JUNE 2018

CR_5826 Attachment 1

CITY OF EDMONTON WASTE SERVICES
GRASS AND YARD WASTE
WHAT WE HEARD REPORT

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
SHARE YOUR VOICE **SHAPE** OUR CITY

Edmonton

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2018, Council recommended that Waste Services consult with the public to help decide what changes could be made to the collection of grass and yard waste, to support Edmonton's goal of 90 per cent residential waste diversion from the landfill, as outlined in the City's environmental strategic plan (The Way We Green). The program change options included:

- No longer picking up grass clippings as part of regular garbage collection, with alternatives being to leave clippings on the lawn, compost at home, or take them to a drop-off collection site;
- Moving to a seasonal collection schedule for leaf and yard waste, with alternatives being to save it for seasonal collection, compost at home, or to take it to a drop-off collection site.

In April 2018, the City engaged with the public to better understand the grass and yard waste habits of residents, to determine residents' willingness to use alternative disposal options, and to ask residents what the City can do to make the proposed program changes easier for residents. Public engagement opportunities included: an online survey for residents, available through an online open link for the public and sent to Edmonton Insight Community members (3600 combined public responses), an online open link survey for multi-unit stakeholders (49 responses), as well as two drop-in sessions for the public, and a drop-in stakeholder engagement event (approximately 75 participants in total).

The majority (91 per cent) of combined public respondents mow their lawn once a week, or once every two to three weeks. Additionally, half (50 per cent) of the combined public respondents leave their grass clippings on the lawn once a week or more, or once every two to three weeks, while 22 per cent never leave grass clippings on the lawn. The majority (38 out of 43) of multi-unit respondents mow their lawn once a week, or once every two to three weeks. Additionally, the majority (31 out of 47) of multi-unit respondents leave their grass clippings on the lawn every time or some of the time, while 8 respondents never leave grass clippings on the lawn.

For yard waste, most respondents accumulate a mix of leaves, branches, garden waste and spring rakings. With regards to volume, combined public respondents collect an average of 6.6 bags in spring, 6.9 bags in summer, and 8 bags in fall. The majority (31 out of 47) of multi-unit respondents contract a yard care company to maintain their properties' yards, while 15 respondents indicated that the property owner, manager, caretaker or a resident provides these services. Most of the yard care companies either haul the yard waste away for disposal (14 respondents), or leave it on-site for regular garbage pick up (12 respondents).

Respondents' primary concerns with leaving grass clippings on the lawn included: having too much material on the lawn; environmental conditions (e.g., when it rains often); and concerns about mess. Concerns about alternative drop-off options included long lineups at Big Bin events and Eco Stations, and options for residents without vehicles, and who have

mobility issues. Most concerns with seasonal pick up for yard waste were related to storage of yard waste between collection dates, including smells, rodents, fire hazards and messy, unsightly properties. Additional concerns include dealing with yard waste from boulevard trees, and accessibility for residents without vehicles and with mobility issues.

Respondents to the public survey who would choose not to leave grass clippings on their lawn were unlikely to use any of the alternative options. For those likely to use one of the alternatives, combined public respondents are most likely to dispose of grass clippings by composting at home (31 per cent), dropping off at an Eco Station for free (23 per cent), and dropping off at a Big Bin event for free (14 per cent). Regarding frequency of yard waste collection, combined public respondents would most prefer monthly pick up (40 per cent), followed by collection four times per year (26 per cent). These respondents would also prefer to have more than one pick up in fall (41 per cent), followed by spring (31 per cent) and summer (28 per cent). Over half (59 per cent) of combined public respondents are most likely to wait for seasonal collection to dispose of their yard waste over other options. For those willing to use an alternative disposal option, combined public respondents were most likely to compost some/all of it at home (27 per cent), drop off at Eco Stations for free (24 per cent), drop off at Big Bin events (spring/fall) (19 per cent) and drop off at Big Bin events (summer) (14 per cent). Multi-unit stakeholder responses were generally similar to the combined public respondents, including a low likelihood of using the alternative options.

In total, respondents (combined public and multi-unit) provided over 4500 suggestions for how the City could make program changes easier for residents. One of the most frequent themes for all respondents was the need for more communication and education about program changes. Another common theme from combined public respondents was the request to provide options that can accommodate the diverse needs of all residents. Combined public respondents would also like to see more education and information about how to grasscycle and compost, and about grass-free landscaping options. Additionally, these respondents would also like to see the City provide composting kits or bins, storage bins where residents can store their yard waste prior to collection, and neighbourhood composters where people can drop off organic material. Other suggestions included more Eco Stations and Big Bin events with longer and more convenient hours; collecting yard waste more than once in spring and fall, with flexible and convenient collection days that are responsive to weather conditions (e.g., late spring, early fall); and semi-regular (e.g., monthly) yard waste collection. All respondents asked that collection dates be well-advertised with advance notice, through multiple forms of channels. Several respondents would also like to see the City explore a three bin or cart system, with one each for garbage, recyclables and organic material, similar to other municipalities.

WHAT WE HEARD

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

DROP-IN SESSIONS

PUBLIC
April 18 & 19
57 participants

STAKEHOLDER (NESA)
April 25
18 participants

SURVEYS APRIL 16 – MAY 1

PUBLIC
3600 responses

MULTI-UNIT STAKEHOLDERS
includes lawn & yard care companies
49 responses

COMMUNICATIONS TACTICS

Print Materials

800 copies — Handbills

250 copies — Info Sheets

Newspaper Ads
586k+ reached

Signage & Ads

Digital Ads
281k+ reached

4 Road Signs

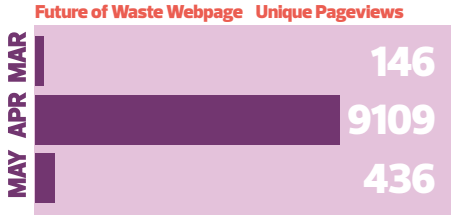
1 City Hall Display

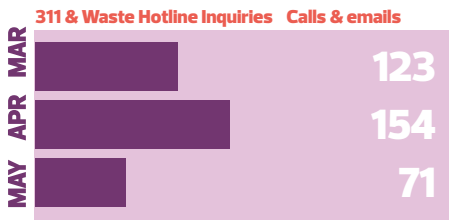
1 PSA sent to **780** contacts

Web and Social Media

Social Media Posts
464k+ reached

E-news
360+ reached





OUTREACH ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

Outreach (phone, email, meetings)

Special Interest Groups	43
Multi-Unit stakeholders	394
Lawn and yard care companies	55
Internal stake-holder groups	5

1,474 Conversations
Home & Garden Show

70 Conversations
Resilience Festival

29 Conversations
Compost Coffee Break

Bus Network Redesign Workshops **450–500 attendees**

IDEAS SHARED BY THE PUBLIC

160+ FROM DROP-IN EVENTS

7200+ FROM SURVEYS

WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO RESIDENTS

Education, Information, Tools

Composting
Grasscycling
Landscaping alternatives

Drop-off Locations

More locations
Extended hours
Neighbourhood bins

Seasonal Pick Up

Convenience
Flexible Dates
Frequent, several times a year
Well-advertised

Yard Waste
Grass and Yard Waste Collection Service Changes
What is Yard Waste?
Yard waste includes materials such as such as rakings and trimmings (leaves, tree branches, and logs), garden waste, potted plants (indoor and outdoor) and decorative bouquets. Yard waste varies across seasons, with primary materials being leaves in Fall, old trees in Winter, a mix of branches and leaves in Spring and a mix of branches and garden waste in Summer.
What are the Proposed Changes to Yard Waste Collection?
Edmonton's goal is diverting 90 per cent of residential waste from the landfill. One way to do this is to separate organic material, like yard waste, from regular household garbage.
Why Consider Changes to Yard Waste Collection?
Currently, all compostable waste (including food scraps and yard waste) is mixed in with regular household garbage, and separated out at the Edmonton Waste Management Centre. With thousands of tonnes of organic waste being processed at once during the summer, some organics slip through during the sorting process and end up being sent to landfill. Landfills are anaerobic environments. When landfill waste breaks down in the absence of oxygen, this creates methane gas instead of carbon dioxide. Methane is a much more powerful greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. Composted yard waste breaks down much more quickly, and produces carbon dioxide.
Proposed Alternative Options
The City is considering alternative options for residents that wish to bring their leaf and yard waste to a drop-off location, instead of saving it for their designated collection day(s). These options may include:
+ Drop-off at Eco Stations for free, year round;
+ Drop-off at Big Bin events for free, in summer;
+ Compost at home;
Any yard waste that is collected through drop-off locations would be composted.
Do you have any concerns about the potential changes to yard waste collection?
Please use the provided sticky notes to leave your comments here:
SHARE YOUR VOICE SHAPE OUR CITY
Edmonton
Yard Waste
Grass and Yard Waste Collection Service Changes
Tell Us What You Think
Please use the provided stickers to indicate your responses to the following questions.
What types of yard waste do you have?
Leaves
Branches
Garden waste
Spring yard cuttings
OTHER ADD YOUR COMMENTS
If the City were to move to seasonal yard waste collection, how would you prefer to dispose of your yard waste?
Compost some / all at home
Drop-off at Eco Station for free, year round
Save it for seasonal (spring/fall) collection
Drop-off at Big Bin Events for free (summer)
OTHER ADD YOUR COMMENTS
Do you have any concerns about the potential move to seasonal yard waste collection?
Please use the provided sticky notes to leave your comments here:
SHARE YOUR VOICE SHAPE OUR CITY
Edmonton
Yard Waste
Grass and Yard Waste Collection Service Changes
Tell Us What You Think
Please use the provided stickers to indicate your responses to the following questions.
On average, how many bags/bundles of yard waste do you collect in the SPRING (March, April, May)?
On average, how many bags/bundles of yard waste do you collect in the SUMMER (June, July, Aug)?
On average, how many bags/bundles of yard waste do you collect in the FALL (Sept, Oct, Nov)?
0
1 - 2
3 - 5
5 - 10
10+
0 Bags/bundles
1 - 2 Bags/bundles
3 - 5 Bags/bundles
5 - 10 bags/bundles
10+ bags/bundles
SHARE YOUR VOICE SHAPE OUR CITY
Edmonton
Yard Waste

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1.0 PURPOSE

In March 2018, Edmonton City Council recommended Waste Services undertake public engagement on residential grass and yard waste collection services. The purpose of engagement was to inform recommended program changes to grass and yard waste collection, working towards the City's 90 per cent residential waste diversion goal.

To achieve this, the objectives of engagement included:

- Engaging with residents, including organizations that represent seniors and residents with accessibility and mobility concerns, to promote public engagement opportunities and discuss how service changes and alternative options could impact these residents.
- Achieving a comprehensive understanding of residents' current grass and yard waste practices.
- Identifying opportunities and issues with potential program changes.
- Identifying opportunities to educate and communicate to residents on potential program changes.
- Engaging with multi-unit stakeholders, including property owners, managers, and lawn and yard care companies, to discuss how potential program changes and proposed alternative options could impact these groups.

Public input will be used as part of the decision-making process for future changes to grass and yard waste collection services.

2.0 ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

Waste Services contracted public engagement consultant DIALOG to develop and implement an engagement plan that would enable effective consultation with a broad range of residents, within the tight timelines given of reporting back to Council in June 2018*. This plan included several opportunities for the public to participate and share feedback, including two drop-in sessions, two online surveys and a stakeholder event. Each engagement technique educated residents and promoted an interactive engagement experience. Engagement activities were designed on the ADVISE level, based on the City of Edmonton's Public Engagement Framework.

*Report to Council has now been deferred, later in 2018

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Public Drop-In Sessions

Two drop-in sessions occurred in April, 2018; one in a South-central location and one in a North-central location, providing accessible options for residents from across the city. Sessions were anchored by a series of interactive panels and a survey station.

The first set of panels featured project background information, including what program changes the City is considering and why. Subsequent panels included a grass waste stream and a yard waste stream. Each stream included additional topic information, and called on participants to share their current grass and yard waste practices, concerns with potential collection changes and feedback on which program options they would be most likely to use. A final set of panels provided the opportunity for residents to share any final comments or ideas, concerns relating to multi-unit properties and comments on other Waste Services initiatives.

Participants provided their responses by placing stickers and post-it notes directly onto the panels. This sticker activity, referred to as dotmocracy, was a process of voting for preferred options presented in a visual format. If participants wanted to share detailed responses, they could write comments on the panels or fill out a comment sheet.

DIALOG consultants and City staff facilitated interaction with the panels and provided clarification on project objectives, potential program options and how feedback from engagement would be used. Residents could also provide feedback by completing a written or digital survey at the survey station.

Stakeholder Event

A stakeholder event was held by City staff at the North Edmonton Seniors Association. The event followed a similar format to the drop-in sessions and included interactive dotmocracy panels and a survey station. Input was collected through the sticker and post-it note activities and comment sheets. City staff were on-hand to provide background information and guidance as needed.

Grass and Yard Waste Survey - General Public

The online survey provided an additional option for residents to provide information on current habits and share feedback on proposed program changes. The survey was active for 16 days, and was accessed through an open link on the City of Edmonton website, and by invitation through the Edmonton Insight Community. The survey included project background information. Survey questions aligned with the interactive panels and called on participants to share information on current practices, concerns and the program options they would be most likely to use. Demographic information was collected from respondents to capture the diversity of respondents, and help affirm that the survey reached a broad audience.

Grass and Yard Waste Survey - Multi-unit Stakeholder

A separate online survey provided stakeholders, including property owners, managers, and lawn and yard care companies with the opportunity to share feedback and perspectives on how potential service changes may impact them. The survey was also online for 16 days, and was accessible through an open link on the City of Edmonton website. The survey included qualifying questions to develop an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of respondents relating to grass and yard waste. Survey questions aligned with the general public online survey.

Edmonton Insight Community (EIC) is an inclusive and accessible online citizen panel made up of diverse Edmontonians who provide feedback on City policies, initiatives and issues. Members complete surveys and participate in discussion forums on a wide range of topics at least twice a month. EIC is open to all residents of Edmonton, and those who own property in Edmonton, over the age of 15.

4.0 ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Public Drop-In Session #1
Date: April 18th, 2018
Time: 5:30 to 8:30 pm
Venue: Mill Woods Seniors and Multi-Cultural Centre
Activity: Interactive Panels and Survey
Participants: 28

Public Drop-In Session #2
Date: April 19th, 2018
Time: 5:30 to 8:30 pm
Venue: Commonwealth Community Recreation Centre
Activity: Interactive Panels and Survey
Participants: 29

Stakeholder Event (North Edmonton Seniors Association)

Date: April 25th, 2018
Time: 9:30 to 11:30 am
Venue: North Edmonton Seniors Association
Activity: Interactive Panels and Survey
Participants: 18

Grass and Yard Waste Survey - General Public

Date: April 16th to May 1st, 2018
Activity: Online Survey
Respondents: 3600
(2591 Open Link respondents + 1009 Edmonton Insight Community respondents)

Grass and Yard Waste Survey - Multi-Unit Stakeholders

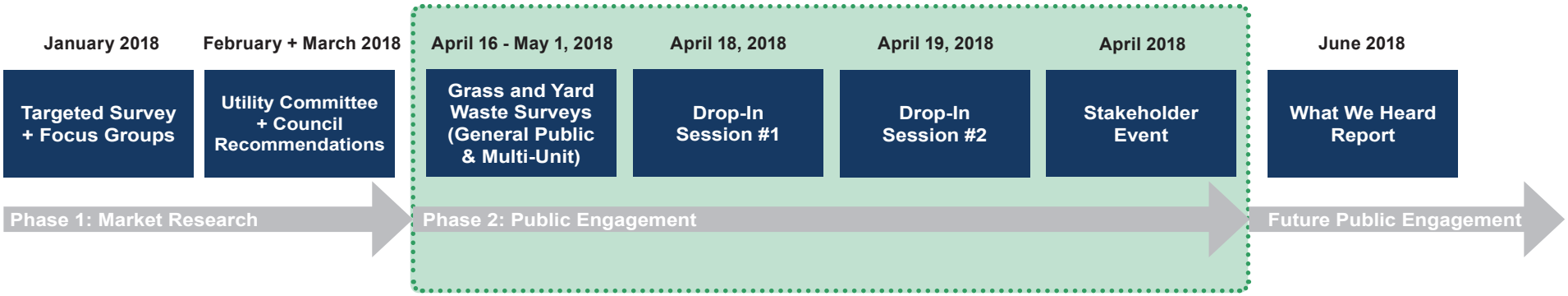
Date: April 16th to May 1st, 2018
Activity: Online Survey
Respondents: 49

5.0 COMMUNICATIONS

Drop-in sessions and surveys were communicated through a range of channels including:

- Public Service Announcements;
- Road Signs;
- Digital Ads/Bulletin Boards on location;
- Social Media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.);
- COE Website and Event Calendar
- Print Ads;
- Additional internal and external engagement methods.

PROJECT TIMELINE



6.0 ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Engagement summaries have been consolidated into the following categories:

Current Practices - Current grass and yard waste habits.

Concerns/Issues - Concerns about potential service changes.

Note: The **Common Concerns and Comments** sub-headers indicate frequent responses that have been summarized together because they are similar in nature.

Alternative Options - The preferences and likelihood to participate in potential program options suggested by the City, and other options that would make the process easier for residents.

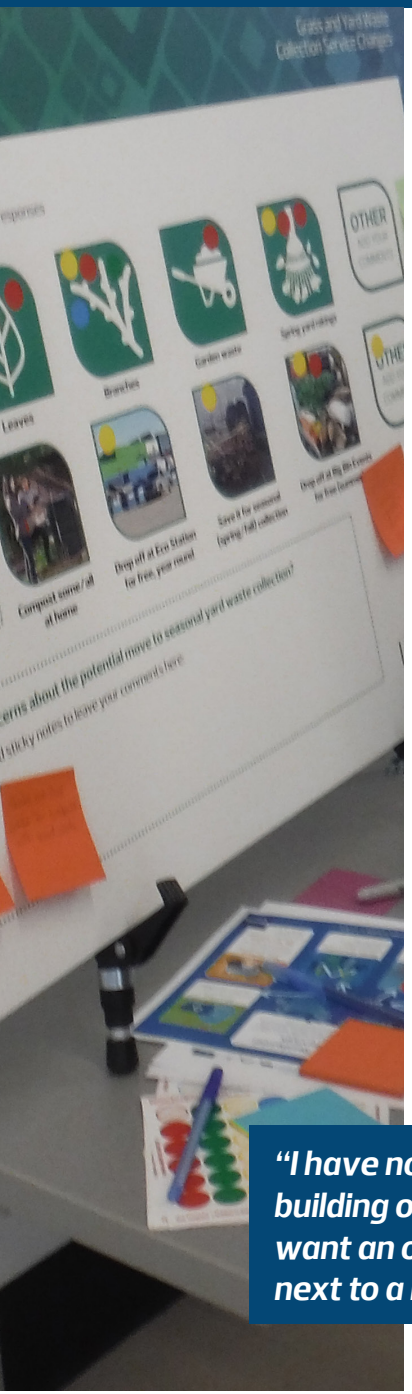
Seasonal Pick Up - The preferences for seasonal pick up of yard waste.

Additional Comments - Additional comments and remarks.

6.1 PUBLIC DROP-IN SESSIONS

The public drop-in sessions provided an opportunity for the City to engage with residents on program options. The informal structure of these sessions allowed residents to drop-in at their preferred time and spend as much or as little time as they wished speaking to staff and sharing feedback. The sessions included interactive panels and an online survey station. DIALOG consultants and City staff were available to participate in discussions and record and document feedback. Panel topics included grass waste, yard waste, multi-unit concerns and additional comments. A lawnmower station was also setup by The Lawnmower Hospital, and provided demonstrations on mowing techniques to encourage grasscycling

"I worry about city parks and school yards etc. being used as dumping grounds for bags of grass clippings."



GRASS WASTE

The grass waste panels called on participants to provide information about how often they mow, how often they leave grass clippings on their lawn, whether they have a lawn care company service their lawn and what their main issues and concerns are with leaving grass clippings on their lawn. The panels also asked residents what options would make it easier for them to deal with grass waste if the decision is made to no longer collect it as part of regular collection. The alternative options suggested included:

- Compost some/all at home
- Drop off at Big Bin events for free (summer)
- Drop off at Eco Stations for free, year round

"I have no issue with grasscycling. I do have issue with thatch building once excess grass clippings build up overtime. I also want an option to be able to throw out grass clippings as I live next to a house where dandelion seeds blow on my lawn."

CURRENT PRACTICES

- Most participants indicated that they mow their lawn **once a week or more,** followed by **once every 2-3 weeks;**
- Most participants indicated that they leave grass clippings on their lawn **once a week or more,** followed by **once or twice per month;**
- Most participants **maintain their own lawn,** some have **contracted a lawn care company.**

CONCERNS/ISSUES

The most common reasons to not leave grass clippings on the lawn included **too much material on lawn, making a mess on property,** and **lawn health.**

Common Concerns and Comments*

- Illegal dumping (into neighbourhood areas such as parks and schoolyards, as well as into regular garbage).
- Thatch build up on lawns over time.
- Spread of dandelion seeds.
- It is a good move to no longer collect it.
- Size of lawn makes composting less convenient.

*Frequent responses summarized together

- Options presented are not good for seniors, people with disabilities and/or people who don't have cars.
- Suggested alternatives are not good.
- Tree canopies including seeds being problematic in mature neighbourhoods (specific mention of Elm trees).
- People need to be able to bag grass to remove weed seeds from lawn.

Other Comments

- Grasscycling is not good for those with allergies.
- Long clippings can suffocate lawns.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

If not left on lawn, participants are most interested in disposing of grass clippings by **dropping them off at an Eco Station** or **composting at home.**

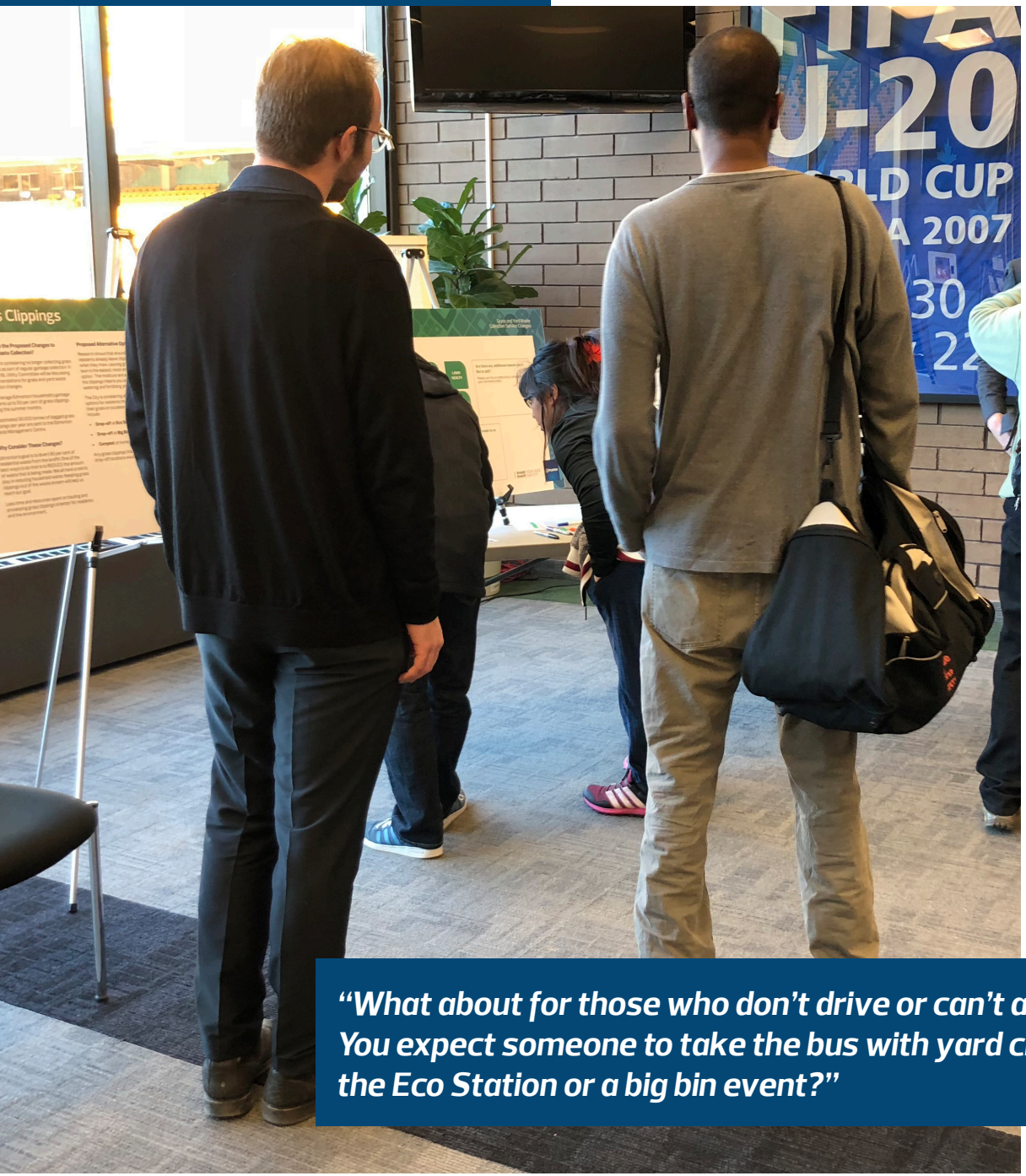
Other Comments

- Option to drop off grass clippings at local community garden.
- Introduce a bin system (individual household carts) like surrounding municipalities as an alternative option.
- Promote, provide information about xeriscaping and native plants (alternatives to lawns).
- Need convenient (more) green drop-off bins or community recycling centres, within walking distance for non-drivers.
- Rebates on mulching lawnmowers.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- Leaving grass clippings on the lawn provides an opportunity to save plastic bags, save landfill space, and save manpower, while adding nutrients back to the lawn.
- Opportunity to sell grass clippings to farmers market for silage.

"I think removing grass from curbside waste collection is a great move! I have never bagged in my life and have a lovely healthy lawn. I'm very glad that you are looking at drop-off locations – this is important for those that need adjustment time . Please make sure that they are convenient."



"What about for those who don't drive or can't afford a car? You expect someone to take the bus with yard clippings to the Eco Station or a big bin event?"

YARD WASTE

The yard waste panels called on participants to provide information about the different types of yard waste they accumulate and the amount of bags/ bundles they collect throughout various seasons. Panels also asked residents what options would make it easier for them to dispose of yard waste if the decision is made to no longer collect it as part of regular collection. Alternative options suggested included:

- Save it for seasonal collection;
- Compost some/all at home;
- Drop off at Big Bin events for free (summer);
- Drop off at Eco Stations for free, year round.

"A 'one size fits all' approach to yard waste collection is not sensible for the entire city. Different neighbourhoods have different situations. For example mature neighbourhoods with lots of trees/boulevards."

CURRENT PRACTICES

- Participants accumulate a mix of **leaves, branches, garden waste, spring yard rakings** and **other yard waste.**
- In **Spring,** participants had a broad range of yard waste from **0** to **more than 10 bags/bundles,** with **3-5 bags/bundles** being the most frequent responses.
- In **Summer,** participants had a broad range of yard waste from **0** to **more than 10 bags/bundles,** with **1-2 bags/bundles, 5-10 bags/bundles** and **10+ bags/bundles** being the most frequent responses.
- In **Fall,** most participants indicated that they have **10 + bags/bundles** of yard waste.

CONCERNS/ISSUES

Common Concerns and Comments*

- Size of yards and amount of mature trees, many of which are on City property.
- Needing to bag up to 35 bags of leaves and other types of yard waste.
- More Eco Stations, Big Bin events and/or bins at community recycling centres, would help.
- High amount citizens pay for waste fees (utility rates), and the expectation that this should include a high level of service (yard and grass waste removal).

*Frequent responses summarized together

- Need options for people who do not drive or have health/mobility issues.
- Beautifying a lawn (which is something the City promotes through "front yards in bloom"), results in a higher volume of yard waste
- Mature neighbourhoods should still have separate/year round pick up.
- It is not possible to compost all of the vegetation yard waste at home.

Other Comments

- Having nowhere to store bags.
- Yard waste accumulates over 2-3 months.
- It may require multiple trips to haul yard waste.
- It feels wrong mixing yard waste with household trash (current practice).
- Long lineups at the Big Bin events and Eco Stations.
- Support for a similar recycle/garbage program to Sherwood Park.
- Smell of lawn clippings if stored or saved for pick up.
- Concerns with illegal dumping in empty fields or on private property.

"We need more Eco Stations to take waste to. We also need more Big Bin events in each community."

SEASONAL PICK UP

- If the City were to move to a seasonal yard waste collection, participants are most likely to **save it for seasonal collection,** or **drop it off at an Eco Station.**
- If the City were to move to a seasonal yard waste collection, participants are most interested in **monthly pick up.**
- **Spring** and **Fall** are the most preferred seasons to have more than one yard waste collection pick up.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Other Comments

- Suggestion for bi-weekly yard waste pick up.
- Suggestion for a combination of weekly and bi-weekly pick up throughout the spring, summer and fall season.
- The City should use vacuum trucks to collect piles of leaves from outside instead of having to buy bags and fill them like in Victoria, BC.
- The City should work with local community gardens for drop-off and composting.
- The City needs a bin (cart) system.
- The City should provide paper bags as an incentive.
- Need different pick up approaches for mature neighbourhoods versus new neighbourhoods.
- The City should have neighbourhood based drop-off points, much like Big Bin events.
- Spring and Fall pick up, as well as pick up every 4-6 weeks in summer.
- The City should provide more Eco Stations and Big Bin events in each community.
- Yard waste is not fully defined and should include dog feces and rabbit droppings.

MULTI-UNIT

CONCERNS/ISSUES

- It will cost time/money for lawn care companies to haul yard waste (including City leaves).
- Some yard care companies blow grass clippings onto the streets.
- There will be more illegal dumping in apartment dumpsters.

GENERAL COMMENTS

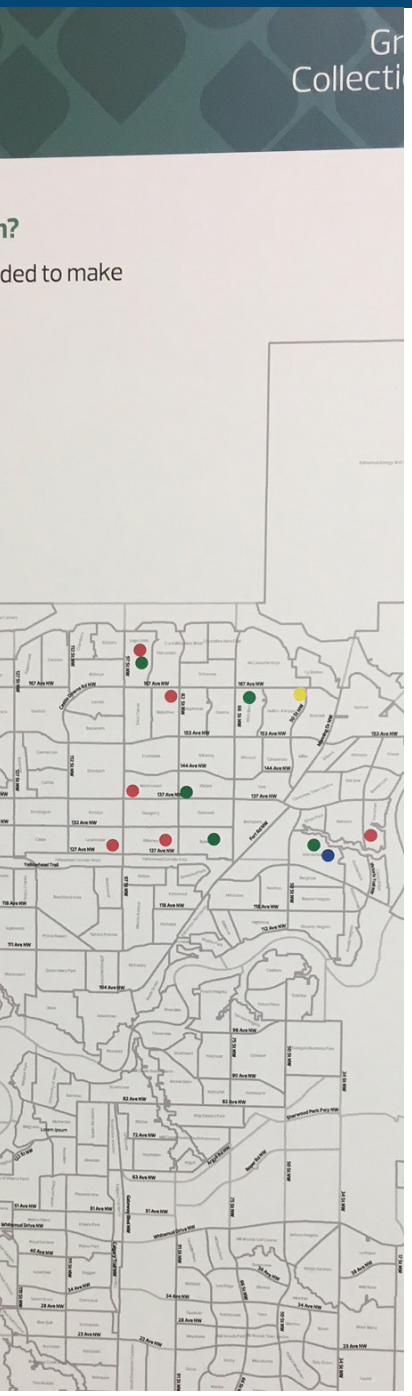
Common Concerns

- Reduced waste services should result in lower taxes/fee.
- These service changes will be a deterrent to maintaining a nice yard.
- Desire to separate trash from household organics at home.

Other Comments

- A one size fits all approach likely won't work.
- It is the City's responsibility to maintain waste collection services.
- Support for organic waste collection for the things that cannot be composted at home.
- Concern with volume for people who have large gardens and flowerbeds.
- Desire to understand where recyclables go and what they are used for.
- Proposed changes won't make it easy for people to participate in our waste programs and services, as per one of the City's goals.
- Pick up needs to be frequent (smell, magpies, slugs).
- The City should get rid of black garbage bags.
- Need to move towards the segregation of the "recycle" material stream at home to provide a higher quality, more salable product for less cost with the waste management facility.
- The City landscape crews block catch basins for sewers which can cause flooding (current practice).
- No clear bags due to privacy issues.
- Limiting volume (garbage) is hard to enforce.
- We need a textile recycling program.
- Need to move to automated collection from wheeled carts for trash, recycling and organics.
- Need to get pigs for the waste management centre.
- Need to ban plastic bags.

"As a lawn care company, we get charged for hauling public leaves that fall on properties and so many more."



6.2 STAKEHOLDER EVENT – (NORTH EDMONTON SENIORS ASSOCIATION)

The North Edmonton Seniors Association Event was structured in a similar format as the drop-in sessions, and included interactive panels and comment sheets for stakeholders to share feedback.

GRASS WASTE

The grass waste panels were re-used from the public drop-in sessions.

CURRENT PRACTICES

- Most participants indicated that they mow their lawn **once a week or more,** followed by **once every 2-3 weeks.**
- Participants indicated that they either leave grass clippings on their lawn **once a week or more, always,** or **a few times per year or less.**
- All participants **maintain their own lawn,** and none contract a lawn care company.

CONCERNS/ISSUES

- The most common reasons to not leave grass clippings on the lawn included **too much material on lawn,** and **making a mess on my property/streets.**

Common Concerns and Comments*

- Not everyone has access to a vehicle.

Other Comments

- Concern over the amount of grass clippings in our drainage system after major rainstorm (e.g., clogged sewers).
- Impractical to take yard waste on the bus.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- If not left on lawn, participants are most interested in disposing grass clippings by **dropping them off at an Eco Station,** followed by **composting at home** or **dropping off at a Big Bin event.**

Other Comments

- Need to come up with a solution for seniors with mobility issues.

*Frequent responses summarized together

YARD WASTE

The yard waste panels were re-used from the public drop-in sessions.

CURRENT PRACTICES

- Participants accumulate a mix of **leaves, branches, garden waste** and **spring yard rakings.**
- If the City were to move to a seasonal yard waste collection, participants are most likely to **save it for seasonal collection,** or **drop it off at an Eco Station.**
- In **Spring,** most participants have indicated that they have **3-5 bags/bundles** of yard waste.
- In **Summer,** most participants have indicated that they have **1-2 bags/bundles** of yard waste.
- In **Fall,** most participants have indicated that they have **3-5 bags/bundles** of yard waste.

CONCERNS/ISSUES

Common Concerns and Comments*

- Access to vehicle to be able to transport yard waste to a drop off location.
- Mobility issues create a problem for alternative disposal.

Other Comments

- Eco Stations and landfills are not on bus routes, and cannot take heaps of grass and yard waste on the bus.
- Transportation concerns for seniors with mobility issues.

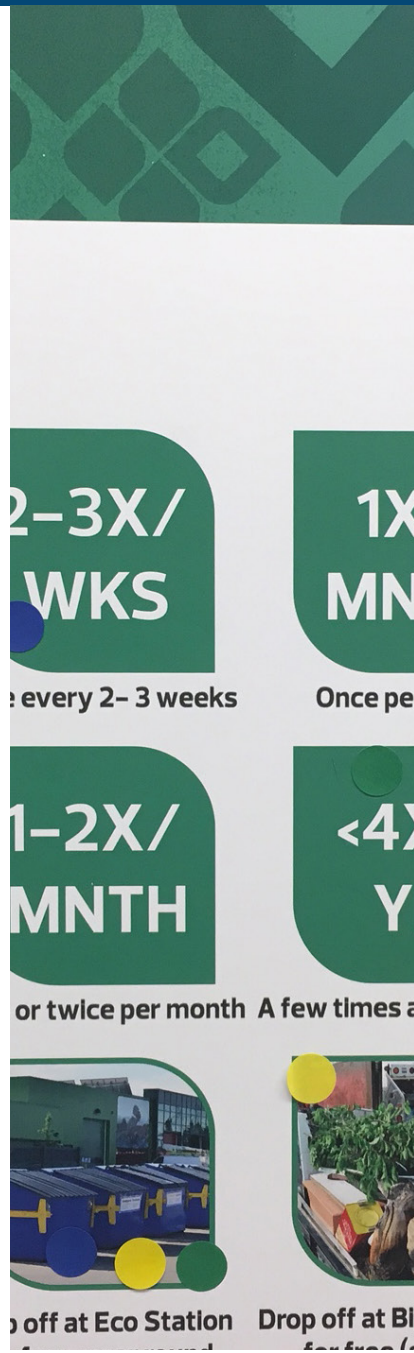
SEASONAL PICKUP

- If the City were to move to a seasonal yard waste collection, participants are most likely to **save it for seasonal collection,** or **drop it off at an Eco Station.**
- **Spring** and **Fall** are the most preferred seasons to have more than one yard waste collection pick up.
- If the City were to move to a seasonal yard waste collection, participants are most interested in **monthly pick up.**

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Other Comments

- More Eco Stations would be beneficial.
- The City should look at Sherwood Park or Calgary programs and move to organic waste pick up as next step.



*Frequent responses summarized together

6.3 GRASS AND YARD WASTE SURVEY – GENERAL PUBLIC

The grass and yard waste online survey provided an additional opportunity for residents to engage and share feedback on grass and yard waste. The survey included questions and background information similar to the interactive panels, as well as a section on demographics. The following summary includes a quantitative analysis of the close-ended question responses and qualitative analysis of the open-ended question responses. The charts within the quantitative analysis compare the responses of the **Edmonton Insight Community** respondents (1009 respondents), with the **Open Link** respondents (2951 respondents), and include the culmination of both as the **Combined Public** respondents (3600 respondents).

GRASS WASTE

The grass waste survey questions called on participants to provide information about how often they mow, how often they leave grass clippings on their lawn, whether they have a lawn care company service their lawn and what their main issues and concerns are with leaving grass clippings on their lawn. The survey also asked residents what options would make it easier for them to deal with grass waste if the decision is made to no longer collect it as part of regular collection. The alternative options suggested included:

- Compost some/all of it at home;
- Drop off at Big Bin events for free (summer);
- Drop off at Eco Stations for free, year round.

CURRENT PRACTICES

Chart 1 indicates that the majority (91%) of **Combined Public** respondents mow their lawns **once a week or more,** or **once every 2 to 3 weeks.** A small percentage of these respondents have a **yard care company cut their grass (2%),** or **do not have grass or a lawn to mow (1%).**

Chart 2 indicates that half (50%) of **Combined Public** respondents leave grass clippings on the lawn **once a week or more,** or **once every 2 to 3 weeks.** Additionally, over a fifth of these respondents (22%) indicated that they **never** leave grass clippings on the lawn.

CHART 1: In an average week, how frequently do you (or another household member) mow the lawn?

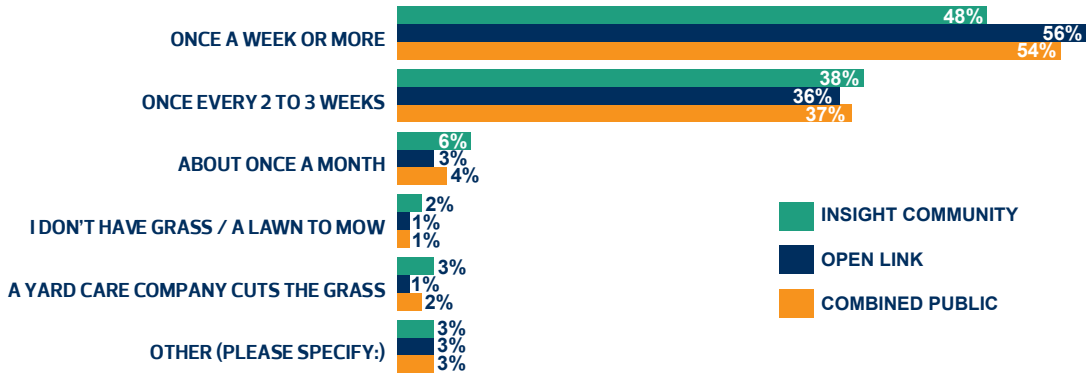


CHART 2: How often do you currently leave grass clippings on the lawn?

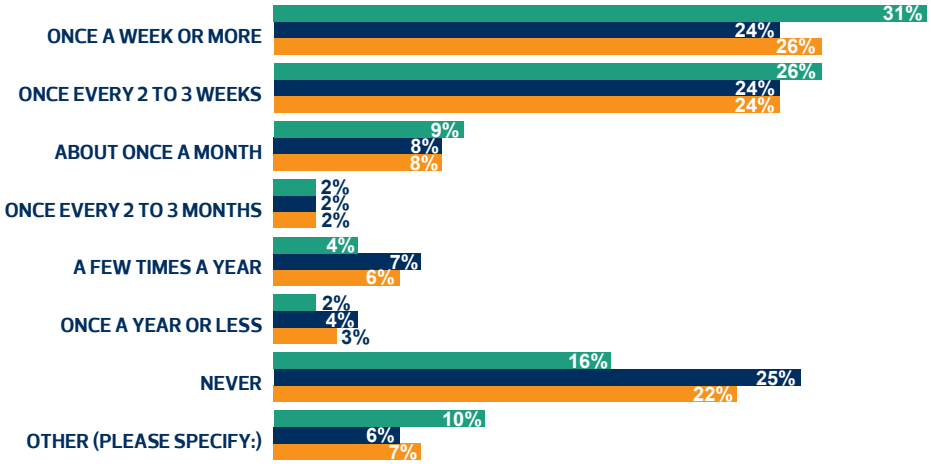
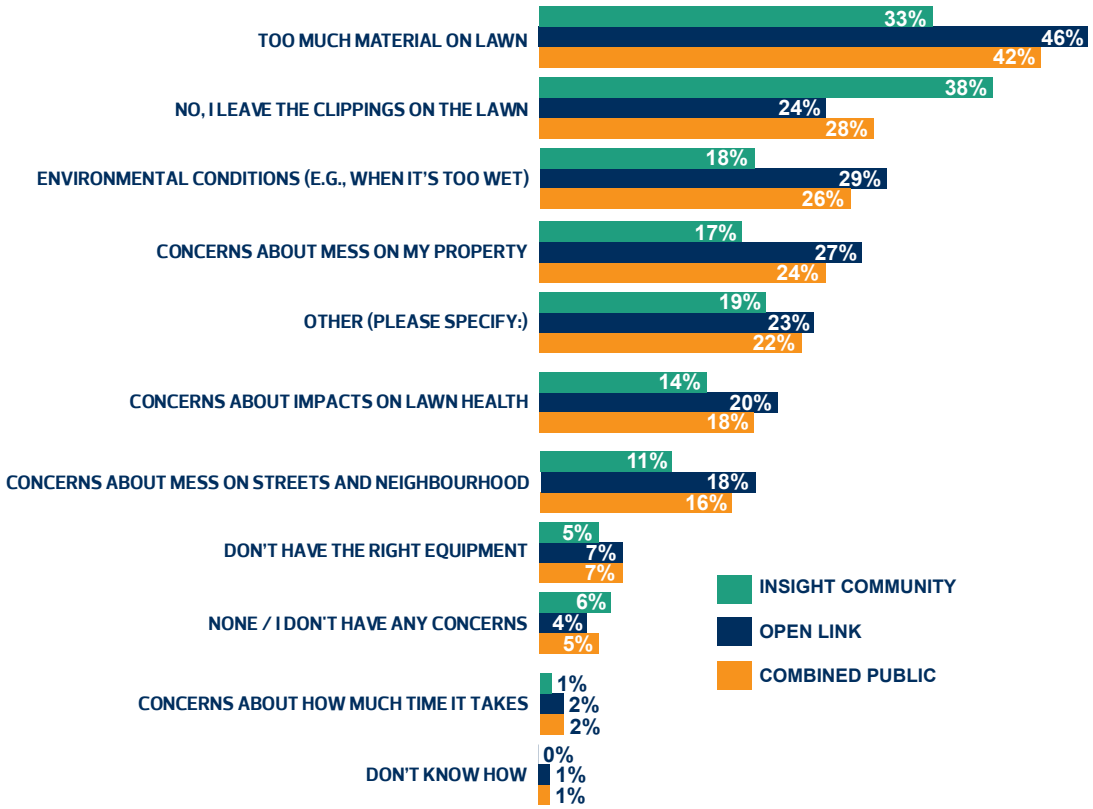


CHART 3: Are there any situations or reasons why you may not want to leave grass clippings on the lawn?



*Respondents were allowed to choose multiple options.

CONCERNS/ISSUES

Chart 3 indicates that the main concerns with leaving grass clippings on the lawn from respondents included, **too much material on lawn, environmental concerns (when it's too wet), concerns about mess on my property,** and **concerns about impacts on lawn health.**

Some of the **other** responses included:

- Seasonal conditions, especially in Spring and Fall;
- Pets/children;
- Allergies;
- Weeds/pests;
- Used for compost.

Additionally, some respondents **do not have any concerns** with leaving grass clippings on their lawn as they already engage in this practice.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Charts 4-6 indicate that if residents choose not to leave clippings on the lawn, the majority (over 50%) of respondents are unlikely to use any of the alternative options. Of those willing to consider alternative options, respondents are most interested in **composting some/all of it at home** or **dropping off at Eco Stations for free, year round.**

In order to reduce waste, the City may no longer collect grass clippings as part of regular weekly garbage collection in the future. This would require residents to leave their grass clippings on the lawn. The City has identified a few possible options for what residents may be able to do with their clippings and asked them to tell us how likely they would be to use the following options on scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 = Extremely unlikely, 5 = Extremely likely).

CHART 4: Composting some/all of it at home:

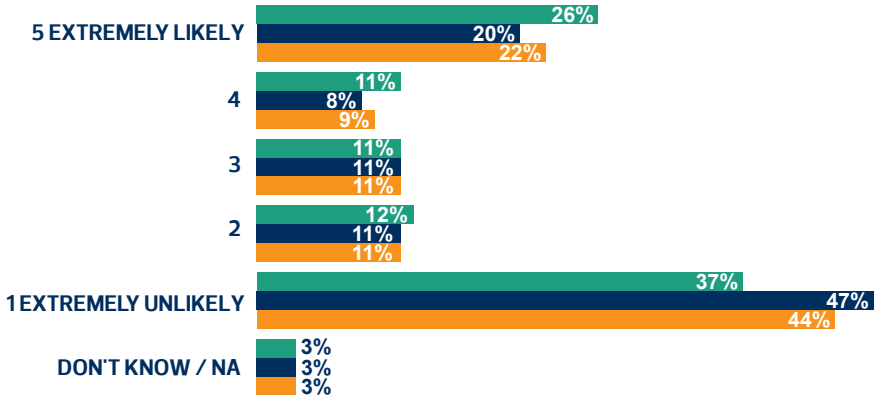


CHART 5: Drop off at Eco Stations for free, year-round:

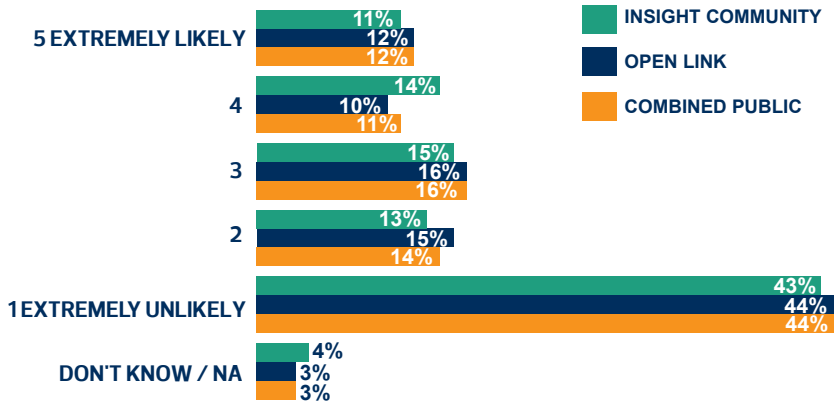
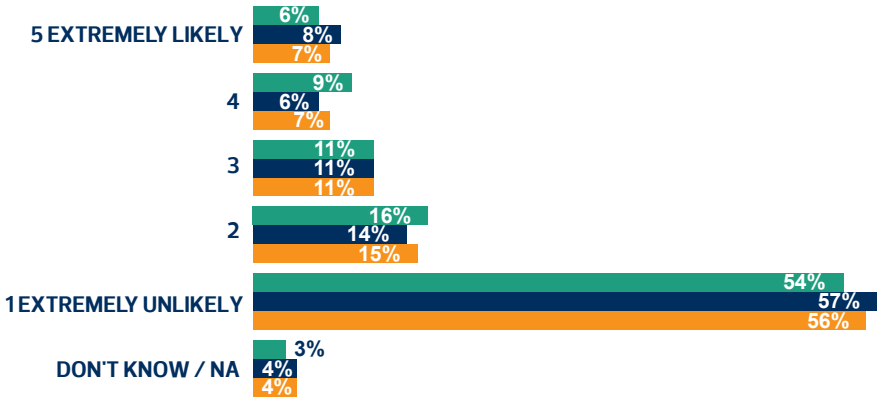


CHART 6: Drop off at Big Bin events for free (summer):



ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS – OTHER

The following two charts illustrate the approximate amount of responses for each theme, as well as a description of some of the most common responses within that theme.

Are there any other options that would make this process easier for you, if the decision is made to no longer pick up grass clippings at the curb with your regular garbage?

ECO STATIONS

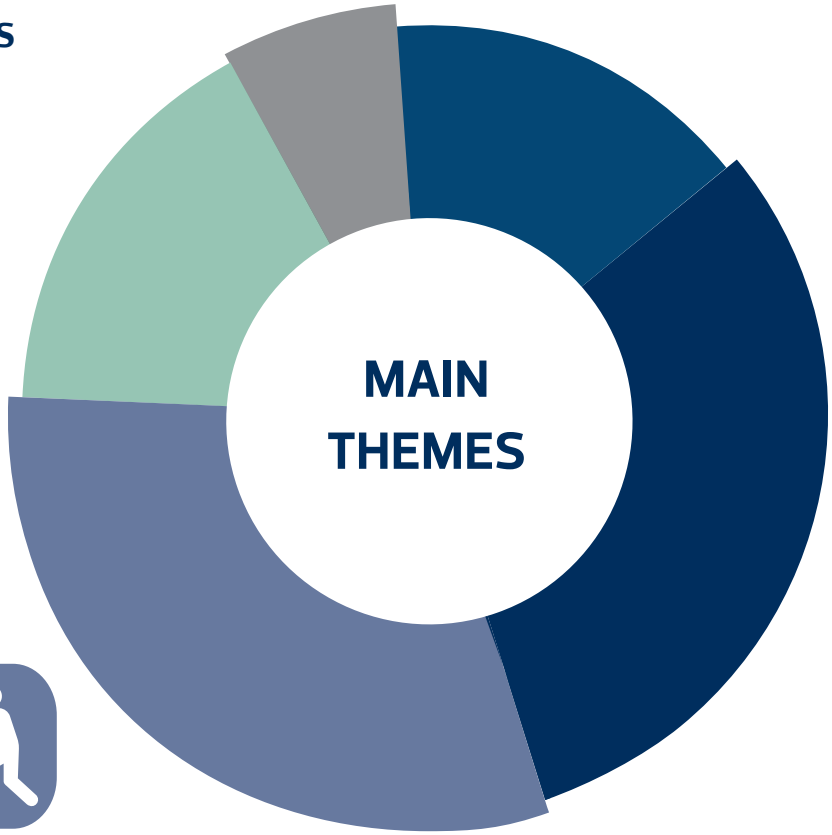
- More Eco Stations.
- More convenient hours - open longer and on weekends.

BIG BIN EVENTS

- More Big Bin events.
- More convenient hours - open longer and on weekends.
- Bins at community halls or other neighbourhood locations during summer.

COMPOSTING

- Education on how to compost grass waste at home.
- Composting kits + bins provided by the City.
- Neighbourhood composters, where people can drop off organic materials. Potential for residents to buy back compost or use it in a community garden.



OTHER

GRASSCYCLING

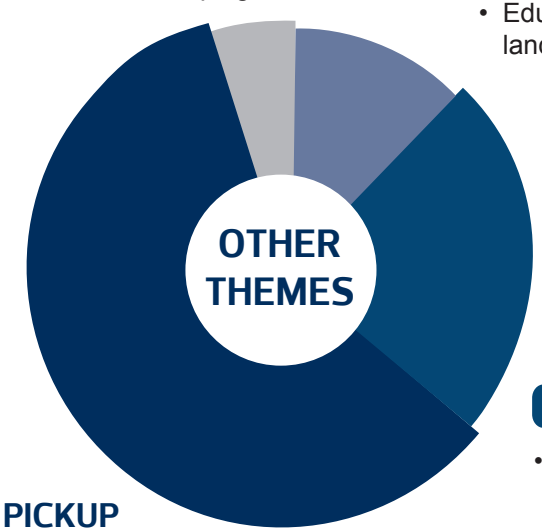
- No, as I already grasscycle and have a healthy lawn.

FINANCIAL

- City should subsidize mulching lawnmowers.
- City should subsidize grass-free residential landscaping.

EDUCATION

- Education on how to mulch (grasscycle).
- Education on why grasscycling is important.
- Education on grass-free residential landscaping forms.



CITY PICKUP

- Semi-regular pick up (seasonal, monthly).
- City should pick up separately and compost.

BIN SYSTEM/BAGS

- A three bin system like other nearby municipalities (one each for waste, recycling, and organic materials).
- City should use clear bags/green bags/ tags so that grass waste is easily identifiable (If the City is picking up).
- City should limit the amount of bags (If the City is picking up).

COMMON CONCERNS*

Residents also believe that options should address the following concerns to make the process easier for them.

- Disposing of thatch in spring.
- Environmental conditions (ie. heavy rain, weeds, etc.).
- Size of lineups at Big Bin events and Eco Stations.
- People will be less inclined to beautify and maintain their yards.
- Smell of decomposing grass.
- Allergies.
- Illegal dumping.
- Environmental impact of driving to Eco Stations.
- Public transit would not be a feasible transportation option to get to Eco Stations or Big Bin events.
- More options are needed for those with mobility/ health issues.
- More options are needed for those who do not have vehicles.
- Cost of waste service collection.

*Frequent responses summarized together

YARD WASTE

The yard waste survey questions called on participants to provide information about the different types of yard waste they accumulate and the amount of bags/bundles they collect throughout the various seasons. The survey also asked residents what options would make it easier for them to deal with yard waste if the decision is made to no longer collect it as part of regular collection. The alternative options suggested included:

- Save it for seasonal collection;
- Compost some/all of it at home;
- Drop off at Eco Stations for free, year round;
- Drop off at Big Bin events for free (summer);
- Drop off at Big Bin events (spring/fall).

CURRENT PRACTICES

Chart 7 indicates that respondents accumulate a mix of yard waste which includes **leaves, branches, spring rakings, and garden waste.** Very few participants have **no** yard waste.

Some of the **other** responses included:

- Pet and animal waste;
- Annual and perennial trimmings;
- Tree waste such as fruit, pine cones and needles;
- Litter or garbage within yard;
- Dandelions or weeds.

Chart 8 indicates that respondents have a slightly larger volume of yard waste in **Fall,** as compared with **Spring** and **Summer.** It is important to note, that the amount of yard waste a resident accumulates is often dependent on the size of their property/yard. As such, many respondents indicated that they accumulate approximately 30 to 35 bags of yard waste throughout the various seasons.

CHART 7: What types of yard waste does your household have?

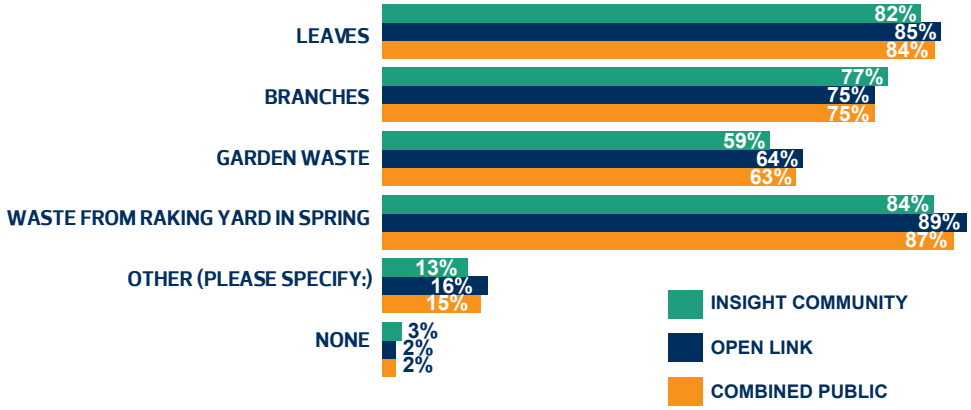


CHART 8: On average how many bags/bundles of yard waste do you typically collect in Spring, Summer, and Fall?

SEASONAL PICKUP

Chart 9 indicates that if the City were to move to a seasonal collection schedule the preferred amount of pick up days is:

- **Monthly**, followed by **four times per year** for the **Open Link** respondents.
- **Monthly** and **four times per year** for the **Edmonton Insight Community** respondents.
- **Monthly,** followed by **four times per year** for the **Combined Public** respondents.

Some of the **other** responses included:

- Weekly;
- Bi-weekly;
- Every three weeks;
- 6 times per year.

Chart 10 indicates that **Fall** is the preferred season to have more than one pick up for the **Combined Public** respondents, followed by **Spring** for the **Edmonton Insight Community** respondents, and **Summer** for the **Open Link** respondents.

CHART 9: If the City were to move to a seasonal collection schedule similar to the way natural Christmas trees are collected, how many days/pick ups for yard waste would you prefer in a year?

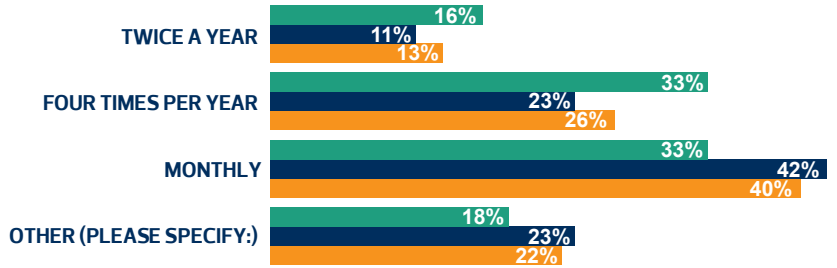
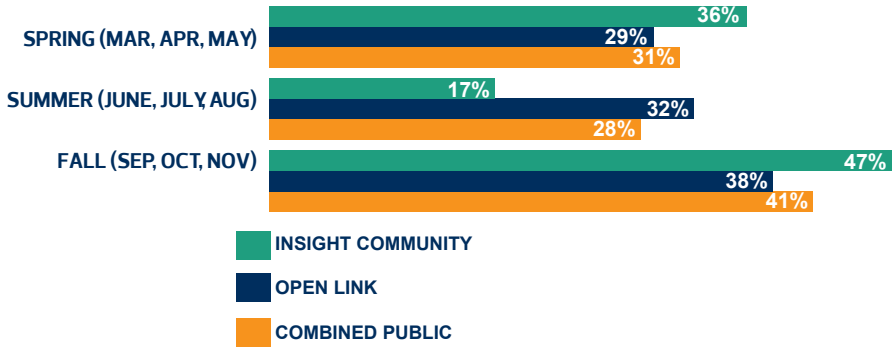


CHART 10: If the City were to consider offering seasonal collection of yard waste more than once per season, in which season would you most prefer to have more than one pick up?



ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Charts 11-15 indicate that if the City were to move to a seasonal yard waste collection, the majority of respondents are most likely to **save it for seasonal collection,** and are unlikely to use the other alternative options. Of those willing to consider alternative options, respondents are most interested in **saving it for seasonal collection, composting some/all of it at home,** and **dropping off at Eco Stations for free, year-round.**

If the City were to move to a seasonal yard waste collection schedule in the future, please tell us how likely you would be to use the following options on scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 = Extremely unlikely, 5 = Extremely likely).

CHART 11: Save it for seasonal collection:

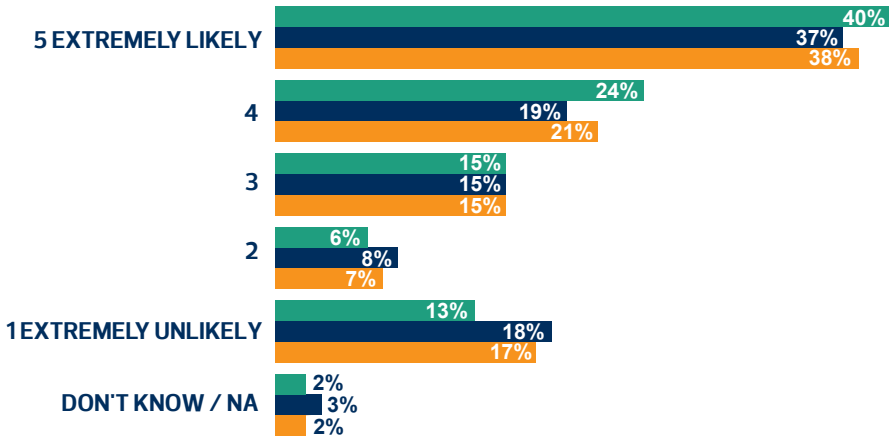


CHART 12: Compost some/all of it at home:

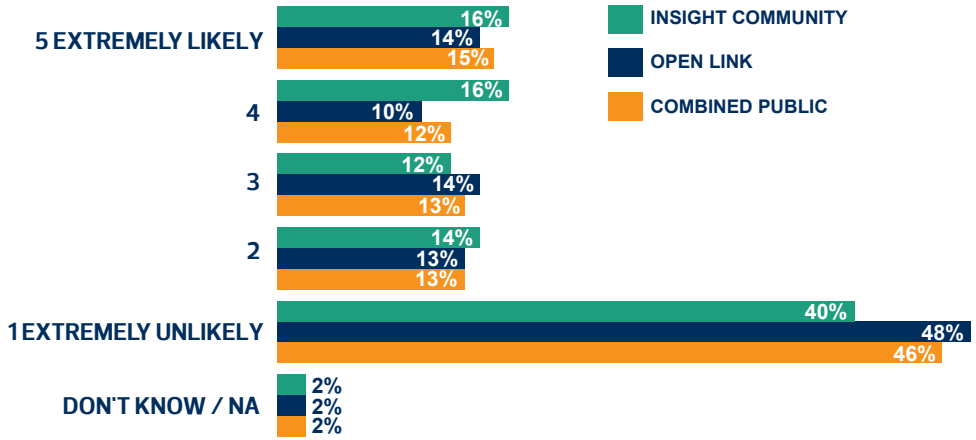


CHART 13: Drop off at Eco Stations for free, year-round:

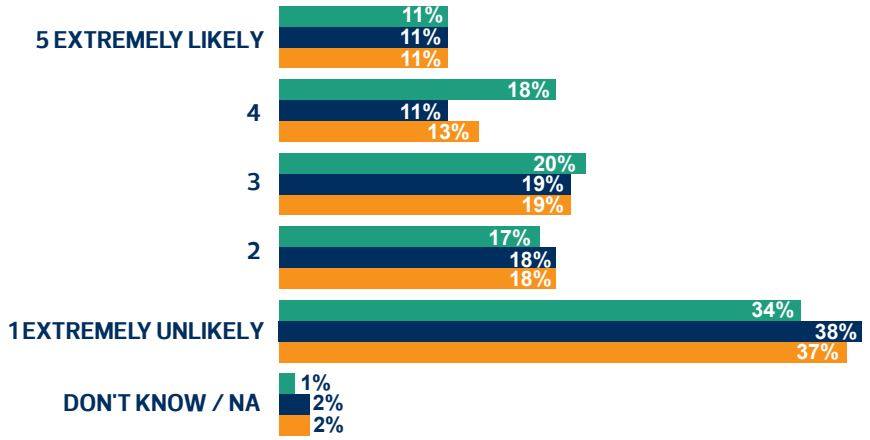


CHART 14: Drop off at Big Bin events for free (summer):

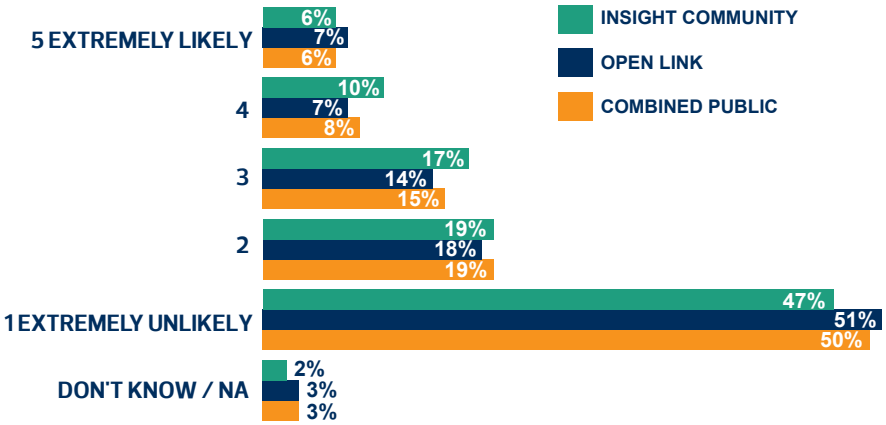
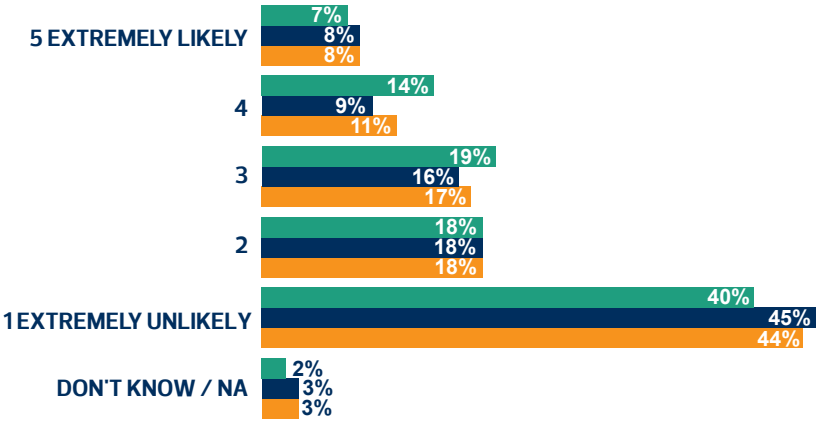


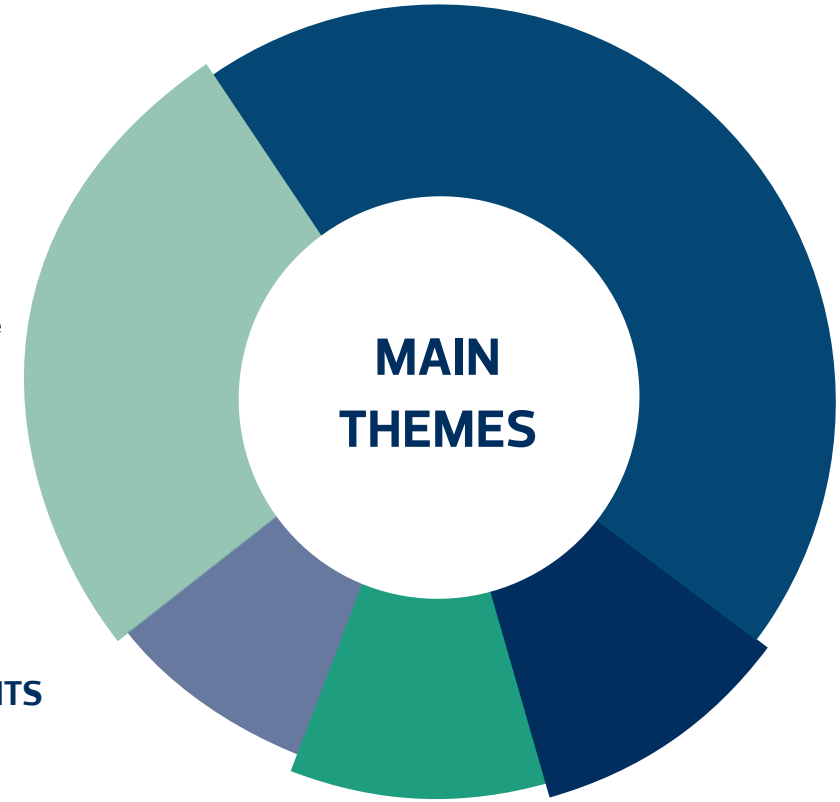
CHART 15: Drop off at Big Bin events (spring/fall):



ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS – OTHER

The following two charts illustrate the approximate amount of responses for each theme, as well as a description of some of the most common responses within that theme.

If a decision is made that the City will move to a seasonal collection schedule for curbside pick up of leaf and yard waste, how can the City help make this easier for you?



SEASONAL PICK UP

- More frequent pick ups in spring and fall (provide time to rake, prune, etc.).
- Flexible pick ups which consider weather conditions (ie. storms that cause damage to tree branches and create yard waste).
- Convenient pick up dates (same day as garbage pick up, after long weekends).

ECO STATIONS & BIG BIN EVENTS

- More Eco Stations and Big Bin events.
- Convenient hours - open longer and on weekends.
- Bins at community halls or other neighbourhood locations all summer long.

HOUSEHOLD BINS

- Composting kits + bins provided by the City.
- Bins to store yard waste between pick up days.

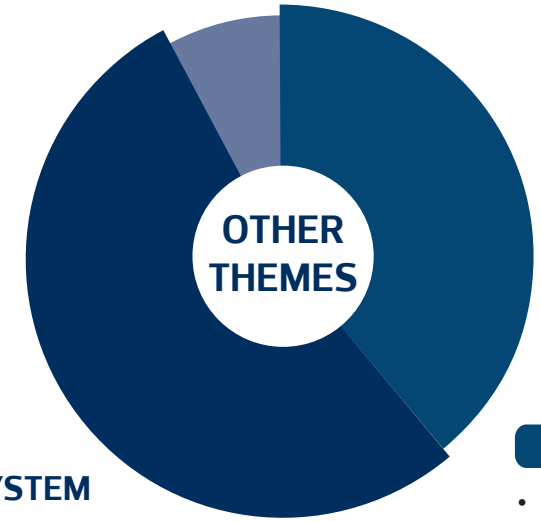
COMMUNICATION & EDUCATION

- Education on how to compost yard waste at home.
- Advertising pick up days in advance with plenty of notification.
- Using multiple forms of advertising. Suggested forms included:
  - WasteWise App;
  - Email;
  - Community Newsletter/Facebook;
  - Street signage;
  - Automated text reminders;
  - Printed calendar or pamphlet (delivered to households).

OTHER

BAG OPTIONS

- Pay per bag program.
- Reusable or compostable bags provided by the City.



BIN SYSTEM

- A green bin compost program for yard waste and other organic materials.

MOBILITY OPTIONS

- Alternative options for seniors and those with health/mobility issues.
- Alternative options for those without vehicles.

COMMON CONCERNS*

Residents also believe that options should address the following concerns to make the process easier for them.

- Fines relating to unsightly yard waste on property between seasonal pick ups.
- Backyards and alleys will be messier.
- Size of lineups at Big Bin events and Eco stations.
- Lack of storage.
- Smell/rodents.
- Dealing with yard waste from boulevard trees (city property).
- Piles of yard waste being a fire hazard.
- Concern about whether or not back alleys will still be used for seasonal pick up.
- Yard waste created by boulevard trees (City property).
- Cost of waste service collection.

*Frequent responses summarized together

6.4 GRASS AND YARD WASTE SURVEY – MULTI-UNIT STAKEHOLDERS

The survey for multi-unit stakeholders provided an opportunity for properties owners, managers and lawn and yard care companies to share feedback on grass and yard waste. The survey included questions similar to the General Public survey, as well as a section to gather background information to better understand the roles and responsibilities of multi-unit stakeholders when it comes to dealing with grass and yard waste. Due to the limited number of respondents, reported results are based on frequency (number of respondents, rather than percentage).

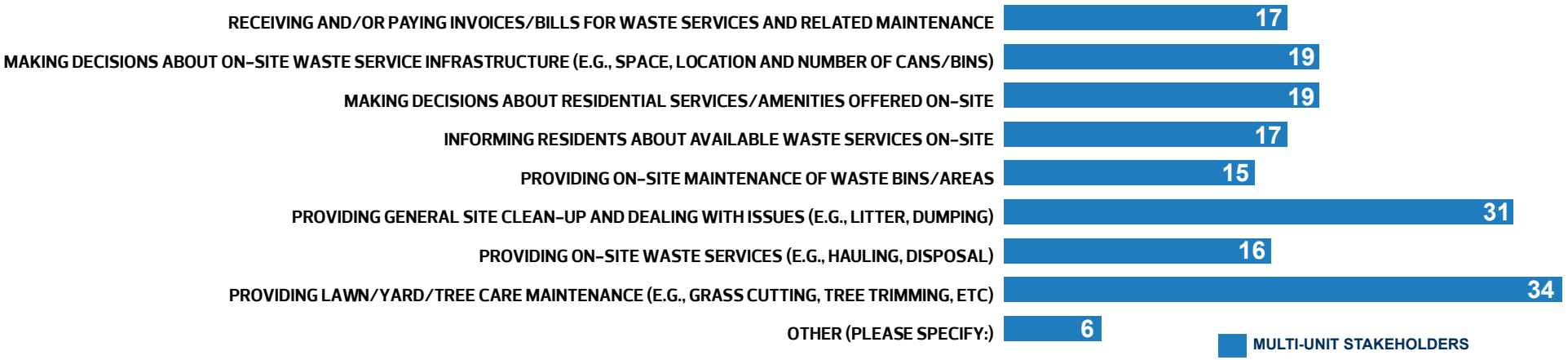
The survey reached a broad range of **multi-unit stakeholder** respondents including managers/owners of **high-rise buildings, condominiums, townhouses, rowhouses, and walk-up buildings,** as well as lawn and yard care companies. These stakeholders have various responsibilities as indicated in **Chart 16** (next page).

Chart 16 indicates that **34 multi-unit stakeholder** respondents provide **lawn/yard/tree care maintenance,** and **31** provide **general site clean-up and dealing with issues (e.g., litter, dumping).**

Additionally, **20** of the **multi-unit stakeholder** respondents involve or delegate responsibility to someone else in some or all of the activities listed in **Chart 16.** Others that are involved in the waste service decisions include:

- Condo Boards;
- Employees;
- Business Partners;
- Contractors;
- Site Superintendent/Caretaker;
- Property Owners.

CHART 16: In your role regarding apartment or condo properties, are you primarily responsible for any of the following activities related to waste services:



*Respondents were allowed to choose multiple options.

GRASS WASTE

The grass waste section for multi-unit stakeholder respondents was similar to the General Public survey with slightly different alternative options.

The alternative options included:

- Compost some/all of it at home;
- Drop off at Big Bin events for free (summer);
- Drop off at Eco Stations for free, year round;
- Pay a company to cart or haul away.

CURRENT PRACTICES

47 out of **49 multi-unit stakeholder** respondents indicated that their buildings require their lawns to be mowed.

31 out of **47 multi-unit stakeholder** respondents indicated that they contract a lawn or yard care company to mow the lawn and/or provide yard care.

15 out of **47 multi-unit stakeholder** respondents indicated that a lawn or yard care company does not mow their lawn, and instead the **property owner, manager, caretaker,** or a **resident** mows the lawn/or provides yard care.

38 out of **43 multi-unit stakeholder** respondents indicated that their lawn is mowed **once a week or more,** or **once every 2nd or 3rd week.**

31 out of **47 multi-unit stakeholder** respondents indicated that they currently **leave grass clippings on the lawn every time**, or **some of the time.**

8 out of **47 Multi-unit stakeholder** respondents indicated that they **never leave grass clippings on the lawn**, with **6 leaving grass clippings on the lawn occasionally or rarely.**

CONCERNS/ISSUES

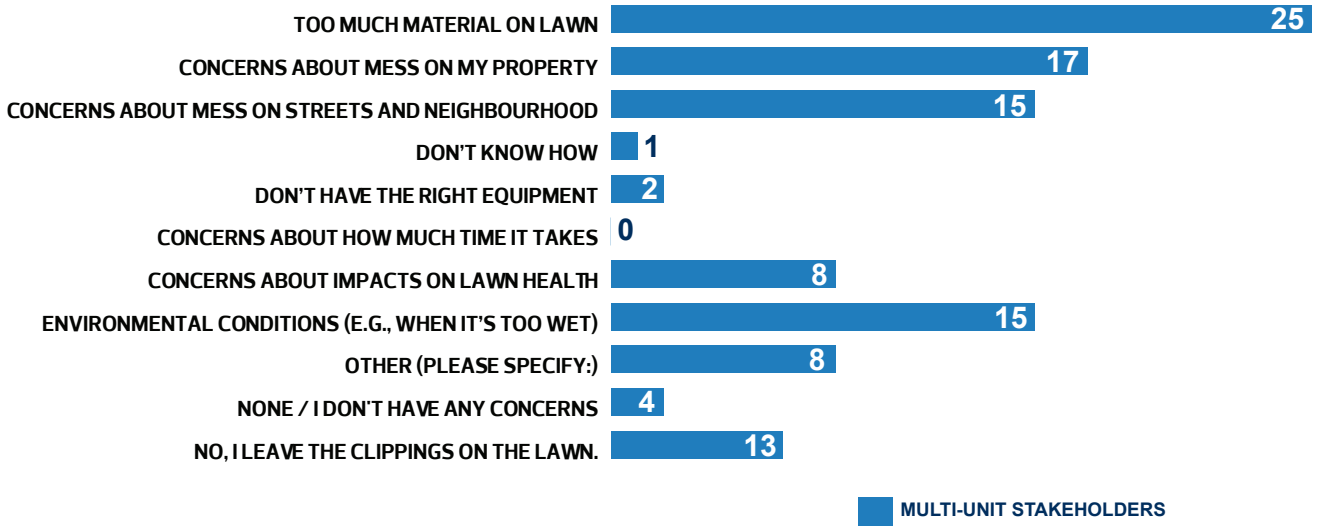
Chart 17 indicates that the main concerns from respondents with leaving grass clippings on the lawn included, **too much material on lawn, environmental concerns (when it's too wet), concerns about mess on my property,** and **concerns about mess on streets and neighbourhoods.**

Additionally, several respondents indicated that they **don't have any concerns** with leaving grass clippings on their lawn as they already engage in this practice.

Some of the **other** responses included:

- Spring clean-up, dead grass;
- Looks unsightly;
- Dealing with yard waste from City trees.

CHART 17: Are there any situations or reasons why you may not want to leave grass clippings on the lawn?



ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Charts 18-21 indicate that if not left on the lawn, the majority of respondents are unlikely to use the alternative options. Of those willing to consider alternative options respondents are most likely to **compost at Home, drop off at Eco Stations for free, year round,** or **drop off at Big Bin events for free (summer).**

In order to reduce waste, the City may no longer collect grass clippings as part of regular weekly garbage collection in the future. This would require residents to leave their grass clippings on the lawn. The City has identified a few possible options for what residents may be able to do with their clippings and asked them to tell us how likely they would be to use the following options on scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 = Extremely unlikely, 5 = Extremely likely).

CHART 18: Pay a company to cart or haul away:

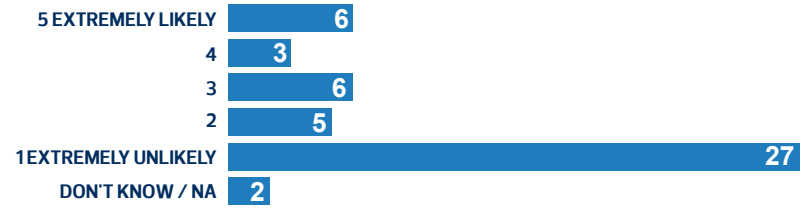


CHART 19: Drop off at Eco Stations for free, year-round:

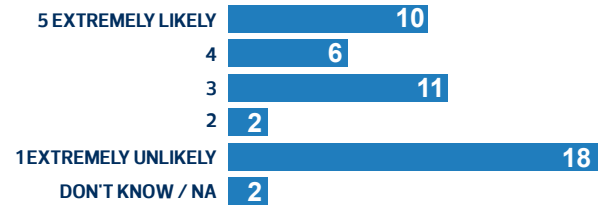


CHART 20: Compost some/all of it at home:

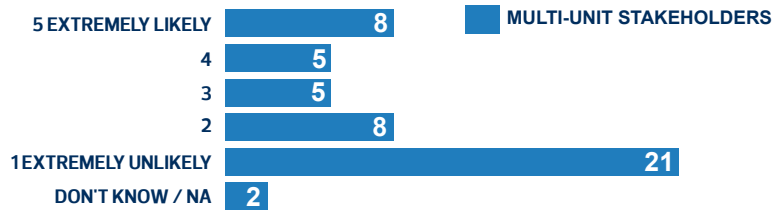
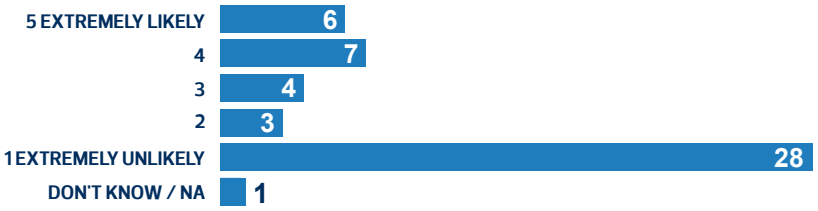


CHART 21: Drop off at Big Bin events for free (summer):



ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS – OTHER

If the decision is made to no longer pick up grass clippings at the curb with your regular garbage, are there any options that would help address your concerns and would make this process easier for you?

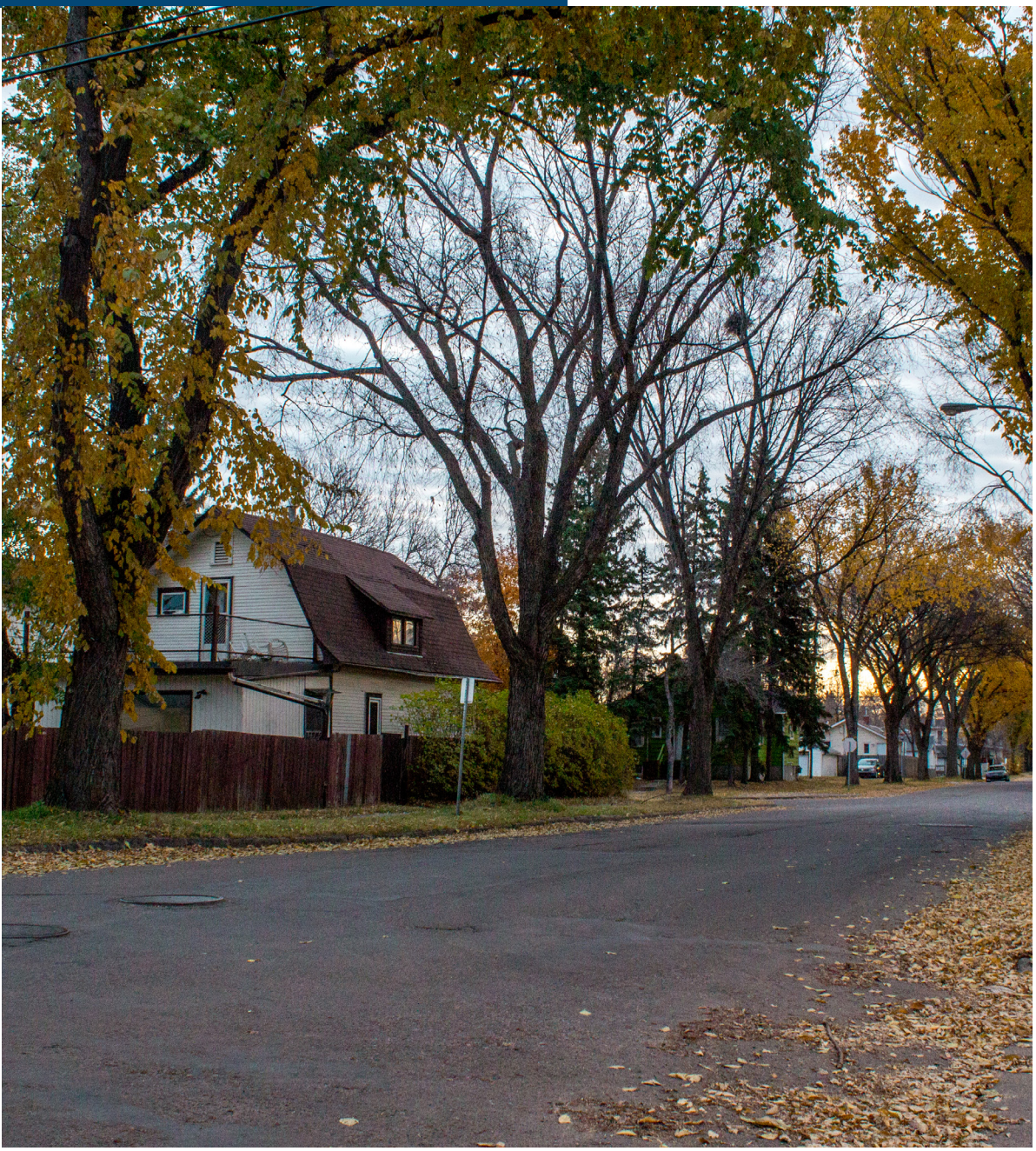
Common Responses*

- Community compost facilities.
- Bins at recycling depots.
- Provide a bin for organic waste.

Other Comments

- Even free drop-off services would cost lawn care companies time.
- Should consider a pre-defined amount of papers bag (can purchase extras).
- Ensure program changes start at the beginning of a season. For most contractors these services are already in place for the full 2018 season (Any new program should be announced in the fall and implemented in spring of 2019 so there is time to inform client, adapt contracts, etc).
- Some customers have lawns mowed for maintenance purposes, rather than aesthetics. These customers normally opt for bi-weekly service, and at peak growing seasons the grass is too long to be mulched. Need solution for letting the properties dispose of the clippings, or will have to raise prices.
- Concerns with leaving clippings with dandelions on the lawn as many owners are concerned about appearance.

*Frequent responses summarized together.



YARD WASTE

The yard waste section for the multi-unit stakeholder respondents was generally the same as the General Public survey with slightly different alternative options.

The alternative options included:

- Save it for seasonal collection;
- Compost some/all of it at home;
- Drop off at Eco Stations for free, year round;
- Drop off at Big Bin events for free (summer);
- Drop off at additional Big Bin events (spring/fall);
- Pay someone to haul it away.

CURRENT PRACTICES

Chart 22 indicates that respondents accumulate a mix of yard waste which predominantly includes **leaves, branches, spring rakings, and garden waste.** Very few (2) participants have no yard waste.

Some of the **other** responses included:

- Street sweepings;
- Plant waste.

29 out of **47 multi-unit stakeholder** respondents contract a yard care company to maintain their yard and/or trees around their property. **Chart 23** indicates that most of these companies either **leave yard waste on-site for regular garbage pick up** or **haul yard waste away for disposal.**

Respondents indicated that they have more yard waste in **Spring** and **Fall.** The actual amount of bags differed substantially, as the amount of yard waste accumulated is likely associated with the type/size of property.

CHART 22: What types of yard waste does your property have?

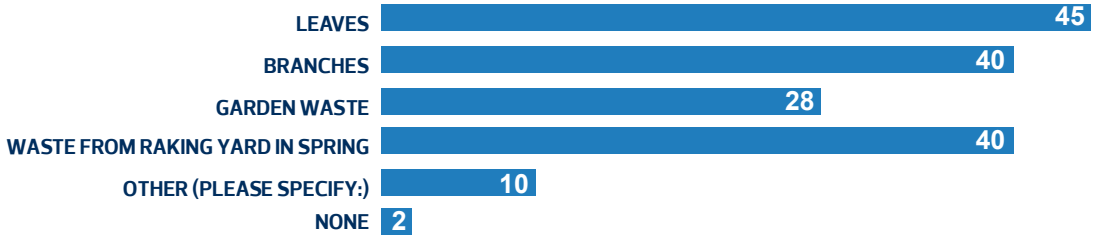


CHART 23: What does this company usually do with any yard waste collected from your property?

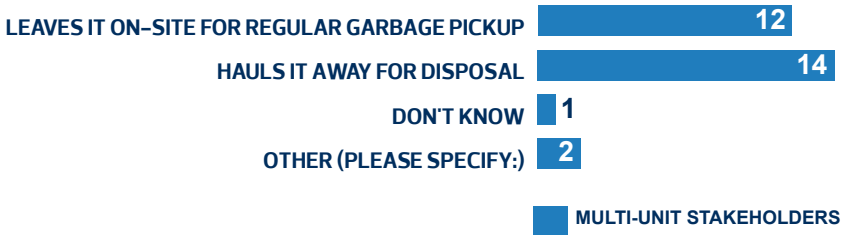
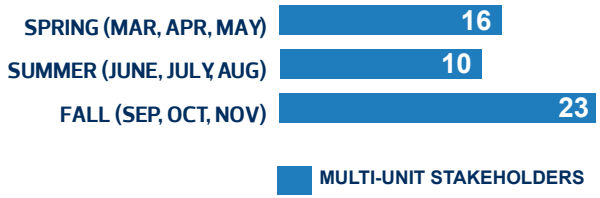


CHART 24: If the City were to move to a seasonal collection schedule similar to the way natural Christmas trees are collected, how many days/pick ups for yard waste would you prefer in a year?

CHART 25: If the City were to consider offering seasonal collection of yard waste more than once per season, in which season would you most prefer to have more than one pick up?



SEASONAL PICK UP

Chart 24 indicates that if the City were to move to a seasonal collection schedule the preferred amount of pick up days is **monthly** and **four times per year** for the respondents.

Some of the other responses included:

- Three times in Spring, Summer, and Fall;
- Bi-weekly in peak times;
- None.

Chart 25 indicates that **Fall** is the preferred season to have more than one pick up, followed by **Spring** for the respondents.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Charts 26-31 suggest that if the City were to move to a seasonal yard waste collection, the majority of respondents are unlikely to **compost some/all of it at home, drop off at Big Bin events in summer or spring/fall,** or **pay someone to haul it away.** Of those willing to consider alternative options respondents are most interested in **saving it for Seasonal collection,** and **dropping it off at Eco Stations for free, year-round.**

If the City were to move to a seasonal yard waste collection schedule in the future, please tell us how likely you would be to use the following options on scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 = Extremely unlikely, 5 = Extremely likely).

CHART 26: Save it for seasonal collection:

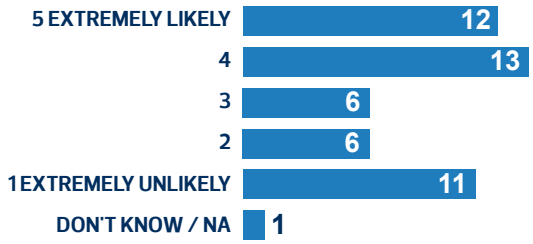


CHART 27: Drop off at Eco Stations for free, year-round:

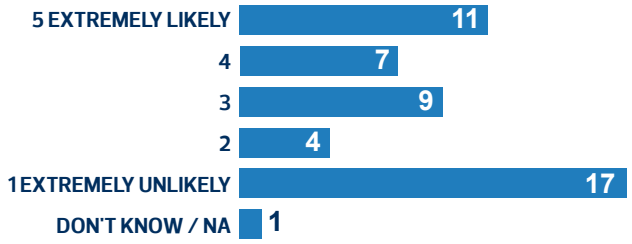


CHART 28: Drop off at Big Bin events for free (summer):

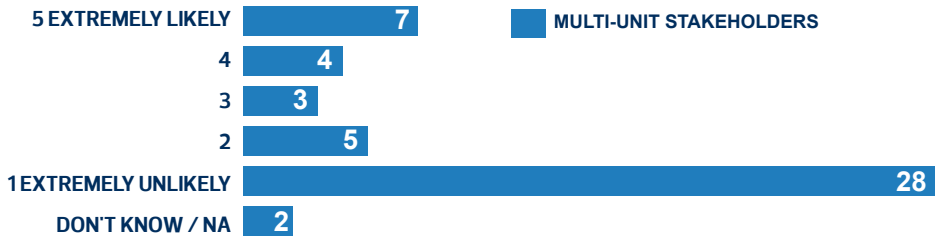


CHART 29: Compost some/all of it at home:

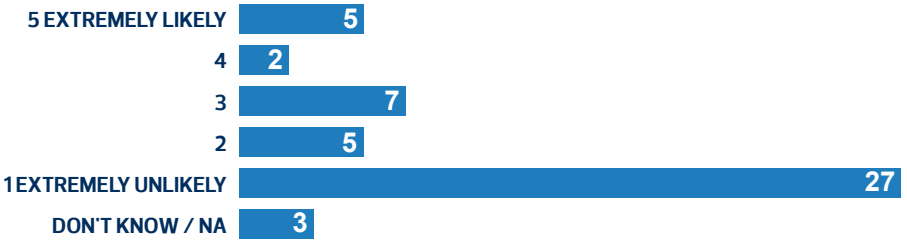


CHART 30: Pay someone to haul it away:

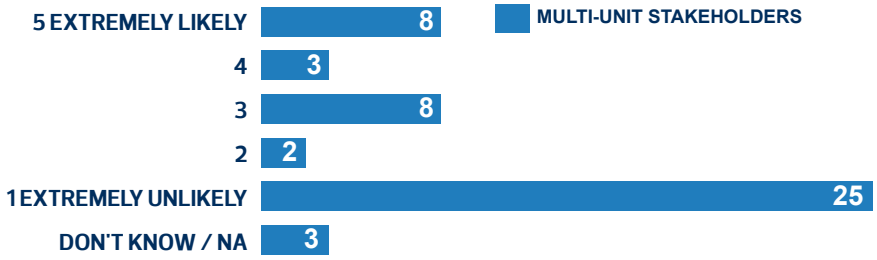
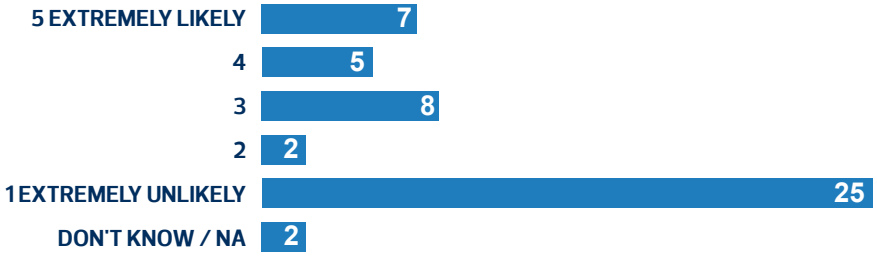


CHART 31: Drop off at additional Big Bin events (spring/fall) if these were offered:



ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS – OTHER

If a decision is made that the City will move to a seasonal collection schedule for curbside pick up of leaf and yard waste, how can the City help make this easier for you?

Common Responses*

- Ample notice in advance with a clear schedule (online calendar, public notice, email, etc.).
- Bins at recycling depots.
- Provide a bin to store yard waste.
- Multiple pick ups in busy months (spring and fall).
- Organic bins for multi-unit properties.
- Different colour bag for yard waste.

Other Comments

- The amount of dead leaves boulevard trees generate which are owned by the City.
- Yard waste pick up is the City's responsibility.
- Rodents.
- Shared residential bins would be overflowing with yard waste in between pick ups.
- Yard waste should be picked up in the back where a back alley is present (not curb-side).

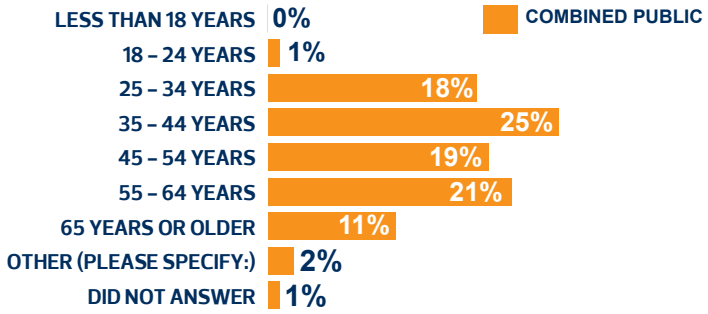
*Frequent responses summarized together.

7.0 DEMOGRAPHICS / MULTI-UNIT STATISTICS

GRASS AND YARD WASTE SURVEY – GENERAL PUBLIC

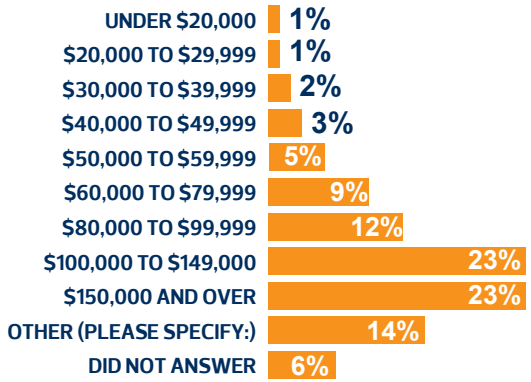
The charts below illustrate a percentage-based representation of the demographics from the General Public survey (n=3600). Demographic information was captured in the survey to determine the diversity of demographic representation.

Which best describes your age?

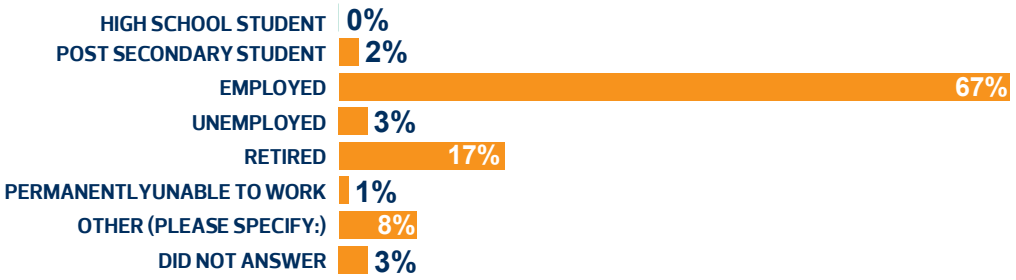


Are you a member of any of the following groups?

Which of the following categories best describes your total household income in 2017 before taxes?



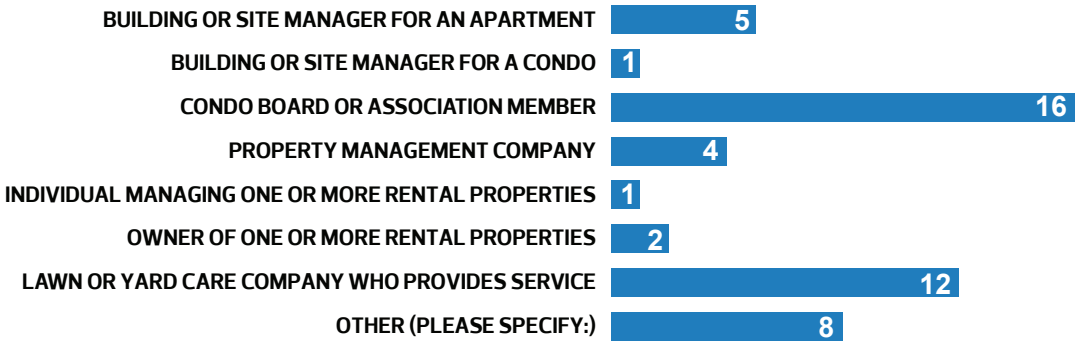
What is your current employment status?



GRASS AND YARD WASTE SURVEY – MULTI-UNIT STAKEHOLDERS

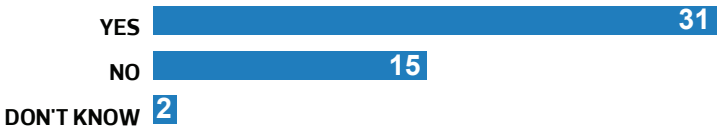
The following charts illustrate the type of multi-unit stakeholders which responded to the Multi-unit Stakeholder survey, out of a total of 49. Demographic information was captured in the survey to determine the diversity of stakeholder representation, regarding their various role broad range of roles, responsibilities and grass and yard waste needs.

Please describe your role:

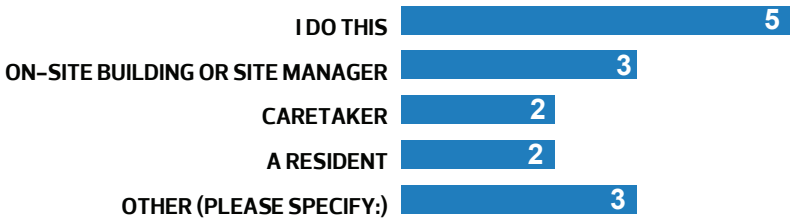


What kind of properties do you have, own and/or manage?

Do you contract a lawn or yard care company to mow the lawn and/or provide yard care?



Who usually mows the lawns for your properties? (If service is not provided by a lawn care company)



STOP