



Regional District of
Central Okanagan

What We Heard Report: Phase One Food Waste Engagement for the RDCO

February 2024



Table of contents

Summary	2
Background	3
What We Heard	4
• Highlights	4
• Survey Results	4
• Your Say Results	5
Next Steps	10
 Appendices	 11
• Appendix 1: Regional Food Waste Survey Report	
• Appendix 2: Your Say Report	



Summary

In October 2023, the Regional District of Central Okanagan began Phase 1 of a public engagement process to gather feedback from residents on a possible curbside food waste collection program. The goal of Phase 1, Stage One of the engagement process was to measure overall community support for a curbside food waste program and identify concerns residents may have regarding this type of program.

To gather this information, the RDCO conducted a statistically valid survey with approximately 1800 residents randomly selected to participate.

In addition to the survey, the RDCO launched an online engagement opportunity at yoursay.rdco.com, providing residents with information on how our food waste is currently managed, and considerations for going forward with a curbside food waste program.

Survey results indicated 73% of respondents would support implementation of a food waste collection program. Of those residents that engaged via yoursay.rdco.com, 53% of comments were in strong support of a food waste program.



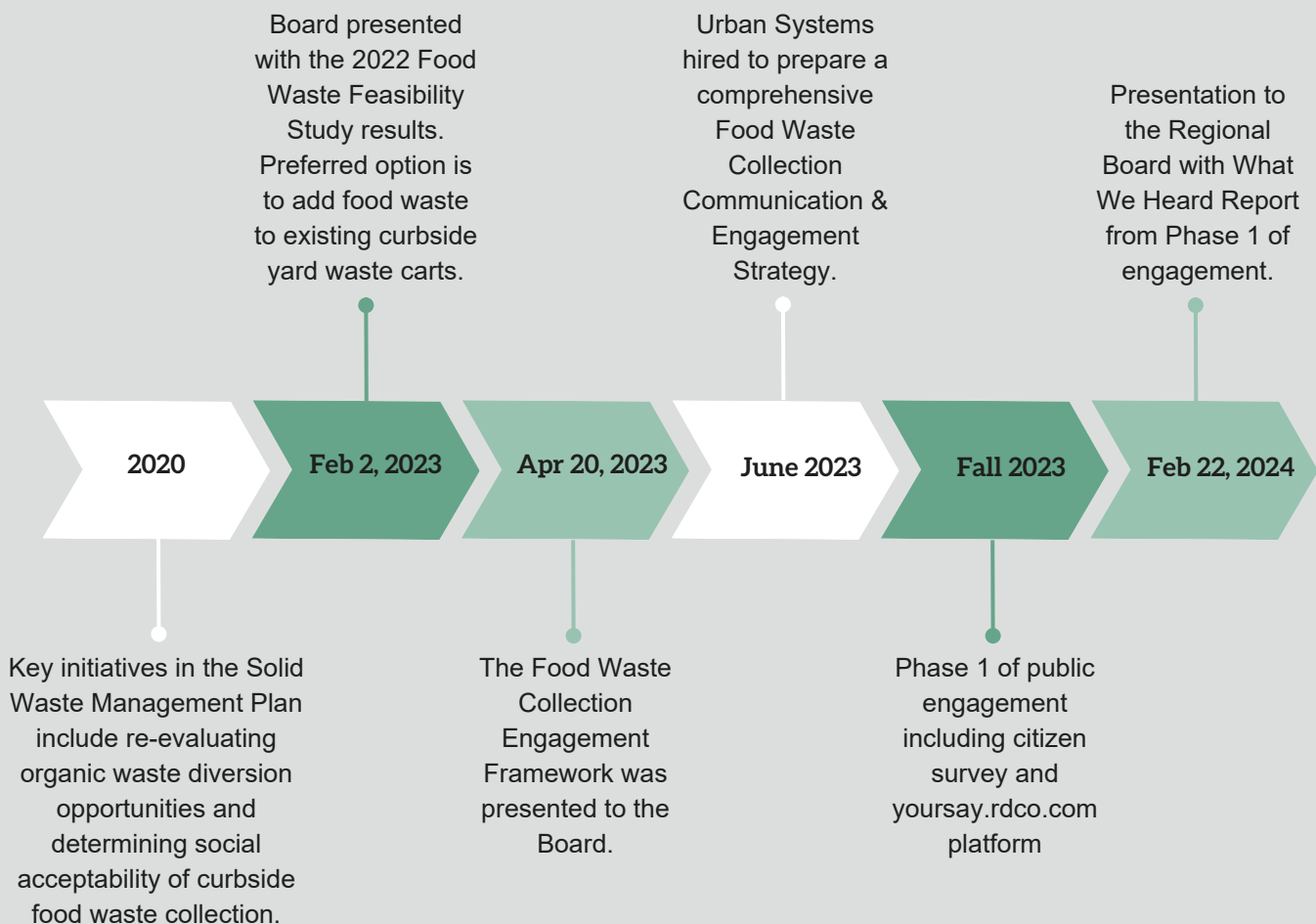
I fully support a food waste collection program with yard and food waste being done weekly and other garbage collected every other week. This was the arrangement we had in the city we lived in before we moved to the Central Okanagan. I believe it worked well.

Background

The Regional District of Central Okanagan's Solid Waste Management Plan includes re-evaluating organics diversion in the region and in particular determining if food waste diversion is supported by residents in the region.

Below is a recent timeline of events leading to the consideration of a curbside food waste program.

ROAD TO CURBSIDE FOOD WASTE COLLECTION



What we heard

In the fall of 2023 first steps to engage the public about food waste were undertaken through a statistically valid survey as well as education and engagement opportunities through the regional districts engagement platform yoursay.rdco.com.

The purpose of this initial consultation was to gain understanding of public acceptance for a food waste curbside collection program as well as identify concerns residents may have.

Below is a summary of benefits and concerns identified in the Survey and Yoursay.



Overall support

There is overall support among engagement participants for the implementation of a food waste collection program in the Central Okanagan. Residents see the service as a benefit to their household, and to the environment.



Cost concerns

There are concerns about cost increases with the addition of food waste collection to the existing service.



Nuisance of wildlife, rodents and odour

Residents have expressed a need to understand what can be done to minimize conflict with not only wildlife, but also rodents. Managing potential odours is also a concern.



Scheduling concerns

Bi-weekly garbage collection is seen as a concern however those that were concerned felt they could manage using cart upgrades or tag-a-bag if needed.

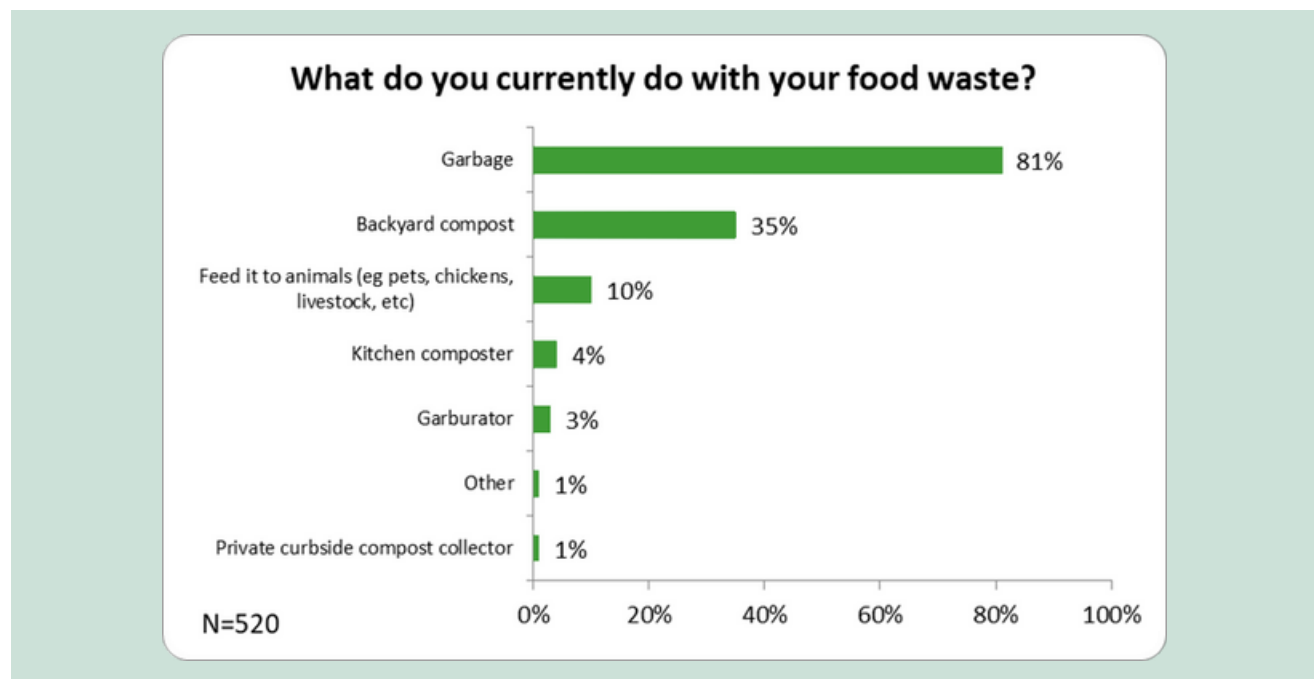
What we heard cont...

Survey Results

A comprehensive mail in survey was conducted in October/November of 2023, with a random sample of 1800 Central Okanagan residents. Residents were asked to provide feedback on current behaviour, and satisfaction with current services. They were also asked to comment on proposed new curbside collection services under consideration to accommodate food waste collection.

Overall, 30% of those that received a survey either returned their survey by mail or used a QR code to conduct the survey online.

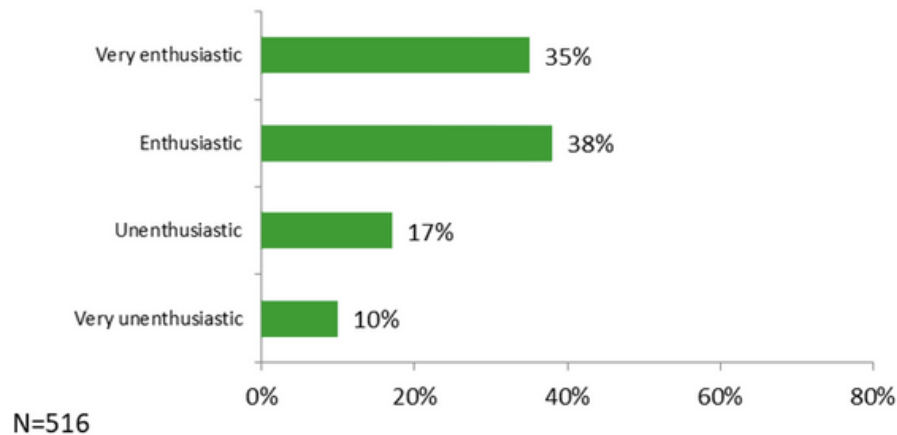
Majority of residents put food waste in the garbage and thirty-five percent put food waste into backyard composters



I love this idea. My concern is would a proper bin for inside my home to store the food waste, be provided? Something that is easy to carry out to the curb side but will not make the house smell.

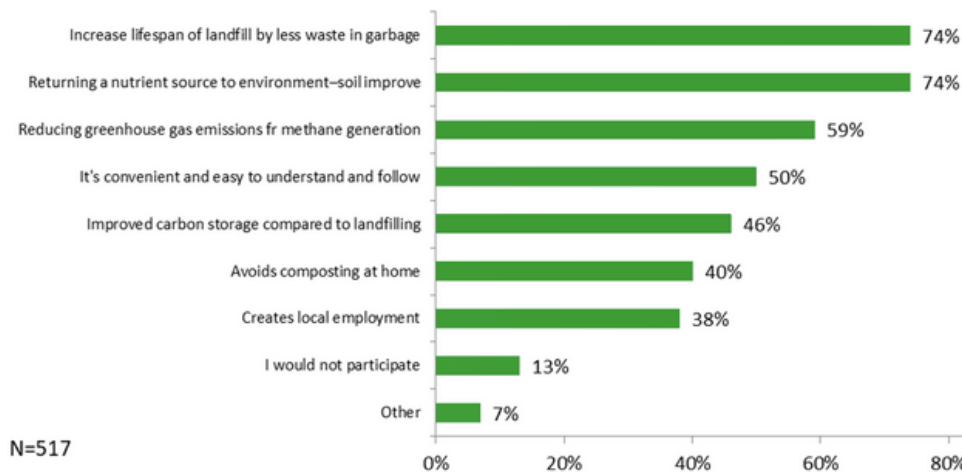
Majority would support implementation of curbside food waste collection.

Overall, how would you rate your household's support for a curbside food waste collection program?



Main reasons for supporting a food waste collection program include increasing landfill life, soil improvement and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

If a curbside residential food waste collection program is in place, which of the following benefits would motivate your household to participate in the program?



People are satisfied with current curbside collection services.

Eighty-nine percent of respondents were satisfied with their current curbside collection service. Ninety-one percent of respondents rated the value of their current curbside collection service as good or excellent.

New fees for the curbside food waste collection program are a top concern.

Sixty-three percent indicated they would be willing to pay more for the new food waste collection program, depending on cost. Fifty-four percent would support an increase of \$50/year for the new program. Twenty-seven percent would support an increase of \$100/year and 13% would support an increase of \$150/year for the new program.

Half would be concerned about bi-weekly garbage pick-up.

If food waste pick-up were to be implemented, 53% would be concerned about shifting from weekly to every other week garbage collection. With bi-weekly garbage pick-up, 65% expected to have more garbage than their current cart's capacity.

The majority could manage extra garbage through cart upsizing or tag-a-bag sticker program

Can the extra garbage from your household be managed through existing services such as upsizing your garbage cart or placing out extra garbage at the curb with a tag-a-bag sticker?



N=336

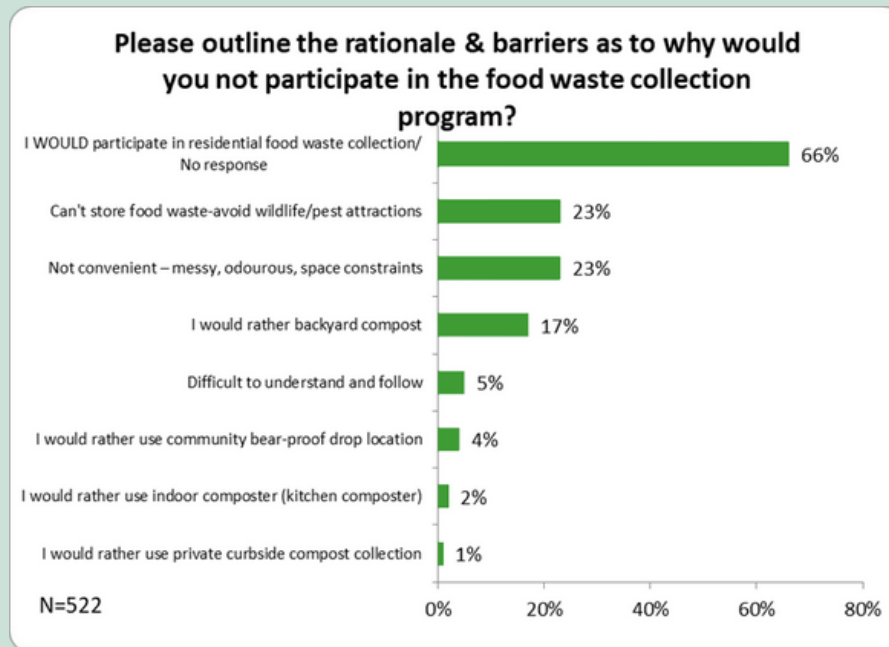


So exciting that the RDCO is considering this. It was total culture shock moving here from the lower mainland and having a full garbage can weekly instead of half can biweekly with kitchen waste picked up weekly.

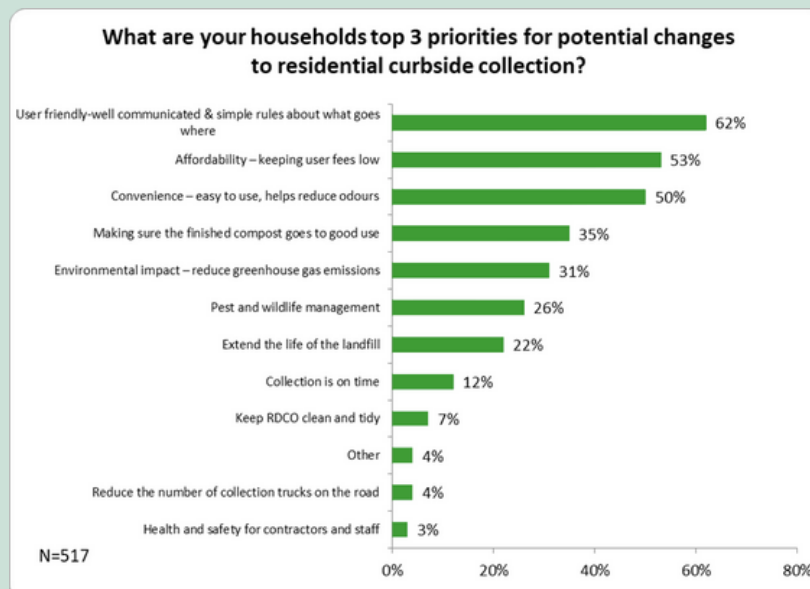
Storing food waste attracts wildlife/pests and is messy

While the majority of residents said they would participate in a food waste program, those that would not identify two main barriers:

- storing food waste is messy, odorous, and takes up too much space.
- storing food waste attracts wildlife and pests.



Resident's top priorities for changes to their curbside collection include making it user friendly with easy to follow rules, affordable and convenient



Your Say Results

Visitors of the Your say page also had the opportunity to ask questions, make comment or participate in a discussion forum. Most visitors who engaged used the question tool to either make comments or ask specific questions.

- The common themes raised by your say participants were analyzed through the survey tool word cloud, and the top tags were created as categories.



What's next

Thank you to everyone who participated in this early stage of engagement! We appreciate and value your feedback.

The next steps towards implementing curbside food waste collection include the project team developing a service design to include the following elements:



Where composting will take place.



Considerations for siting a transfer station.



Costs related to collection, transportation, processing.



Working through resident concerns.



Confirmation on frequency of collection.



Engaging with Municipal councils.



Continued public engagement.

Stay up-to-date with this project at yoursay.rdco.com.



Regional District of
Central Okanagan

