

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 options for the weekly collection of medical garbage at no additional fee for registered participants of the medical circumstances special 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 medical circumstances exemption.

Registered participants of the medical circumstances support program are eligible for 104 medical circumstances bag tags per year at no additional cost. The bag tags are intended to assist with non-recyclable and non-hazardous medical waste in excess of the garbage bag limit. The medical circumstances bag tags can be used at the discretion of the participant (e.g. use one bag tag on one collection day and three at the next or use none at all because they were able to meet the bag limit). There are no special requirements for the colour or transparency of the bag to which a medical circumstances tag can be affixed. In order to be approved for the program, the applicant must agree to fully participate in all City waste diversion programs.

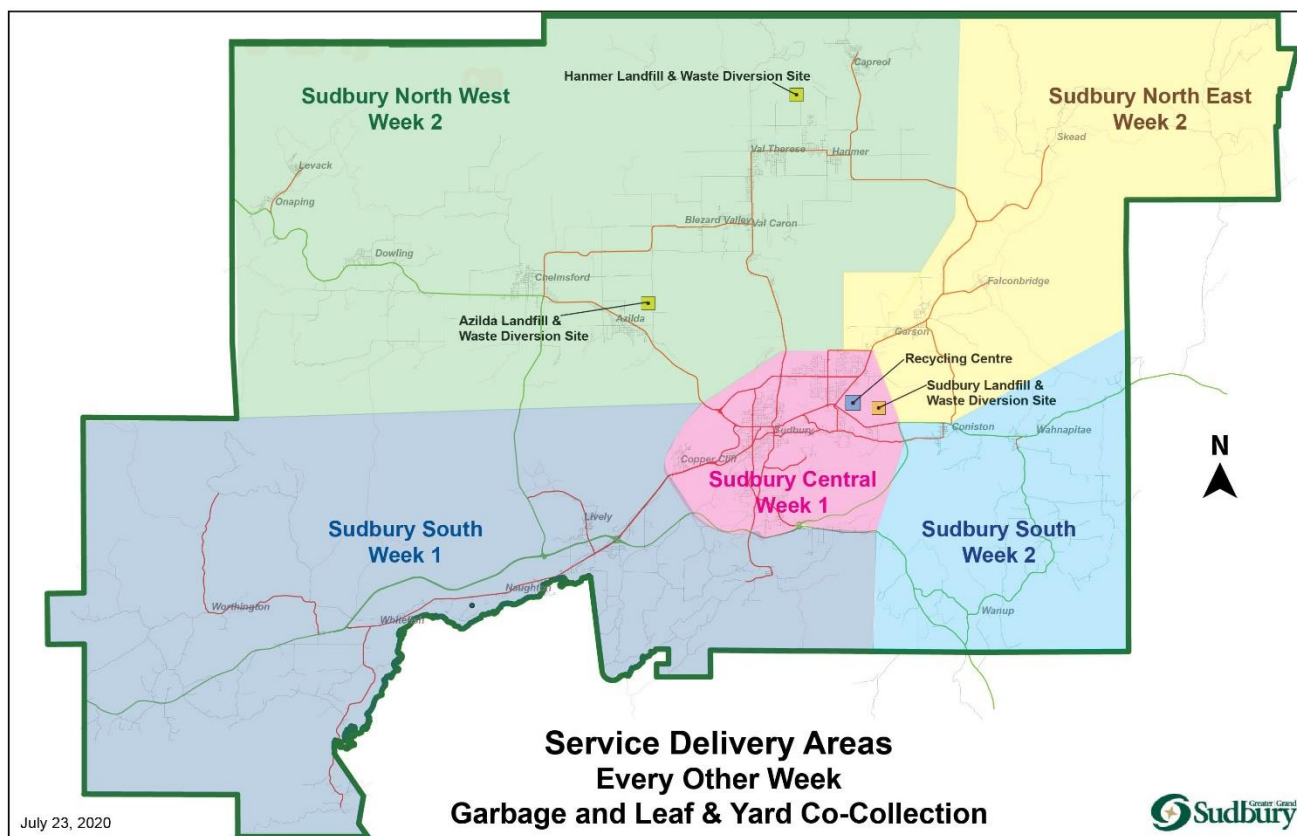
Staff are currently preparing for the last phase of the implementation plan. This will include a change from weekly to every other week garbage and leaf & yard collection with a limit of two garbage bags per household unit. Unlimited quantities of leaf & yard trimmings will be collected every other week. 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 medical circumstances garbage 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 develop an enhancement to the medical circumstances support program that would allow for the weekly collection of medical circumstances garbage. The Committee further requested that the program be developed at no additional cost to the registered participant of the program.

Analysis

Currently, there are approximately 219 registered participants in the medical circumstances support program. Participants with a temporary condition are required to reapply with a medical professional's note every three (3) years whereas participants with permanent conditions are only required to reapply with a medical professional's note every seven (7) years. Regardless of condition type, registered participants may request medical circumstances bag tags on the one (1) year anniversary date of their application or last tag request whichever is later. The number of tagged medical garbage bags placed at the roadside on a weekly basis is unlimited.

Registration for weekly collection of tagged medical garbage bags would be administered via 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 medical circumstances support program as we transition from weekly to every other week garbage and leaf & yard trimmings collection.

The estimated cost to collect two (2) medical circumstances garbage bags per registered participant on the week without regularly scheduled roadside garbage collection is approximately \$270 per applicant for 26 weeks per year.

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.

Staff have developed two options for the weekly collection of medical circumstances garbage for the Committee's consideration:

1. Unlimited Weekly Collection of Medical Circumstances Waste
2. Limited Weekly Collection of Medical Circumstances Waste

Options

Option 1 – Unlimited Weekly Collection of Medical Circumstances Waste

The medical circumstances special support program application will be updated to include an optional enrollment for the collection of an unlimited number of medical

circumstances garbage bags on the week without regularly scheduled roadside garbage collection. Understandably, some participants will have more garbage while others will have less. Providing an unlimited collection mirrors the existing medical circumstances support program.

Collection for the week without regularly scheduled garbage collection will be provided to all enrolled participants on a single dedicated day of the week (e.g. every Monday). The waste collection contractor will record the number of bags collected at every address and remit the record to the City for payment. Where there are no bags out at an enrolled address, the contractor will be paid for the collection of one bag to compensate for their time.

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 unlimited bags from all registered participants on the weeks without regularly scheduled roadside garbage is approximately \$89,000 (based on 3 bags per registered participant). This estimated cost is directly related to registration in the program and the number of bags generated by each participant. Therefore, the cost will fluctuate (increase/decrease) based on program participation and the amount of garbage bags generated. If participation rates double and/or the number of garbage bags generated is higher than anticipated, the cost will increase. For this reason, the cost will be reviewed on an annual basis and the budget will be adjusted accordingly.

Option 2 – Limited Weekly Collection of Medical Circumstances Waste

The medical circumstances special support program application will be updated to include an optional enrollment for the collection of two (2) tagged medical circumstances garbage bags on the week without regularly scheduled roadside garbage collection.

Collection for the week without regularly scheduled garbage collection will be provided to all enrolled participants on a single dedicated day of the week (e.g. every Monday).

During the week with regularly scheduled garbage collection, the number of tagged medical garbage bags will remain unlimited and collection will occur on the regularly scheduled garbage and leaf & yard trimmings collection day.

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 two (2) bags from all registered participants on the weeks without regularly scheduled roadside garbage is approximately \$59,000. This estimated cost is directly related to registration in the program and will fluctuate (increase/decrease) accordingly. If participation rates double, the cost would also double. For this reason, the 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 households with special medical circumstances who may require a temporary or permanent accommodation to meet the new garbage bag limits and overcome storage challenges while they contribute to our community and actively participate in diversion programs.

Staff have developed options for the weekly collection of garbage from registered participants of the medical circumstances support program 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 Unlimited Weekly Collection of Medical Circumstances Bags be approved since it mirrors the existing program and will cause the least confusion for approved participants.

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>