



# ENGAGE



## YXE TALKS TRASH: CURBSIDE

Sensemaking Sessions Summaries

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## Activity Overview

Sensemaking sessions were developed as a way of deepening engagement with residents and key stakeholders by providing a “sneak peek” of draft program recommendations for their feedback and discussion.

A session with residents was held on April 28, 2018. 60 residents were randomly selected and invited, from those who provided their email address at one of the February/March events or through the online survey. In the end, 17 residents attended the event.

A session with stakeholders was held on May 3, 2018. Invitations were sent to a list of 20 waste and community stakeholder groups, and 6 participants attended.

In addition to the sneak peek and feedback, the sessions were also designed to have participants imagine themselves in the shoes of a City Councillor or decision-maker, grapple with complexity, and develop a better understanding of the decision-making process.

## Goals

1. Understand what is resonating and not resonating about the recommendations and why.
2. Identify key questions, potential issues, and areas of interest.
3. Gain insight into how we can communicate the recommendations and future programs in a way that makes sense to residents.
4. Ask for input on the next steps in program implementation.

## Participants

### Stakeholders

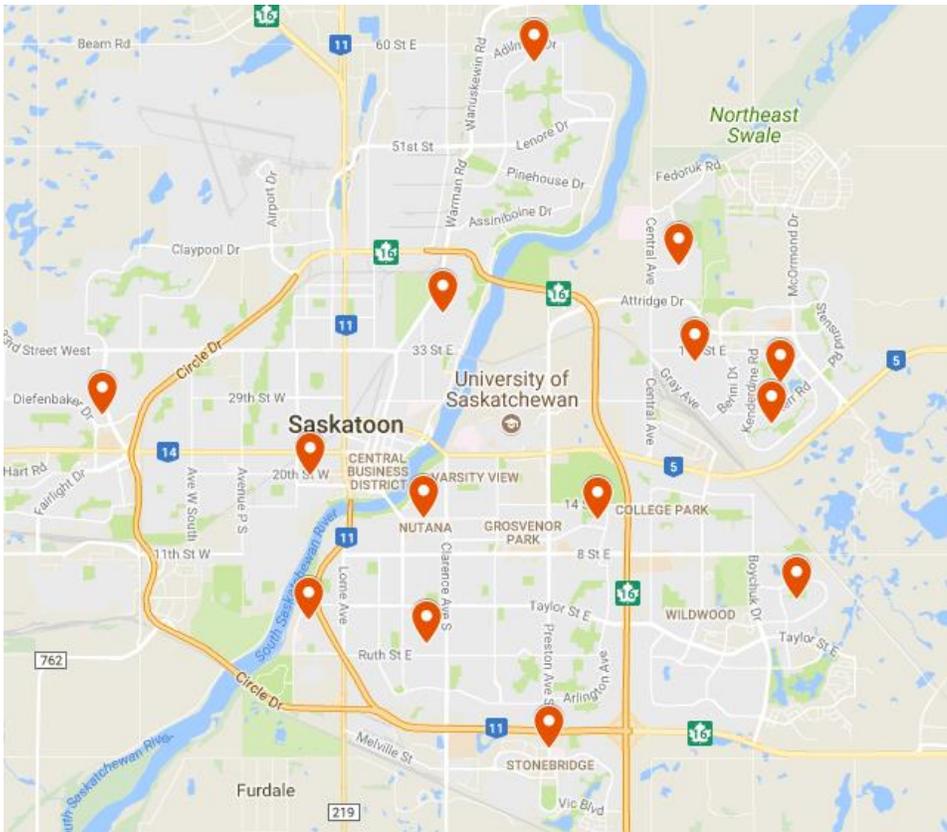
Representatives attended from the following organizations:

- City of Saskatoon – Immigration, Diversity & Inclusion
- Sarcan
- Multi-Materials Stewardship Western
- Electronic Products Recycling Association
- Saskatoon Housing Authority
- Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee (SEAC)

### Residents

Residents came from the following neighbourhoods:

- Nutana
- Stonebridge
- Briarwood
- Riversdale
- Forest Grove
- Erindale
- Silverwood
- North Park
- Confederation
- Arbor Creek
- Exhibition
- Queen Elizabeth
- Silverspring
- Greystone



## Format

The format of the session was a combination of presentation and discussion. City staff presented the recommendations for each waste stream, and then shared the research and engagement results that informed the recommendations. After each presentation, there were small group discussions about what resonated, what didn't, further questions, and other considerations.

The recommendations that were shared with participants were as follows:

## Recycling

What's included?	What's next?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep biweekly collections</li> <li>• Keep large (360L) cart</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adding smaller cart size options</li> <li>• Adding an extra collection at Christmas</li> <li>• Service location</li> <li>• Future contract (existing expires at end of 2019)</li> <li>• Changes to accepted materials and future material bans</li> </ul>

## Organics

What's included?	What's next?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cart-based collections</li> <li>• Co-mingled – food and yard waste collected in the same cart</li> <li>• General cart size (medium/large)</li> <li>• Year-round collections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organic processing method</li> <li>• Loose or bagged, type(s) of bags</li> <li>• Cart size option(s)</li> <li>• Collection frequency</li> <li>• Role of the city in service provision</li> <li>• Billing method and price</li> <li>• Mitigation for accessibility issues</li> <li>• Timeline</li> <li>• Seasonal Depot</li> </ul>

## Garbage

What's included?	What's next?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Variable cart size</li> <li>• No variability in frequency</li> <li>• City of Saskatoon Utility Bill</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collection frequency</li> <li>• Service location</li> <li>• Price</li> <li>• Base cart size option(s)</li> <li>• Mitigation for accessibility issues</li> <li>• Timeline</li> </ul>

## Reception

The sessions were very well-received by participants. In the feedback forms, some residents mentioned the value of getting comprehensive and clear information and understanding the broader context around waste (from other cities, for example). There were also comments indicating that they left with a better sense of the challenges around waste stewardship and learned from the other residents at their table.

In general, participants in both sessions were supportive of the recommendations for recycling and organics, with some additional feedback and suggestions. The Pay as You Throw (PAYT) waste utility with variable sized carts was mostly seen as favourable, but with some larger concerns raised – similar to what we heard in the online survey.

## What We Heard

### Residents

#### Recycling

1. What resonates with you?
  - That people are generally satisfied with the current program; “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it”.
  - Keeping biweekly collection keeps the GHG emissions down.
  - Like the biweekly frequency.
  - Like the potential for choosing a smaller cart in the future.
  - Idea of adding a recycling collection at Christmas.
2. What doesn’t resonate?
  - Would like more data available to the public about program success rates.
  - Are we more worried about the environment or about the landfill reaching capacity?
  - Where is the forward thinking on the future of this program?
  - The lack of local processing for plastics and other materials that cannot be recycled.
3. What remaining questions do you have?
  - How successful is the program at diversion? Is glass contaminating other materials and is it being stockpiled and not recycled? Where does the material end up going for processing?
  - Is there better diversion success with source separated recycling, despite the added sorting for residents?
  - Plastic bags – need clarity on next steps, don’t want to put them in the garbage. Some participants suggest preventing their use or making them illegal, like other cities and countries have done.
  - Does missing a collection / putting my cart out less often save money for the City or Loraas?
  - Could new areas of the city get options for cart sizes, even before it is allowed more broadly?
  - How do we become more mindful consumers? How can we encourage businesses and residents to recycle consistently?
  - How can we stimulate local business to “close the loop”?
  - Is it possible to add a latch to blue carts to prevent wind from blowing lids open?

#### Organics

1. What resonates with you?
  - Putting it all in one cart – ease of use.
  - Continuing to have depots for large loads.
  - Weekly collection in spring-fall (April-November) with less frequent in winter.
  - Including meat and bones.
2. What doesn’t resonate?
  - Cart size – large cart is a disincentive to reduce food waste, and for existing composters.

- Number of carts – takes up a lot of space, but understand that it may be the only option.
  - Un-bagged organics – smell is a concern. Would like moderately sized compostable bags provided/available; this would help with winter collection as well.
  - Extra collection during peak periods makes sense (in scenario with yard waste bags being collected).
  - No opt-out for home composters.
3. What remaining questions do you have?
- Will we go biweekly or monthly in the winter for food waste?
  - Will we continue to promote grass cycling and backyard composting, and education in these areas?
  - Would like City to consider adding Pay as You Throw organics by cart size– this would benefit home composters and incentivize less food waste.
  - How can we ensure that bins are secure from rodents and wildlife?
  - How long does it take compostable bags to degrade in composting technology?
  - How much will a new fleet and carts cost?
  - Will I be able to pick up finished compost for free or a low price?
  - What is the overall GHG impact of diverting organic materials? What are the other benefits?

## Garbage

1. What resonates with you?
- Like the simplicity – if I want to pay less, I will choose a smaller cart. Will encourage diversion.
  - Works better for seniors – less waste, smaller carts.
  - Like the transparency aspect. Would be good to see all costs on the utility.
  - Uniformity of the variable size approach, likely the simplest and cheapest option.
  - Less waste produced because diverting to compost and recycling.
  - A smaller base/standard cart size would make me think more about my waste.
  - Am surprised about significant public concerns about dumping in other people's carts.
    - People should already be returning their carts to their property under the bylaw, which would reduce this issue.
  - Adding bulky item collection service.
2. What doesn't resonate?
- What if we need to change cart sizes? How do we pick the size we think we need?
  - I would prefer standard cart size with variable frequency chosen by the household.
  - My family couldn't use a small bin (size of household, diapers).
  - The whole cost picture around waste – building new organics facility vs. landfill airspace.
  - How big is the differential – fraud, illegal dumping?
  - Concern that the way it's shown on the utility bill might not be adequate and lead to many questions.
  - High risk of increased illegal dumping – who will clean it up?
  - That the RFID technology isn't good enough and that a navigator is needed (extra cost) – we should be able to solve this problem.
  - Public garbage cans might become filled with private garbage, and be a barrier to neighbours picking up garbage in their area, in parks, etc.

3. What remaining questions do you have?

- Can organics be rolled out first? Do not do PAYT before introducing organics.
- What is the implementation strategy, schedule, and cart crews? What is the level of effort (environmental, cost)?
- What is the rate? Gut-check says about \$8/month?
- Legal suites – do they pay a separate fee? How will this billing work?
- Is a smaller cart possible – i.e. 80L?
- Can we add more public space recycling/garbage/organics to lead by example? Pet waste raised as specific need, if less carts out in alleys/streets.
- Can we add a free garbage pickup every year for bulky items or excess?
- How much more will this cost?

## Implementation

### Cart Size and Collection Frequency

- Ensure that organics and PAYT start around the same time, so that people can judge the cart sizes they need properly.
- Frequency
  - 1 group suggested that biweekly collection for both organics and garbage is a good place to start.
  - 2 groups proposed weekly in summer (April/May to November), biweekly in winter for organics, and agreed with reducing garbage to biweekly all year.
- 1 group would like variable cart sizes for all carts.
- Another group would like a consistent cart size, but with option of going smaller.

### Service Location

- 1 group noted that front street collection preferred to deter illegal dumping, though large items will end up in the alleys regardless.
- Would like all carts collected from the same location, whether its front or back.
- 1 group expressed concern about parking space in front lane with an added 3<sup>rd</sup> bin.
- 2 groups noted preference for back lane collection in core neighbourhoods, or to keep as-is rather than changing location when enough other changes are underway.

### Depots/Drop-Offs

- Interest in keeping organics depots, because of having many trees and lots of leaves/branches.
  - Also to have “dig your own” compost program continue.
- Might have to re-evaluate hours if they are being used less, but keep seasonal hours.
- There is a need for clear and accessible options for collecting things like vehicle oil, batteries, and furniture.
- Concern that current depots are too far out of the way.

### Risk Factors

- If the cost for organics and PAYT is too high, you will see a backlash from residents.
- That the organics program does not accept enough materials to be seen as useful or needing large cart.

- Frozen material in green carts in the winter.
- More neighbourhood garbage and more dumping with PAYT, would need to be addressed.
- It can be hard to reach people. Don't just preach to the converted.
- Concerns about rotting food – how this will affect buy-in, similar with concerns about rodents/wildlife.
- Multi-Materials program – why is there a gap? They should pay what was promised. Need to see more extended producer responsibility and go further with it.

### Success Factors

- Education & Awareness – reasons and why this is important, how it works, what goes where.
  - Help combat the “ick” factor – explain how carbon and nitrogen interact.
  - More outreach to schools, garden groups, over social media, direct email, community associations, and radio. Need to get broader buy-in.
- Minimize quantity of choices to keep system as simple as possible. Make it easy and reduce amount of change happening at once.
- Give adequate timelines to choose options for different cart sizes.
- Have a good transition plan in place.
- Allow variable cart size for all collections.
- Consistency in where cart is collected (front or back for all).



## Stakeholders

### Recycling

- Overall support for the recommendation to keep the program as-is for now. Biweekly makes sense for recycling given lack of smell issues.
- Concern that once something is in the program, it should stay.
  - Need to innovate to find ways of dealing with plastic bags.
  - Number 4 plastic identified as another priority – can't be recycled now.
- Product stewardship has multiple moving parts that don't always work well together (municipalities, product packagers, processors/recyclers, and provinces).
  - Challenge is that residents and consumers are "driving the bus" and influencing political decisions about which materials are accepted, but they are the furthest away from industry, which is trying to find value-added products to make with the recycled materials (the supply chain).
- Look into effective and cleaner uses of glass.
- Interest in levies and bans, encourage City to do research on it.
- Need to enhance education aspect, regardless of whether bans or levies are put into place. Explain the issue and the alternatives.

### Organics

- Need to add some flexibility – consider four plexes with limited space.
  - Some of these properties will have 12 carts out front with organics, leaving limited space for parking and no ability to do back lane collection.
  - Suggest that sharing carts could be an option in that circumstance.
- Consider how the program accommodates bags to deal with the "ick factor".
- Suggestion that the City could do PAYT by size of cart for organics as well rather than flat rate – ex. if we promote and incentivize reducing food waste, grasscycling, mulching, xeriscaping, and backyard composting.
- How to incentivize compliance and that everyone uses it, if it is PAYT?
- Consider impact of the organics utility cost on folks living on social assistance.
- Education will be need about the type of bag you can use or can't use.

### Garbage

- Housing provider working with many low-income tenants predicts high outrage.
- Need to explain to residents their specific impact and how they are helping but it is costing more.
- Tell the story up front – dipping into reserve, so if not dipping into it what will we be doing with that reserve instead?
- People will like the idea of personal accountability, taking responsibility for their own footprint and having more control over the cost.
- Identify clear "wins" and talking points for Councillors – straightforward; most likely that they deal with the angry people that may influence the outcome.
- How to show the move from property tax to utility to residents and communicate that effectively?
- How to avoid finger-pointing? Ex. Residents pushing the blame to businesses and multi-units.

- Could have a message about control over consumption: with black and blue carts and now organics you've managed what's coming out of your household, but what about what's coming into it?
- Speaking to the program experience of residents (for all programs) will be really important; environmental message doesn't resonate with many, other values will be resonate more.
- How to deal with businesses – what is the commercial responsibility for garbage, recycling, and waste diversion?