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# Background

In 2018, Edmonton City Council, in the journey towards reaching a goal of 90 per cent diversion of waste from landfill, directed the Waste Services Branch to engage stakeholders and the public on potential changes and updates to waste programs and services. This input will inform and refine the strategic direction outlined in Administration reports in March 2018 and August 2018.

In March, 2018, Council approved a direction towards the implementation of a Source Separated Organics Program, and in August 2019, Council approved the outline of a broader 25-year strategic review that encompasses:

- + A move towards source separated organics (such as food scraps and yard waste)
- + Development of a new organics processing program
- + Consideration of the City's broader waste reduction goals, including consideration of:
  - + Acceptance of a zero waste framework overall
  - + Potential restrictions on single-use plastic items
  - + New programming to support reduction of food waste and textiles
  - + Other potential waste reduction programming
- + Diversion targets for the single-unit, multi-unit and non-residential (non-regulated) sectors
- + A revision of the City's current programming within the non-residential markets.

The two-phase public engagement process sought to gather input from four sectors:

- + Residents
- + Multi-unit stakeholders
- + Non-residential or ICI (Industrial, Commercial and Institutional) stakeholders
- + Internal City of Edmonton stakeholders

The Waste Services Branch contracted Stantec Consulting to develop and deliver a comprehensive public engagement process and activities. Phase 1 engagement took place from October to November, 2018 and the City heard from nearly 20,000 residents, businesses and institutions through public drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings and surveys. Proposed changes to waste set outs, collection frequency, and separation of food scraps, yard waste and recycling were discussed with residents while challenges with trying to sort and divert more waste were the focus of discussions with businesses and industry.

On the residential side, Phase 1 input demonstrated some key insights and directions for development of the strategy. For example:

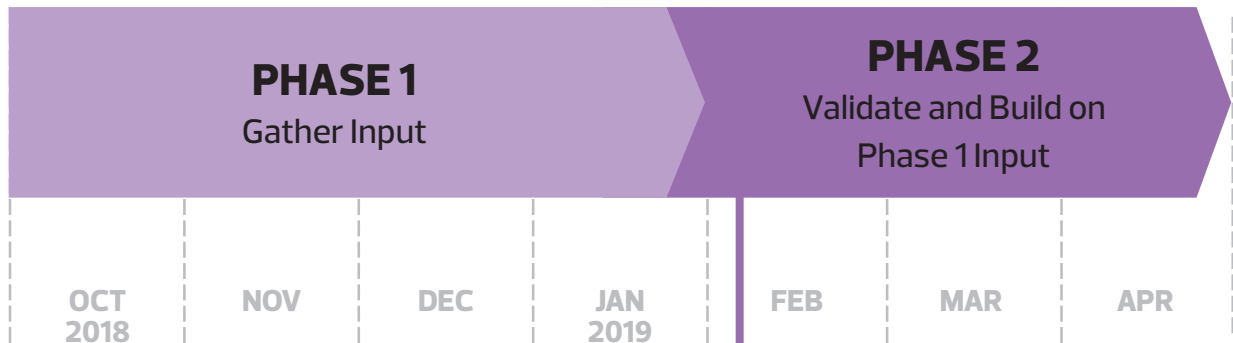
- + Respondents indicated that they are generally interested in a cart system and are willing to sort their food scraps;
- + People indicated general support for restricting single-use plastic items;
- + Large and small businesses said they want to divert more but also want a simple system for sorting and separating their waste;
- + The need for more education and more consistency in how to properly sort waste was often raised as a requirement for success across the city and the region. Proper sorting would reduce contamination so that recyclable materials have a greater value, which would help the City divert more waste from landfill;
- + Some of the challenges included a lack of clarity about the role of the City in managing waste in the non-residential sector, the need for education and awareness, and concerns with costs, space and infrastructure. Businesses talked about fees and lineups associated with drop-off locations.

Phase 2 engagement provided the opportunity for the City to "*keep talking about the future of waste*" with residents and stakeholders, to validate what was heard in Phase 1 and to delve into more detail with some of the proposed changes. In particular, residents were presented with proposed options of what future changes to curbside collection and restrictions on single-use plastics could look like for Edmonton.

Public drop-in sessions provided the opportunity to have conversations with participants and record comments, while subject matter experts were available to answer questions. Facilitated conversations and surveys were used to measure reactions to comments, plans, and ideas, as well as to reach out to voices that had not participated in Phase 1.

In all discussions, note takers and facilitators recorded comments and questions.

A two-phase public engagement process was proposed. This document describes the engagement in Phase 2.



### PHASE 2 ENGAGEMENT TOPICS

Input was gathered on the following topics:

- + Changes and options for curbside waste collection, including sizes of garbage carts and options for setting out recyclables
- + Changes to seasonal grass, leaf and yard waste collection
- + Single-use plastics
- + Zero Waste goal for Edmonton
- + Community drop-off locations
- + Education opportunities
- + Extended Producer Responsibility
- + Role of the City and setting waste diversion targets (non-residential sector topic)

### GENERAL COMMENTS

In general, residents and businesses are interested in finding ways to be more environmentally sustainable. Many residents want the City to introduce green carts for separation of food scraps faster than currently planned.

In many of the conversations, people discussed the history of waste in Edmonton with a sense of pride regarding the City's method of handling waste. They believed the City had world-class processing technology to divert waste from landfill and reduce their need to sort it themselves. There was a belief that the City was less dependent on landfill use than other jurisdictions because of the technology it employed. Edmontonians expressed dismay over the current situation and want the City to reclaim its role as a leader in waste management.

The Waste Services Branch is committed to reporting the results from the public engagement process. While this report does not itself contain recommendations, the results are being used to shape and inform recommendations for proposed changes that are being brought forward. The following is a summary of what we did and what we heard during Phase 2 public engagement.

# WHAT WE DID

# What We Did

Phase 2 public engagement for residents, multi-unit stakeholders, and employees was in the Refine spectrum of engagement. For non-residential stakeholders, engagement was in the Create spectrum.

## The City of Edmonton's Public Engagement Spectrum.

Increasing influence of the public →



Recognizing that not all stakeholders and the public can be engaged in the same way, different methods and timeframes were used to capture as many thoughts and perspectives as possible from residents and stakeholders. These included:

- + Public drop-in sessions
- + Surveys (see Appendix A for summary results)
- + Scheduled stakeholder workshops
- + Facilitated meetings and discussions
- + Phone interviews with multi-unit stakeholders and businesses
- + Site visits to multi-unit properties
- + Intercept polls in public locations, including farmers markets and events
- + Displays and presentations
- + Focus groups with ICI stakeholders and multi-unit residents
- + Social media comments

# Changes from Phase 1

Some changes were incorporated into Phase 2 engagement based on feedback and observations from Phase 1, including:

- + Making the surveys shorter and more manageable in a single sitting;
- + Changing locations of some public drop-in sessions to improve flow of foot traffic;
- + Including more information for multi-unit resident, multi-unit stakeholders and non-residential stakeholders at the public drop-in sessions;
- + Adding more questions for public input on the storyboards at public drop-in sessions to gather information on a variety of topics;
- + Working with City inspectors and networks to increase participation of multi-unit stakeholders such as property managers; and
- + Multi-unit stakeholders were engaged through phone interviews, site visits, and stakeholder workshops, in lieu of an online survey.



City of Edmonton Tower April 8, 2019



# Who participated?

The stakeholder list from Phase 1 was refined to add voices to the conversation. The stakeholder list included the general public and specifically targeted segmented participants from the following categories:

## RESIDENTS

- + Single-unit and multi-unit residents
- + Seniors
- + Newcomers
- + Persons with disabilities and mobility challenges
- + Post-secondary students
- + Edmonton Insight Community

## MULTI-UNIT STAKEHOLDERS

- + Property owners, managers, and management companies
- + Site and building managers
- + Condo boards and tenant associations

## CITY OF EDMONTON STAKEHOLDERS

- + City of Edmonton employees
- + City of Edmonton Waste Services employees

## NON-RESIDENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS (INDUSTRY, COMMERCIAL AND INSTITUTIONS)

- + Post-secondary institutional facilities and operations
- + Festivals and events
- + Commercial businesses and associations, including:
  - + Retailers
  - + Restaurants
  - + Food Distribution
  - + Large corporations
  - + Small businesses, including home-based businesses
- + Not-for-profit organizations
- + Industrial companies and organizations
- + Waste haulers
- + Large public venues

# How did we communicate?



## DIGITAL

1,425,400  
website users (entire site)

41,318

Future of Waste site users



Facebook

590

Comments

178,143

Impressions

126,694

People reached



124.8K

Impressions

Google

Display Network

20.6K

Ad clicks

5.5M

Impressions



Facebook

Advertising

38.6K

Ad clicks

8.0M

Impressions

1.0M

People reached

3.9K

Reactions

660

Shares



## RADIO ADS

6.9M

People reached

(Adults 18+)

57%

of Edmontonians

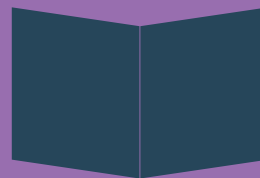
18+ heard the ad

9.5

Average number

of times audience

heard the ad



## PRINT ADS

3.7M

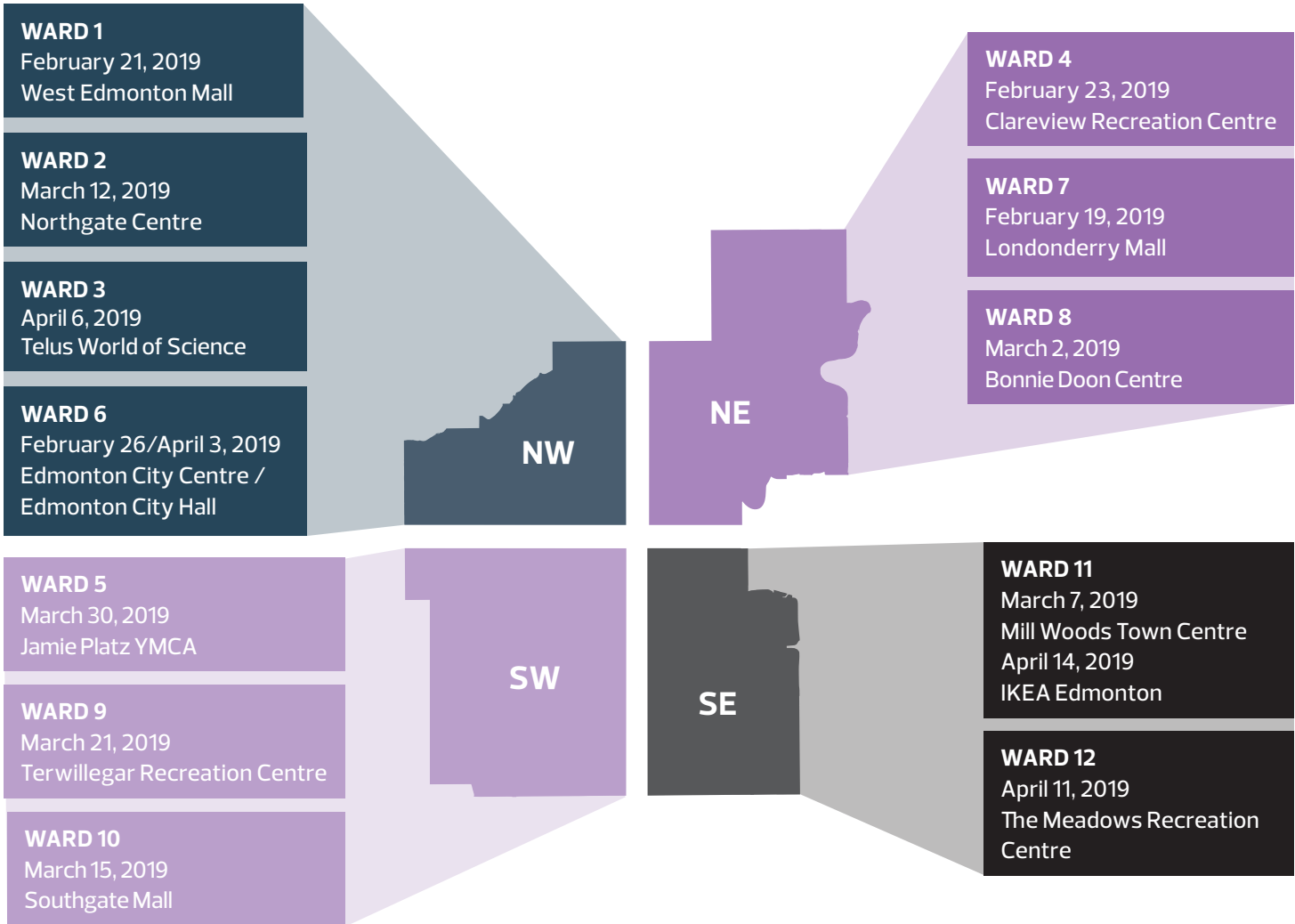
Estimated

impressions

(Adults 18+)

# PUBLIC DROP-IN SESSIONS

A total of 14 public drop-in sessions were held at convenient locations across the city between February 19 and April 14, 2019 with at least one session in each ward:



The goal of these drop-in sessions was to make it easier for the public to participate. During Phase 1 engagement, it was determined that drop-in sessions at high traffic areas such as recreation centres and malls were well attended, therefore many of these locations were used again in Phase 2. A mixture of evening, lunch time, and Saturday sessions were chosen in order to capture different audiences. Over 1,100 people in total attended the public drop-in sessions.

The final drop-in session at IKEA was the result of a collaboration with the City of Edmonton's Corporate Climate Leaders Program. Its members, including IKEA, are Edmonton businesses that have made a commitment to take action on climate change. Through this program, IKEA expressed interest in hosting a drop-in session as part of the kickoff for their in-store sustainability event.

At each public drop-in session, people were greeted by City of Edmonton staff, asked to sign in, and provided a briefing to help them navigate the information. A map of the City allowed participants to mark where they lived. Once greeted, people were either accompanied by a facilitator on a storyboard journey or left to read the storyboards on their own. In either case, a note taker captured their comments. Based on feedback from participants during Phase 1, drop-in sessions contained more information and input-gathering opportunities for single-unit residents, multi-unit residents and stakeholders, and non-residential stakeholders.

The public drop-in sessions included displays and storyboards, providing information on:

- + A timeline for the engagement process of the project
- + The importance of properly sorting waste
- + Changes to waste set outs and collection
- + Waste drop-off locations
- + Zero waste goal and hierarchy
- + Single-use plastics
- + Edmonton Cart Rollout
- + Monthly utility rates
- + Topics for multi-unit and non-residential stakeholder input

In addition to recording comments, facilitators encouraged people to vote on a variety of options, and to provide their comments, thoughts and ideas on sticky note areas of the boards.

Participants could vote and provide comments on the following proposed changes:

- + Ideas for a potential Zero Waste goal in Edmonton
- + Single-use plastics, such as categories of materials that could conceivably be restricted, and how the City should manage them
- + How to make drop-off locations easier to use and access
- + Proposed changes for seasonal grass, leaf and yard waste collection
- + Preference for blue bags or blue carts for recycling
- + Preferred cart size option for garbage set-out (120L or 240L black cart) for single-unit residents
- + Optionality on waste utility rates

While the drop-in sessions primarily attracted those living in single-unit homes, people living in apartments and condominiums also participated; some invited the City to view their waste collection process for input.

Multi-unit and non-residential stakeholders at public sessions were invited to participate in phone interviews and stakeholder workshops. A voicemail was set up specifically for these stakeholders to leave messages if interested in additional participation.

A station demonstrating proper waste sorting was set up to help educate participants about proposed changes to sorting of food scraps, recyclable materials and garbage. Actual carts were on display so people could see their size and interact with them (120L green, 120L black, 240L black, 240L blue).

City of Edmonton staff, subject matter experts (SMEs), and facilitators were available to record comments and answer questions. A comment box was provided to allow the public to leave any questions or comments that were not answered at the drop-in session. These questions were later answered by City of Edmonton staff.



IKEA Edmonton April 14, 2019

# SURVEYS

Seven surveys were created and conducted on the City's website, through the City's Edmonton Insight Community, at public drop-in sessions, at events, and over the telephone.

## RESIDENT SURVEYS:

### Edmonton Panel

#### 1,000 surveys

were conducted with Edmonton residents using a random sample of Leger's LegerWeb panel between February 11 and 23, 2019.

Data were weighted by age, gender, and region for Edmonton, according to Statistics Canada proportions.

### Open Link (Other Public)

#### 6,689 surveys

were conducted through an online open link between February 10 and April 15, 2019. Only complete responses were included in reporting. Data are unweighted.

A separate multi-unit stakeholder online survey was not conducted, due to low response rates in Phase 1. These stakeholders were engaged through phone interviews, site visits, and stakeholder workshops.

### Drop-in Sessions (Informed Public)

#### 66 surveys

were conducted through an online open link between February 10 and April 15, 2019. These respondents completed the survey during one of the various public drop-in sessions. Complete and incomplete responses are included in reporting. Data are unweighted.

### Edmonton Insight Community Panel

#### 2,096 surveys

were conducted through the City's Edmonton Insight Community panel between February 28 and March 19, 2019. Data are unweighted.

### Intercept Polls (Community Outreach)

#### 49 polls

were conducted with individuals by City staff between February 10 and April 15, 2019.

## NON-RESIDENTIAL SURVEYS:

### Edmonton Insight Business Panel

#### 179 surveys

were conducted through the City's Edmonton Insight Community business panel between March 29 and April 9, 2019. Only complete responses are included in reporting. Data are unweighted.

### Phone Survey

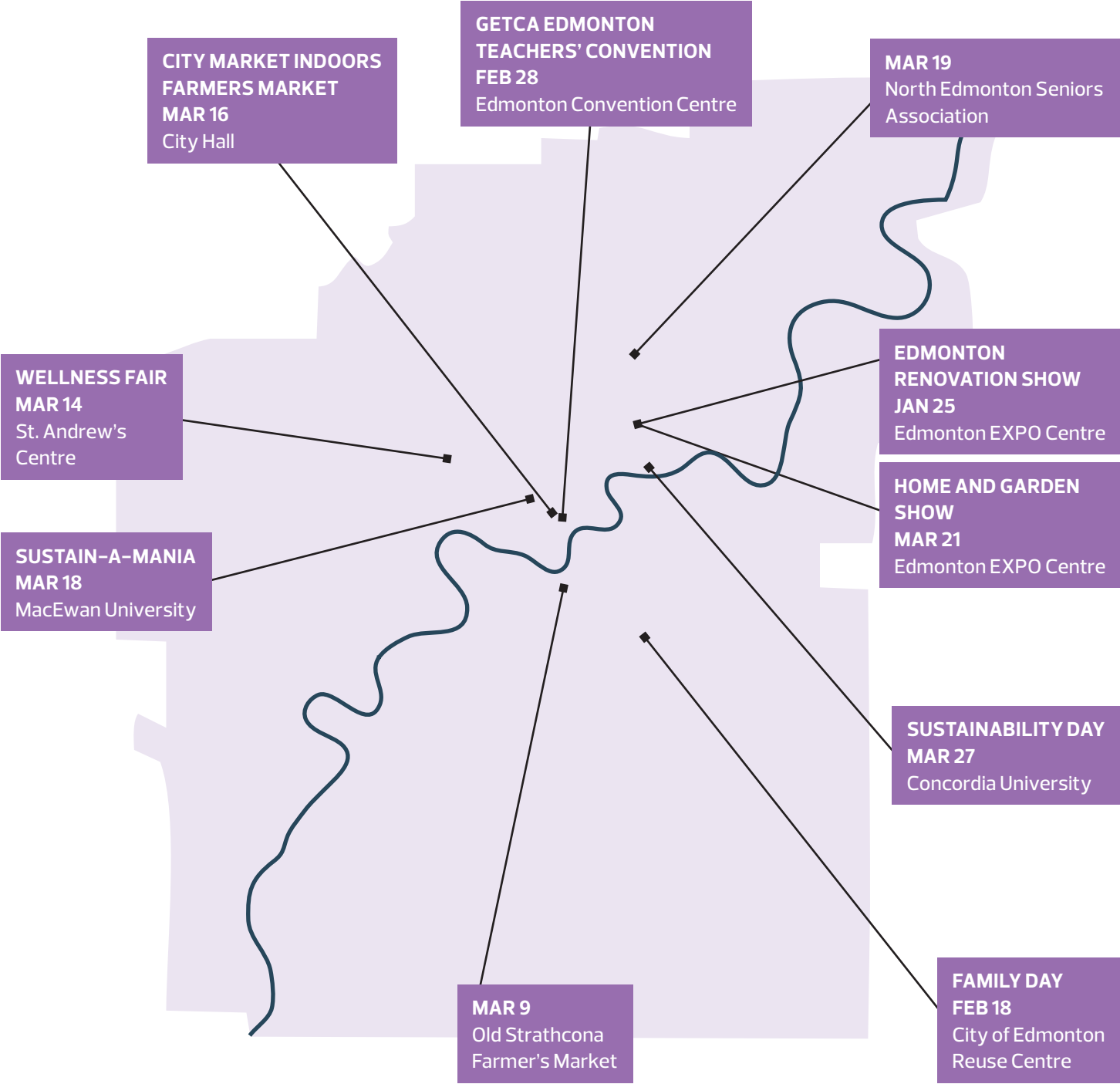
#### 501 telephone interviews

were conducted by Leger interviewers between March 8 and April 5, 2019. Data are unweighted.

A summary analysis of findings for residential and non-residential surveys can be found in Appendix A.

# POP-UP EVENTS AND EVENT DISPLAYS

In an effort to reach as many Edmontonians as possible, Waste Services staff went to locations and events to speak to residents and passersby. At these events, staff provided information about public engagement opportunities, and some of the proposed changes. People were also invited to fill out intercept polls. The locations included:



# FACILITATED CONVERSATIONS

## MULTI-UNIT STAKEHOLDERS

Condo boards, property and site managers, management companies, and developers were engaged in Phase 2 through workshops, meetings, telephone interviews, phone surveys, focus groups, site visits, and the public drop-in sessions. Multi-unit residents were also recruited to attend the focus groups. These conversations were intended to better understand constraints and opportunities for recycling, sorting of food scraps, and changes to the collection of grass, leaf and yard waste. Non-market housing property managers and developers were included in these conversations and site visits.

## SITE VISITS

Approximately 25 multi-unit sites reflecting a variety of building and development styles (rental, condos, walk-ups, town houses, non-market, and high rise properties) across the city were visited by engagement consultants and inspectors. The sites are managed by different property managers, and have different waste set out configurations, including curbside and alley collection, bin collection including indoor vs. outdoor garbage bins, garbage chutes, recycling bins, garbage storage sheds, large roll-off bins, and garbage piles.

## NON-RESIDENTIAL (ICI) STAKEHOLDERS

Businesses, associations, restaurants, grocery vendors, retail stores, industry, and not-for-profit organizations were engaged through workshops, meetings, presentations, employee engagement, online surveys, focus groups, and telephone interviews.

Members of the City's Corporate Climate Leaders Program reached out to participate in conversations about single-use plastics, diversion rates, and additional sorting of food scraps, which resulted in one presentation and the public drop-in session at IKEA. They were interested in having their employees participate in the conversation and as a result, one lunch and learn was conducted and two organizations took copies of the storyboards from the public drop-in sessions to gather employee comments.

Workshops, in-person meetings, and telephone conversations with ICI stakeholders focused on constraints and opportunities for additional diversion, sorting of food scraps in offices and single-use plastics.

Sessions were specifically held with lawn and yard care companies to discuss proposed changes to grass, leaf and yard waste, and with producers of single-use plastics to discuss waste management associated with these products.

Three meetings with not-for-profit organizations were held to better understand their interest and their potential role in reducing waste and sorting of food scraps, and to hear their thoughts on how the City should approach single-use plastics.



### CITY OF EDMONTON EMPLOYEES

Two drop-in sessions were held on April 8 and April 17 for City of Edmonton employees at Edmonton Tower and City Hall. The purpose of these sessions was to gather input from employees as residents, and also collect insights on how potential changes to waste services would affect employees' work areas across the corporation. The storyboards and waste sorting demonstration were similar to the public drop-in sessions with some additional questions for employees.

### CITY OF EDMONTON WASTE SERVICES EMPLOYEES

Waste Services employees were encouraged to complete either an online or paper survey, to share their perspectives on the proposed changes and how some of these might impact their operations. A total of 235 employees across the Branch from operational, technical, and administrative areas completed the survey.

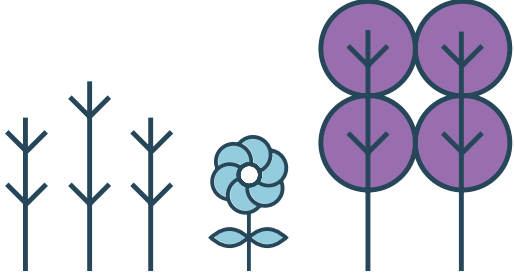


# WHAT WE HEARD

# WHAT WE HEARD

## Common Themes with Phase 1

Conversations in Phase 2 allowed for a deeper dive into some of the topics discussed in Phase 1.



### GRASS, LEAF AND YARD WASTE

#### COLLECTION SCHEDULE

In Phase 1, people were concerned about limiting scheduled yard waste pickups to one in the spring and one in the fall. Although people were pleased that the City was listening in Phase 1 and increased the proposed pickups to twice in the spring and twice in the fall, many (over 40 per cent in the survey) felt that this was still insufficient for the same reasons as discussed in Phase 1:

- + Mature neighbourhoods have many leaves that often take more than one cleanup to complete;
- + Weeds, dead flowers, and grass clippings are collected all summer and small green carts would not be large enough to accommodate this yard waste; and,
- + Storing grass, leaf and yard waste between pickups would generate significant odours and attract rodents. Fire hazards were also a concern. These comments were raised by residents as well as lawn care companies.

#### PAPER YARD WASTE BAGS

Yard care companies and residents were concerned that the paper bags would not be strong enough to replace plastic bags, especially if they got wet. They would also be difficult to stack and tie. The cost of the paper bags, which are seen as significantly more expensive than plastic bags, was another concern raised. A question was raised if burlap sacks could be used instead of paper.

**What concerns do you have with using paper yard waste bags?**

Bags could get soggy when wet  
**69%\*** **72%\*\*** **78%\*\*\***

Break or tear easily  
**59%\*** **57%\*\*** **59%\*\*\***

Cost of bags  
**51%\*** **49%\*\*** **46%\*\*\***

Survey results. See Appendix A for more details.  
\* Edmonton Panel  
\*\* Open Link Respondents  
\*\*\* Insight Community Panel

## YARD CARE COMPANIES

Many yard care companies typically leave grass, leaf and yard waste with the owners of the properties they service. These companies raised concerns that hauling grass and yard waste to Eco Stations would be costly given tipping costs, time spent making extra trips and waiting in line. They were also concerned about:

- + Capacity of equipment such as trucks and trailers to haul yard waste along with equipment;
- + Passing on fees for these additional services onto customers, and how this would affect customer demand for service; and,
- + Reduced capacity to complete yard maintenance, due to extra hauling and tipping time needed.

Many suggested additional tipping sites, an "express lane" for lawn maintenance companies, elimination of fees, and extended hours would mitigate some of their concerns.

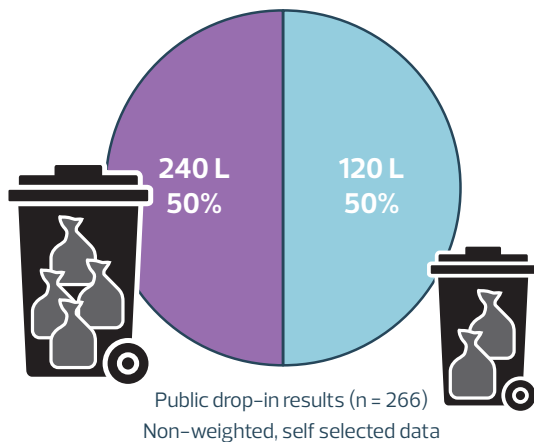


# MOVING TO A CART-BASED SYSTEM

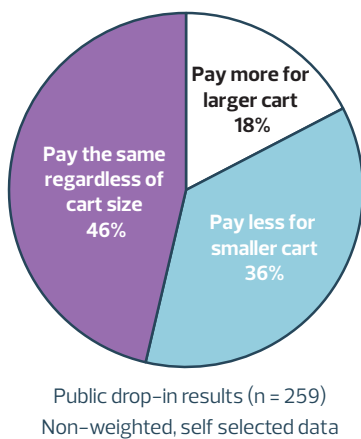
Proposed carts for garbage and food scraps continued to be generally liked by participants in Phase 2. In Phase 1, there was no clear preference for cart size, which was also the case in Phase 2. We heard that a “one size fits all” approach will not work given the different number of people that live in residences, and that residents should have the option to choose their cart size.

Most participants at drop-in sessions preferred having a blue cart over blue bags. Some saw the blue bag as a single-use plastic item that should not be encouraged, and others didn't like having to pay for blue bags.

**If households were given the option to choose between 2 different sizes of black garbage carts, which would you prefer?**

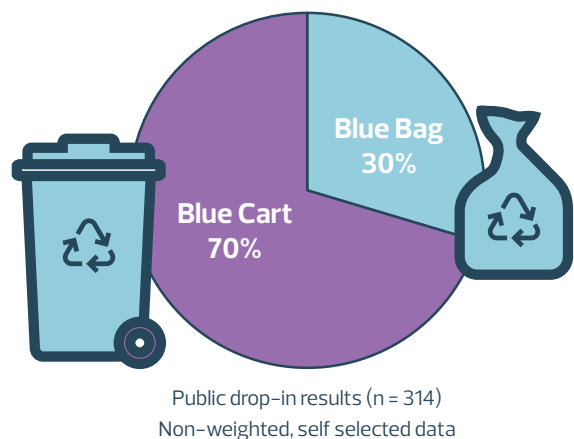


**If 2 different sizes of black garbage carts are offered to households, the City may consider a difference in monthly rates, based on cart size. Which pricing structure would you prefer?**



## GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT CARTS AND THEIR SIZE:

- + The 120L black cart was preferred by seniors, small families, and those who diligently sort their waste. Many thought providing this size would encourage people to carefully sort their waste. Others were concerned that providing the smaller size would result in garbage being illegally dumped, left in others' carts, or left beside the cart and not collected.
- + The 240L black cart was preferred by large families. Some large families, especially those with children in diapers, thought that a 240L black cart that was only picked up every two weeks would not be big enough, and wanted the option to have a second cart. Participants with families also felt that they shouldn't be penalized for having a family, and shouldn't have to pay extra for the larger cart.
- + There were concerns about not having sufficient space to store the carts, especially those with front street pickup who did not want to store carts in front of the house.
- + The proposed 120L green cart was seen as too big if only used for food scraps and too small for topping up with grass, leaf and yard waste.



**55%\*** **67%\*\*** **60%\*\*\***

Would prefer to switch to a 240L blue cart for collecting recyclables in the future.

Survey results. See Appendix A for more details.  
\* Edmonton Panel  
\*\* Open Link Respondents  
\*\*\* Insight Community Panel

## **ADDITIONAL WASTE SORTING**

Those who participated in discussions were generally supportive of additional waste sorting and recognize that other jurisdictions have incorporated separate food scraps and yard waste collection into their waste management practices for several years. Many wanted to participate in the rollout and asked when these changes would be introduced city-wide.

- + Multi-unit residents suggested that carts or bins for food scraps, recyclables, and garbage be located beside each other to make it easier to sort, and encourage more participation. Some residents will not make an effort to walk to a second or third bin, and instead throw all waste in the closest bin.
- + The non-residential sector was supportive of additional sorting but acknowledged that there were often financial barriers to implementing these changes. Commercial haulers provide different services. Some may promise high levels of waste diversion through mechanical sorting technology while others will only recycle clean cardboard. Stakeholders questioned if the City could impose rules on the private sector for recycling and sorting.
- + Concerns about space restrictions and additional sorting were raised by all sectors in both Phase 1 and Phase 2.
- + Many single-unit residents wanted the green cart program to be introduced right away and were disappointed that they weren't chosen for the rollout.

In Phase 2, site visits to several multi-unit residential buildings identified that challenges with additional sorting can be broader than simply finding space for additional bins or carts. Although location and number of bins are determined by property managers, sorting of food scraps would require space for an additional cart(s), but these also need to be in an appropriate location that can be accessed by a collection vehicle.

## **SINGLE-USE PLASTICS**

Single-use plastics were discussed in further detail in Phase 2 with many people encouraging the City to restrict or eliminate their use. In both public drop-in sessions and facilitated conversations, participants were well aware of the waste associated with single-use plastics because of traditional media and social media reports. Many participants at public drop-in sessions typically favoured eliminating or restricting single-use plastic products, including Styrofoam, plastic straws, plastic bags, takeout containers and plastic utensils. Participants in facilitated conversations had the same concerns but highlighted different solutions, such as having the City work with other jurisdictions to collect, bale and sell single-use plastics to markets, introduce voluntary reduction programs, and work together on new technologies for recycling. Given the amount of information generated on single-use plastics, a separate summary of What We Heard on this topic can be found in Appendix B.

# TOP TEN EMERGING TRENDS AND THEMES FROM ALL SECTORS

Despite the diversity of participants, common themes appeared in conversations with single-unit and multi-unit residents, multi-unit stakeholders, and ICI stakeholders. Zero Waste was a topic that required facilitation, as it tended to be unfamiliar to most participants. When the concept of Zero Waste was explained, people were supportive, but in some cases participants considered it to be a lofty goal.

Over half of survey respondents agree that given the proposed ideas to support waste reduction and reuse, they would support the Zero Waste goal.

**54%\*** **59%\*\*** **56%\*\*\***

Survey results. See Appendix A for more details.

\* Edmonton Panel

\*\* Open Link Respondents

\*\*\* Insight Community Panel

## 1. CONSISTENCY AND EDUCATION

- + Make people aware of what to recycle, and how to properly sort waste materials across the region. There is confusion over the items to put in the blue bag versus the garbage (e.g., plastic clamshell containers, aerosol containers). Increased education should lead to improved compliance.
- + Education needs to be multi-pronged to reflect that people learn in different ways. The City should use workshops, videos, infographics, and commercials to educate. Adding more curriculum content in schools will help educate children, who will take the information home and advise their parents of proper recycling and sorting practices. This could be done in collaboration with other jurisdictions in the region.
- + There needs to be a re-introduction of recycling education prior to the education of separating food scraps. This is especially important in the multi-unit residential sector.
- + Make people more aware of their role in Edmonton's waste system. Some people don't recycle because they believe the City sorts their waste for them and removes recyclable materials from the garbage.
- + There are differences in recycling and sorting practices across the region, which is confusing, and makes participation difficult.
- + If recycling and sorting rules were the same at home, work, school, leisure centres, parks, and festivals, participation would be easier to understand and take less effort. Ideally, sorting practices and containers would be the same at each location.
- + Participants were curious if the same rules could be applied across the region, the province, or the country. This was particularly true for chain restaurants who had multiple locations across the City, region, province and country.
- + Some industry participants recognized that consistency can be challenging because recyclable materials markets change and are difficult to predict. It was suggested that a regional approach of collaboration and cooperation may generate enough quantities of materials to help establish markets for recyclable materials.

## 2. MAKE IT EASY

Challenges to participation include time constraints, cold winters, bin configurations, changing rules, language barriers, different cultures and tenant turnover.

The City should assume that recycling and waste sorting may not be top priorities for most Edmontonians. Making changes that are as simple as possible will help ensure a greater likelihood of compliance and success.

## 3. JUST DO IT!

Many jurisdictions are currently separating food scraps and yard waste from the garbage and feel the City needs to simply start making changes. They don't feel that the proposed timelines for residents is fast enough. "If Fort McMurray can do it, Edmonton can do it!"

## 4. LEARN FROM OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Incorporate lessons learned from other jurisdictions that already have carts and food scraps separation programs in place.

As one of the last jurisdictions to introduce these types of changes, Edmonton has the benefit of avoiding the challenges faced by early adopters.

## 5. MAKE DROP-OFF OPTIONS MORE CONVENIENT AND ACCESSIBLE

Increase the number of drop-off locations across the city by either adding more Eco Stations or partnering with malls, stores, transit centres, community leagues, and churches.

Make drop-off hours more convenient by including Sundays and evenings. In the summer, Eco Stations should be open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Educate people about where and what to drop off.

Reducing or eliminating fees for dropping off items such as couches and mattresses would reduce illegal dumping.

Introduce Edmontonians to the "waste hierarchy triangle." Recycling is only one step in the process.

Encourage people to reduce and reuse.

Have additional Reuse Centres, including reuse facilities that the ICI sector, particularly retail, could utilize.

## 6. PACKAGING CHALLENGES AND EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY

Packaging is a large challenge across all sectors. Many residents and businesses deal with unwanted packaging that they can't recycle or return to the seller.

Increased online shopping and participation in restaurant takeout delivery services have increased packaging waste without an environmentally friendly method to dispose of excess packaging.

Many recognize that this issue lies more with the provincial or federal government but encouraged the City to lobby in favour of such a program.

Others feel that it would be unfair to small 'mom and pop' shops to take on the extra expense that could come from an Extended Producer Responsibility initiative.



## 7. SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

Single-use plastics were mentioned in just about every conversation—particularly straws, shopping bags, coffee cups and Styrofoam. Everyone recognized the amount of waste created by single-use plastics, but conversations differed significantly on what to do next.

“Proceed with caution” was the advice from some facilitated conversations with ICI stakeholders. Although many encouraged or supported eliminating or restricting plastic straws, plastic shopping bags and Styrofoam, some voices recommended learning first how such a policy would affect the local economy, including jobs.

Additional results and key findings from the single-use plastics discussions are available in Appendix B.

## 8. ODOURS FROM FOOD SCRAPS CONTAINERS AND GREEN CARTS

Whether in the kitchen, a garbage room, or a place of business, people are concerned about the potential odours that could be generated from concentrating food scraps and yard waste in one kitchen pail or cart.

Residents consistently questioned why compostable bags could not be used in the green carts to reduce odour and keep the carts clean.

Residents suggested that the carts come with a hole in the bottom to facilitate washing/cleanliness.

## 9. ILLEGAL DUMPING

Residents were concerned that limits to the amount of garbage collected, or reduced collection schedules could lead to an increase in illegal dumping.

Some thought eliminating grass, leaf and yard waste collection over the summer could lead to dumping in the ravines, river valley, vacant lots and ditches.

Although fees for dropping off furniture and large items at Eco Stations may not seem like much, for many the expense is a deterrent to compliance and can lead to illegal dumping. Participants felt that they should not be charged money to help their City reach a Zero Waste target.

Multi-unit residential buildings currently spend thousands of dollars and many hours of staff time to regularly pick up illegally dumped furniture and dispose of it to avoid fines. They feel that they should not have to pay fees at City of Edmonton facilities to dispose of these items.

## 10. CITY'S ROLE REGARDING WASTE MANAGEMENT IN PRIVATE SECTOR

Multi-unit and ICI stakeholders thought that the City should set waste diversion and management standards, then let the market take the necessary measures to meet those standards.

Multi-unit residential property managers and owners want to be able to choose their hauler because they consider City rates excessive compared with the private companies. Comparisons with properties in other jurisdictions were made. Property managers want to be able to negotiate rates for waste services and select the company that provides the best service for the best price.

While the non-residential sector has the ability to choose their own hauler, most felt strongly that the City should not be competing with private companies.

# INSIGHTS FROM EACH SECTOR

Many themes and topics were discussed across all sectors. This section contains summaries of key insights from each sector.

## SINGLE UNIT RESIDENTIAL

### Concerns with green carts

- + Most single-unit residents were surprised to learn that the City intends to prohibit the use of compostable bags in their green carts. They felt that the elimination of bags will increase odours and make cleaning difficult.
- + Seniors and those with limited mobility questioned their ability to tilt and sufficiently manoeuvre a green cart to properly clean it out.
- + Participants suggested that green carts should have a hole in the bottom to drain liquids. Others suggested that carts come with a lock to deter garbage scavenging and illegal dumping.

### Make drop-off locations more convenient

- + Suggested locations included transit centres, buses, community leagues, and churches as drop-off locations for a variety of items, including batteries, light bulbs, and textiles. Another suggestion was that buses could have a container to collect batteries on board.
- + It was suggested that incentivizing people to drop off items with a punch card that could be redeemed for a free City recreation centre pass could increase compliance.
- + Fees for large items like couches and mattresses should be waived to reduce illegal dumping.
- + Many residents have difficulty hauling large items to an Eco Station or Big Bin Event because they don't have a vehicle or a truck. They hope that the City could expand the Assisted Waste program to include these people or allow residents to schedule large item pickups with the City.
- + Offer a one-stop location for dropping off recycling, stationery, Eco Station items, clothing, and donated household items, which would make it easier, rather than visiting several different drop-off locations.



### Grass, leaf and yard waste

- + Many residents suggested creating neighbourhood drop-off locations for yard waste in the summer. However, finding storage space until City pickup time could be problematic.
- + Concerns were expressed about the integrity and durability of the proposed paper yard waste bags if these are stored outside when it rains, as well as the higher cost of purchasing paper bags compared with plastic bags.

### Education and consistency

- + Education will help ensure consistency and make it easier.
- + Residents are confused by differences in waste sorting stations and expectations at festivals, recreation centres, shopping malls, and offices across Edmonton and the region. Some places have recycling or compostables containers, while others do not. Some locations provide multiple sorting bins for items that residents mix together in their blue bags at home, or that they often throw in the garbage.
- + Suggestions include use of highly visual graphics and marketing to educate the public and children, who will reinforce messaging at home and result in improved compliance.
- + More consistency is needed across Edmonton and the region.

Education is identified as the main idea or suggestion on how to get people on board and ensure compliance.

**58%\*** **68%\*\*** **69%\*\*\***

Would like online courses and information (videos, documents) made available.

Survey results. See Appendix A for more details.

\* Edmonton Panel

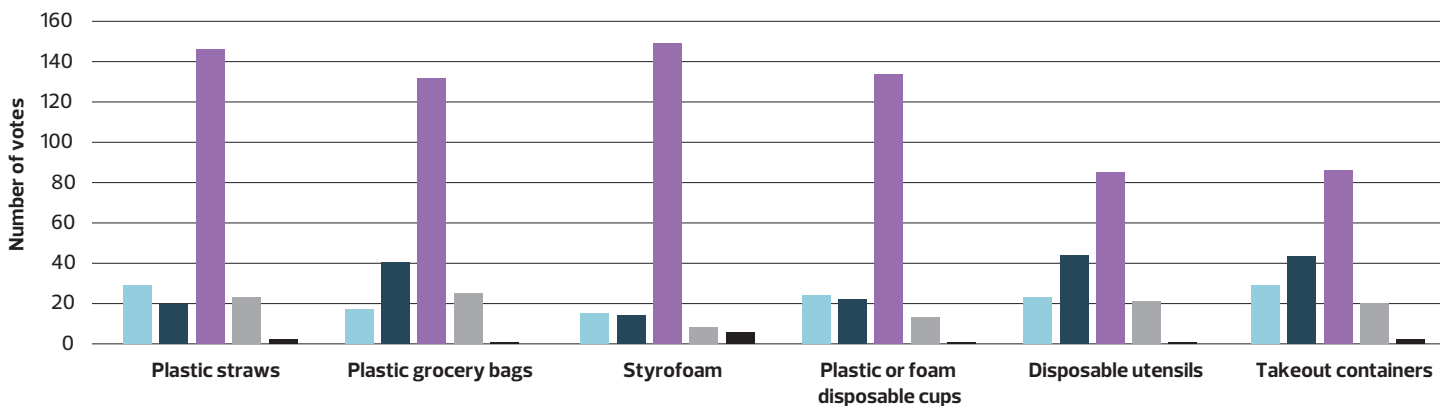
\*\* Open Link Respondents

\*\*\* Insight Community Panel

### Single-use plastics

- + There is significant support for eliminating single-use plastics among participants at the public drop-in sessions; it is not clear to what extent residents were influenced by others' votes at drop-in sessions.
- + Some residents want stronger incentives to reduce their consumption of single-use plastics and said a 5-cent fee at grocery stores was not a deterrent to use plastic bags. If a fee is charged for plastic bags and takeout containers, that fee should be applied to a sustainability fund rather than to the store's general revenue.
- + There was some support for the idea of the City working with smaller businesses to help eliminate single-use plastics.
- + Many stakeholders want the City to consider Extended Producer Responsibility programs and work to eliminate plastic packaging.

### For these 6 different items, how would you prefer to see the City deal with them?



Public drop-in results (n = 1,175)  
 Non-weighted, self selected data

- Restrict their use, but no extra charge/fee
- Do not restrict their use, but do charge customers an extra charge/fee for use
- Eliminate their use
- No restriction (no extra charge/fee)
- Don't know

### How should the City of Edmonton deal with single-use plastics?

Plastic straws	● *****	■	■
Plastic grocery bags	● *****	■	■
Styrofoam	● *****	■	■
Plastic or foam disposable cups	● *****	■	■
Disposable utensils	● **	● ****	● **
Takeout containers	● *****	● *****	● **

Survey results. See Appendix A for more details.  
 \* Edmonton Panel  
 \*\*Open Link Respondents  
 \*\*\*Insight Community Panel



**47%\*** **48%\*\*** **60%\*\*\***

Think that consumers should be charged at least \$0.01 per-use fee for disposable items.

Survey results. See Appendix A for more details.

\* Edmonton Panel

\*\* Open Link Respondents

\*\*\* Insight Community Panel

## MULTI-UNIT STAKEHOLDERS

### Education and access to services are critical

- + Not all multi-unit residents have access to on-site recycle bins. Those that do may not have them conveniently located, resulting in improper disposal of garbage and recycling.
- + High tenant turnover can hinder the effectiveness of proper sorting efforts, resulting in inconsistent disposal of garbage and recycling. Continual education and awareness is needed for tenants, which can pose a challenge for building managers.
- + Property managers, condo board members, residents and City waste inspectors all suggested that the City should focus on increased recycling education and compliance before introducing additional sorting of food scraps.
- + Tenants need to understand the why and how of the current recycling program before introducing food scraps sorting. The feeling is, "if they haven't learned to recycle dry goods, they won't be good at sorting organic material."
- + Compliance is difficult to monitor.

### Low participation

- + Recycling participation and compliance in the multi-unit sector is low. There is concern that introducing food scraps separation in some multi-unit residences will not improve waste diversion rates but increase contamination of both recyclables and food scraps.
- + In general, rental buildings, high rises, and non-market housing were said to have the lowest recycling participation and compliance among multi-unit residents, due to lack of understanding on how to recycle, proximity of recycling bins to units, tenant turnover, other priorities, and lack of interest in recycling.
- + High turnover in some buildings and different rules for recycling across jurisdictions reduce residential participation, as well as increase contamination of recyclables.
- + Recycling knowledge and participation is low in non-market housing developments.

### **Cost of service**

- + Property managers and condo boards saw the cost per unit charged by the City for multi-unit waste collection as prohibitive.

### **Infrastructure concerns and challenges**

- + Space is required for any additional bins and collection vehicles that are required for additional sorting.
- + Concern was raised by property managers and condominium owners over potential damage to private roads with additional trucks.
- + Parking spaces may have to be sacrificed for new bins, an idea that was not well-received.
- + If recycle bins were closer to units than garbage bins, recyclable material was frequently contaminated with garbage.
- + Property managers were sometimes reluctant to use bins on their property if they felt their placement was unattractive or resulted in odour complaints from units close to the bins.
- + Buildings and developments with high turnover had issues with dumping of furniture, barbecues, mattresses and other items, especially during moves. Disposing of these items creates significant costs for the property managers.

### **Food scraps separation challenges**

- + Some property managers and developers see additional sorting of food scraps as plausible but challenging. They are concerned that introducing additional sorting requirements would not be successful because there are already low success rates and low participation in sorting garbage and recycling.
- + In non-market multi-unit residences, tenants and support staff have many obstacles to proper sorting, including other priorities, language barriers, cultural adjustments, financial issues, mental health issues, and medical issues.
- + In some complexes, food scraps container storage in units is seen as problematic. An additional container would take up space, which is already at a premium. This issue was predominantly raised in non-market multi-unit residences.
- + Some properties already have issues with pest management, including cockroaches, mice and other pests. There are concerns that keeping food scraps in units could exacerbate this problem.
- + Capital Region Housing offered a pilot program to teach tenants how to sort and recycle. They suggested the City partner with the social workers at their sites and run a test pilot now, well before new sorting changes are introduced.

## NON-RESIDENTIAL (ICI) STAKEHOLDERS

Facilitated conversations covered several topics, although stakeholder discussions primarily focused on single-use plastics.

Participants understood the motivation behind developing a new long-term waste strategy and some have plans to introduce practices that are more environmentally friendly. However, their ability to do more is restricted by cost, capacity, space and in the case of some businesses (such as franchises), policies from headquarters not located in Edmonton.

The profit motive is the key driver to understanding or changing behaviour. For some, less waste or better separation equals fewer pickups which translates into lower costs. Conversely, for others, less source separation means lower labour costs at their sites (i.e., it all goes into one bin without paying the labour costs to separate it on site).

Most participants in the non-residential sector wanted to be kept informed, participate in future conversations and work together with the City on waste management changes and strategies.

### Lawn and yard care companies

Businesses want to know well in advance where grass, leaf and yard waste will go. They sign multi-year maintenance contracts with property managers, condo boards, businesses and residents. Changes in drop-off requirements by the City (hauling to Eco Station versus leaving with owner) can change the cost of service significantly, which can affect the business.

- + Many companies leave grass, leaf and yard waste on site with the property owners for the City to haul. If they have to haul, they need a trailer, or they must make a separate trip for pickup.
- + Many mentioned that leaving grass on the lawn over the summer creates thatch, which increases the amount of cleanup required in the spring.
- + There was concern that reduced pickups in residential neighbourhoods will result in odours from grass and leaves left behind. There was also concern around companies' ability to complete scheduled maintenance in time for the two spring collection dates.

For commercial clients, grass, leaf and yard waste is typically put in a trailer. Lawn care companies said that Eco Stations are not set up to take trailers, should be open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. in the summer, should provide businesses with a pass to avoid lineups and should be located conveniently across the city.

- + Paper bags are considered less strong than plastic, are difficult to stack, can leak if wet, and are hard to tie or close.
- + Businesses feel that changes to grass, leaf and yard waste collection schedules will increase illegal dumping in ditches, ravines and the river valley.



## Business and commercial associations

Discussions focused mainly on single-use plastics and packaging.

- + Most stores and restaurants want to reduce packaging and are considering moving towards using either recycled or recyclable packaging.
- + Significant increases in online shopping and takeout delivery businesses are increasing packaging requirements.
- + There is concern about additional costs associated with single-use plastic alternatives that could negatively affect businesses that have already been impacted by the economic downturn. Extra fees for coffee cups and plastic bags may help reduce their use in the first year, but may not be a long term solution and could harm businesses in a fragile economy.
- + Participants prefer voluntary measures over regulatory restrictions. For example, the single-use plastics ban in Vancouver allows businesses to design their own strategy for eliminating single-use plastics rather than being told what to do. Their method must show annual reductions in single-use plastic consumption.
- + Having a regional approach to regulation of plastics would create consistency, and also prevent customers from frequenting businesses in jurisdictions with fewer or no regulatory restrictions in place.
- + Reduction strategies with a phased approach are preferred over a sudden and complete elimination, to allow time to understand the effects of alternatives. For example, can bamboo straws or cardboard containers with grease be composted or recycled more easily than single-use plastics?
- + Associations are interested in working with the City to share effective examples of plastic restriction bylaws that consider how to handle specific items, like meat and pharmaceuticals.

Would these be a challenge for your business if you are asked to sort and reduce more of your waste in the future?	% Agree
Additional financial costs to set up, sort and remove waste	40% / 39%
Space to sort waste and/or store waste carts on-site	43% / 37%
Finding appropriate alternative materials that can be used	42% / 35%
Finding a company or business that will sort your mixed waste	36% / 34%
Staffing or time needed to sort and manage waste	35% / 33%
Finding/developing practices that focus on waste prevention and reuse	33% / 30%
Communicating with others about how to sort waste	38% / 29%
Lack of information about how to sort and manage waste***	29%
Process for food waste prevention, donation, and reuse	31% / 27%
Customer convenience and safety	35% / 25%
Personal/staff safety with sorting waste	34% / 23%

Survey results. See Appendix A for more details.

% Order: Non-residential Respondents / Mixed Topic

\*\*\*Asked only of Mixed Topic respondents

## Businesses

Many businesses struggle with non-recyclable packaging, such as Styrofoam, shrink wrap, plastic buckets and polymer plastic. They want the City to engage with the Government of Alberta to encourage Extended Producer Responsibility practices.

Some businesses send recyclable items to landfill because they would be charged an additional fee to recycle them.

Some businesses feel they are too large to affordably participate in City recycling programs, but too small to find a market for their own recyclables. They suggested the City become a 'clearing house' for these items, by collecting recyclable items from smaller businesses, so the collection and recycling process is economical.

Regarding single-use plastics:

- + Businesses cautioned the City not to "jump on the single-use plastics bandwagon" without conducting a business case and considering unintended consequences of restricting or eliminating their use.
- + Businesses suggested setting a minimum requirement for use of materials with post-consumer content. For example, all plastics used must be a minimum of 20 per cent post-consumer material. Incentivize manufacturing of products from post-consumer products. For example, in California, materials made of less post-consumer content cost more to purchase or use.
- + The money from single-use plastic fees should go into a sustainability fund, not into the store's general revenue.
- + Offer incentives to companies who help the City reach their zero waste goal.
- + Some more sustainable options are not cost competitive, and people often look for the cheapest price.

45%

Agree that the City should use its own authority to enact Extended Producer Responsibility rules

Survey results. See Appendix A for more details.

- + While some businesses in the food industry compost leftover food and/or donate leftovers, others are constrained by space and resources, and look to private haulers who promise to divert and recycle waste.
- + Businesses see a need for consistency and education with respect to sorting and recycling across the region as their customers are not all from Edmonton.
- + Keep signage simple and consider colour coding bins and carts across the region. Fancy graphics can be less effective in communicating a message than simple graphics and simple signs.
- + In some cases, forcing the issue (i.e., with more regulation and more enforcement) may be the only option to push some businesses to comply. At the same time, this pressure could encourage new businesses or technologies to emerge to provide innovative solutions for the business community.
- + For some, the private haulers have very restrictive (and expensive) terms including long-term contracts that are hard to break and very short option-to-renew periods. While most recognize that the City would have an unfair advantage in the waste hauling market, there was some sense that the additional competition could be good for the market overall.

## Industry

Conversations focused on single-use plastics. While they recognized the waste that is created by these products, they also identified its contribution to the economy and employment in the city and the region.

- + Participants said that alternatives to single-use plastics can, in some cases, create hardship for those who have lower incomes, and can sometimes have a larger environmental footprint than the product they are replacing.
- + There is interest in working with the City and other jurisdictions to find solutions for plastic waste.
- + Participants believe mechanical recycling does not work because of cross contamination and the inferior products produced by using recycled materials.
- + There are many markets for recycled plastics, including single-use. Many examples of plastic recycling market opportunities were cited.
- + Participants advised exercising caution regarding eliminating the use of single-use plastics, due to "unintended consequences" that they had witnessed in other regions.
- + They suggest that manufacturers grade the quality of plastics and develop "end of life cycle" strategies to better deal with products.
- + Participants propose investing in a gasifier pyrolysis system for recycling, which can produce food quality plastic. In addition to single-use plastic waste produced by residents, they see an opportunity for clean feedstock from the single-use plastics generated by industry, including polymer plastic and Styrofoam.

## Institutions

- + The biggest barrier to waste sorting is space. Efforts have been made to establish space in newer facilities but this is difficult in older facilities. Older facilities must pay additional fees for more frequent waste collection.
- + These waste programs cost money in processing, management, containers, receptacles, vendors and space. This takes away from the other services that institutions are expected and legislated to provide.
- + Rolling out the changes in phases would be helpful. In Calgary, one newer site was used as a test site. Food scraps were separated and converted to compost for staff for their gardens. This turned a new rule (separating food scraps) into a positive tangible outcome (compost for gardens).

"Our organizations would require some exemptions similar to those in Vancouver with respect to single-use plastics or restrictions."

## Not-for-profit organizations

These organizations play an important role in managing waste, and figure prominently in reuse and recycling. Several programs exist—or could exist—that would allow not-for-profits to increase their capacity and divert greater amounts of waste from the landfill.

The focus for the not-for-profit sector conversations included:

- + *Quick wins*: Immediate actions that the City could implement to support not-for-profits who are committed to doing more to reduce and reuse waste.
- + *Direct assistance*: areas where the City would need to be more involved with not-for-profits to support their waste reduction efforts.
- + *Innovation*: opportunities for social enterprise and creation of new markets and investments.

### Examples of Direct Assistance:

- + The City could provide support in the form of seasonal educational campaigns (around Christmas or at the end of the school year) to encourage people to reduce waste, by reusing and donating used items. The City could partner with schools and school boards to facilitate recycling and collecting school supply donations. In this way, the City could help “make it easy” to reuse and recycle.
- + Share City data with not-for-profits, such as how much the City is spending or is willing to spend to deal with dumped and damaged items. Some organizations could use this to develop a business plan to get funding to help support the City’s waste diversion efforts through their operations or projects.
- + Funding support to not-for-profits would help increase diversion rates.

### Examples of Innovation:

- + Could the City provide additional support or programs to community leagues for their current and future initiatives? For example, one league organizes pickups from the elderly to bring large items to Big Bin Events.
- + Work with not-for-profits to find solutions for hard-to-repurpose or recycle items. For example, could the Waste to Biofuels Facility take old encyclopedias?
- + Are there other markets for recyclable materials that haven't been explored yet?

## Waste services employees

In the survey for Waste Services employees, staff described the following challenges with a cart-based system:

- + Accessibility to stage and pick up carts;
- + Compliance issues such as carts being overfilled;
- + Continued use of bags; and
- + Expectation of a fee reduction for residents using a smaller cart.

Staff preferred that residents use a 240L blue cart for recyclables instead of bags. They also recommended allowing year-round topping up of green carts with grass clippings and yard waste.

### Challenges Perceived by Waste Services Staff with Having Cart Waste Collection

- + Accessibility to stage/pick up carts (flat surface, vehicles, etc.)
- + Carts overfilled/bags left beside cart
- + Those using a small cart will want a rebate or fee adjustment

### Recycling

**59%** Would prefer residents to use a 240L blue cart for collecting recyclables in the future

**51%** Have operational concerns with using blue carts

**62%** Do not feel there are any reasons why we should continue to use blue bags for recyclables

### Grass, Leaf, and Yard Waste (GLY)

**50%** Like topping up green carts with GLY waste year round

**34%** Like the seasonal collection of GLY waste, with 2 pickups in the spring and 2 pickups in the fall

**30%** Are concerned about having waste in both carts and bags at the same time

### Large Paper Yard Waste Bags

**23%** Like collecting GLY waste in large paper bags

**54%** Have no specific concerns regarding the proposed changes for GLY waste collections

## City of Edmonton employees

Facilitators and note takers were not used at the two drop-in sessions for City staff. Comments were gathered from sticky notes attached to the storyboards. Many comments at the sessions mirrored those collected at the public drop-in sessions.

The following highlight unique comments generated by participants.

### *Single-use plastics:*

- + Require that single-use items be made of biodegradable materials.
- + Add requirements regarding single-use plastics for all mobile food vendors before they can be approved for events.
- + Most swimming pool chemicals are in single-use containers. The City would need to work with suppliers to create options.
- + Provide penalties and incentives such as reducing taxes if restaurants use eco-friendly products and tax heavily if they don't.

### *Waste set-outs and food scraps collection:*

- + Start food scraps collection in Edmonton Tower.
- + Use liners in food scraps containers to keep contents contained and off the roads.

### *Preferences for proposed changes:*

- + Eliminate or restrict single-use plastics.
- + The 120L black garbage cart was preferred over the 240L size.
- + Blue cart preferred over blue bags.

### *Some ideas for zero waste:*

- + Bylaw to enforce less packaging from manufacturers.
- + Make leaving grass clippings on lawns mandatory. Provide more information on improving the health of your lawn with grass clippings.
- + The City needs more Reuse Centres. Set up pop-up reuse drop-off locations on weekends at parks, parking lots, and community leagues.
- + Create a leftover program for schools instead of throwing out unwanted food. Package up food in reusable containers and give it to students to take home.

### *Drop-off locations:*

- + Should offer disposal of sharps and needles, small furniture and textiles that can't be donated.
- + Should be free or lower fees, including free for City areas to use.
- + Needs to be a one-stop shop, versus multiple locations for different types, and open 7 days a week. Extended hours in the spring and summer.
- + Ideal locations include Fleet service yards, recreation centres, libraries, community league halls, LRT stations, malls and farmers' markets.

*Other comments and concerns:*

- + Workplace incentives:
  - + Encourage/provide incentives to use reusable containers and cups at work.
- + Unclear which plastic is recyclable, and which is not.
- + Some companies offer recycling of office materials like batteries, pens, etc.
- + Workplace waste bins:
  - + Each office/cubicle waste bin should not be lined with a plastic bag.
  - + Waste bins should just be emptied into a single large trash bag.
  - + How to deal with current garbage can areas that would not meet the container requirements?
- + How does the collection of food scraps occur at City facilities that have waste contracts with private companies?
- + Consider working with neighbouring municipalities on collection and/or processing of waste to improve economies of scale.
- + Reduced pickups and restricted volume will result in more dumping in transit trash (transit trash is different from waste trash).
  - + Who pays for clean up – transit or waste?
- + Road maintenance will be higher with more trucks collecting.

# NEXT STEPS



# NEXT STEPS

## HOW INPUT FROM PHASE 1 AND 2 IS BEING USED TO INFORM DECISIONS

The information and input from both phases of public engagement will be used:

- + To develop Edmonton's new 25-year waste strategy, which will be presented to Utility Committee and City Council in 2019.
- + To inform and provide direction on how Waste Services continues to work with the multi-unit and non-residential stakeholders in developing proposed recommendations and program changes for these sectors.
- + In conjunction with results and feedback from residents participating in Edmonton's initial cart rollout. Input will help refine Waste Services' recommendations for a city-wide cart rollout, along with changes to grass, leaf and yard waste collection for residents. These recommendations will be presented to Utility Committee and City Council.

Approval from City Council is required before any changes to waste programs and services can be implemented.

A comprehensive What We Heard report with full results from phases 1 and 2 of public engagement will be made publicly available later in 2019.

# APPENDICES

# **APPENDIX A**

## SURVEY REPORT (LEGER)

# Report

## City of Edmonton

Waste Services  
Public Engagement Phase 2  
Draft Survey Report



DATE 2019-05-15

# Leger

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*We know Canadians*



# SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

# RESIDENTIAL RESPONDENTS

# RECYCLING

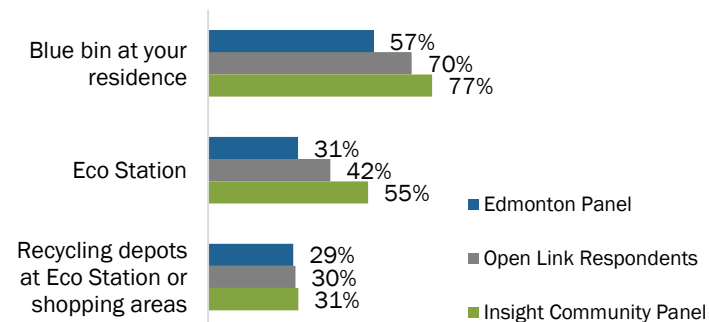


**55% / 67% / 60%**

would prefer to switch to a 240L blue cart for collecting recyclables in the future



## Disposed of recyclables at...\*



**79% / 77% / 85%**

have a dedicated cart or place for recycling\*

% Order: Edmonton Panel Members / Open Link Respondents / Insight Community Panel

Base: Survey respondents who take their waste to the front street or back alley for pick-up by the City (EP, n=723; OL, n=5,656; ICP, n=1,712)

\*Base: Survey respondents who place household waste in a large, shared bin or use a garbage chute that is shared with other residents (EP, n=263; OL, n=1,038-1,049; ICP n= 363)

# CART SYSTEM

Percentage of single-unit respondents who would prefer a specific size of cart for garbage...

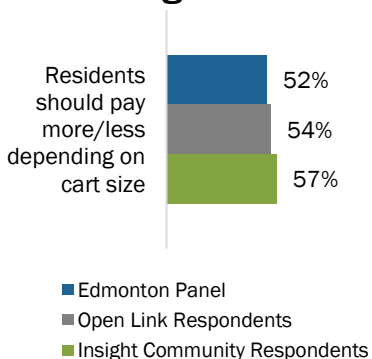


**44% / 50% / 43%**



**41% / 41% / 47%**

## Pricing Structure



**61% / 58% / 58%**

Think a **difference** in monthly rate between the two cart sizes would be reasonable.

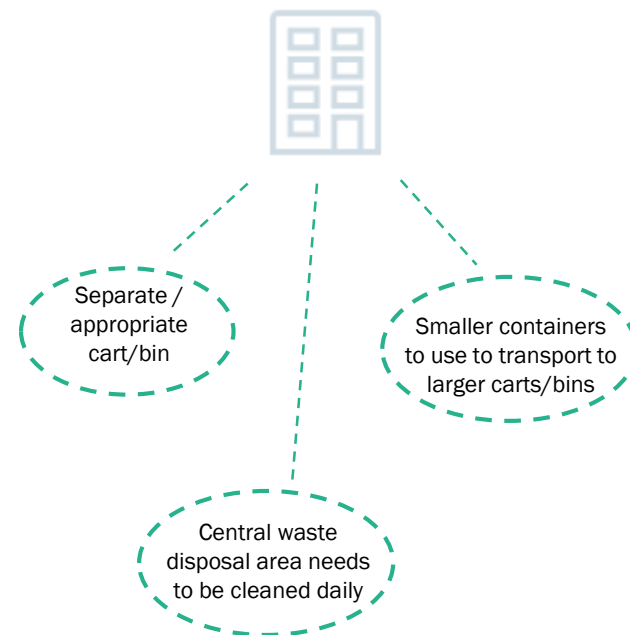
**28% / 20% / 19%**

Think a **\$2 to \$5 change** in the monthly rate would be reasonable for the difference in cart size

**36% / 39% / 48%**

Would be **unlikely\*** to use a larger cart size if it costs more

Multi-unit respondents would like to see the following in their building to help ensure all residents can participate in sorting their food scraps...



% Order: Edmonton Panel / Open Link Respondents / Insight Community Panel

Base: Survey respondents who take their waste to the front street or back alley for pick-up by the City (EP, n=723; OL, n=5,645-5,653; ICP, n= 1,712)

\*Unlikely = sum of 1,2,3 ratings



# GRASS CLIPPINGS AND YARD WASTE COLLECTION



**57% / 71% / 73%**

Are responsible for disposal of any grass clippings, leaf and/or yard waste



**52% / 58% / 58%**

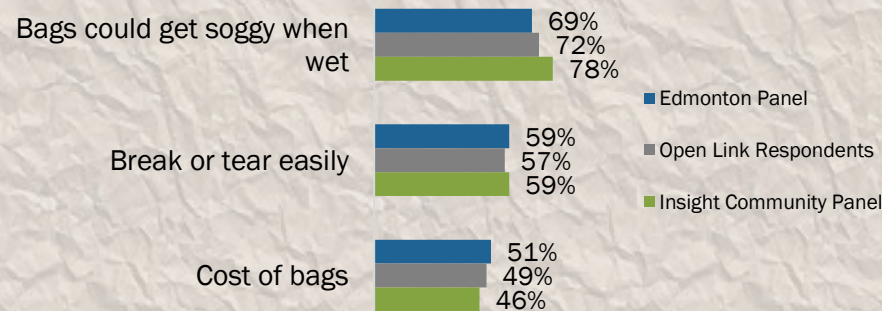
Agree that 2 collection days in the spring and 2 collection days in the fall for yard waste pick up, as well as being able to top up their green carts, are sufficient to meet their needs\*

# LARGE PAPER YARD WASTE BAGS

**62% / 66% / 66%**

Are willing to use large paper yard waste bags for disposing of yard waste, instead of plastic bags \*\*

## Concerns\*\*



% Order: Edmonton Panel Members / Open Link Respondents / Insight Community Panel

Base: Survey respondents (EP, n=1,000; OL, n=6,755; ICP, n=2,096)

\*Base: Survey respondents responsible for grass clippings and yard waste (EP, n=566; OL, n=4,815; ICP, n=1,521)

\*\*Base: Respondents responsible for disposal of grass clippings and yard waste, and need grass and yard waste collection (EP, n=497; OL, n=4,572-4578; ICP, n=1,434)

# SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

## Items for Elimination/Restriction...

	Eliminate Use	Restrict Use (but no extra fee/charge)
Plastic straws	✓	
Plastic grocery bags	✓	
Styrofoam	✓	
Plastic or foam disposable cups	✓	
Disposable utensils**	OL only ✓	EP/ICP only ✓
Takeout containers**		✓

## Per-use Fee for Disposable Items

47% / 48% / 60% of respondents think that consumers **should be charged at least \$0.01** per-use fee for disposable items.

Respondents feel there should be a charge of... (on average)



### What items should be permitted or considered exempt from a restriction or elimination? →

- × Medical waste, diapers, sanitary products
- × Plastic straws
- × Plastic bags

### Why?

- Medical and disability concerns
- Cost to consumers
- Item such as plastic bags can be reused, not necessarily single-use

## Minimum Cost for Reusable Bags...



Agree\* that there should be a minimum cost for reusable bags

% Order and \$ order : Edmonton Panel Members / Open Link Respondents / Insight Community Panel  
 Base: Survey respondents (EP, n=1,000; OL, n=6,773-6,755; ICP, n=2,096)

\*Agree = sum of 8,9,10 ratings

\*\*ICP also indicated that this item should not be restricted but charge customers and extra charge/fee for use

# DROP-OFF LOCATIONS



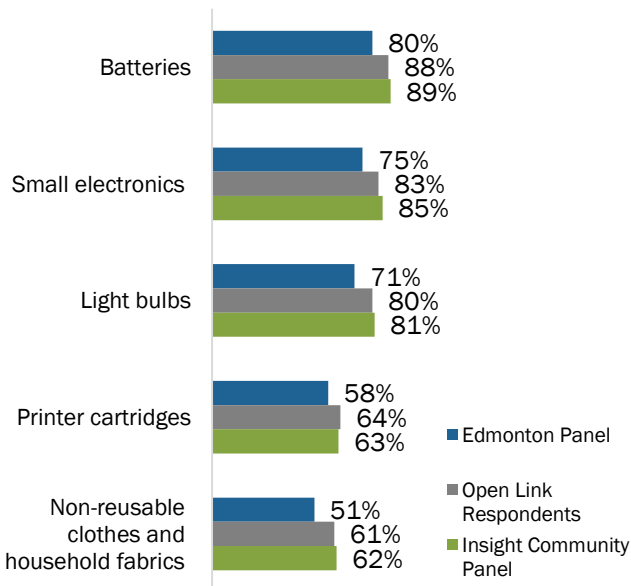
**57% / 73% / 80%**

of single-unit respondents **have brought items for disposal** to an Eco Station within the past 12 months\*

## COMMUNITY DROP-OFF AREA PREFERENCES

## ECO-STATION PREFERENCES

### Items for Drop-Off



### Location



**55% / 63% / 57%**

Grocery Stores



**51% / 54% / 57%**

Shopping Malls and Retail Centres

### Hours of Operation

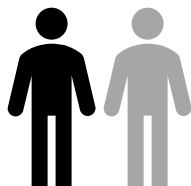
	Afternoon	Evening
Monday		✓
Tuesday		✓
Wednesday		✓
Thursday		✓
Friday		✓
Saturday	✓	
Sunday	✓	

“The City can have **more / accessible locations** to increase access to drop-off locations for those without vehicles.”

% Order: Edmonton Panel Members / Open Link Respondents / Insight Community Panel  
Base: Survey respondents (EP, n=1,000; OL, n=6,755; ICP, n=2,096)

\*Base: Survey respondents who take their waste to the front street or back alley for pick-up by the City (EP, n=723; OL, n=5,645; ICP, n=1,712)

# ZERO WASTE

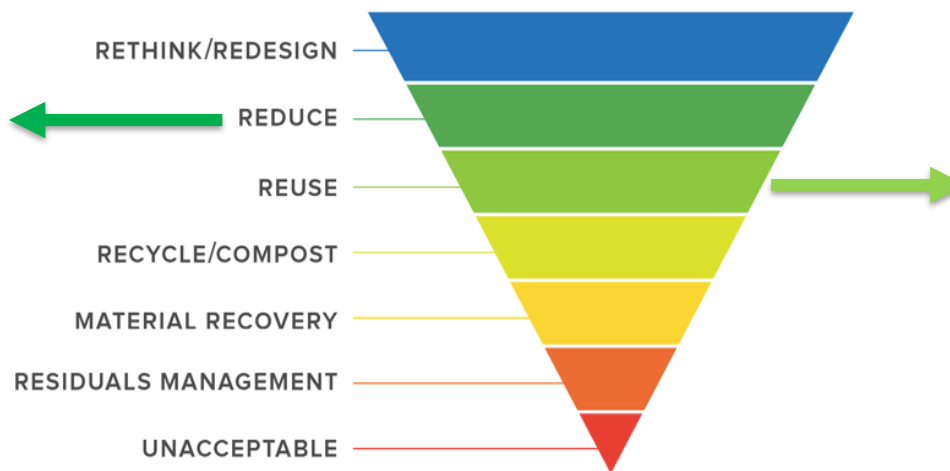


Over half (54% / 59% / 56%) of Edmontonians **agree\*** that given the proposed ideas to support waste reduction and reuse, they would **support** the zero waste goal

The City should further explore...

- ✓ Supporting, advocating for **purchasing sustainable items**
- ✓ **Working with businesses** to support waste reduction efforts
- ✓ Supporting, advocating for **making producers more responsible** for their packaging and disposal of their products
- ✓ Developing **food waste prevention programs**

## ZERO WASTE HIERARCHY



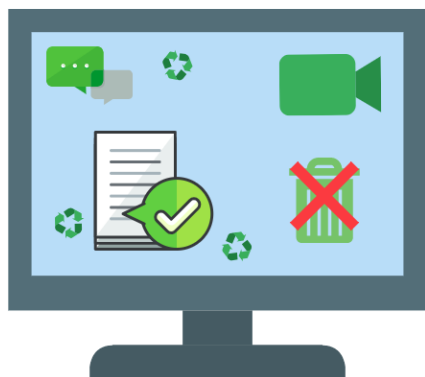
The City should further explore...

- ✓ Establishing **additional Reuse Centre(s)**
- ✓ Food recovery programs for **commercial sector**
- ✓ Support for **item donation organizations and programs**

Source: Zero Waste Canada 2018

# EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

## Educational Resources



**58% / 68% / 69%**

Would like **online courses and information** (videos, documents) made available

**Education** is identified as the main idea or suggestion on how to get people on board and ensure compliance.

## Preferred Communication Channels for Updates and Progress



**63% / 65% / 64%**

News / TV Media

**www.edmonton.ca**

**57% / 65% / 65%**

City Website

## Ambassador-Type Program\*\*



**43% / 42% / 44%**

Are on the fence\* that this type of program would be positively received by the other residents and the property manager in their building

% Order: Edmonton Panel Members / Open Link Respondents / Insight Community Panel

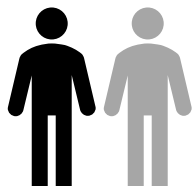
Base: Survey respondents (EP, n=1,000; OL, n=6,755; ICP, n=2,096)

\*Are on the fence = sum of 4,5,6,7 ratings

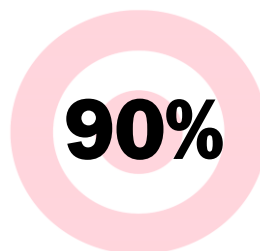
\*\*Base: Survey respondents who place household waste in a large, shared bin or use a garbage chute that is shared with other residents (EP n=263, OL n=1,038; ICP, n=363)

# NON-RESIDENTIAL RESPONDENTS

# ZERO WASTE



61% / 49% of survey respondents agree\* a zero waste goal is something that Edmonton business should support



76% / 64% of survey respondents think that business and industry should have the same target to divert 90% of their waste because:

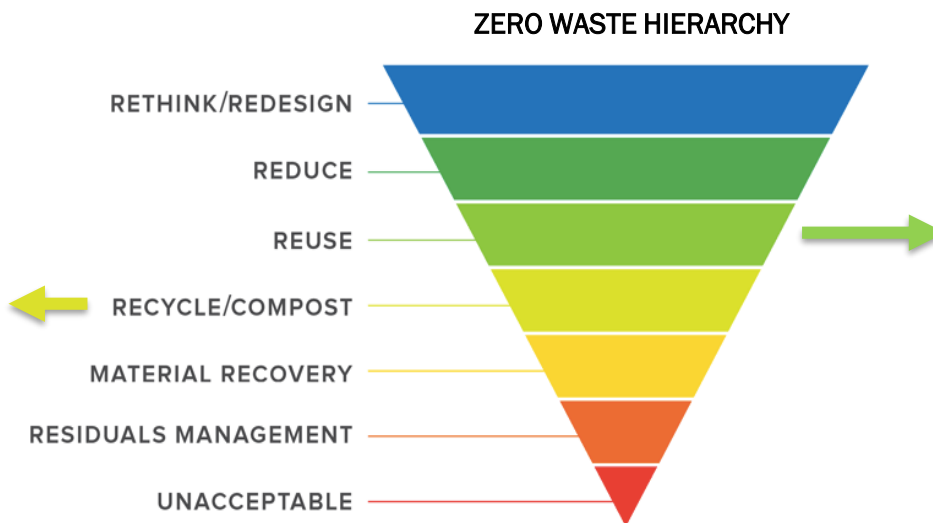


Nearly half (49%) of non-residential respondents think it will take 1 year or less for their organization to reach the 90% diversion target\*\*

- ✓ It's good for the environment
- ✓ We all need to do our part

Support/agree\* businesses being required to...

- ✓ Separate **compostable food waste** (51% / 53%)
- ✓ Separate **recyclable materials** (75% / 69%)



- ✓ Agree\* would be interested in working with other organizations to **support the reuse of materials and reduction of waste** (52% / 48%)
- ✓ Agree\* businesses that serve/sell food should be **responsible for preventing wasted food and donating** (74% / 63%)

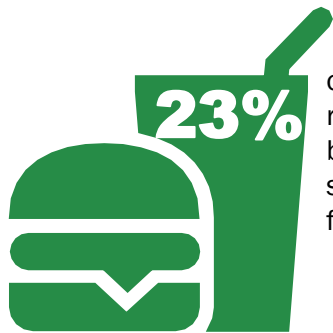
Source: Zero Waste Canada 2018

% Order: Non-residential Respondents / Mixed Topic  
 Base: Survey respondents (NR, n=501; MT, n=179)  
 \*Support/Agree = sum of 8,9,10 ratings  
 \*\* Non-residential respondents only

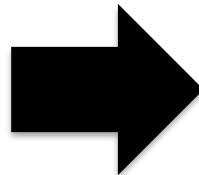
# SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

## Items for Elimination/Restriction...

	Eliminate Use	Restrict Use (but no extra fee/charge)	Do Not Restrict Use (but charge)	No Restriction
Plastic straws	✓			
Plastic grocery bags	✓			
Styrofoam	✓			
Plastic or foam disposable cups	✓			
Disposable utensils	MT only ✓	I only ✓		
Takeout containers**			MT only ✓	MT only ✓



23% of non-residential respondent businesses sell or serve any kind of food\*\*\*



## Support and infrastructure needed to be less reliant on disposable items...\*/\*\*\*

- ✓ *Would use biodegradable products*
- ✓ *Affordable substitutions*
- ✓ *Support in cost (subsidies)*
- ✓ *Access to alternative items*

(19% indicate don't know/refused; 17% indicate not applicable to business/do not use disposable items)

Base: Survey respondents (NR, n=501; MT, n=179)

\*Base: Survey respondents with a food service business (NR, n=116)

\*\*Not asked of Non-residential respondents

\*\*\* Not asked of Mixed Topic Respondents



# CHALLENGES WITH SORTING WASTE AND CURRENT WASTE



Challenges With Sorting Waste	% Agree*
Additional financial costs to set up, sort and remove waste	40% / 39%
Space to sort waste and/or store waste carts on-site	43% / 37%
Finding appropriate alternative materials that can be used	42% / 35%
Finding a company or business that will sort your mixed waste	36% / 34%
Staffing or time needed to sort and manage waste	35% / 33%
Finding/developing practices that focus on waste prevention and reuse	33% / 30%
Communicating with others about how to sort waste	38% / 29%
Lack of information about how to sort and manage waste***	29%
Process for food waste prevention, donation, and reuse	31% / 27%
Customer convenience and safety	35% / 25%
Personal/staff safety with sorting waste	34% / 23%

## Current Waste\*\*



36% of non-residential respondents estimate that **1-5%** of their organizations **current waste that is compostable is**

**53%** of non-residential respondents

indicate there are **no other challenges** their organization may face regarding sorting and reducing their waste. Among those who did provide a challenge...

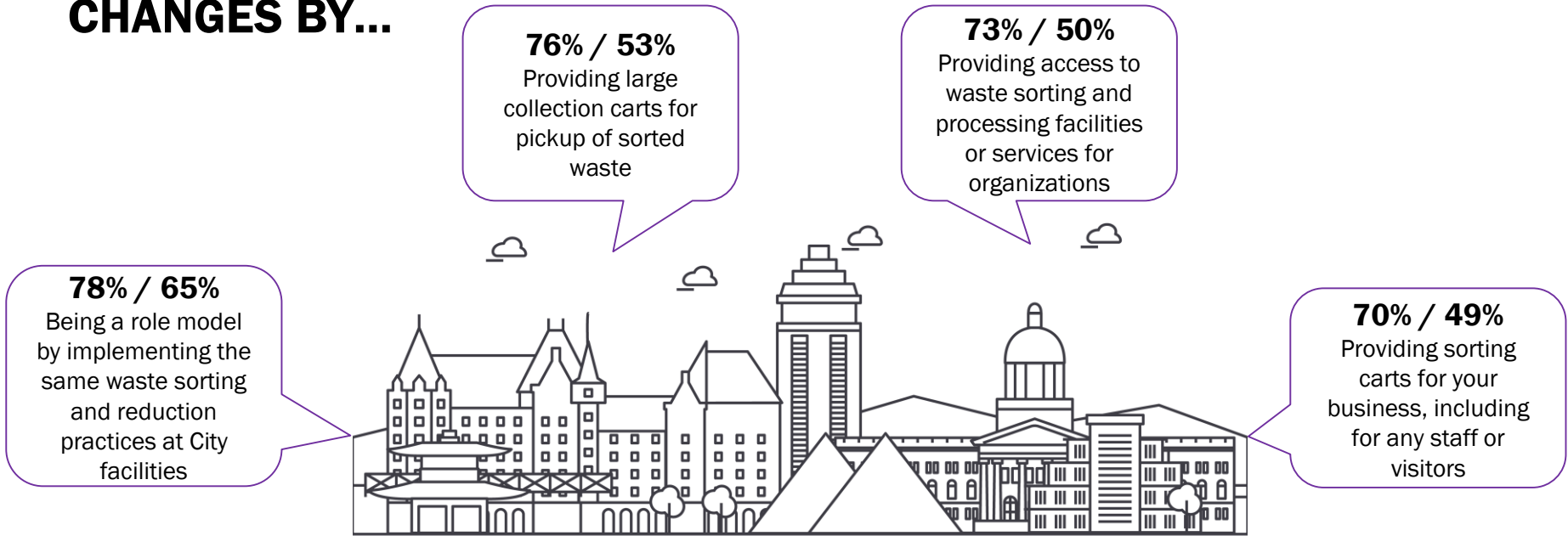
**\$ cost** was the top mention

% Order: Non-residential Respondents / Mixed Topic  
 Base: Survey respondents (NR, n=501; MT, n=179)

\*Agree = sum of 8,9,10 ratings

\*\*Asked only of Non-residential respondents \*\*\*Asked only of Mixed Topic respondents

# EDMONTON BUSINESSES WANT THE CITY TO SUPPORT CHANGES BY...



## Importance of Support\* from the City

### Importance\* of Education Information from the City\*\*

- ✓ Guidelines about proper sorting, storage, and disposal of different types of waste properly (74%)
- ✓ Information about alternatives to using single-use plastics (69%)
- ✓ Consistent signage and templates for staff and visitors that can be used by multiple organizations (65%)
- ✓ Example plans or templates to help you set up your own waste sorting station on-site (64%)
- ✓ Information about why sorting and reducing waste is important (63%)
- ✓ Reporting on Edmonton's progress in achieving waste diversion goals (60%)

% Order: Non-residential Respondents / Mixed Topic

Base: Survey respondents (NR, n=501; MT, n=179)

\*Support/Important = sum of 8,9,10 ratings

\*\*Asked only of Non-residential respondents

# EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY

**45%** Agree\* that the City should use its own authority to enact extended producer responsibility rules\*\*

## Importance\* of City Involvement

**69% / 60%**

Advocate and promote take-back programs where material is collected and returned to producers

**73% / 54%**

Involvement in programs that provide incentives for reducing waste

**67% / 52%**

Advocate for legislation that will ensure consistency in waste management practices across all municipalities in the Capital Region

**69% / 49%**

Advocate for legislation and bylaws that will ensure consistency in waste management practices across Edmonton

## Agreement\* with City Initiatives\*\*

- ✓ Private sector operators should be able to access the City's waste processing facilities in order to ensure waste that is sorted can be properly processed (73%)
- ✓ The City should provide waste services only in cases where there are not enough private companies or facilities to provide a sufficient level of service for all of Edmonton (42%)
- ✓ The City should provide waste services to organizations, even though private companies may also provide similar services (45%)
- ✓ There are plenty of private collectors, the City doesn't need to compete with the private sector (36%)
- ✓ The City should only provide waste services that are not provided by any private companies (36%)

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



**62%**

of respondents require **no additional** resources from the City to keep as much waste as possible out of the landfill



**23%**

of respondents would like the City to consider a **tax incentive/break/credit** as an incentive for keeping as much waste as possible out of the landfill



**22%**

of respondents would be interested in being **considered for an advisory committee**

# WASTE SERVICES STAFF

# CHALLENGES WITH HAVING CART WASTE COLLECTION



# RECYCLING



**59%**

would prefer residents to use a 240L blue cart for collecting recyclables in the future

**51%**

have operational concerns with using blue carts

- ✓ Contaminated bins
- ✓ Lack of knowledge of what goes where (proper sorting)
- ✓ Space/storage for carts

**62%**

do not feel there are any reasons why we should continue to use blue bags for recyclables

# GLY WASTE COLLECTION



**50%**

Like\* topping up green carts with GLY waste year round



**34%**

Like\* the seasonal collection of GLY waste, with 2 pick ups in the spring and 2 pick ups in the fall



**30%**

Are concerned\* about having waste in both carts and bags at the same time

## Other Concerns

- ✓ Not enough collections
- ✓ Bag storage
- ✓ Bags could get soggy when wet

# LARGE PAPER YARD WASTE BAGS

**23%**

Like\* collecting GLY waste in large paper bags

**54%**

Have no specific concerns regarding the proposed changes for GLY waste collections



# **APPENDIX B**

## SINGLE-USE PLASTICS SUMMARY

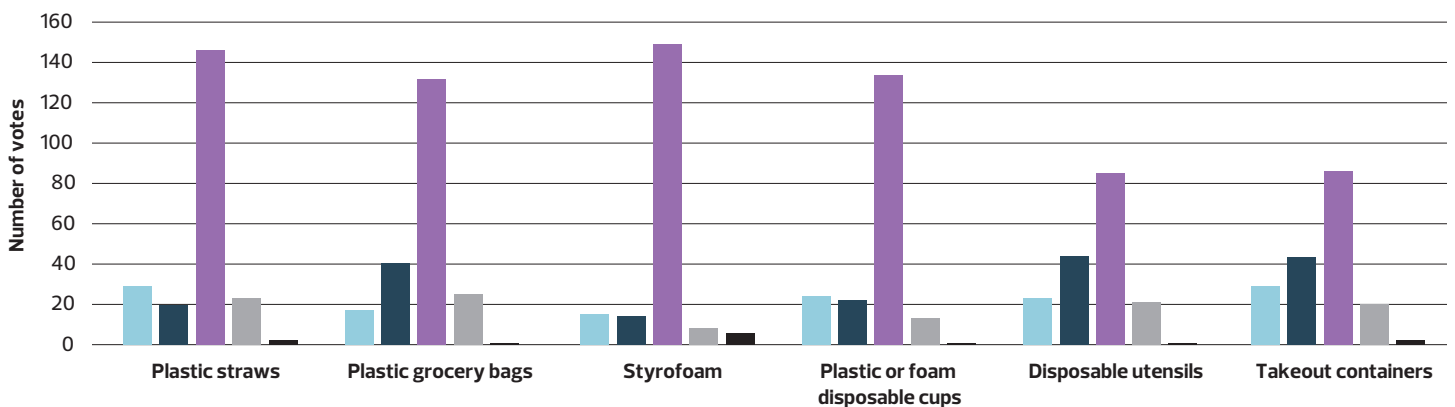
# Overview

Most stakeholders and the public participating in Future of Waste public engagement conversations are aware of single-use plastics and their effects on the environment. Some of their knowledge comes from other jurisdictions, social media, and/or other media. A recent episode of CBC's Marketplace was often discussed at public drop-in sessions. Although many would applaud the City if it eliminated single-use plastics, others would see it as a reactionary response that failed to consider the bigger picture and other alternatives and potential opportunities.

Overall, stakeholders and the public who participated in the online survey and public drop-in sessions consistently showed interest and significant support

for the City to restrict or eliminate single-use plastics. Facilitated conversations with organizations such as Edmonton Public School Board and the City of Edmonton's Environmental Advisory Committee strongly favoured eliminating all plastics. Other facilitated conversations identified opportunities for the City to play the role of a "clearing house" for single-use plastics, potentially at the regional level, to gather single-use plastics from multiple jurisdictions and businesses for sale to recycling markets and as feedstock for other processes. Participants in facilitated conversations cautioned the City to undertake a careful analysis and beware of unintended consequences of eliminating plastics. They identified several models from around the world that provided an economic return on single-use plastics.

## For these 6 different items, how would you prefer to see the City deal with them?



Public drop-in results (n = 1,175)  
Non-weighted, self selected data

- Restrict their use, but no extra charge/fee
- Do not restrict their use, but do charge customers an extra charge/fee for use
- Eliminate their use
- No restriction (no extra charge/fee)
- Don't know

## How should the City of Edmonton deal with single-use plastics?

Plastic straws	● *****	■	■
Plastic grocery bags	● *****	■	■
Styrofoam	● *****	■	■
Plastic or foam disposable cups	● *****	■	■
Disposable utensils	● **	● ****	● **
Takeout containers	● *****	● *****	● **

Survey results. See Appendix A for more details.

\* Edmonton Panel

\*\*Open Link Respondents

\*\*\*Insight Community Panel

# Survey Results and Comments

Most survey respondents, both residential and non-residential, support the restriction or elimination of single-use plastics.

There is a near-majority that support the elimination of:

- + Styrofoam
- + Plastic or disposable cups

A further number of respondents support restrictions.

There is significant support for the elimination of:

- + Straws
- + Plastic grocery bags
- + Disposable utensils
- + Takeout containers

A further number of respondents support restrictions on these items.

Given how frequently plastic bags were raised in conversations at public drop-in sessions and facilitated meetings, the survey results showed that plastic bags were not the most favoured single-use plastic to restrict or eliminate. Based on feedback from drop-in sessions, this may be because many people reuse them instead of buying new plastic bags.

## ELIMINATE THEIR USE

	Residential	Non-residential
Plastic straws	37%/48%/44%	45%/50%
Plastic grocery bags	31%/45%/36%	39%/41%
Styrofoam	45%/59%/56%	42%/55%
Plastic or foam disposable cups	43%/51%/49%	42%/58%
Disposable utensils	22%/31%/24%	27%/28%
Takeout containers	15%/23%/17%	20%*

Residential: Edmonton Panel/Open Link/Insight Community Panel

Non-residential: Phone surveys/ Mixed Topic

\* Not asked of phone survey respondents

## RESTRICT THEIR USE, BUT NO EXTRA CHARGE/FEE

	Residential	Non-residential
Plastic straws	30%/25%/26%	26%/23%
Plastic grocery bags	21%/16%/15%	22%/13%
Styrofoam	22%/18%/17%	30%/19%
Plastic or foam disposable cups	23%/20%/19%	29%/16%
Disposable utensils	29%/26%/26%	28%/23%
Takeout containers	32%/28%/27%	24%*

Residential: Edmonton Panel/Open Link/Insight Community Panel

Non-residential: Phone surveys/ Mixed Topic

\* Not asked of phone survey respondents

# Public Drop-In Session Input and Comments

## SUPPORT FOR ELIMINATION

Voting at sessions showed that there is significant support for the restriction or elimination of single-use plastics among participants at the public drop-in sessions. However, the choices were made on an open voting station board at public sessions so the results should be interpreted carefully. It is possible that some votes may have been influenced by previous votes or marks on the board. Some residents wanted stronger incentives to reduce their consumption of single-use plastics and said a 5-cent fee at grocery stores was not a deterrent to using plastic bags. Others felt that the 5-cent fee should be allocated to sustainability programs. Some supported the idea of the City working with smaller businesses to help eliminate single-use plastics, such as disposable cups and utensils. Many stakeholders wanted the City to also consider programs such as provided by the Extended Producer Responsibility and eliminate the plastic found in packaging.

## THOSE WHO DID NOT SUPPORT

During conversations, some residents said they do not want to eliminate plastic bags from grocery stores because they reuse those bags and were concerned that their elimination would require them to purchase plastic bags for other uses (e.g., garbage, or picking up dog poop). Some residents liked the durable takeout containers that could be reused, referring frequently to those used by Boston Pizza. Some were reluctant to support the elimination of single-use plastics like straws because some people with disabilities need straws for drinking and feeding.

## QUESTIONS

Many participants questioned whether the City was concerned over the energy to produce single-use plastics or the environmental footprint of plastics that end up in landfill and asked how the City would eliminate single-use plastics.

# Facilitated Meetings and Workshop Input and Comments

Overall, industry is interested in reducing or eliminating single-use plastics that end up in landfill. At facilitated meetings, participants asked questions about what impact eliminating single-use plastics would have on the regional/local economy and jobs. There was discussion about the life cycle of plastic, and if the industry could buy and reuse single-use plastic for feedstock. Industry is interested in meeting with the City to discuss how they can collaborate to minimize single-use plastics going to landfill.

The key themes below emerged from facilitated meetings and workshops.

## INNOVATION

Innovation is essential and attracts business and employment. Recycling and repurposing single-use plastics create job opportunities and investment in Edmonton. For example, Goodwill is collecting some single-use plastics in Edmonton. Extra fees charged from the use of plastic items should go into a sustainability fund, not into a store's general revenue.

## HEALTH SERVICES

Institutions dealing with health services are keenly interested in reducing single-use plastics; however, they must do so in a way that preserves sterilization and minimizes the risk of contamination for patients and the public. Health service organizations do not want to eliminate plastic straws that are needed by patients. Waste haulers will not recycle anything that may have been in contact with bodily fluids as it is considered biohazardous material.

## REGIONAL APPROACH

There is a lot of confusion among residents and businesses about what plastics can be recycled, given that each municipality, even though adjacent to Edmonton, has different sorting rules. Participants expressed interest in all municipalities across the province working together to create consistent guidelines. There is an opportunity for the City to lead a regional model for recycling and waste management that would provide this consistency. The economic benefits of markets for recycled products could be better attained at the regional level by gathering larger quantities of materials for sale.

## UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES AND LIFE CYCLE OF PLASTICS

Some participants recommended having honest conversations around elimination of single-use plastics. The City was cautioned to be careful about eliminating single-use plastics and to consider potential repercussions. Comments around the market for single-use plastics included:

- + Single-use plastic materials may be used and needed as feedstock in several industries.
- + The market is cyclical. The City should establish processes that can drive the market or be responsive to the market.
- + The City should invest in technology that will recycle and reuse plastic materials. Respondents indicated that they believe there are excellent examples of profitable markets and models in China, Europe and Australia.
- + Begin with the end in mind. If the intent is to make landfills obsolete in 100 years, start there and work backward. If the City cares about Zero Waste, focus on waste diversion and invest in solutions to make this happen. Some municipalities are focusing on this goal.
- + Look at the bigger picture. Consider Extended Producer Responsibility.
- + The City should conduct end-of-life and life cycle analyses as part of the strategy.

## ROLE OF THE CITY

The following suggestions were made that would involve the City taking a leadership role either within the city limits or within the region:

- + Many participants are interested in having the City act as a resource for knowledge, leadership and networking in all areas of waste management, particularly market information about single-use plastics.
- + Some businesses have attempted to reduce and recycle but have found that the volumes of single-use plastics they generate are too small to collect, bale and sell to market, and are too big to participate in the City services without incurring a cost. They suggest the City become a "clearing house" for single-use plastics generated by business and industry. The City could collect or coordinate the collection of excess plastic such as the large plastic sheets that cover floors in display halls, plastics in food packaging and those used to cover pallets, bread bag ties and plastic pails similar to those sold at hardware stores. Instead of going to landfill, they could see the City collecting or coordinating the collection of these items and either selling, distributing or reusing them. They think that City involvement as a clearing house would generate the necessary economies of scale required for these items to be bundled or baled and sold.
- + Offer incentives to companies who help the City reach their Zero Waste goal.

## IDENTIFYING PLASTICS

Some participants in the industrial, commercial and institutional (ICI) sectors suggested separating different types of recyclable materials at the source would help increase the market value of recycled items. Others recommended that manufacturers grade and label plastics. The grading and labeling of plastics would assist Materials Recovery Facilities in sorting and recycling. The more difficult the plastic is to recycle, the more it costs.

- + Require materials to contain a minimum amount of recycled material. For example, all plastics must contain 20 per cent post-consumer content, or a certain percentage of the material must be able to be recycled. This could be scalable, so that the higher the recyclable material content, the lower the cost of the product. California has a similar policy.
- + Eliminating mixed materials would be better than eliminating single-use plastics. Products made from mixed materials are harder to recycle, contaminate recyclable materials and decrease overall values of recyclable materials being sold.
- + Invest in or provide incentives to manufacture products from recyclable plastics.

Instead of eliminating single-use plastics, introduce a bylaw that requires producers to identify what products are made of and what grade they are (for customers and for recovery facilities). Customers could then make informed decisions.

Participants felt that the big focus needs to be reducing as much as you can.

## CONFLICTING POLICIES

Food producers and food service businesses have innovative ideas on reducing plastics in their industry, but are bound by Alberta Health Services' policies and procedures, and continue to use plastics for sanitary reasons.

## QUESTIONS POSED BY NON-RESIDENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS

- + Is the City just jumping on the bandwagon without sufficient analysis?
- + What is the point in elimination or restriction? What is the market demand?
- + What is the City's role within industry? The City must have an all-encompassing policy related to what drives recycling, describing the purpose and the market for recycling in Edmonton.
- + Which items can be recycled?
- + What happens at the end of a product's useful life?
- + What is happening with single-use plastics around the world?
- + Where are innovation and opportunities happening?
- + What are the long-term unintended consequences of eliminating single-use plastics?
- + Can industry use single-use plastics for feedstock?



| **SHARE** YOUR VOICE  
**SHAPE** OUR CITY

