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# Multi-Unit Residential Proposed Changes to Waste Management – Engagement Results

## Recommendation

That the report of the A/General Manager, Corporate Performance Department dated September 10, 2018 be received as information.

## Topic and Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the community engagement and communications results from the Saskatoon Talks Trash: Multi-Unit engagement campaign and an update on the next steps in developing a Multi-Unit Waste Diversion Strategy.

## Report Highlights

1. The Saskatoon Talks Trash: Multi-Unit engagement campaign ran from June 3 to June 22, 2018. In that time, 546 residents and 123 property managers participated in a series of engagement activities.
2. Engagement results will inform the program recommendations being brought forward in the second quarter of 2019.
3. The majority of residents were excited about a Multi-Unit Organics Program, while property manager support of organics collection was more mixed.
4. The first step in designing a Multi-Unit Organics Program is to determine the service approach: a city-run program (city fleets and crews or contracted services) or a bylaw mandated program (such as a requirement for source separation with flexibility to choose a private hauler).
5. An interim step is to address concerns raised regarding current operations as these will impact the organics program.

## Strategic Goals

The information in this report supports the four-year priority to promote and facilitate city-wide composting and recycling to reduce the rate and volume of waste sent to the landfill under the Strategic Goal of Environmental Leadership.

## Background

City Council, at its meeting held on February 26, 2018, considered the Multi-Unit Residential Waste Diversion Opportunities report and resolved:

- “1. That Administration explore opportunities for the diversion of organic waste from multi-unit residential buildings with the goal of launching a program as soon as possible and, where possible, in alignment with the organics program already being explored for curbside residential dwellings; and

2. That, following engagement with citizens and stakeholders, the Administration report back in September of 2018 with recommendations for an organics program for multi-unit residential buildings.”

### **Report**

Community engagement was conducted to ensure that changes to the Multi-Unit Waste Management Program are feasible, desirable, and community-informed in their design and implementation. The engagement and supporting communications focused on the development of a new organics program, the continuous improvement of current recycling and garbage collections, the design of a sustainable funding model, as well as seeking other opportunities for waste diversion and reduction.

The engagement was planned by building on the City of Saskatoon’s (City’s) own experience, including recent curbside engagement and multi-unit residential recycling consultations, program launch and operations, as well as the best practices from other jurisdictions with established multi-unit residential recycling programs.

### Engagement Results

Between June 3 and June 22, 2018, the City engaged residents and property managers. Over 650 people participated in a series of six pop-up events, two online surveys (one for residents and another for property managers), two property manager workshops, and three Crime-Free Multi-Housing events coordinated through Saskatoon Police Services. Attachment 1, Community Engagement Results, provides the full results.

A communications plan was developed to support the engagement. A variety of tactics were used to inform multi-unit residents and property managers about the engagement and to encourage participation. The full list of communications tactics, results and samples are available in Attachment 2, Communications Summary and Results.

### What We Heard

Residents and property managers shared many ideas on multi-unit waste management and diversion. Below is a short summary of what the City heard. Additional details can be found in Attachment 1. Attachment 3, Excerpts from the 2017 Waste Awareness & Behaviour Survey, provides additional context.

On average, 82% of residents that participated in the engagement indicated that they support an organics program. This is in line with the 81% support by multi-unit residents in the 2017 Waste Awareness & Behaviour Survey. Support from property managers was lower, with 53% supporting the program and 19% opposing.

Residents and Property Managers were aligned on their top concerns and strategies for program uptake:

#### Top Concerns:

- Cleanliness (addressing pests and odours);
- Space limitations (for both in-unit collection and the communal bins); and

- Program cost.

### Top Strategies for Program Uptake:

- Frequent collection and cleaning of bins/collection area;
- Provide kitchen catchers for all units; and
- Focus on education, including information packages for all residents.

Other frequent suggestions included allowing compostable/plastic bags, program flexibility for different building types, and a pilot program before full roll out.

In terms of the service approach for a new organics program, participants were unsure about whether a city-run program (i.e. city fleets and crews or contracted services) or a bylaw mandated program (such as a requirement for source separation with flexibility to choose a private hauler) would be more desirable.

Participants identified two main advantages of a city-run approach: less work for properties (especially condo boards) and greater city-wide consistency in program delivery and education. However, some were concerned that their property would be ineligible for collections but they would still be required to pay (based on their experience with garbage collections). The bylaw-mandated approach was seen as having advantages in cost, flexibility, reliability and customer service. Property management companies tended to be more interested in this approach than condo boards, though there was variability.

Most participants were satisfied with the current frequency and capacity of garbage collections. Most were opposed to moving to a utility model for garbage collection and a large number were uncertain and unsure of the implications, which is consistent with the 2017 survey conducted by Inshtrix Research.

In terms of recycling, both residents and managers agreed that education and improving collection areas was a priority.

### Next Steps

The first step to designing a Multi-Unit Organics Program is to determine the service approach: city-run or bylaw-mandated. At this time, a city-run approach cannot be recommended without first addressing serviceability issues. Therefore, in conjunction with determining the service approach for organics, concerns raised regarding current operations will need to be addressed as these will impact a future program. Specifically, these include issues with eligibility for service (by City waste services), current space constraints, collection schedules, illegal dumping, and customer service. The Administration will also explore options to increase waste diversion, address financial equity, and ensure that services are fully and sustainably funded by further researching utility and/or user fee funding models.

Throughout the planning process for changes to multi-unit waste management, the Administration has and will continue to use the results of engagement, combined with best practice research and operational expertise.

### **Public and/or Stakeholder Involvement**

Public and stakeholder involvement is the subject of this report.

### **Communication Plan**

The communications activities used to promote and support engagement are outlined in this report. Additional communications planning and activities are anticipated as the project moves from engagement to recommendations and implementation.

### **Other Considerations/Implications**

There are no policy, financial, environmental, privacy, or CPTED implications or considerations. Any future implications will be brought forward when multi-unit waste management and diversion recommendations are presented to Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities & Corporate Services.

### **Due Date for Follow-up and/or Project Completion**

In order to first address outstanding concerns related to civic waste service eligibility, a Multi-Unit Residential Proposed Changes to Waste Management report will be brought forward in the second quarter of 2019. Engagement of the Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (ICI) sector on waste management and diversion is scheduled to start in fall 2018. The engagement strategy is currently being developed and an update will be provided before the end of 2018.

### **Public Notice**

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

### **Attachments**

1. Community Engagement Results
2. Communications Summary & Results
3. Excerpts from the 2017 Waste Awareness & Behaviour Survey

### **Report Approval**

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