

RESIDENTIAL FOOD WASTE COLLECTION PILOT PROJECT

Phase 3 Public Engagement Summary

April 2023

Background

The City of Winnipeg (City) began a two-year residential food waste collection pilot project in October 2020. The pilot project helped determine how to collect food waste from homes and if residents felt it was valuable. Five areas of Winnipeg were selected for the pilot. Food waste was composted at the Brady Road Resource Management Facility.

Engagement

The final phase of public engagement happened at the end of the pilot project. This allowed pilot participants to reflect on their experiences over the last two years. The City sent a survey to pilot participants. The survey captured attitudes and perceptions over the two-year pilot project. It also identified any challenges that pilot participants were still experiencing.

The City also sought input from non-pilot participants through a scientific survey. This input helped provide an understanding of how Winnipeggers felt about a food waste collection program.

The same survey questions were asked of pilot participants and Winnipeggers several times which allowed for comparison over time and also allowed Winnipeggers' perspectives to be compared with pilot participants.

Table 1 provides a summary of Phase 3 public engagement opportunities.

Promotion

An information package was sent to the 4,000+ participating households on September 13, 2022 to notify them that pilot project would be ending at the end of the month. The package included a postcard inviting them to provide feedback on the two-year pilot project. Follow-up emails were also sent to 417 participants who had completed the previous surveys in Phases 1 and 2 of public engagement. Two weeks before the survey closed, a second postcard was mailed to all participating households reminding them of the survey.



Figure 1: Invitation card mailed to participants

Table 1: Phase 3 public engagement opportunities

Date	Activity	Participation
May 10 – 30, 2022	City-wide representative survey	622 respondents
September 13 – October 10, 2022	Pilot participant survey	1,025 respondents

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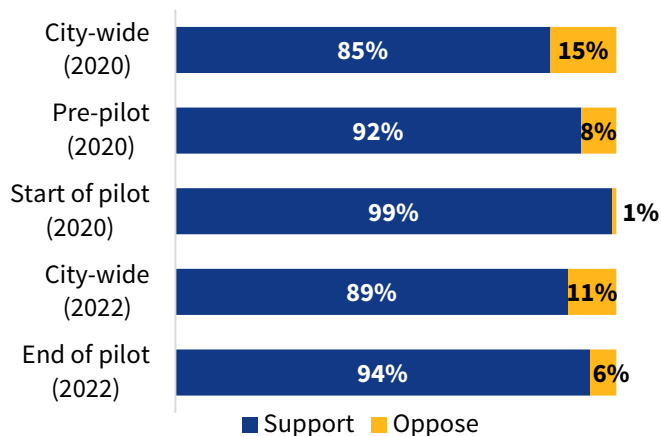
Key Findings

Support

Winnipeggers' support for a city-wide food waste collection program remained high throughout the two-year pilot project, with 85% (2020) and 89% (2022) support.

Support among pilot participants was higher than the Winnipeg average. Support quickly jumped after the first few months of the pilot project from 92% to 99% and remained high at the end with 94% (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Do you support or oppose a curbside food waste collection program in Winnipeg?

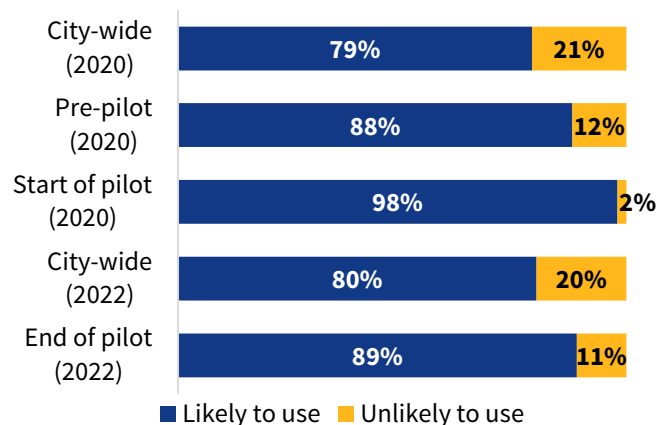


Usage

The likelihood of Winnipeggers using a city-wide food waste collection program remained stable between 2020 and 2022, with 79% (2020) and 80% (2022) reporting that they would likely use the program.

Actual usage data was collected during the two-year pilot project for pilot participants. The usage data will be reported to Council. However, pilot residents were also asked to report how likely they are to use a permanent city-wide program, if such a program was in place (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Let's say a program was in place city-wide. How likely or unlikely are you to actually use it?



Willingness to Pay

Survey respondents were informed that the average homeowner pays \$115 per year for garbage, recycling, and yard waste as part of their property taxes and the waste diversion fee on their water bill. Winnipeggers and pilot participants were asked to identify a reasonable annual cost for a food waste collection program. Some Winnipeggers (23%) and pilot participants (20%) said they were not willing to pay at all, which lowered the average amount and is identified in the amounts below.

\$26.60

is the average pilot participants are willing to pay (\$0 included).

\$33.33

is the average among pilot participants willing to pay something (\$0 removed).

\$24.01

is the average Winnipeggers are willing to pay (\$0 included).

\$31.05

is the average among Winnipeggers willing to pay something (\$0 removed).

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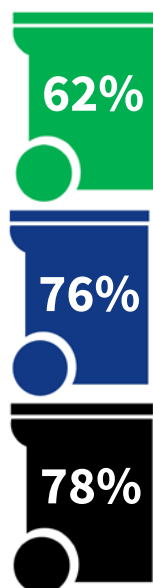
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Pilot participants were willing to pay more on average than Winnipeggers for food waste collection. Approximately 66% of pilot participants said they are willing to pay or can live with paying for food waste collection compared to 60% of Winnipeggers.

Frequency

The City collects garbage and recycling once a week and picked up food waste once a week in the pilot neighborhoods during the two-year pilot. This meant that pilot participants likely had more room and fewer smelly items in their garbage carts.

When asked how often they would like the City to pick up each cart, the majority of pilot participants continued to want weekly collection. When asked the same question, fewer Winnipeggers desired weekly collection.



62% of pilot participants favor weekly green cart pick up.
(51% city-wide)

76% of pilot participants favor weekly recycling cart pick up.
(67% city-wide)

78% of pilot participants favor weekly garbage cart pick up.
(55% city-wide)

Challenges

Pilot participants were asked to report on problems that they encountered over the two-year pilot project. Frozen food waste, bugs, and odours were the most common problems; however, were minor in most cases (Table 2).

Table 2: Top four problems encountered during the pilot

	Major problem	Minor problem	Not a problem
 Food waste freezing in cart during winter	9%	40%	51%
 Bugs or rodents	11%	33%	56%
 Odours in the house	9%	34%	57%
 Odours outside	8%	35%	57%

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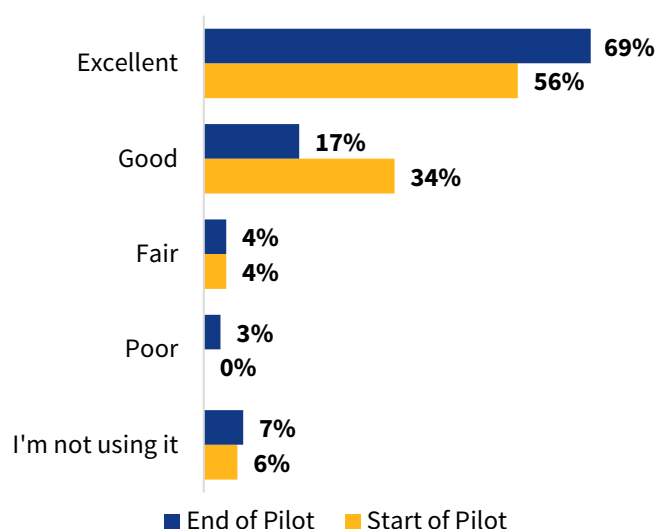
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Overall Experience

The majority of pilot participants that responded to the survey felt that the pilot project was excellent (69%). This was a significant increase compared to when the pilot project first started (56%). See Figure 3 for details. Those who rated their experience as 'poor' slightly increased to 3% at the end of the pilot project.

Figure 3: How would you rate your experience overall using the food waste collection system?



Respondents that had a positive experience noted:

- I like that I'm not putting as much waste into the garbage (66%)
- I like that I am reducing greenhouse gases (18%)
- It is easy (10%)

Respondents that had a negative experience noted:

- I don't produce enough food waste (26%)
- Too messy (14%)
- Smell and odours (13%)

Respondents that indicated they did not put out food waste in the green cart for collection were asked why. The top reason for not participating over the past two years continued to be that non-users felt they did not have enough food waste.

Table 3: Top four reasons for not participating in the program

Reason	Start of pilot	Change	End of pilot
Not enough food waste	25%	↓	23%
Concern about odours/cleanliness	11%	↑	19%
Already compost food waste myself	42%	↓	16%
Tried it and did not like it	3%	↑	15%

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How Input Was Considered

What we heard	How input was considered
There was strong support from pilot participants and Winnipeggers for a city-wide program (Figure 1).	The City will share this support with Council. Council approval is required if a city-wide program is implemented.
Most pilot participants (80%) and Winnipeggers (77%) were willing to pay for a city-wide program, but keeping costs low is important.	Costs will be a key factor considered when designing a city-wide program, if a city-wide program is implemented.
Most pilot participants (62%) and Winnipeggers (51%) would like weekly collection of green carts if a city-wide program is implemented.	The City will consider collection frequency when designing a city-wide program, if a city-wide program is implemented.
Pilot participants identified concerns, though mostly minor, about waste freezing, pests, and odors (Table 2).	The City will refine the educational welcome package and include tips on how to prevent common issues, if a city-wide program is implemented.

Next Steps

The City will review the data collected from the pilot project and feedback from pilot participants. Results from the pilot project will be summarized in a report to Council. The Public Service will make recommendations on how to proceed.

Council will decide how to move forward based on the results. A permanent city-wide food waste collection program is subject to Council approval and funding.

Appendices

Appendix A – Phase 3 city-wide survey results

Appendix B – Phase 3 pilot participant survey results