to age or had a physical disability or severe medical condition; or
- lived at a property with extreme physical barriers (such as an elevated yard).

Current Program

When the curbside residential recycling program was implemented in 2013, the households that were included in the Special Needs Garbage Collection Service were also provided special recycling collection services as established under contract with Loraas Recycle. Special needs services are not currently available for the optional Green Cart food and yard waste program. The number of households receiving special

needs collection service has decreased since implementation and is now approximately 300.

The staff and equipment that provide special needs garbage collection also perform other duties such as clean-ups of illegally dumped materials in back lanes and recycling depots, and garbage collection from special locations that cannot be serviced by automated side loaders due to narrow lane widths or raised lots. There are approximately 500 special collection locations that are serviced by rear-loader trucks, in addition to the 300 households included in the special needs service.

In 2016, the cost to provide special needs garbage collection to 300 households was \$147,000 or the equivalent of \$490 per household. This service costs approximately five times more than automated curbside garbage collection for the following reasons: two staff are required for each truck (one operator and one labourer to retrieve carts), collection locations are more dispersed throughout the city, and each collection takes longer to complete. The costs to operate this program are funded by property taxes.

The \$12,000 allocated to create a marketing or promotion campaign was not used in 2016 on a dedicated program as only preliminary investigations were completed. Administration will develop a community awareness campaign to encourage people to assist neighbours with their collections carts. This program will use the \$12,000 allocation to design a program to fit the allocated funds. The program will be implemented in late fall of 2017.

Decline in Program Use

Since the special needs program was implemented, the number of households utilizing the service has decreased by approximately 100. The Administration receives approximately 10 requests annually from elderly and mobility-challenged residents who wish to be included in the Special Needs Garbage Collection Service. The program history is explained to these residents, and they are offered smaller 65 gallon carts as a possible solution as these carts are easier to manoeuvre and store.

Options to the Recommendation

As an informational report, there were no options considered.

Communication Plan

A community awareness campaign will be directed at neighbourhoods where the special services collections program takes place. The goal of the awareness will be to encourage residents to help their neighbours with their collections carts. This campaign will start in late fall 2017.

Financial Implications

The Special Needs Garbage Collection Service is funded from the Garbage Collection Operating Budget under the Waste Handling Service Line. In 2016, the cost to provide special needs garbage collection to 300 households was \$147,000 or the equivalent of \$490 per household.

Other Considerations/Implications

There are no public and/or stakeholder involvement, policy, environmental, privacy, or CPTED implications or considerations.

Due Date for Follow-up and/or Project Completion

If approved, the Administration will report back on options for expanding the Special Needs Garbage Collection Service as part of the follow-up report on waste utility design options in 2018.

Public Notice

Public Notice pursuant to Section 3 of Policy No. C01-021, Public Notice Policy, is not required.

Attachment

1. Report - Services and Accommodations for Seniors and Residents with Physical Limitations – Options and Possible Partnerships – Dated November 30, 2015

Report Approval

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