

Corporate Report

REPORT NUMBER 067-2025-Infrastructure & Operations-Environment		
DATE PREPARED February 14, 2025		FILE
MEETING DATE March 3, 2025		
SUBJECT		Program Implementation Update – Food and Organic Waste (Green Bin) Program and Automated Cart Based Collection

RECOMMENDATION

For information only.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This report directly supports the Sustainability Pillar in the 2023-2027 Maamawe, Growing Together Corporate Strategic Plan, to plan and deliver cost-effective services.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the progress made to date on implementing the Food and Organic Waste Diversion (Green Bin) Program and Automated Cart Based Collection, including providing an updated timeline on implementation.

The updated timeline for implementation of the mandated Food and Organic Waste Diversion (Green Bin) Program will be the fall of 2026.

Automated cart-based collection for the garbage stream will be rolled out as a 'soft' launch to a portion of single-family households starting in the fall of 2025, with the remainder of single-family households onboarded with automated carts for the garbage stream in the spring of 2026.

Supply chain issues related to the delivery of all the required waste collection vehicles and the complexity around securing a processing solution for the City's Green Bin waste are the reason for the delay.

DISCUSSION

In 2022, City Council approved the implementation of the mandated curbside Food and Organic Waste Diversion (Green Bin) Program for single family households starting in

2025, and multi-family properties in 2026. Expansion of the curbside leaf and yard waste collection program and implementation of automated cart-based collection of garbage and Green Bin waste were also approved.

As Administration continues to work towards implementing the recommendations for program roll-out, the following provides an update on progress and next steps in the process.

Food and Organic Waste Diversion (Green Bin) Program

Progress to Date

A key objective achieved was finalizing the procurement strategy for securing an aerobic processing solution for the City's Green Bin waste. This strategy has consisted of issuing a Request for Information (RFI), Expression of Interest (EOI) and Request for Proposal (RFP). The RFI and EOI procurements have been completed and informed the RFP. The City currently has an open Negotiated RFP, which is scheduled to close in April 2025. This contract award will need to come to City Council for approval. This is a complex undertaking to develop the documents, select and award an appropriate solution. The organics processing facility once built and operational, will be a first of its kind not only in the City of Thunder Bay, but all of Northwestern Ontario.

Council approved starting in 2024, the expansion of the curbside leaf and yard waste collection program from two to three collections annually. The program expansion was a success, with a 34% increase in the amount of leaf and yard waste material collected at the curb in the fall of 2024 with the two collections. In 2025, Council expanded the program to four collections annually. The program will now consist of two collection events in the spring and two in the fall. The expanded program is part of the Green Bin Implementation Plan and the least expensive option to partially meet the 50% diversion requirement for Green Bin waste.

Program Implementation

The start date of the Green Bin collection program will be delayed beyond 2025. It is not uncommon in the waste industry for a program of this nature to encounter delays. Supply chain issues related to the delivery of all the required waste collection vehicles and the complexity around securing a processing solution for the City's Green Bin waste are the contributing factors. The updated timeline for implementation of the Green Bin is the fall of 2026. Administration will communicate status updates to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks on the program roll-out.

Automated Cart Based Collection Program

Progress to Date

A key objective was awarding a Tender to secure the remaining required residential waste collection vehicles to accommodate auto-cart technology and co-collection of

garbage and Green Bin waste for program roll-out. Council approved the Tender award in September 2023. The estimated delivery will be in scheduled stages throughout 2025.

A collection route analysis has been completed to identify challenging and problematic areas. Work continues to determine solutions to provide safe and efficient collection of automated carts on city streets or lanes for garbage and Green Bin waste. Training of waste collection staff is a key component of a successful program; in 2024 a few staff were able to visit and get on the job training from other municipalities that currently operate automated cart-based collection systems.

Other key objectives are to tender and award the required automated carts for both garbage and Green Bin waste and the required in-cab vehicle software to support the program management of the automated carts. Work on these objectives is underway.

Program Implementation

Supply chain issues have caused delays across the industry to procurement of waste collection vehicles over the last few years. Due to these delays, and complexity around securing a processing solution for the City's Green Bin waste, automated cart-based collection for garbage and Green Bin waste will not be rolled out to all residential households in 2025. Instead, automated cart-based collection for the garbage stream only will be rolled out as a 'soft' launch to a portion of single-family households starting in the fall of 2025, with the remainder of single-family households on boarded with automated carts for the garbage stream in the spring of 2026. The final number of households, exact date of launch and what areas of the City will receive automated garbage carts as part of the 'soft' launch has yet to be finalized. Final determination will largely depend on when the required waste collection vehicles are delivered in 2025. A 'soft' launch will allow us to progress towards full implementation, while examining lessons learned along the way.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

The costs associated with program development and implementation work in 2025 as outlined in this report are accounted for in the Solid Waste and Recycling Services Operating and Capital budgets.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that this report should be received for information with Administration continuing the implementation as outlined in this report.

BACKGROUND

At the April 7, 2014, Committee of the Whole meeting, Report No. 2014.017 – Solid Waste Management Strategy was approved by City Council in principle. The Strategy

called for the development of a food and organic waste diversion program, including the use of auto-cart technology.

At the December 9, 2020, Committee of the Whole Meeting, Report R 144/2020 (Program and Service Review) was presented - Administration was directed to evaluate integration of curbside organics program to meet the provincial mandated deadline of 2025 and conduct a feasibility study of moving to automated collection for waste and consider integration of the organics program which will begin 2025 in addition to several other diversion actions

At the March 7, 2022, Committee of the Whole Meeting, a presentation on the development of the City of Thunder Bay Organics (Green Bin) Diversion Program and the City's obligations under the Provincial Policy Statement on Food and Organic Waste was provided.

At June 6, 2022, Committee of Whole Meeting, Report No. R24/2022 – City Council approved the Implementation Plan for a Food and Organic Waste Diversion (Green Bin) Program and Automated Cart Based Collection for garbage and Green Bin waste. Also approved as part of the Implementation Plan was the expansion of the curbside leaf and yard waste collection program.

At the May 1, 2023, Committee of the Whole Meeting, Report R 148/2023 - update on the Solid Waste Management Strategy was provided for information. This report also provided a status update on the Food and Organic Waste Diversion (Green Bin) Program and Automated Cart Based Collection implementation.

At the June 3, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting, Report R 193/2024 - update on the Solid Waste Management Strategy was provided for information. This report also provided a status update on the Food and Organic Waste Diversion (Green Bin) Program and Automated Cart Based Collection implementation.

REFERENCE MATERIAL ATTACHED

None

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February 17, 2024