

AGENDA ITEM NO: 7.5

MEETING DATE: March 19, 2024

STAFF REPORT – COVER SHEET

SUBJECT: Curbside Collection Exemptions DATE: March 7, 2024

DEPARTMENT: Engineering PREPARED BY: T. Friesen


1. SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

Staff are preparing the Request for Proposals for the next Curbside Collection Contract. Council requested staff to review the feasibility of implementing exemptions for curbside compostable waste collection from residences on agricultural properties, based on public feedback.

A decision is required to continue the standardized Curbside Collection Program for the next contract, or allow exemptions.

2. RECOMMENDATION:

Recommendation that Council approve continuing with a standardized Curbside Program for the next Curbside Collection Contract, with all properties receiving collection of compostable waste, mixed recyclables, glass and garbage to encourage waste diversion.



K. Jefford, Director of Engineering

3. FINANCE COMMENTS:

Curbside Collection Contract costs would be funded through Curbside Collection Fees.



Glen Savard, Director of Finance

4. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION/COMMENTS:

Supports recommendation.



David Blain, CAO

**STAFF REPORT ON
CURBSIDE COLLECTION EXEMPTIONS**

PREPARED BY:	<u>Sydney Hartley</u>	DATE:	<u>March 7, 2024</u>
POSITION:	<u>Environmental Services Specialist</u>	DEPARTMENT:	<u>Engineering</u>

1. DEFINITION OF ISSUE:

Staff are preparing the Request for Proposals for the next Curbside Collection Contract. Council requested staff to review the feasibility of implementing exemptions for curbside compostable waste collection from residences on agricultural properties, based on public feedback.

A decision is required to continue the standardized Curbside Collection Program for the next contract, or allow exemptions.

2. FACTORS:

2.1 Prior to 2017, residents were able to apply for exemptions from the garbage portion of the Curbside Collection Program if they provided proof of having a commercial waste collection contract for a business/farm operation on their property. Exemptions were also provided for vacancies of three months or longer (e.g. snowbirds), and there was a bi-weekly collection option for seniors. A comprehensive review of exemptions and different service levels was carried out, which determined that there were essentially no operational cost savings from the contractor if some residences are exempt because the contractor would still need to provide the same number of trucks and crews. There are also administrative costs associated with exemption programs.

2.2 Currently, all properties on the Curbside Program receive garbage, glass, compostable waste and recycling collection. To maximize diversion rates and cost-effectiveness, the Solid Waste Management Bylaw does not allow exemptions from any part of the collection service, except in two cases:

- (1) in the opinion of the Director the Collection Service cannot reasonably and practically be provided to that building, by reason of inadequate access or otherwise; or,
- (2) the building has been rendered uninhabitable by fire or natural disaster or is under demolition.

2.3 The City has conducted Waste Audits on the residential curbside garbage in 2010, 2015, 2017 and 2022 to determine the typical contents of garbage being placed at the curb by rural and urban residents on the Curbside Program.

- a. The fall 2010 audit found that compostable waste (food and yard waste) made up 45.9% of the residential curbside garbage contents. This study included garbage

samples taken from one rural residential area (Ryder Lake), which found 36.2% compostable waste.

- b. In fall 2015, an additional waste audit was carried out to gather additional information for rural residential properties. The audit found that compostable waste (food and yard waste) made up 32.5% of the rural garbage contents.
- c. In fall 2017, after the introduction of compostables collection in the Curbside Program, a waste audit was completed on the residential curbside garbage stream, which found 24.0% compostable waste in the rural curbside garbage and 21.0% compostable waste in the urban stream.
- d. In winter 2022, a residential curbside garbage audit was conducted which found 30.0% compostable waste in the rural garbage stream and 28.0% compostable waste in the urban garbage stream, an increase from the 2017 audit findings.

2.4 As shown in waste audits, compostable waste continues to make up a substantial amount of the residential curbside garbage stream for both rural and urban homes, with the two more recent audits finding rural garbage had a slightly higher compostable waste content than urban garbage.

2.5 The curbside contractor conducts participation audits every year on selected areas. The most recent audit occurred in February 2024 and focused on rural/agricultural properties. In this participation audit, it was found that 62% of rural/agricultural properties had placed garbage and recyclables out for collection and 40% had placed compostable waste (Green Carts) out for collection. There was considerably lower participation for glass collection, at 13%. An audit completed in 2022 included both rural and urban properties, and found higher participation among urban properties across all commodities:

Type of Property	% with Garbage at Curb	% with Recycling at Curb	% with Compostables at Curb	% with Glass at Curb
Rural	62%	69%	49%	17%
Urban	77%	77%	61%	19%

2.6 Both the City and FVRD have bylaws requiring the separation of compostable waste and recyclables from garbage. The FVRD’s Solid Waste Management Plan includes a target of 90% waste diversion by 2025 and unfortunately the Curbside Program is falling well short of this target (66% diversion in 2023). The curbside participation and waste composition audits indicate that significant additional efforts are needed, and staff are planning extensive waste sorting education as part of rolling out the next Curbside Collection Contract.

2.7 Exemptions or opt-in service are not practical or cost-effective to implement. If rural areas are fully excluded from the Curbside Collection Program, it will reduce service levels for those properties currently participating in the collection service, and will make education and enforcement of waste diversion requirements significantly more challenging.

3. RECOMMENDATION & SUBSTANTIATION:

Recommendation:

Recommendation that Council approve continuing with a standardized Curbside Program for the next Curbside Collection Contract, with all properties receiving collection of compostable waste, mixed recyclables, glass and garbage to encourage waste diversion.

Substantiation:

A standardized curbside service provides the best opportunity for improving waste diversion and there is a lack of operational cost savings associated with exemptions.