

Purpose

This report is an update to the Waste Collection Services – Additional Support Programs report presented to the Operations Committee on March 2, 2020. The report provides an option for the weekly collection of children's disposable diapers at no additional fee to registered participants of the disposable diaper support program when garbage and leaf & yard trimmings collection transitions from weekly to every other week collection in February 2021.

Background

In October 2016, four support programs were created to assist residents with special circumstances to meet the garbage bag limit when it was reduced from three (3) to two (2) bags and then from two (2) to one (1) bag in October 2019. These special support programs undoubtedly contributed to the success of the 2016 and 2019 waste collection changes by providing various options and reducing complaints. One of these special support programs was a children's disposable diaper exemption.

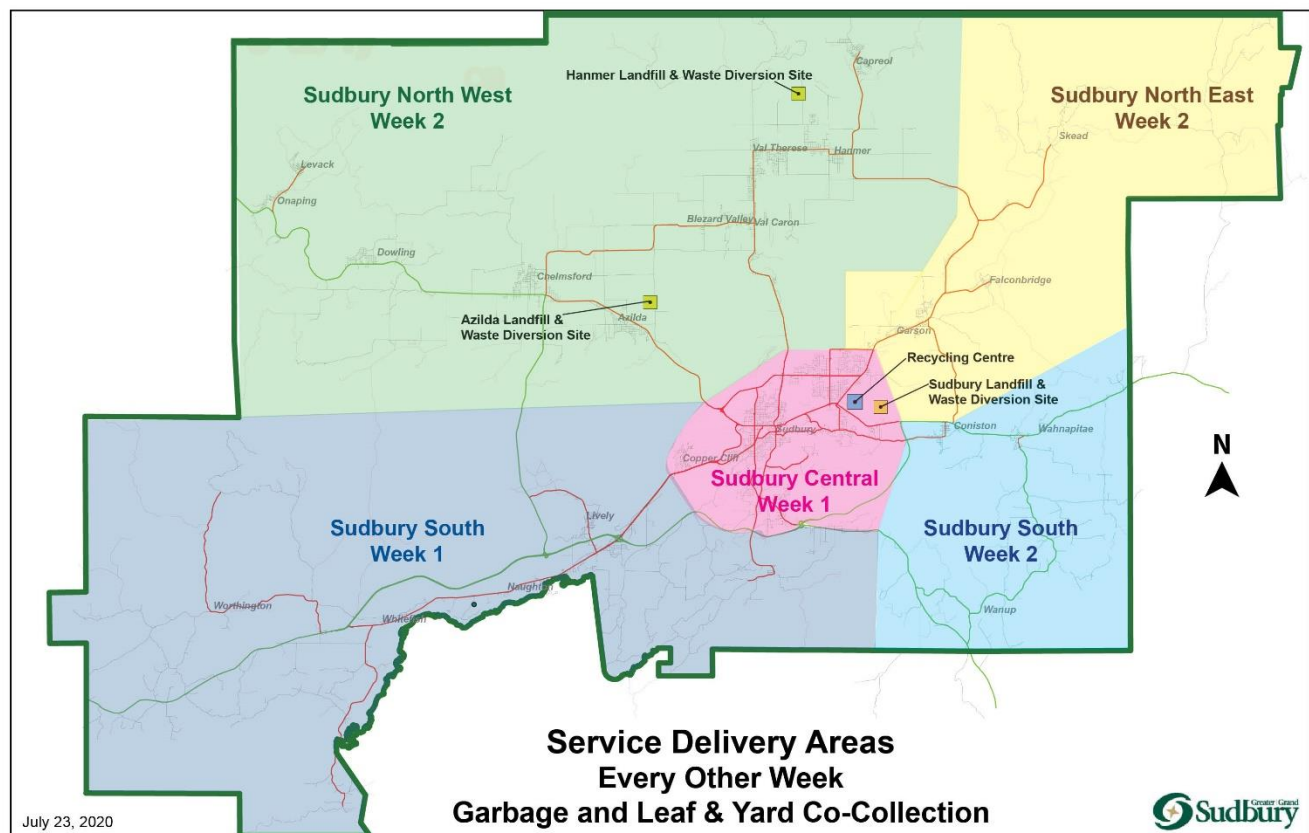
Registered participants of the disposable diaper support program are eligible to receive collection of one (1) clear bag of diapers for every child under four (4) years of age. This program is intended to assist families with children to meet the garbage bag limit. The clear bags of diapers are collected in addition to the household garbage bag limit. In order to be approved for the program, the applicant must agree to fully participate in all City waste diversion programs.

Staff are currently preparing for the last phase of the implementation plan. This will include a change from weekly to every other week garbage and leaf & yard collection with a limit of two garbage bags per household unit. Unlimited quantities of leaf & yard trimmings will be collected every other week. The unlimited co-collection of Blue Box recyclables, Green Cart organics and large furniture, appliances and electronics will continue on a weekly basis. These policies are aimed at encouraging participation and maximizing the use of existing waste diversion programs, especially the Green Cart organics program.

When garbage and leaf & yard collection transitions to every other week, in-house collection crews will co-collect waste from the Sudbury Central area for the first week (Week 1) and in-house collection crews will assume collection of waste in the Sudbury North West area in the second week (Week 2).

Contract collection crews will be responsible for the co-collection of garbage and leaf & yard in the remaining areas. In the first week (Week 1), contract collection crews will collect a portion of the Sudbury South area and in the second week (Week 2), contract collection crews will collect the remaining Sudbury South area as well as the Sudbury North East area. Refer to Map 1 - Service Delivery Areas.

Map 1. Service Delivery Areas



Contract collection crews will co-collect weekly recycling and organics as well as large furniture appliances and electronics in all service delivery areas. During the week without garbage collection, the contract collection crews will collect garbage from litter containers in all service delivery areas. The contract also includes the allowance of additional resources to provide enhanced and additional support program services if approved by Council. One such enhancement is the possibility to collect disposable children's diapers on the week without regularly scheduled garbage collection.

On March 2, 2020, Staff presented the Operations Committee with options for additional support programs that would address storage concerns after the transition from weekly to every other week garbage and leaf & yard trimmings collection scheduled to commence in February 2021. The Committee requested that Staff revise the enhancement to the children's disposable diaper support program to allow for the weekly collection of children's diapers at no additional cost to the registered participant.

Analysis

Currently, there are approximately 602 registered participants in the children's disposable diaper support program. This represents the collection of approximately 972 bags of diapers on a weekly basis.

Registration for the weekly collection of children's disposable diapers would be administered via an optional enrollment in the application process. Staff anticipate that the majority of applicants will choose to register even if it is simply precautionary. Staff also anticipate that there may be an increase in registration for the children's disposable diaper support program as we transition from weekly to every other week garbage and leaf & yard trimmings collection.

The estimated cost to collect one clear bag of diapers on the week without regularly scheduled garbage collection is estimated at \$135 for 26 weeks per year (2020 pricing).

Support programs are designed to assist residents who cannot meet the garbage bag limit due to special circumstances such as disposable diapers or medical waste. Registered participants of these programs are required and must agree to fully participate in all City waste diversion programs including Blue Box recycling, Green Cart organics and leaf & yard trimmings diversion. Support programs were not designed to encourage garbage production but rather to ensure that those with special circumstances are not penalized when the bag limit is reduced. In order to ensure that the program is not misused, Staff will periodically conduct audits to ensure that residents are fully participating in the diversion programs. Households that do not meet their commitment to fully participate in diversion programs will be contacted and provided education to allow them the opportunity to meet their diversion commitment and continue to receive support program services. Households who continue to neglect their commitment to participate in the diversion programs will have their registration revoked.

Option

Weekly Collection of Children's Disposable Diapers

The children's disposable diaper special support program application will be updated to include an optional enrollment for the collection of one (1) clear bag of diapers per child under four (4) years of age on the week without regularly scheduled roadside garbage collection. Collection will be provided to all enrolled participants on a single dedicated day of the week (e.g. every Monday).

To encourage waste diversion, participants will still be required to fully participate in all City waste diversion programs to keep their registration in good standing. Approved participants will be subject to periodic audits to ensure that the program is not being misused.

The estimated annual cost to collect clear bags of disposable diapers from all current registered participants on the weeks without regularly scheduled roadside garbage is approximately \$131,000 (based on current program enrollment and 2020 pricing). This estimated cost is directly related to registration in the program and will fluctuate (increase/decrease) based on program participation. If participation rates double, the cost would also double. For this reason, the program cost will be reviewed on an annual basis and the budget will be adjusted accordingly.

Conclusion/Next Steps

Waste diversion and sustainability is an important community value and forms part of the City of Greater Sudbury's Strategic Priorities. The transition to every other week garbage and leaf & yard trimmings collection supports these values and priorities by encouraging residents to fully participate in all available waste diversion programs and is expected to increase the low participation rates in the Green Cart organics program. It is also important not to lose sight of families with children who may require a temporary accommodation to meet the new garbage bag limits and overcome storage challenges while they contribute to the growth of our community and actively participate in diversion programs.

Staff have developed an option for the weekly collection of children's disposable diapers at no additional cost to registered participants as requested by the Operations Committee on March 2, 2020. Policies that support the City's goal of increasing waste diversion will form part of the program requirements.

Staff recommend that the Weekly Collection of Children's Disposable Diapers be approved.

Resources Cited

City of Greater Sudbury, Operations Committee, Manager's Report, Waste Collection Services – Additional Support Programs – R-2, March 2, 2020

Accessed online:

<https://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=agenda&action=navigator&id=1484&itemid=18133&lang=en>