



# ENGAGE



## **SASKATOON TALKS TRASH: MULTI-UNIT**

Community Engagement Results

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## Project Overview

City Council has adopted the target of 70% waste diversion by 2023. The multi-unit residential sector currently generates 6% of the waste generated in Saskatoon. 61% of this waste is divertible through a new organics program and existing recycling programs.

The Multi-Unit Residential Waste Diversion Strategy will outline the steps that the City of Saskatoon (City) will take to increase waste diversion and decrease waste generated in the Multi-Unit Residential Sector. It will include the following:

- the development of a new mandatory organics programs;
- a review of the current garbage and recycling programs;
- additional waste management and waste reduction programs; and
- a sustainable funding model.

City Council has provided direction to develop an organics program to serve the multi-unit residential sector. The following recommendations were adopted through the Multi-Unit Residential Waste Diversion Opportunities report (February 2018):

- 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
- 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.

The goal is to create waste diversion and management programs for the multi-unit sector that maximizes waste diversion and achieves financial sustainability.

The first step in designing a multi-unit organics program will be determining the service approach for organic waste collection. This will be reported on in the second quarter of 2019. The report will also look at garbage and other collection programs, including the funding model. Implementation reports will follow.

## Engagement Overview

### Engagement Approach

Similar to the curbside engagement process, the Saskatoon Talks Trash: Multi-Unit community engagement process was designed to include residents and key stakeholders in assessing current and potential waste programs. The goal was to ensure that current and future programs are feasible, desirable, and community-informed in their design and implementation.

The engagement strategy was designed to reach a combination of multi-unit residents and property managers (we use this as an umbrella term to refer to building managers, superintendents, condominium boards, landlords, and owners who are actively involved in the day-to-day management of a multi-unit residence).

Compared to curbside, multi-unit residents are significantly harder to reach with communications and engagement activities. With waste in particular, this is

compounded since residents share communal metal bins and have less of a direct connection to the management and cost of waste disposal. Whereas with curbside, City staff had access to direct email and contact methods for green bin subscribers and Recollect app users, for this project we had no direct contact methods for multi-unit residents other than those that opted-in to e-mail updates.

To mitigate this challenge, the team worked through existing lists of property managers and condo boards, encouraging them to share the information with their residents, as well as engaging in targeted advertising and social media (see Communications Summary). The team also attended the Saskatchewan Landlord Association's conference and provided information about the upcoming engagement opportunities. Pop-up engagements were chosen strategically, targeting events and locations with high density and a diversity of residents.

In developing the engagement approach, the team also reviewed the results and lessons learned from Multi-Unit Residential Recycling, and incorporated this information in the plan.

## Engagement Objectives

### Residents

- 1) **Organics:** Understand priorities and preferences for how organics are collected and disposed at building/in-unit.
- 2) **Garbage:** Identify current level of satisfaction, opportunities for improvement overall, and other ideas for increasing waste diversion. Gauge interest in bulky item collection program.
- 3) **Recycling:** Identify opportunities for improvement and for increasing participation.
- 4) **Other Diversion and Reduction:** Identify new program opportunities to increase waste diversion and/or reduce waste generation.

### Property Managers, Owners, Condominium Boards, and Landlords

- 1) **Organics:** Identify barriers and opportunities for program design, identify advantages and disadvantages of possible service approaches, and identify unique requirements.
- 2) **Garbage:** Understand satisfaction with current service, identify barriers and opportunities for improvement, gauge interest in bulky item collection program, and consider the implications of changing the funding model to a utility fee.
- 3) **Recycling:** Identify opportunities for improvement and for increasing participation.
- 4) **Other Diversion and Reduction:** Identify new program opportunities to increase waste diversion and/or reduce waste generation.

## What We Asked

### Engagement Techniques (Methodology)

A mix of in-person and online engagement techniques were used to ensure a broad mix of participation.

Online surveys were conducted, with separate surveys designed for residents and property managers.

Pop-Ups were held at a number of public locations and/or festivals around the city. Locations were selected in areas with a high density of multi-unit residences and to ensure demographic diversity. Cosmopolitan Industries (Cosmo) also provide several suggestions of neighbourhoods based on their experience with the recycling program.

These events enabled the team to reach residents who might not have seen the online survey or may not have reliable internet access at home, and to engage in deeper dialogue with residents. In Pleasant Hill, for example, we heard from several participants that they did not have reliable internet access at home. Using visual cues and tactile materials made the Pop-Ups accessible and relatable.

Two workshops were held for property managers, which gave the City an opportunity to share more detailed information and ideas for the organics program and led to excellent conversations and relationship-building. Both evening and afternoon sessions were offered, each on a different side of the city.

We asked both groups to identify levels of support, key concerns, and preferred strategies for bringing in multi-unit organics collection. Both groups also assessed their current garbage services and gave feedback on a potential bulky item collection, improvements to the recycling program, and other diversion ideas.



## What We Heard

### Executive Summary

#### Participation

Technique	Participants
Pop-Ups - Residents	107
Online Survey - Residents	439
Online Survey – Property Managers	83
Workshops – Property Managers	40

There was a total participation of 669 as outlined in the chart above. The multi-unit residential sector is made up of approximately 850 buildings with 35,500 units. The multi-unit sector was last engaged on waste management in the fall of 2013 on the design of the multi-unit recycling program, with a total participation of 192.

#### Common Themes

When results were averaged, 82% of resident participants indicated that they were mostly or strongly in support of the introduction of an organics program. Support from property managers was more muted, at about 53% mostly to fully supporting the program and 19% opposed.

Residents and Property Managers were very aligned on their top concerns:

- 1) cleanliness (addressing pests and odours);
- 2) space limitations (for both in-unit collection and the communal bins); and
- 3) program cost.

Many also mentioned that contamination was a serious concern, especially given their experience with recycling.

They were also in agreement on the following three strategies for ensuring program uptake:

- 1) frequent collection and cleaning of bins/collection area;
- 2) providing kitchen catchers for all units; and
- 3) focusing on education, including information packages for all residents.

Many participants said that it would be critical to allow compostable or plastic bags for multi-unit organics collection. Some also noted that while education is helpful, it is limited if residents also lack the motivation to participate.

Property Managers also emphasized the importance of a flexible program, allowing a range of options for different kinds of buildings. For example, being able to select bin size or type (cart or bin). They suggested that the City consider a variety of incentives and consequences to support compliance, and encouraged a pilot program before a full roll-out.

Residents suggested that the City look at bin placement and contamination levels (ex. further from building may lead to more bulky item dumping, but closer might increase contamination)

with garbage). Many also requested that accessibility be considered for seniors and elders, along with affordability for lower-income residents. Several residents also requested education in multiple languages and large-print formats.

In terms of the service approach, participants were unsure about whether a City-run or Bylaw-mandated approach would be more desirable. Many condo owners saw advantages to a City-run approach because they saw it as less work for their building managers or board members. However, some were concerned that their property would be ineligible for city service and yet they would pay for it anyway, as may be the case with garbage collections (due to property design, layout, or collection areas). The other main advantage was greater program and educational consistency between buildings, which could be helpful in cases of high resident turnover. The Bylaw-mandated approach was seen as having advantages in cost, flexibility, reliability and customer service, service and was generally more preferred by professional property managers (i.e. buildings managed by a property management corporation).

With respect to garbage collection, most participants were satisfied with the current frequency and capacity. Some condo owners were dissatisfied that they could not receive City collections but paid the same property taxes as buildings that receive collections. Participants were most concerned about bulky items being dumped in their building's bins, primarily from non-residents. While there was some moderate interest in the City providing a bulky item collection service, there were concerns about cost and where to store these items in the interim. They were very supportive of offering this service to single-family homes, as they felt it would reduce dumping.

In terms of other recycling and diversion initiatives, there was a high interest in having more collection points for common household hazardous waste items and electronics, as well as having "freecycling" areas, swap events, and shared "libraries" for items like tools and equipment. When asked about improvements to the recycling program to improve participation, both residents and managers agreed that education and improving collection areas was a priority. Residents also requested more frequent collection or more capacity, while managers prioritized improved processes for residents to report illegal dumping.

## Full Results

### Pop-Up Events - Residents

Pop-up events were held at 6 public locations. 107 residents participated, and an additional 23 people took information but did not complete the activity.

- Nutrien Children's Festival, Kinsmen Park
- Prairie Sky Farmers Market, Sutherland
- Stonebridge Sobeys
- Downtown Bus Terminal
- Lawson Civic Centre
- Pleasant Hill Community Pow Wow

### Introducing Organics Collection

87% of participants indicated that they would definitely participate in an organics program at their building. An additional 10% said that they would probably participate. 2.5% of participants said that they would not participate.

### Suggestions

When asked for their suggestions about how to ensure a successful program, the top three ideas were to provide kitchen catchers for inside their units, to allow bagged collection, and to focus on education.

Other suggestions included: ensuring sufficient collection frequency, making sure lids are secure, closing garbage chutes, and accepting pet-related waste.

Another participant requested that the City translate information into other languages (including indigenous languages) so that the concept is more accessible. Along the same lines, large print signage was requested for the bins to assist with sorting.

It is worth mentioning that several participants were curious to know more about where the organic waste would be taken, how it would be processed, and how the resulting compost would be used.

### Concerns

The top three concerns were that the program would be unsuccessful due to high contamination, that it would be smelly and attract pests, bugs and rodents, and that it would be complicated and inconvenient.

Several participants also mentioned barriers around cost and accessibility – particularly for people with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses who may have added difficulty participating in organics collection.





One participant noted that low-income tenants may not generate much food waste because of eating habits or because they cannot afford to waste food. Therefore they may not see as much value from the program or have much to contribute.

### **Challenges and Solutions**

The following issues were identified by participants when asked for the common problems with waste management at their building (listed in order of frequency):

- 1) Plastic Bags
  - Concern about how to address plastic bags and film being removed from recycling stream.
  - Some interest in a ban, while others would be concerned that a ban would make it difficult to dispense of diapers and incontinency products for seniors.
- 2) Household Hazardous Waste (HHW)
  - Unsure where to drop off batteries, as well as paint, household cleaners, CFLs and concern that HHW Days are inconvenient.
  - Needles can be an issue in some areas.
- 3) Contamination and Low Participation
  - Seeing contamination of recycling bin with garbage.
  - People putting recyclable items in the garbage and not sorting their waste.
  - Some participants linked this to a lack of awareness, while others saw it as laziness or apathy.
- 4) Dumping & Bulky Items
  - Non-residents dumping waste at their buildings, including bulky items along with grass clippings, diapers, wiring, pipes, bicycles, and commercial waste.
  - Residents that don't have transportation/vehicles to move bulky items like furniture and electronics, may not be able to afford a hauling service, so often bulky waste is disposed of in the dumpsters or on the street.

Participants also identified possible solutions and approaches to address the common problems. In order of frequency, these comments included:

- 1) Focus on Education
  - "Be annoying" with continuous education.

- Use flyers, posters, infographics, ads and media to showcase 'what goes where' and common mistakes.
  - Consider different levels/types of education for different demographics.
  - Translate materials into different languages.
- 2) Improve HHW collection
- Add drop-off times and locations for items like batteries, paint, compact fluorescent lights, etc.
  - Bring in safe injection sites (re: needle litter).
- 3) Bulky Item Collection
- City should provide a pickup service. Provide a clean-up at the end of each month.
  - Lock bins to reduce dumping of bulky/other waste.



Other ideas included: “Have someone collect styrofoam egg cartons to take to the Food Bank”, “have the City take more responsibility to hold property managers accountable”, and “use compostable takeout containers”.

### **Other Waste-Related Feedback**

A wide range of suggestions were shared for how to continue improving waste management for multi-unit buildings. Comments included:

- Allow buildings to change number and size of different bins to meet their volume and/or space needs.
- Make each unit accountable for their bulky or large items.
- Provide fliers and electronic resources for education; be persistent with education and communication.
- Have more frequent Household Hazardous Waste collection days with more accessible locations.
- Pressure businesses to stop using materials like straws, plastic cups, and non-compostable materials.

Some participants also shared concerns about the existing collection programs, including:

- How to fix or stop new residents from sorting improperly and dumping waste.
- Plastic like straws and bottles are affecting the water stream.
- Nobody in the building does recycling, bins are in an inconvenient location behind the building.
- Need to accommodate elders and support them to continue using programs.
- Dislike that bottle pickers leave the caps behind as litter.
- Concern that the City can't provide collection at my building (trucks can't go down the small lanes).

## Online Survey - Residents

### Respondent Characteristics

439 respondents. Note that some participants finished only a portion of the full survey, or only completed mandatory questions.

The first two questions were intended to collect information about the type of multi-unit dwelling that respondents occupy, and whether they rent or own the unit.

It is difficult to determine to what extent the profile of survey respondents aligns with the actual types of buildings and type of occupancy (ownership or rental) and therefore how representative the results are, due to differences in classification of multi-unit between Planning & Development and Waste Services.

Condo units make up about 49% of Saskatoon's total number of multi-unit residential units. Planning & Development numbers indicate that 60% of condo units are owner-occupied, while only 29% of apartments are owner-occupied (71% are renter occupied). Given that information, we can assume that ownership rate of 54.7% (see question 2 below) likely means that the perspective of condo residents and unit owners may be over-represented in this survey data.

In the future, Administration will consider separate streams of engagement or add a question to identify condo residents so that results can be segmented and analyzed separately.

Q1. What kind of multi-unit building do you live in?	% of Respondents
Walk-up apartment or stacked townhouse (20-30 units)	23.2%
High-rise apartment (>45 units)	28.7%
Tri-plex, four-plex or townhouse (8-19 units)	19.1%
Mid-rise apartment (30-45 units)	18.5%
Duplex or equivalent (3-7 units)	6.8%
Other	3.6%

Q2. Do you own or rent your unit?	% of Respondents
Own	54.7%
Rent	44.8%
Other	0.5%

The following two questions were asked in order to gauge the degree to which properties are already engaging in composting, and to gauge the amount of yard waste that multi-unit households generate. Only 10% of respondents said that they already engage in a form of composting at their building.

As anticipated, the majority have minimal yard, lawn or garden waste and most is addressed by a property manager or contractor. Very few households self-report as having significant volumes of yard waste, which corresponds with findings from the Waste Characterization Study, where yard waste made up only 5% of the waste that multi-unit buildings are sending to the landfill.

Q3. Does your household have yard, lawn, or garden waste?	% of Respondents
No - it is handled by someone else (property manager, landscape company)	51.8%
Yes - but not very much (ex. soil and plants from balcony garden)	22.0%
No - there is no yard or garden waste	20.0%
Yes - quite a bit (ex. leaves, grass, soil, plants)	6.2%

Q4. Do you already separate and compost your organic (food and yard) waste?	% of Respondents
No	88.47%
Yes, I do it myself (vermicomposting, compost bin, pile, or other method)	10.46%
Yes, my building has arranged compost collection	1.07%

### Introducing Organics Collection

#### Addressing Challenges

Participants were asked to rank a list of common concerns with organics collection from most to least challenging for them. The ranked results are as follows:

- 1) Cleanliness – concern about smells, bugs, rodents and keeping the container clean.
- 2) Space – finding space to store and separate organic waste in my unit.
- 3) Cost – concerns about paying for an extra program.
- 4) Convenience – needing to sort the organic waste in my unit and take it out to the disposal bin.
- 5) Education – learning what can be put in the organics bin.
- 6) Accessibility – difficulty accessing the outdoor waste and recycling area.

Next, participants were asked to select their top three strategies from a list of actions that could help make participation easier. Consistent with the concerns above, the highest ranking strategies were:

- 1) Ensuring the collection area is clean and that communal organics bins are emptied and cleaned frequently.
- 2) Providing small kitchen catchers (bins) for every unit.
- 3) Providing an information package to each unit, explaining how to properly sort and dispose of organics, and why it is important.

The next three strategies were consistently ranked as less important, while still useful:

- 4) Locating organics bins in an accessible and central location that is organized and well-lit.
- 5) Using posters and labels in busy areas and next to bins to remind me of what goes where.
- 6) Getting regular feedback on how our building is doing - our rate of diversion & effectiveness.

Some participants added other comments, including concerns about:

- Low anticipated participation and risk of contamination, with cited concerns including location of bin, accessibility issues, dumping, and residents' lack of interest or feeling of inconvenience.
- Lack of space for container (in unit) and bin (at complex). Concern about losing parking spaces.
- Raising taxes to implement the program.
- Messy bin areas (due to scavenging and due to pickups – blowing garbage); request for regular cleaning of bins.

Several respondents requested posters, labels and other educational materials in a variety of languages. One noted that providing compostable bags would be valuable, while another requested that regular plastic bags could be used to bag organic waste.

*One respondent commented that, "all of these (strategies) matter, when dealing with marginalized population. Concerns about hauling possibly wet drippy catchers too far, in large complexes with lots of stairs and hallways to navigate to the bin. Training and literature on how to prevent pests further, during a problem with cockroaches, ants, etc. Assurances that your composting won't be a liability for your rental history/record."*

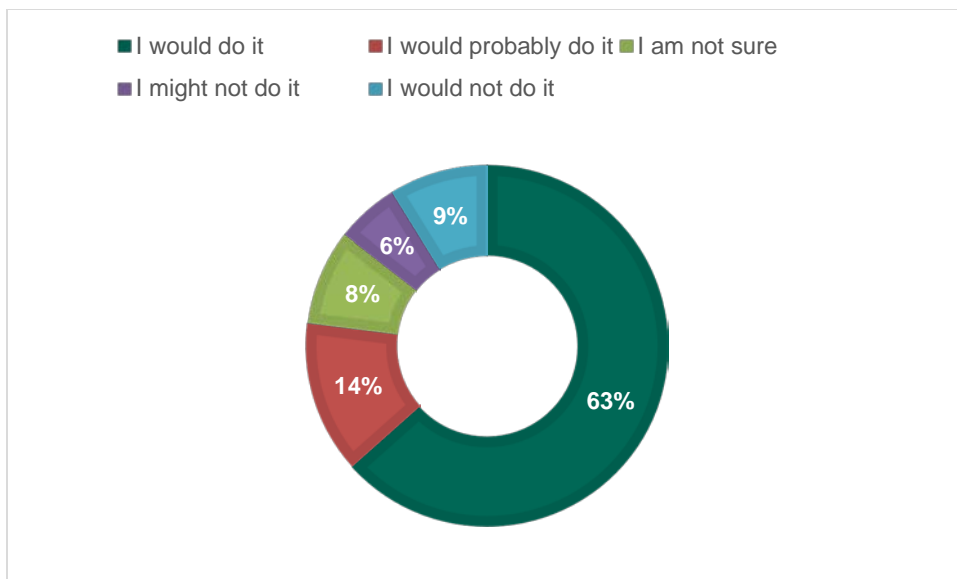
*There was one specific comment about the billing method: "I struggle with the idea of paying as a large group. Our water bill continually goes up every year as there are 84 units in the complex and I am a single person in my complex whereas some have 4-5 people and use far more water than I do. It will be similar to the pay as you use garbage disposals."*

## Overall Support

Of 374 respondents, 77% said that they would or would probably participate in an organics collection program at their building. 15% said that they might not or would not participate.

*Figure 1: Level of Support for Organics Program*





23 respondents also provided written comments to supplement their answer. Eight of these comments were positive, reiterating support for the program – for example: *“Being a renter of a condo unit, I don’t have a say in how my building is run and what sort of services are provided. A universal city program to encourage proper waste management would be a positive step for our building and for many others like us.”*

Of the remaining comments, most were related to ensuring convenience, cleanliness, affordability, and managing contamination. Three respondents mentioned that they were already composting through vermiculture or another method.

One commenter stated: *“I have stopped using the communal recycling bin as there is so much junk put into it that I’m sure nothing can be recycled after it is picked up. I’ve seen communal organic compost bins and they are just as bad or worse. What is the point of participating if it is so contaminated than none of it is usable? That’s just a waste of time and money.”*

### Other Advice

150 residents responded to a question asking for any further advice as the City develops an organics program for multi-unit buildings. 19% of comments were positive, affirming support and interest.

21% of comments emphasized the need for excellent education so that residents know how to participate, what is included, and what the benefits of the program are.

10% of comments were about contamination and the risk of non-participation. Many concerns mentioned the difficulty with recycling and residents incorrectly using the bins. A lack of ownership combined with anonymity were mentioned as particular challenges for multi-unit buildings. There was disagreement about whether to put organics conveniently near an entrance/exit to the building as it could increase contamination risk.

9% of comments requested that the program be kept affordable or be introduced for no fee, keeping low-income tenants in mind. Some mentioned costs associated with making space to

accommodate extra bins and that these should not be charged to owners (in condo setting).

The remaining comments fall into the following categories:

- Make the program opt-in, not mandatory.
- Keep bins in tenant-only areas to reduce dumping and mess.
- Make it easy to participate.
- Make sure it is clean.
- Address accessibility, especially for seniors in winter.
- Need to find space for bins.
- Have incentives to motivate participation and/or penalties to enforce proper disposal.
- Empty the bins often enough.
- Allow bags.
- Advertise free finished compost.
- Variety of bin sizes to suit the property.

*“Warning: A good many people in our condos already refuse to invest the time and effort needed for recycling and are even less likely to do so with organics. The problem is not education but motivation. Also, turnovers with condo renters make one-time education efforts futile.”*

*“I used to live in Mississauga and remember when they first put this type of system in place.....there were growing pains but it's a great program. It might be worth doing information nights at community centres or shopping centres near big apartment blocks, like at Centre Mall.”*

*“For multi-unit complexes with townhouses, have 'community events' for that specific complex. Inform people why not all garbage is the same. If people are told why something is being changed they are usually a lot more receptive to it.”*

### Reviewing Garbage Collection

#### Level of Satisfaction

78.1% of 361 respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the frequency of collection, and 75.0% are satisfied or very satisfied with bin capacity. There is slightly higher dissatisfaction with bin capacity than collection frequency.

How satisfied are you with the garbage collection at your building?	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Frequency of collection - the bin is collected often enough	29.6%	48.5%	13.9%	6.5%	1.5%

<b>Bin capacity</b> - there is enough room for my garbage	30.1%	44.9%	13.9%	9.0%	2.0%
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*Additional Feedback*

56 respondents provided additional feedback about their experience with garbage collection.

The most frequent comment was about outsiders (non-residents) using multi-unit bins, which is frustrating for residents. Some respondents expressed concern that a Pay-As-You-Throw Utility for single-family homes will lead to increased dumping in their bins. Two respondents requested that garbage bin access be restricted to tenants only.

10 commenters noted that their garbage bin is often too full, and that their recycling bin gets used for garbage too. Several mentioned that the garbage bin was poorly placed in an inconvenient or high traffic location. In complexes with multiple bins, respondents said that the second or third bin is often placed too far away leading to one overflowing bin and contamination (similar challenges were mentioned with the recycling bins).

Four respondents felt that their garbage bin is too big for the number of units in the residence. A few respondents have challenges accessing the garbage bin due to its size (height) and/or the weight of the lid.

There was also a participant who expressed frustration that their building is unable to get City garbage collection: *“The city does not pick up our garbage because of where the bin is located, yet the city approved the building plan.”*

**Bulky Waste Items**

This set of questions asked residents to tell us about how they dispose of bulky waste items, like mattresses, furniture, and large electronics or appliances. Respondents were allowed to check multiple disposal approaches.

For items that **can be reused**, respondents indicated that they normally donate these to a local charity (77%), sell them through Kijiji, Facebook or other (51%), put them out with a “free sign” (17%) or return them to a local business (5%). 6% of respondents said that they generally put these items in the garbage bin at their building, while another 5% take them to the landfill.

For items that **cannot be reused** (i.e. are contaminated or broken beyond repair), respondents indicated that they normally take them to the landfill (42%) or put them in the garbage bin at their building (32%). As would be expected, far fewer participants donate, give away, return, or sell these items.

Participants were then provided with a list of common barriers, and asked to rank the **largest barriers** for them to properly dispose of these items that **cannot be reused**.

Rank	Barrier
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1	I don't have a vehicle to get to the landfill or donation centre, or my vehicle is too small
2	It's too expensive for me to hire a collection service (ex. 1-800-GOT-JUNK or other)
3	There is not enough space in our communal waste bin
4	I don't want to pay for the landfill fee (\$15 entry)
5	It takes too much time and effort for me to arrange

Given those barriers, participants were asked to rate their interest in a bulky waste collection service from the City.

If a bulky waste collection service was introduced, how useful would this be for your household?	
Scale	% of responses
0	6.52%
1	3.40%
2	4.82%
3	7.93%
4	5.67%
5	32.86%
6	7.65%
7	6.80%
8	4.53%
9	7.08%
10	12.75%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>353 responses</b>

The average level of interest was 5.44 out of 10, indicating that this service “might be useful”. When asked whether they would be willing to pay for such a service, the rating was just slightly lower, averaging 5.15.

If you required a bulky waste collection, would you be willing to pay for it? <i>Assume that the cost would be competitive with or more affordable than existing junk disposal companies.</i>	
Scale	% of responses
0	10.68%
1	5.93%
2	4.15%
3	3.85%
4	3.56%
5	29.38%

6	10.68%
7	12.46%
8	5.93%
9	4.45%
10	8.90%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>337 responses</b>

Some open-ended comments included:

*“If the area was well lit it might discourage people from putting bulky stuff into the communal bins because people could see them so their anonymity would be gone. I like the idea of an area for bulky broken down stuff but think it should be by appointment and/or pay as you go so that things don’t sit around forever and people who don’t use the service are not billed unfairly.”*

*“The problem with (collecting) bulky items is that we do not have room to store things while waiting for a pickup date.”*

### Improving Recycling Participation

The multi-unit residential recycling program started in 2014. The 2017 Waste Awareness & Behaviour Survey found that 69% of multi-unit residents stated that they recycled most or all of their recyclable items. The 2016 Waste Characterization Study of materials multi-unit buildings were sending to landfill found that there was room for improvement: 17% of materials going to the landfill from multi-units actually could have been recycled.

In this question, we provided the context above as well as some information about recycling contamination. Participants were then asked about how to improve the participation rate and reduce contamination with recycling at their building. The strategies suggested were based on research and best practices from other municipalities and from Cosmopolitan Industries.

**Q14. Please rank your level of interest in the following opportunities to improve your building's recycling participation & effectiveness. Rank from most (1) to least interested (6).**

1	<b>Educational materials:</b> such as posters, door hangers, magnets, how-to-recycle kits for new residents
2	<b>Improve the waste collection area:</b> have all bins in one convenient location, recycling bin is always blue and clearly labeled, visual reminders of "what goes where"
3	<b>More on-site recycling:</b> more or larger bins or more frequent collection
4	<b>Online education tools:</b> promote the "Waste Wizard" search tool on saskatoon.ca/waste to multi-unit residents to quickly search how to dispose of different items
5	<b>Illegal dumping:</b> make it easy for residents to report non-authorized users (dumping waste) or contamination (non-recyclable items in the bin)
6	<b>In-person education:</b> such as resident recycling ambassadors trained at each building, recycling events with educational games

*Other ideas to improve recycling participation and reduce contamination:*

- Have better monitoring with fines and enforcement, especially for illegal dumping, contamination, and non-participation.
- Introduce separate bins for paper and other items to reduce contamination.
- Empty the bins more often or increase capacity.
- Find new ways to recycle plastic and other materials.
- Look at best places to site recycling bins – closer to doors is more convenient, but others are concerned that this leads to more contamination.
- Lasting, all-season signage for bins.
- Provide small blue bins for in-unit collection.
- Make colour differences between communal bins more obvious and distinct.
- Ban plastic bags, legislation to prohibit single-use plastic and Styrofoam that cannot be recycled.
- Improve the durability of bin lids.

**Additional Diversion Opportunities**

**Reduce, Reuse, Repair and Recycle Initiatives**

Participants were asked to rank their level of interest in a number of sample recycling programs and reduce, reuse or repair initiatives. These could be activities that take place community-wide, at a neighbourhood scale, or within buildings themselves – recognizing that some buildings might be well-positioned to host or organize collections or other programs.

Ranked from most to least interested (338 answered)

Ranking	Potential recycling programs in your building or neighbourhood
1	Battery and lightbulb recycling collection bins
2	Electronic waste collection point or event
3	Household hazardous waste collection point (ex. paint cans, aerosols, automotive oils, pesticides, cleaners, solvents, medicines)
4	Clothing and textile collection bins

Ranked from most to least interested (320 answered)

Ranking	Potential reuse, reduce or repair programs in your building or neighbourhood
1	Swap events or sales (ex. clothing, books, other items)
2	Shared "things" libraries (ex. for tools, small appliances, craft/sewing tools, sport/camping equipment, etc.)
3	Waste reduction workshops (ex. reducing food waste, avoiding excess packaging)
4	Repair workshops (ex. bring clothing, appliances, or small electronics and learn how to repair)

**More Diversion Ideas**

The last question asked participants to share any other ideas for reaching 70% waste diversion by 2023. Of the 70 respondents who answered this question, there were a number of common themes:

1) *Addressing plastic bags*

Many respondents urged a ban on plastic bags and single-use plastics. Some also extended this to straws, plastic packaging/takeout containers and Styrofoam.

2) *Education & awareness*

Continuing to invest in education and marketing to spread awareness especially of new programs or services. One participant requested that the advertising be “less condescending” and less wasteful.

3) *Learning from others*

Several participants referenced other cities like Okotoks and Halifax and recommended learning from the experience and best practices from European countries.

4) *Affordable and accessible programs*

Adding costs or raising taxes was mentioned as a barrier to participation and support. Ensure that programs are available and accessible to all residents, especially for household hazardous waste and other difficult items.

5) *Industry innovation*

A number of respondents highlighted a need for innovation in product packaging, recycling, and reuse. Some suggested subsidies or incentives for local businesses that provide reuse or repair opportunities or are looking to innovate in recycling or packaging design.

6) *Reuse opportunities*

A few participants wanted to see more opportunities for sharing material goods and promoting less overall consumption. “Freecycling” areas in buildings or neighbourhoods, shared libraries, and repair workshops could be examples.

7) *Enforcement and accountability*

Some participants suggested more fines and better enforcement for people who over-fill their garbage bins, dump illegally, or create a mess when scavenging others’ bins.

## Online Survey – Property Managers

### *Respondent Characteristics*

115 respondents. Note that some participants finished only a portion of the full survey, or only completed mandatory questions.

Please note that this category included condo board members who are also condo owners. These results may be skewed toward condo interests, given the nature of the comments received and that we saw a lower number of participants from high-rise apartments than was anticipated.

Responses indicated that at times condo board participants were commenting from their perspective as a resident and not as a property manager. In the future, Administration will likely consider separate engagement and communications streams for condo boards, given their significant differences from other multi-unit properties.

Q1. What kind of multi-unit building do you manage?	% of Respondents
Walk-up apartment or stacked townhouse (20-30 units)	27.0%
High-rise apartment (>45 units)	24.4%
Mid-rise apartment (30-45 units)	25.2%
Tri-plex, four-plex or townhouse (8-19 units)	19.1%
Duplex or equivalent (3-7 units)	4.4%

71 respondents

Q2. Does your property generate yard, lawn, or garden waste?	% of Respondents
Yes - some	53.5%
Yes - quite a bit	22.5%
No – not much or not at all	22.5%
Unsure	1.5%

77 respondents

Q3. If so, how does your property manage lawn, leaf, and/or garden waste?	% of Respondents
We use a contractor to do yard work that disposes of the waste themselves	63.6%
We put it in our communal garbage bin	24.7%
We take it to the City's compost depot	3.9%
Our residents take care of it themselves	2.6%
We have set up our own composting system (ex. compost pile, vermiculture, other)	2.6%
Other (please specify)	2.6%
We pay for an organic waste collection service	0.0%

### Introducing Organics Collection

#### Service Approach

The biggest take-away from this question about level of support for a Bylaw versus City-Led approach is that there was not a clear preference between the two approaches. It is unclear

whether participants struggled to understand the differences between the two alternatives or if there were other factors influencing these result.

In particular, 40% of respondents were unsure of whether they supported or opposed the bylaw approach. This may indicate a lack of familiarity and knowledge of the differences, and a need for clearer explanation.

45% of respondents were mostly or strongly opposed to the bylaw approach. It is worth noting that condominium board members are likely over-represented in this survey, which may contribute to higher opposition, given what was heard at the community workshops. That is, that boards were concerned about the added burden of responsibility for their members or employees. 15% were mostly to strongly supportive of the bylaw approach.

As for the City-led approach, 54% of respondents were mostly to strongly supportive, 23% were unsure and 22% were mostly to strongly opposed to the approach.

### Addressing Challenges

Participants were asked to rank the concerns below from most to least challenging for their PROPERTY. The averaged ranked results are as follows:

Rank	Concern
1	<b>Cleanliness</b> - preventing odour, pests, and keeping the bin/areas around the bin clean
2	<b>Space</b> - finding space for an additional large cart/bin on our property
3	<b>Contamination</b> - making sure that residents sort items correctly
4	<b>Capacity</b> - making sure that the bin size and collection frequency is enough
5	<b>Aesthetics</b> - that the bins and collection area looks good
6	<b>Safety</b> - ensuring that the area around the bins is safe for residents

They were then asked to rank another list of concerns from most to least challenging for their RESIDENTS. The averaged ranked results are as follows:

Rank	Concern
1	<b>Cleanliness</b> - worrying about: smells, bugs or rodents, and keeping the container clean
2	<b>Cost</b> - concerns about paying for an extra program
3	<b>Space</b> - finding space to store and separate organic waste in their units
4	<b>Convenience</b> - needing to sort the organic waste and take it out to the disposal bin
5	<b>Education</b> - learning what can be put in organics bin
6	<b>Accessibility</b> - difficulty accessing the outdoor waste and recycling area

When asked to pick their top three strategies for making it easier for residents to successfully participate in organics collection, participants overwhelmingly aligned on the following three items:

- 1) Ensure communal organics bins are emptied and cleaned frequently.
- 2) Provide small kitchen catchers (containers) for every unit.
- 3) Provide information packages to each unit, explaining how to properly sort and dispose of organics, and why it is important.

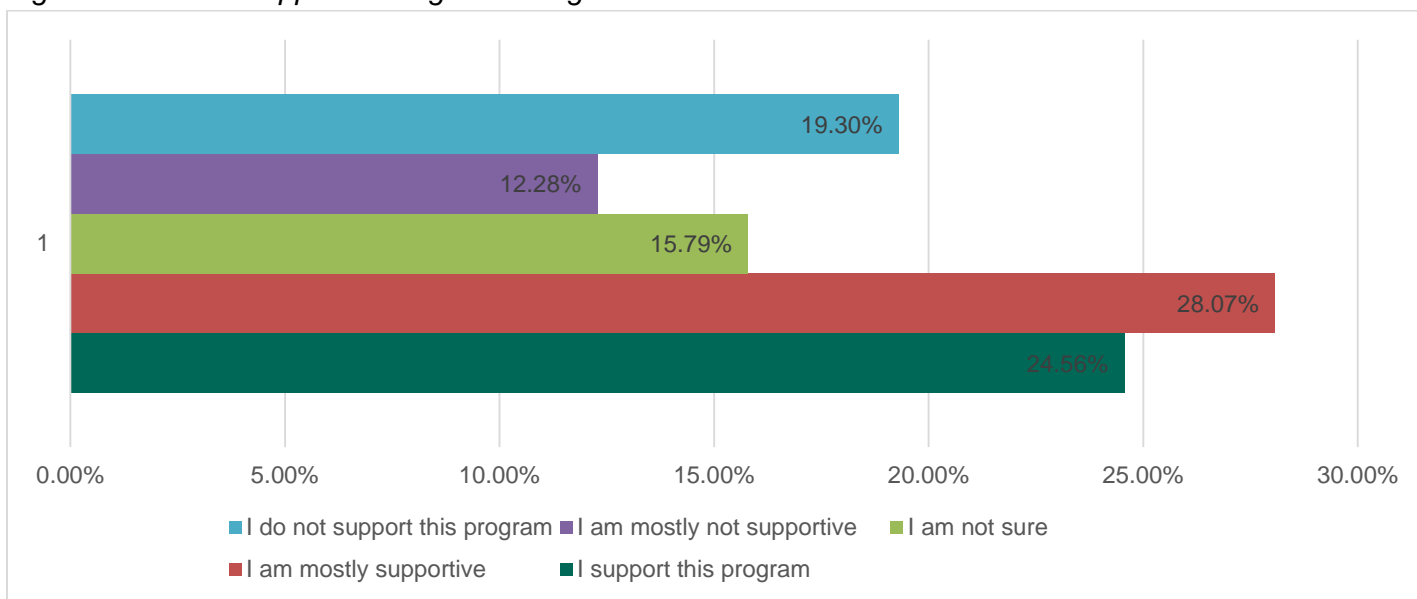
The other, lower-rated strategies were:

- Locate organics in an accessible and central location.
- Ensure collection area is clean, well-lit and organized
- Using posters and labels in busy areas and next to bins to remind residents of what goes where.
- Give regular feedback to the building on how we are doing – rate of diversion and effectiveness.

### Level of Support

Of the 57 respondents who answered this question, 52.5% were mostly or fully supportive of the program. 19% said that they do not support the program.

Figure 2: Level of Support for Organics Program



### Collection Format

Respondents were asked to weigh in on their preferred approach for collection food and/or yard waste.

- 58% of participants liked the choice of having food waste collected year-round with optional yard waste collection either seasonally or not at all, depending on the property's needs.
- 38% of participants preferred food and yard waste collected together (co-mingled) in one bin, year-round.
- Only 4% expressed an interest in having yard waste collected seasonally in a separate bin from food waste.

### Additional Feedback

- Provide choices and clear costs for this program. Allow us to change sizes and numbers of bins.
- Have a strategy for addressing risk of non-compliance and contamination due to low individual accountability, and/or incentivize participation.
- Fix recycling before adding new programs. Difficulties with compliance now and complaints about the space it takes up.
- Make it as convenient and easy as possible, with an emphasis on reducing odour and maintaining cleanliness.
- Bins must be indoors or in resident-only access to minimize external public dumping – service providers must be willing to collect from these locations.
- Make it cost-neutral; added costs will be passed to tenants and seen as a rent increase from landlords.
- Consider seniors with decreased physical and mental capacity and their ability to participate.
- Space for bins will be a real issue at some properties.
- Meet with owners through the Northern Saskatchewan Chapter of the Canadian Condo Institute. Know that condos already pay for services that the City does not provide due to City policy around waste vehicles; seen as an additional tax to owners.

### *Reviewing Garbage Collection*

#### **Garbage Collection Service**

77% of the 56 people who responded get garbage collection from the City, while 16% are not serviced by City collection and a further 7% are unsure.

80% expressed that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the **frequency of collection**, with 13% neutral and 7% expressing dissatisfaction.

79% expressed that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the **bin capacity** (with fewer “very satisfied” than for frequency). 11% were neutral and 10% were somewhat to very dissatisfied.

While participants were asked to rate their satisfaction with the ability to contract additional collections when needed, many (40%) were not aware of this service or had not used it, while 50% were satisfied and 10% were dissatisfied.

10 participants gave further feedback. The key themes were:

- Want the City to tackle the issue of outsiders dumping furniture in bins and then City refusing to dump the bins.
- Were unaware that they could contact extra collections when needed from the City or a private hauler.
- Frustration with many missed collections that are not remedied, a lack of communication from City on breakdowns and maintenance, and poor overall management of collection. Unreliability of City service.
- Issue that condos have to use private providers because City will not access bins inside garbage rooms.
- Garbage bin is too large.



- Recycling is often overflowing.

### **Waste Utility**

Participants were given the following context: The City is looking at how all waste management services are funded and is considering transferring some of these costs from property taxes to utility bills instead (similar to recycling). They were then asked to rate their level of support for transferring garbage collection costs from property taxes to utility bills.

The majority (43%) of the 56 respondents were unsure, with 25% expressing support and 32% opposed.

Several respondents expressed concern or frustration that they are being double billed, as their Condo building receives garbage collection from a private contractor because they cannot be serviced by the City. Several commenters also expressed concerns about cost increases or added administrative burdens.

One of the participants that was open to this approach suggested that “we would get charged for the number of bins we put out for emptying”, thus creating an incentive for collectively reducing or diverting waste. On that note, another participant mentioned that this would cause tenants to care more about composting and recycling. However, this was contrasted by a commenter who stated that “there is no control over what other occupants in my building do. I am not interested in paying for the collection of their garbage”.

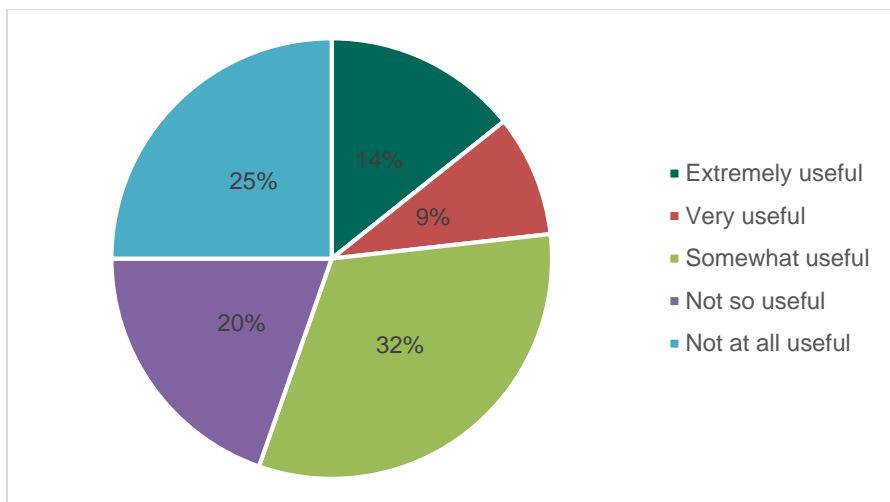
### **Additional Feedback**

- Should address the fact that some condo owners are being double billed for garbage collection.
- City should provide pickup for items dumped into or around building dumpster.
- Use best practices from other municipalities, don't reinvent the wheel.
- Make a levy and accept that we need to find a new landfill rather than playing with these costs.
- Try to coordinate pickup days to be different from Cosmo, to reduce street congestion.
- Fix and refine current processes before implementing new system or program.
- Third-party contractors provide better services than City. Don't limit supplier choice; provide options and let condos determine how they can be serviced and at what cost.
- Account for non-profit housing providers that support low-income seniors and cannot handle significant cost increases.

### **Bulky Waste Collection**

Property managers expressed mixed interest on the idea of introducing a bulky item collection service, where the City would offer a seasonal or by-appointment service to collect things like mattresses, furniture and appliances.

*Figure 3: Level of Support for Bulky Waste Collection*



12 participants provided additional comments, summarized below:

- Useful for dealing with homeowners that dump their items in or near our bins.
  - Already arranging for private contracting 2x/week because of this issue.
  - Already arrange for a private hauling company once per year – like the private contractor, doesn’t need to be City managed.
  - Use a private company currently; would be most helpful on tenant change dates (mid and end of month).
- Would depend on cost and service.
  - Ideally make more affordable than private options.
  - Not interested in a paid service – interested if it is free (like North Battleford, once per year).
- Difficulty is where to store things while waiting for a collection.
- Not as useful for our (condo) residents, who we expect to take care of their own bulky items.

### Improving Recycling Participation

As with the resident survey, property managers were asked to rank a number of opportunities to improve the recycling program participation.

**Q14. Please rank your level of interest in the following opportunities to improve your building's recycling participation & effectiveness. Rank from most (1) to least interested (6).**

1	<b>Educational materials:</b> such as posters, door hangers, magnets, how-to-recycle kits for new residents
2	<b>Illegal dumping:</b> make it easy for residents to report non-authorized users (dumping waste) or contamination (non-recyclable items in the bin)
3	<b>Improve the waste collection area:</b> have all bins in one convenient location, recycling bin is always blue and clearly labeled, visual reminders of "what goes where"
4	<b>Online education tools:</b> promote the "Waste Wizard" search tool on saskatoon.ca/waste to multi-unit residents to quickly search how to dispose of different items
5	<b>More on-site recycling:</b> more or larger bins or more frequent collection
6	<b>In-person education:</b> such as resident recycling ambassadors trained at each building, recycling events with educational games

*Other ideas:*

- Lock recycling bins at night to reduce much of contaminated material being dumped.
- City rep visit suites to convey importance of these programs and increase sense of personal accountability.
- Reduce bin sizes at buildings and keep close to the building to reduce dumping risk.
- Consider bag tag program where you purchase a tag from the City and place it on bag. If item is disposed without a tag, then tenant is billed.
- Make it easier, there are too many rules.
- More action from City when illegal dumping is reported.
- More education at individual level; easier for people to access lists or examples of what can be recycled. Could include more frequent posters/door hangers and meetings with sorting demos.
- Ensure property developers are including waste areas in their plans for building design

***Additional Diversion Opportunities***

Participants were asked to share any further ideas of what multi-unit buildings and residents could do to divert more waste.

These ideas are summarized below:

- **Keep it simple!**
- **Build awareness**
  - Advertise and encourage; show what other cities do to help us get on board.
  - Have ambassadors in condo buildings – talk with Canadian Condominium Institute chapter.
  - More education about what cannot be recycled and composted; what are the liabilities for the environment.
  - Social media and online educational resources.
- **Charitable Donations, Swaps, or Garage Sales**
  - More awareness of where to take old furniture, electronics, etc. for recycling or to be stripped down.
  - More charities should come collect items – or buildings could contract them to come; tenants may not be able to drop-off and many buildings don't have space to accommodate drop-off areas or more bins.
  - Donation bins for clothes and household goods; avoid waste when people move out.
  - Encourage alternative garage sales or swaps for condo buildings who may not have space to host – host it at a civic centre parking lot or church, or have a nearby drop-off point.
- **Change developer rules**
  - Plan for waste collection needs before condos are built (ex. chutes, bin space indoors).
  - Planning & Development should take more responsibility to ensure space is available when developers request project approval.
- **Collect metal separately**
  - Request for separate collection of metals in particular, or ability to contract this service.
- **Budget for waste**
  - City should budget for true cost of waste and pass on the costs; re-directing waste won't help much.

- Ask how to deal with more waste, what the cost is, and scale appropriately. “*Stop the bandaids.*”
- **Provide incentives**
  - Example: rebates for fewer pickups needed.
- **Retrofit garbage chutes**
  - “Grants to non-profits to retrofit buildings to provide additional chutes for garbage/green waste/recycling (three chutes instead of one) for senior and disabled housing.”

### Workshops – Property Managers

Two workshops were held with property managers. They were offered both afternoon and evening options, on the East and West sides of the city. 40 participants attended in total; 25 represented condo boards and 16 represented property management companies (primarily from 5 large companies). At the workshops, City staff presented initial findings from the resident engagement, to provide context and fodder for discussion. City staff also presented examples of how organics collection is managed in 4-5 other jurisdictions, and whether they use a bylaw or City-run approach. Participants were asked to share their feedback on preferred approaches, and to provide advice on how to best introduce an organics program.

### Introducing Organics Collection

#### Level of Support

Across both workshops there was a moderate level of support for bringing in an organics program. Many participants commented that while the concept is good, they are concerned about the logistics of cleanliness, space, pest control, odour, and space requirements. One group mentioned that they would like to see research around the input costs compared to the actual savings that would result from such a program.

#### Addressing Barriers

Participants were asked to discuss how the City and individual Properties might address the barriers to implementing a multi-unit organics program. The top 3 most frequently noted comments are listed in bold.

#### Suggestions for the City:

- **Allow compostable bags.**
- **Provide kitchen catchers.**
- **Ensure frequent and efficient collection service.**
- Focus on education, providing clear instructions and materials.
- Provide subsidies or rebates for costs of bins, retrofitting properties, or job grants to assist with collection (ex. Tenants with dementia).
- Consider incentives to reward good behaviour and make program appealing and/or enforcement of non-compliance.
- Be flexible and cater to the different configurations & sizes of different buildings (appropriately sized containers are part of this).
- Try a pilot project before scaling up.

#### Suggestions for Properties:

- **Share educational information & instructions, hold presentations, address tenant turnover.**
- **Ensure compliance of residents and hold them accountable.**
- **Determine best bin location (convenient, accessible, inside vs. outside, etc.).**
- Downsize garbage bin.
- Find space at property, which might involve eliminating parking, moving lawns or fence, adding pavement, eliminating parking.

*Other ideas – learning from recycling*

Participants were then asked to share other recommendations for how the City and/or contractors could better inform residents and support properties, learning from their experiences with multi-unit recycling.

- Provide adequate advanced notice of changes.
- Focus on advertising and awareness to spread the word, including City staff at AGMs and meetings to be more visible and accessible.
- Focus on education to improve compliance, including handouts and pamphlets.
- Pilot projects and testing before implementation to work out the issues.
- Create fines for non-compliance.
- Ensure there are options for variety of service levels and frequent enough collection.

## **Service Approach**

As part of planning the workshops, preliminary results from the property manager survey were reviewed and it was noted that there was uncertainty on the service approach questions. The workshop aimed to provide additional information and time on this topic to determine if there was a lack of understanding on the different approaches or if there were other reasons driving the uncertainty that was appearing in the preliminary survey results.

The workshop provided additional definition of the service approaches, including examples of how they work in other jurisdictions as well as the roles and responsibilities anticipated in each scenario for key stakeholders including the City, the property manager, residents, and possibly a third party contracted service provider.

It appeared that condominium owners and boards were more supportive of a City-Led approach than a bylaw mandated approach. This was largely due the perception that the bylaw approach would be more work for the board and employees (where employees exist), which would reduce any potential cost savings.

Because the bylaw mandated approach was much less familiar to most participants, many expressed uncertainty and were not clearly in support or opposed.

### *Bylaw-Mandated*

Participants saw several advantages to a bylaw approach. The key advantages listed were: improved customer service, greater reliability, greater accountability, more choice to best meet property needs, competition between providers driving down costs and increasing efficiency, and greater readiness (to collect organic materials). One participant noted that they want the ability to pay per load rather than by unit and would choose a provider offering that billing structure.

The disadvantages identified were: more work for the property manager, less consistency in service across properties, less flexible funding source (service fee), less focus on education, unreliable contractors, fluctuating fees, and cost to the City to enforce non-compliance.

#### *City-Led*

This approach was seen as having advantages in the following areas: centralized resident education, more funding options (utility or tax), less work for property managers, greater consistency in method and cost (an advantage when dealing with tenant turnover). One participant mentioned that the program cost could be lower if the City contracts the service.

Participants identified the following disadvantages: less adaptable and accommodating, less reliable service (with collection schedule and location), more expensive and less efficient, billing by fixed cost per unit, worse customer service, and lack of choice.

#### **Other Comments**

- Would like City to collect bulky items at least once every 6 months, or offer a “valet” service for items like mattresses, furniture, etc.
- City or Cosmo should provide in-unit recycling bins/catchers to make sorting easier.
- Add locks to waste bins to discourage illegal dumping.
- Would like to see more consistent hours at both Compost Depots.
- Interested to know more about plans to separate out construction and demolition waste.

#### **Next Steps**

The City's project team will integrate the ideas and feedback into the design and implementation of a multi-unit organics program and a broader multi-unit diversion plan. A report in the second quarter of 2019 will outline the recommended service approach for an organics program and timelines for implementation.