



Options development and key considerations

This backgrounder provides a summary of how the Curbside Garbage Collection Options were chosen and developed. It also highlights what research has already been conducted on the shared challenges, benefits and key considerations common to all the options. Key considerations particular to each policy option are listed within each corresponding option backgrounder.

Options development

An analysis of waste management needs in Ottawa completed as a part of the [Solid Waste Master Plan's Long-Term Waste Management Needs Technical Memorandum](#) identified the need to increase curbside waste diversion and reduce waste to landfill. Through this exercise, three primary Curbside Garbage Collection Options were identified for the City to consider in order to support the SWMP's aspirational vision of achieving a zero-waste Ottawa:

1. Partial Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) for Garbage
2. Reduced Garbage Item Limits
3. Clear Bag Garbage Collection

Research identified that these three policy options are among the most effective policies used in Ontario to support reducing waste to landfill and increasing curbside waste diversion. The needs analysis did also identify a full PAYT program for garbage. With that option, homeowners would have to pay for each bag of waste set out, rather than only paying for items over a set limit (which is the case with partial PAYT). However, a full PAYT system would require changes to how garbage collection is funded, which is out of scope for this project. A full PAYT system will be considered through the Solid Waste Master Plan's evaluation process.

Material bans on recyclables and organics were also identified as options to consider. Material bans are being considered as secondary options that could be implemented with one of the three options listed above to further support increasing waste diversion from landfill.

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Typically, with any of the options, the stricter the garbage item limit the greater the impact on the amount of waste diverted from the landfill. A reduced garbage allowance also leads to an increased use of recycling and composting programs. Industry standards state that a limit needs to be set below the average set out rate in order to be effective. Currently in Ottawa:

- The garbage item limit is 6
- The average set-out is 4.18 items or less
- 85% of households set out 4 items or less
- 81% set out 3 items or less
- 71% set out 2 items or less

Research conducted on the options

A detailed review was undertaken for each of the Curbside Garbage Collection Options. Other municipalities operating one or more of the collection options were contacted to get feedback on the advantages and challenges of the options, potential costs, how the options were implemented and results following implementation. This information was considered alongside City of Ottawa collected tonnages, waste composition, and current program costs to determine the estimated impact of each of the options.

Challenges, benefits and key considerations common to all options

Each option has its own specific benefits, challenges and considerations (see individual option backgrounders for more detail) but there are some considerations that are common to all the options, which are presented below.

If Ottawa City Council chooses to approve a new Curbside Garbage Collection Option, feedback from residents will support the development of a detailed implementation plan. The implementation plan will outline communications and outreach tactics, approaches to enforcement, and strategies to overcome potential challenges based on experiences from other municipalities.



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Shared potential benefits:

- Reduce the volume of curbside household waste requiring landfill disposal.
- Increase participation rates for recycling and Green Bin programs.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with landfilling organic waste and paper products.

Shared potential challenges:

- Temporary increase in illegal dumping.
- Short-term increases in recycling and Green Bin contamination due to several factors including:
 - Lack of understanding of diversion programs.
 - “Wishful recycling” (tossing garbage items in the recycling bin with the hope they will be or should be recycled) to reduce garbage output.
- Increase in organics and separately collected leaf and yard waste (LYW) processing costs.
- Difficulties for households dealing with excess waste that is beyond their control, (i.e., packaging waste from purchased items).

Shared key considerations:

- There is no standardized approach to the design and implementation of a new Curbside Garbage Collection Option, providing the City with the opportunity to develop a “made in Ottawa” solution that best meets the needs of the City and the desires of residents.
- It can take up to two years to implement a new Curbside Garbage Collection Option after Council approval.

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- Ongoing public education and outreach will be required following implementation of any potential option.