

Appendix 4 - Stakeholder Comments on Proposed Base Collection Options

Consultation and engagement with stakeholders commenced in May of 2018 to obtain input on the proposed base collection options. The following sections summarize the results of the comments provided by stakeholders throughout the consultation process. Not all stakeholders that staff engaged with provided formal comments on the proposed collection options. In addition, the results of the on-line and telephone survey are contained in a separate appendix. The following section summarizes the formal comments provided from the following stakeholders:

- Regional Departments and Agencies, Boards and Commissions
- Waste Management Advisory Committee
- Organizations Representing Business (ie. Business Improvement Associations, Chambers of Commerce, Tourism Agencies and Industrial Associations)
- Local Area Municipalities
- Residents and Business Owners (excluding feedback provided through the on-line and telephone surveys)

1.0 Regional Departments and Agencies, Boards and Commissions (ABCs):

Staff from the following Regional Departments and ABCs provided input on the proposed base collection options.

1.1 Planning and Development Services

Planning and Development Services reviewed the proposed container limit changes pertaining to MU properties inside and outside DBAs, to ensure alignment with broader Corporate initiatives, including the objectives of Growth Management policies. The following comments were provided by Pat Busnello, Manager Development Planning:

“the proposed reduced limit would not affect larger mixed-use developments that already exceed the current container limits and require private garbage collection”

“recent curbside audits referenced in Appendix A of Report WMPSC-C 9-2018 indicate the average number of garbage containers placed out weekly by mixed-use properties was below the proposed limit. The report therefore, indicates that the needs of mixed-use properties are expected to be met based on the audit results, particularly if diversion services are utilized. As

such, it is generally not anticipated that smaller mixed-use developments would be affected by the proposed change.”

Lindsey Savage, Planner with Community and Long Range Planning provided comments on the alignment of the proposed collection options with the new Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, which took effect on July 1, 2017:

- “The proposed changes to waste collection services align with and support policy 4.2.9.1 d) i) of the Growth Plan, which requires municipalities to develop and implement official plan policies and other strategies in support of integrated waste management, including through enhanced waste reduction, composting and recycling initiatives. In addition, a new Regional Official Plan is under development which will include policies supporting integrated waste management, in conformity with the Growth Plan.”

1.2 Economic Development

Valerie Kuhns, Economic Development Manager with Economic Development indicated that their work generally revolves around larger industrial companies, which would not use the Region’s curbside garbage collection service, and would not be impacted by the proposed collection options

1.3 Niagara Regional Housing

Cameron Banach, Manager Housing Operations with Niagara Regional Housing reviewed the relevant proposed collection options and indicated they would not be in support of EOW garbage collection, or mandatory use of clear bags for garbage at their properties.

2.0 Waste Management Advisory Committee (WMAC)

At the November 21, 2018 WMAC meeting, members voted all in favour or majority in favour of all base collection options.

3.0 Organizations Representing Business

Meetings were held with representatives from each of Niagara’s Business Improvement Associations, Chambers of Commerce, Niagara Tourism Agencies, Niagara Economic Development Corporation, and Niagara Industrial Association, during the months of August and September.

The following ORBs provided formal comments on the proposed collection options for the next contract:

- **Grimsby Downtown Improvement Association:**
 - Do not support reducing base container limit from seven (7) cans/bags to four (4) cans/bags per week.
 - Do not support mandatory use of clear garbage bags due to concern about enforcement and mixed-use properties.
 - Do not support reducing enhanced container limit without knowing the associated cost savings.
- **Niagara Falls - Queen Street Business Improvement Association:**
 - Do not support reducing base container limit from seven (7) cans/bags to four (4) cans/bags per week.
 - Do not support mandatory use of clear garbage bags.
- **Niagara Falls - Victoria Centre Business Improvement Association:**
 - Request reduction in container limit for enhanced collection service from fifteen (15) cans/bags weekly to seven (7) cans/bags weekly.
 - Do not support mandatory use of clear garbage bags. Support would be contingent on seeing a report on how the contractor will educate its staff on the proper materials that go into the proper containers/bags.
 - Request collection start time change to 5 a.m., instead of 7 a.m.
- **Pelham Business Association:**
 - Support all proposed collection options
- **Port Dalhousie Business Association:**
 - Expressed concern that proposed options would make collection more onerous and/or costly for businesses.
 - Also have concerns about storing garbage in the hot summer months.
- **St. Catharines Downtown Business Association:**
 - Do not support reducing base container limit from seven (7) cans/bags to four (4) cans/bags per week.
 - Do not support mandatory use of clear garbage bags due to concern about enforcement and mixed-use properties.
 - Request for increased organics/recycling collection and review of days and times of collection for the enhanced collection area. Also request continued front-end cardboard collection bins.

Based on these comments, there was very limited support for the mandatory use of clear bags for garbage, or the reduction in the garbage container limits for IC&I and

MU properties inside the DBAs. The exception was the Pelham Business Association, which supported all proposed options.

4.0 Local Area Municipalities (LAMs)

Formal comments from the LAMs on the proposed collection options and which enhanced services to be included in Niagara Region's next contract are being requested by February 1, 2019.

5.0 Residents and Businesses

The primary method for collecting input from residents and businesses on the proposed collection options was through the on-line survey. Residents of low density residential properties were also targeted for feedback through a telephone survey.

Individuals that wanted to provide comments and feedback in addition to or as an alternative to the surveys were able to do so through a number of options. While this feedback cannot be included in the statistical analysis as representative of the population, it can be considered as part of the anecdotal findings to support the overall findings.

Residents and business owners provided additional comments by posting on Facebook, calling the Waste Info-Line, sending emails, providing web submissions and/or speaking with staff in-person at open house and community booth events. These comments are summarized in the subsections below.

5.1 Facebook

Facebook was the primary social media platform used by members of the public to comment on the proposed collection options for the next contract. The majority of comments were related to the proposed options for the mandatory use of clear garbage bags and every-other-week garbage collection. Of all of the comments documented that were related to every-other-week garbage collection, 22% of comments were in support of this proposed option. For clear garbage bags, 10% of comments related to this option were supportive.

Overall, the majority of commenters used this platform as a means of communicating their concerns. The comments posted on the Region's paid Facebook advertisement were reviewed, categorized and tallied. The ten most frequently reported concerns are listed below in order of the frequency that they

appeared in comment section. As of November 30, 2018, 1,467 Facebook comments were posted.

Most Common Comments (by % of most posted comments)

1. Concern about odours from products that cannot be placed in the Green Bin (i.e. diapers and raw meat packaging) increasing with every-other-week garbage collection (16%)
2. Concern about privacy with the use of clear garbage bags for personal items (i.e. incontinence products, feminine hygiene products, prescription bottles, bills) and that one opaque bag is not sufficient to contain all of these items (12%)
3. Concern that services are decreasing, but residents will not receive an associated decrease in taxes (10%)
4. Concern about a potential increase in pests (i.e. rats, raccoons, squirrels, coyotes, maggots) if garbage is collected every-other-week (10%)
5. Concern that mandatory use of clear garbage bags is adding unnecessary plastic waste to the landfills (8%)
6. Requests for Region to use carts, bigger containers and/or containers with lids (7%)
7. Complaints about current service, including missed collection (7%), late collection (7%) and generally displeased with service (4%)

Facebook Analytics for “Lets Talk Waste” Campaign:

• **Impressions: 271,397**

- The number of times any content from the “Niagara Region” Facebook page entered a person’s screen.

• **Link clicks: 6,633**

- The number of clicks on links within the “Lets Talk Waste” Facebook paid ad that led to the Niagara Region “Lets Talk Waste” webpage.

• **Reach as per analytics: 78,784**

- Number of people who had a paid post from the Niagara Region Facebook page enter their screen.

- **Reach with organic: 112,159**
 - Number of people who had an unpaid post from Niagara Region Facebook page enter their screen.
- **Cost per click: 2.44%**
 - The actual price paid for each click in the “Lets Talk Waste” Facebook paid ad campaign.
- **Total engagements: 19,733**
 - Includes all actions that people take involving the “Lets Talk Waste” Facebook paid ad while it was running. Post engagements can include actions such as reacting to, commenting or sharing the ad, or clicking on a link.
- **Reactions as per analytics: 367**
 - On the “Lets Talk Waste” Facebook paid ad itself, Facebook only reports direct reactions on those people who the ad was delivered to. So if a Facebook user received the ad and reacted, that is counted as one reaction per analytic. But if the Facebook user’s friend saw their feed (but did not receive the ad) reacted, it is not counted.
- **Comments as per analytics: 331**
 - On the “Lets Talk Waste” Facebook paid ad itself, Facebook only reports direct comments on those people who the ad was delivered to. So if a Facebook user received the ad and commented, that is counted as one comment per analytic. But if the Facebook user’s friend saw their feed (but did not receive the ad) commented, it is not counted.
- **All reactions: 561**
 - This is the total number of reactions on the “Lets Talk Waste” Facebook paid ad. This provides a better picture of the total engagement.
- **All comments: 1,467**
 - All comments (including replies) on the “Lets Talk Waste” Facebook paid ad.
- **Shares: 358**
 - The number of times Facebook users shared the “Lets Talk Waste” Facebook paid ad to their Facebook profile or a different Facebook page.
- **Amount spent: \$2,456.23**

5.2 Open Houses and Community Booths

A public open house, with a presentation was held in each of the twelve municipalities in Niagara. Staffed community booths with informational displays were also held in a public space in each municipality. The community booths were very

well attended with approximately 450 attendees and open house attendance was lower with 67 attendees, perhaps due to poor weather conditions.

The majority of the comments heard were related to the options for every-other-week garbage collection and mandatory use of clear garbage bags. Members of the public visiting the booths and open houses were divided about every-other-week garbage collection. While approximately half of the people that talked to staff at events expressed support, there were some specific concerns that were repeated throughout the consultation process. There was less support for clear bags, with the majority of participants expressing opposition to the option. A minority of the feedback and conversations at these events dealt with the options to introduce a four-item limit on bulky item collection and the discontinuation of scrap metal collection, but of those commenting there was a high level of support to implement the changes. The key concerns about the proposed options heard at these stakeholder consultation events are listed below.

Most Common Comments (listed in no particular order)

1. Concern about odours from products that cannot be placed in the Green Bin (i.e. diapers and raw meat packaging) increasing with every-other-week garbage collection
2. Concern that illegal dumping will increase as a result of every-other-week garbage collection and/or mandatory use of clear garbage bags.
3. Concern about privacy with the use of clear garbage bags for personal items (i.e. incontinence products, feminine hygiene products, prescription bottles, bills) and that one opaque bag is not sufficient to contain all of these items
4. Concern about the additional expense of having to purchase clear bags and/or privacy bags and potential issues with the quality and availability of clear garbage bags
5. Concern about storing additional garbage bags due to every-other-week garbage collection and/or clear garbage bags that are left behind due to unacceptable materials.
6. Concerns about the ability of collectors to monitor and enforce clear garbage bag contents

7. Concern about how residents will transport scrap metals and large appliances to the drop-off depots.
8. Concern about a potential increase in pests (i.e. rats, raccoons, squirrels, coyotes, maggots) if garbage is collected every-other-week
9. Concern that mandatory use of clear garbage bags is adding unnecessary plastic waste to the landfills
10. Complaints about current service, including missed collection, late collection, and generally displeased with service

6.0 Waste Info-Line, Emails, Web Submissions

Residents and business owners interested in providing the Region with additional comments were able to do so by calling the Waste Info-Line, sending an email or submitting their comments through the Region's website. Comments from individuals that provided an address were recorded in CityView, Waste Management's customer service software. These comments were categorized based on support or opposition to the proposed options. Comments from individuals that did not provide an address recorded in a public comment tracking sheet, separate from the CityView program. As of December 2, 2018, 38 comments were recorded in CityView and 27 additional comments without associated addresses were recorded in the spreadsheet public comment tracking sheet.

6.1 CityView

Due to the self-selected nature of the input and the small number of comments recorded, the CityView data cannot be considered representative of the viewpoints of the broader population. The comments do provide anecdotal insight into some of the key attitudes that residents and business owners have towards the proposed collection options.

The majority (74%) of individuals that commented were contacting the Region to express concern over one or more of the proposed collection options. The key concerns expressed in the comments align with those provided through Facebook and at the open houses/community booths. Individuals opposed to every-other-week garbage collection were concerned about potential odours and pests. Comments related to clear bags were focused on privacy issues. There were also

concerns from multi-residential and mixed-use property owners about tenants not complying with the diversion programs and thus presenting a challenge for both the every-other-week and clear garbage bag options.

Of the 38 comments recorded, 26% were in favour of one or all of the proposed options. In particular, 16% were in favour of every-other-week garbage collection. Other comments provided included suggestions for alternative options, including collection from alternating sides of the road and communal collection areas.

6.2 Additional Comments

The additional comments from residents and business owners that did not provide an address align with the comments provided through Facebook, at public consultation events and in CityView. The most frequent comments were concerns about odours and pests related to every-other-week garbage collection and privacy issues associated with clear garbage bags.