

REPORT TITLE: Townhouse Waste Collection Options

FROM: Andrea Warren, Interim Commissioner of Public Works

RECOMMENDATION

That the townhouse waste collection options outlined in the report of the Interim Commissioner of Public Works, titled “Townhouse Waste Collection Options”, be approved;

And further, that the consultation plan outlined in the subject report be approved;

And further, that staff align the implementation of the townhouse waste collection options selected by the individual townhouse complexes with the new curbside collection contracts anticipated to commence on October 1, 2024;

And further, that townhouse complexes requesting to be converted to cart-based collection prior to the new collection contract in 2024 be allowed to do so provided the proposed approach outlined in the subject report are met.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- To date, 18,138 townhouse units have been converted to a cart-based waste collection program, which represents approximately 50 per cent of all townhouse units in Peel.
 - At its June 13, 2019 meeting, Regional Council directed staff to cease all further implementation of the cart system in townhouse complexes and report back to the Waste Management Strategic Advisory Committee on alternative townhouse waste diversion strategies, including a consultation plan for engaging the townhouse residents prior to changing their current collection system.
 - Staff reviewed several service options and used a multi-pronged evaluation process to determine which options best align with Peel’s strategic policy objectives while meeting the needs of residents.
 - Options developed utilize varying combinations of carts for garbage, carts or bags for recycling and the existing size organics cart or a smaller organics cart.
 - Staff will consult with townhouse complexes in 2022 and implement their chosen option in 2024.
 - Staff recommends that townhouse complexes that have already been converted to carts remain on cart-based collection.
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DISCUSSION

1. Background

In January 2016, most curbside households, including all freehold townhouses, in the Region of Peel were converted from a weekly, bag-based waste collection program to a bi-

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weekly cart-based waste collection program. At that time, most townhouse condominium complexes were converted to bi-weekly bag-based collection for garbage and recycling, and weekly organics collection, using the same larger organics cart rolled out to other curbside households. Since the fall of 2016, staff converted 18,138 townhouse units, representing approximately 50 per cent of all townhouse units in Peel, from bag-based to cart-based collection.

At its June 13, 2019 meeting, Regional Council directed staff to immediately cease all further implementation of the cart system in townhouse complexes and report back to the Waste Management Strategic Advisory Committee on alternative townhouse waste diversion strategies, including a consultation plan for engaging the townhouse residents prior to further conversions (Resolution 2019-609).

The recommended approach for townhouse waste collection options in this report incorporates the results of an environmental scan of a number of other large and medium sized Ontario municipalities; feedback received from townhouse residents, property management and Regional Council; and, considers how these options align with Regional strategic policy objectives such as increasing diversion; seamlessly transitioning the Blue Box Program to Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR); potentially implementing a user pay system; and preparing for the 2024 collection contracts.

2. Environmental Scan Results

The first step to determining options to replace the current three cart program for townhouse complexes was the completion of an environmental scan to gather information on how other Ontario municipalities collect from townhouses. This scan included the impact of the collection systems on diversion, resident satisfaction and concerns, contractor concerns and other challenges. The scan was completed through a questionnaire sent to municipalities with members on the Regional Public Works Commissioners of Ontario waste subcommittee and a total of seven responses were received.

The majority of municipalities offer the same service level in townhouse complexes that they do for regular curbside collection. Generally speaking, municipalities with bag-based collection for curbside customers offered bag-based collection for townhouse customers; and, municipalities with cart-based collection for curbside customers offered cart-based collection for townhouse customers. While all municipalities offered cart-based collection for organics, some used a smaller green bin than Peel. Municipalities that utilize automated collection vehicles tended to use 80 or 100 litre green bins and municipalities with manual collection tended to use 46 litre organics carts. Some of those municipalities offer alternatives, such as front-end collection when the collection vehicle cannot access each home individually. Appendix I includes a more detailed summary of the information received from municipalities that responded to the questionnaire.

Public Feedback

Prior to pausing the cart rollout in 2019, staff engaged residents through public consultation sessions, surveys, focus groups, collection day set out studies and site visits. Through these activities, residents strongly expressed their key concerns which included the size of the new organics cart, the desire for a smaller organics cart, finding storage space for three carts indoors (as outdoor storage of carts is not appealing), the option for containers that they could carry to the curb and a desire for an alternative solution to the current three cart program.

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3. Townhouse Waste Collection Options

Based on the information received through the environmental scan and from resident feedback, staff developed the following collection service options to consider for townhouses:

1. Cart-based collection with individual households having a choice between 120, 240 and 360 litre garbage and recycling carts and a choice of the full sized 100 litre organics cart or a smaller 46-80 litre organics cart
2. Cart-based collection for garbage with individual households having a choice between 120, 240 and 360 litre garbage carts, bag-based collection for recycling and a choice of the full sized 100 litre organics cart or a smaller 46-80 litre organics cart
3. Bag-based collection for garbage and recycling and a choice of the full sized 100 litre organics cart or a smaller 46-80 litre organics cart
4. Front End Collection for recycling, garbage and organics

If approved by Council, the option of a 46-80 litre organics cart would be made available to townhouse complexes that have already been converted but not offered to curbside residents in detached, semi-detached or freehold townhouses.

4. Analysis and Evaluation of Townhouse Waste Collection Options

The following evaluation criteria for the townhouse waste collection options were developed considering feedback from Regional Council and residents:

- Supports the Region's Strategic Policy Objectives:
 - Increases Diversion – the option supports the diversion objectives of the Region's long-term waste management strategy and its 3Rs diversion target of 75 percent by 2034.
 - Allows for a Seamless Transition to Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) - to prepare for the Blue Box Program transition, the draft regulation is considering the Region's preferred transition date which aligns with the commencement of the new collection contracts in 2024. Any changes implemented to Peel's current blue box program from now to transition, including changes to the collection system, may not be utilized or funded by the producers under the new blue box program.
 - Allows for Potential Future User Fees – a potential user fee system is being investigated in which residents would be charged a fee based on the size of their garbage cart.
- Addresses Resident Concerns – the service option supports residents' concerns regarding storage and the desire for a smaller green bin.
- Reduces Litter – the service option prevents blowing papers and other lightweight items, reducing neighbourhood litter.
- Prevents Vermin and Vector – the service option prevents vermin and vector from accessing food sources in waste.

The criteria were applied in an evaluation process to eliminate any options that did not align with the Region's objectives or reasonably address the concerns of residents. The results of the evaluation are shown in Table 5, below. A more detailed summary of the evaluation is included in Appendix II.

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Table 1 - Townhouse Option Evaluation Summary

Service Option	Alternative Strategy	Increases Diversion	EPR	User Fees	Addresses Resident Concerns	Reduces Litter	Prevents Vermin & Vector	Recommended
1	Cart-based garbage and recycling collection with choice of 120, 240 and 360 litre carts. Cart-based organics collection with choice of 46-80 litre or 100 litre cart.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes
2	Cart-based garbage collection with choice of 120, 240 and 360 litre carts. Bag-based recycling collection. Cart-based organics collection with choice of 46-80 litre or 100 litre cart.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
3	Bag-based garbage and recycling collection. Cart-based organics collection with choice of 46-80 litre or 100 litre cart.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
4	Front End Collection for recycling, garbage and organics.	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No

*if small carts are selected

As Options 3 and 4 did not adequately meet all the evaluation criteria, staff recommends that these not be given further consideration. Options 1 and 2 have been brought forward as viable collection options for townhouse residents. The current three-cart program will continue to be available to townhouse complexes as part of option 1.

5. Implementation Timing

The current collection contracts allow the Region to convert townhouse complexes to the three-cart program, including the 100 litre organics cart or have the locations remain on current bi-weekly bag-based collection program.

The collection options that include a mixed service level and the provision for a 46-80 litre organics cart are not identified in the contract as collection methods. An amendment to the

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contract to allow these could be negotiated but would result in a significant increase in cost due to new vehicles and operators required to collect using these methods. The alternative collection options could be written into the next collection contract, which is expected to commence on October 1, 2024.

The existing cart supply contract does not allow for additional cart sizes to be manufactured outside of the designated carts (120L, 240L, 360L for garbage and recycling and 100L for organics). Staff would have to work with the cart vendor to amend the contract to implement a smaller organics cart.

Due to the anticipated high costs of renegotiating collection contracts and cart supply contracts, and due to the risk of producers not supporting changes to the blue box collection system under the new producer responsibility program, staff recommends implementing the townhouse conversion options listed above at the commencement of the next collection contract, which is anticipated to begin on October 1, 2024. Consultation and selection of options by townhouse complexes would, of course, occur sooner but collection would not change until 2024.

The future collection contract would specify the service level requirements at townhouse complexes, for the bidders' consideration in the submission of their bid prices, which staff believe would be more financially responsible than amending current contract pricing to address changes to the contract at this time.

As part of the Waste Collection Design Standards manual, any new townhouse complexes that are approved for development are now required to include storage for carts; up to 360 litres for garbage and recycling and 100 litres for organics. The Region will continue to work with the local municipalities as well as the developers to ensure that there is a designated area for waste collection carts.

Staff also recommend that any townhouse complexes requesting to be converted to cart-based collection with the three-cart program prior to the new collection contract in 2024 be allowed to do so, provided the proposed approach outlined in the Next Steps section of this report are met.

6. Next Steps

Consultation Plan

Following Council approval of the townhouse waste collection options, staff will implement a consultation plan to inform townhouse Boards of Directors and/or Property Managers of the waste collection service options and to confirm their preferred option.

The proposed process is as follows:

1. Board of Directors and/or Property Managers will be advised of Council's approval to move forward with one of the two options below:
 - Cart-based garbage and recycling collection with choice of 120, 240 and 360 litre carts with cart-based organics collection with choice of full sized 100 litre organics cart or 46-80 litre organics cart

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- Cart-based garbage collection with choice of 120, 240 and 360 litre cart, bag-based recycling collection with cart-based organics collection with choice of the full sized 100 litre organics cart or 46-80 litre organics cart
2. Staff will clearly describe the benefits and impacts of each option, including the ability to transition sooner if the complex chooses cart-based garbage and recycling and the 100 litre organics cart.
 3. Board of Directors and/or Property Managers can arrange an online review or in-person site visit to support selection of the option that best suits their needs and, subject to COVID-19 restrictions, may request staff to meet with residents should it be necessary.
 4. Board of Directors and/or Property Managers will be required to confirm their selection in writing before September 2022. For complexes that do not make a selection before the deadline, staff will assess the complex and assign and implement a recommended option. Residents will be required to select cart sizes by December 31, 2022 to allow staff to adequately describe the scope of work in the upcoming cart supply contract and waste collection contracts.

Proposed Approach for Consultation for Townhouse Complexes Requesting Conversion before 2024

Staff has received requests from some townhouse complexes to implement the current three cart collection program. Staff recommend that townhouse complexes requesting to have all three carts – choice of 120 litres, 240 litres, or 360 litres for garbage and recycling carts and 100 litres organics cart – be approved for conversion prior to 2024 provided they meet the following requirements:

1. The Property Management Group for the complex must submit a written request on a prescribed form provided by staff.
2. The above written request must include written approval from the Board of Directors of the complex.

Once the written request is received, staff will advise the Ward Councillor that the conversion request has been submitted prior to converting the complex to the cart program.

7. Staffing

In order to ensure adequate staffing for the consultation and implementation process, it is recommended that one contract staff be added through the 2022 budget process to assist with the consultation process in 2022.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

There is the risk that townhouse complexes that have already been converted could request to go back to bag-based collection, or one of the other approved options, which could reopen the debate amongst complex residents over whether to use carts or an alternative, and could increase costs. This risk will be managed by allowing these complexes to choose a smaller (46-80 litre) organics cart beginning in 2024.

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FINANCIAL IMPACTS

Sufficient funding is available within existing approved budgets to fund the consultations and purchase of carts for the townhouse complexes that are requesting to be converted ahead of the new collection contracts in 2024.

One contract staff will be required to assist with the continuing consultation process in 2022. The request for this contract position will be submitted as part of the 2022 budget submission.

CONCLUSION

In response to Regional Council direction, staff has identified a number of waste collection options for townhouses that have not yet been converted to cart-based collection. These options address residents' concerns (primarily around storage space) and support the Region of Peel's strategic objectives. If approved by Council, these options will be implemented in 2024 under the Region's new collection contracts. Consultations with townhouse complex Boards of Directors and property managers will take place in 2022 to inform them of the available options and for them to select one of the options. Townhouse complexes that request conversion to the existing cart-based collection system prior to 2024 and meet the requirements set out in this report will be converted.

APPENDICES

Appendix I – Municipal Townhouse Collection Program Summary

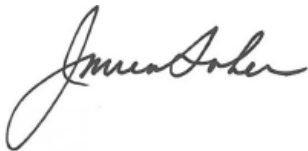
Appendix II – Evaluation of Collection Options for Garbage, Recycling and Organics

For further information regarding this report, please contact Norman Lee, Director Waste Management, Ext. 4703, norman.lee@peelregion.ca.

Reviewed and/or approved in workflow by:

Department Commissioner, Division Director and Financial Support Unit.

Final approval is by the Chief Administrative Officer.



J. Baker, Chief Administrative Officer