Minute No. 438
Minutes – Council – July 17, 2025

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment – June 27, 2025

Item No. 1 Consolidation of Garbage Collection Operations Review

COUNCIL DECISION:

Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment and adopted the following:

1. That the report be received as information.

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment – June 27, 2025

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Eadie,

That the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment be adopted by consent.

Carried

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On July 8, 2025, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment and submitted the matter to Council.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On June 27, 2025, the Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

COUNCIL DECISION:

On July 18, 2024, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment and adopted the following:

1. That garbage collection operations not be consolidated into one department, and the Public Service proceed with operational changes to improve abandoned waste collection within the current administrative structure.

2. That the Public Service review the impact of planned operational changes, increased budget, and consolidated administration of garbage collection requests and report back in 360 days.

3. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment – June 27, 2025

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COUNCIL DECISION (continued):

On September 22, 2022, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Water and Waste, Riverbank Management and the Environment and adopted the following:

1. That the Solid Waste Utility be directed to work with the Public Works Department to provide a report to Council within 180 days on consolidating all city garbage collection into the utility's operations with details such as, but not limited to, Public Works abandoned waste calls for service and costs, and the cost to consolidate the various Public Works garbage services, both private and public, with costs separated.

2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

David Grant submitted a communication with respect to the matter.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Consolidation of Garbage Collection Operations Review

Critical Path: Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste, and the Environment – Executive Policy Committee – Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
M. Gordichuk, CCLP, Manager of Solid Waste Services	T. W. Shanks, M. Eng., P. Eng. Director, Water and Waste Department	T. Graham	S. Armbruster, Interim CAO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On July 18, 2024, Council directed the Public Service to review and report back on the impact of planned operational changes, increased budget, and consolidated administration of garbage collection requests.

In 2024, the Public Service rolled out the following changes:

1. Consolidation of administrative responsibility for garbage and debris pick up in the Water and Waste Department (WWD).
2. Increased bulky sweeps from seasonal to year-round.
3. Inner city contaminated recycle cart sweeps.

These changes have helped the Public Service reduce the time it takes for received 311 reports to be reviewed by Solid Waste Services (SWS) to within 48 hours; and commit to ensure coordinated clean ups are carried out within five days following the review.

The phased-in expansion in Bulky Sweeps to year-round has helped reduce the number of Abandoned Waste Reports Within Bulky Sweep Area by 47 percent from the previous year and is expected to continue to decrease with a second phased expansion this year.

WWD is reviewing a “Layered In Services” approach, as used in Vancouver, as a potential way to help further address litter and debris concerns in the inner city. and is initiating discussions with Public Works Department (PWD) and Community Services’ Licensing and By-law Enforcement Division to identify potential service gaps and opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That this report be received as information.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

On July 18, 2024, Council directed the Public Service to review the impact of planned operational changes, increased budget, and consolidated administration of garbage collection requests and report back in 360 days.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no implications associated with receiving this report as information.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

In September 2022, Council directed the Public Service to report back on a plan for the consolidation of all garbage collection services into one department, along with associated costs, to respond to the issue of chronic dumping, abandoned waste, and litter in high needs areas of the city.

On July 18, 2024, in response to a report from the Public Service, Council adopted the following recommendations:

1. That garbage collection operations not be consolidated into one department, and the Public Service proceed with operational changes to improve abandoned waste collection within the current administrative structure;

2. That the Public Service review the impact of planned operational changes, increased budget, and consolidated administration of garbage collection requests and report back in 360 days.

The operational changes identified in the report include:

- Consolidation of administrative responsibility for garbage and debris pick up in WWD.
- Increased frequency of bulky sweep program from 1,000 hours in 2023 to 2,000 hours in 2025 in the approved 2024-2027 multi-year budget. This will allow year-round sweeps.
- Expanded boundaries for the bulky sweep program.
- Allowance to empty contaminated recycling carts in the downtown area.
- WWD to collaborate where possible within the Encampment Clean-up Pilot Project.

This report contains a discussion of the impacts of these operational changes and identifies additional initiatives the Public Service is considering for further improvements.

Changes Implemented

1. Consolidation of administrative responsibility for garbage and debris pick up:

An extensive review of 311 scripting and service requests was undertaken in late 2024 to identify the various touchpoints related to abandoned garbage and litter. With the goal of having Solid Waste Services (SWS) as the central intake for all reports of abandoned garbage, 311 staff worked with subject matter experts in Water and Waste, Public Works, and Community Services' Licensing and By-law Enforcement Division to revise scripting and 311 service request forms. 311 also created a web self-serve form for reporting illegally dumped or abandoned items, litter, or debris. The new scripting and online form were launched in late March 2025.

311 service requests are reviewed by SWS within 48 hours; clean ups are carried out within five days following the review.

The above changes are intended to ensure a more responsive and collaborative approach between departments, and facilitate reporting.

2. Increased Bulky Sweep Frequency:

The City's bulky sweep program is a proactive approach to minimizing bulky, abandoned waste in the downtown/inner city through regularly scheduled sweeps by collection vehicles looking for abandoned waste. The program has operated continuously since 2013, generally between the months of May and October.

In 2024, total hours allocated to the bulky sweep program were increased from 1,000 to 1,500. Upon the start of the new bulky waste collection contract (February 2025) hours were increased to 2,000. Increased hours have extended the duration of the bulky sweep program from six months to year-round, and provided additional clean up frequency and coverage. By increasing the duration and frequency of collection, the opportunity for abandoned waste to accumulate is reduced.

3. Contaminated Recycling Carts:

Overfull and overflowing containers are a source of scattered debris reported in the inner city/downtown. In some cases, recycling containers are overfull/flowing because they were not collected due to "contamination," which is when a recycling container contains items not accepted in the City's recycling program. For example, significant quantities of food waste, liquid waste or construction materials.

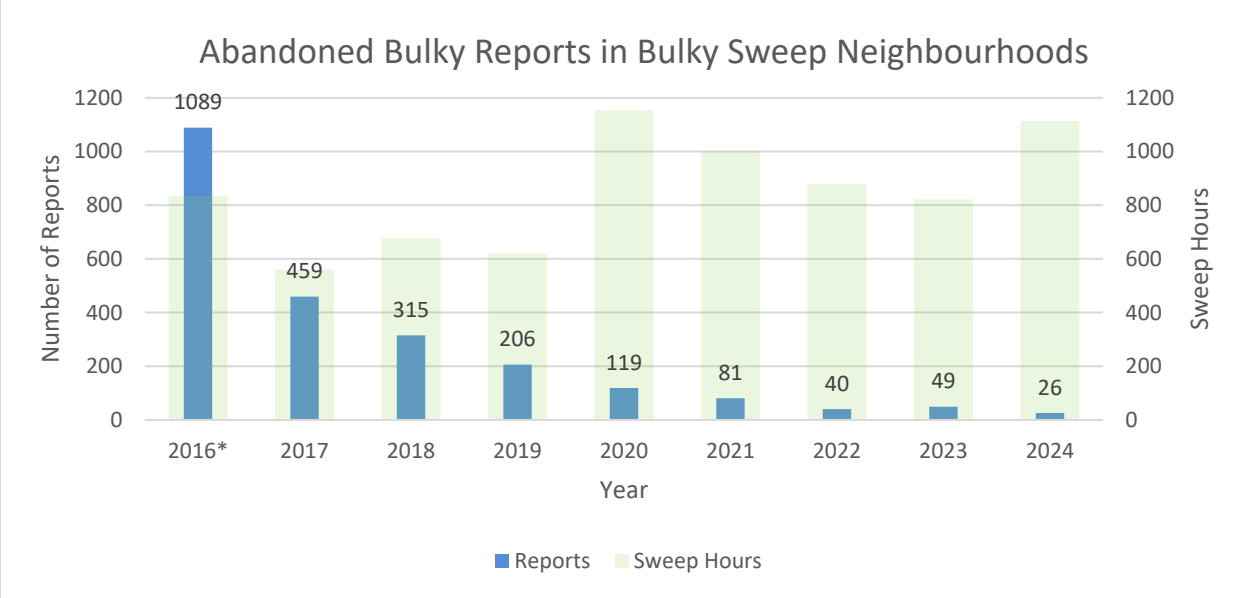
To minimize the occurrence of overflowing containers and associated scattered waste in the inner city, SWS has allowed for containers tagged as 'contaminated' to be collected as garbage to ensure they are regularly emptied. This measure is limited to areas within the inner city where this been identified as a problem.

Impacts

Since the introduction of the bulky sweep program in 2013, reports of abandoned waste have decreased significantly. Annual reports went from over 850 (city-wide) in 2014, down to 163 in 2024. Reports of abandoned waste specifically within the bulky sweep targeted area went from

over 519 in 2014, to 26 in 2024. Between 2023 and the changes implemented in 2024, bulky waste reports dropped 47 percent (49 to 26). See Figure 1, below.

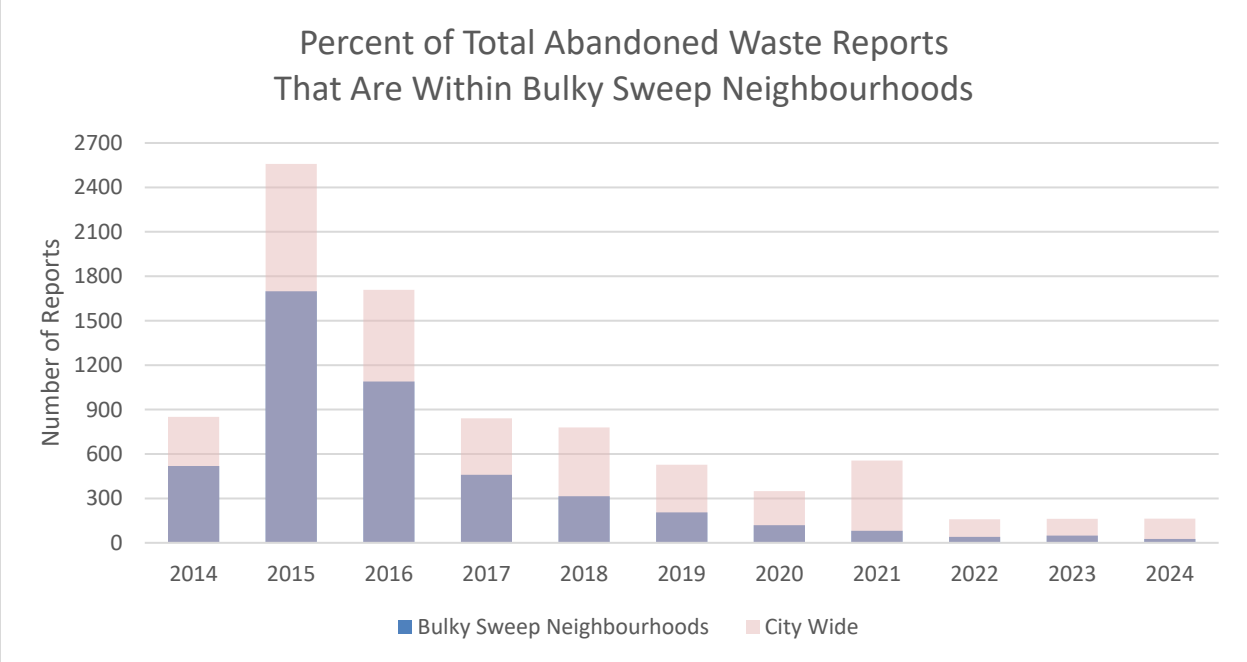
Figure 1: Abandoned Bulky Reports in Bulky Sweep Neighbourhoods



*Note: The higher number of reports in 2015 and 2016 is partially due to SWS staff actively monitoring and submitting abandoned bulky waste reports to 311, as this was the practice in those years.

Figure 2, below, shows the majority (61 percent) of all abandoned waste reports in 2014 were located within the bulky sweep area, whereas by 2024, only 16 percent of city-wide reports were located within this area.

Figure 2: Percent of Total Abandoned Waste Reports Within Bulky Sweep Area



Based on this abandoned waste report data, it appears that the proactive bulky sweeps have contributed significantly to reducing 311 reports of abandoned waste in the bulky sweep area, and subsequently reducing the total number of reports city-wide.

Other factors may have also contributed to a decline in abandoned bulky waste, including: increased awareness and use of the City's large item collection program and 4R Winnipeg Depots, increased bylaw enforcement, and support for community clean ups.

Additional Measures Under Review – A Layered Approach

The City of Vancouver uses an integrated layered services approach to manage garbage waste in the Downtown East Side neighborhood. This neighborhood has many complex social challenges including drug use, crime, homelessness, housing issues, unemployment, encampments and loss of businesses in the community. The approach for this neighborhood has been refined over many years and adapted to address the increasing challenges that have appeared since the COVID-19 pandemic.

The layered services are provided by the City of Vancouver's Engineering Services Department, Vancouver Police, Parks, Urban Issues, Business Improvement Associations, Community Organizations, and Sanitation Services. A $1 million budget is allocated to provide the additional, layered services, above and beyond the regular sanitation services (e.g. cart and bin collection).

The City of Vancouver administers a $2.5 million program for community organizations to hire individuals with barriers to employment. The service provided under this grant is characterized as micro-cleaning and is performed twice a day, seven days a week. The focus is on sharps and needles clean-up.

The approach focuses on a 10-block area to provide the following services:

1. Daytime Sanitation Team performs three sweeps a day using leaf blowers, brooms and rakes.
    - Consists of three to four staff
    - Equipment is one rear load packer truck and two small pickup trucks for litter

2. Enhanced Street Cleaning Team performs work during the night, between 9 p.m. and 7 a.m.
    - Consists of five to six staff
    - Equipment is one rear load packer truck and two small pickup trucks for litter, one Street Flusher and one Street Sweeper (similar equipment for the Daytime Sanitation is shared between services)

3. Daily litter bin emptying
    - Procured through contract and only for single stream garbage (no recycling)

The City of Winnipeg provides similar services through several departments, including:

> **Water and Waste Department:** residential waste collection for carts and bins, abandoned bulky waste collections and sweeps, large item and extra garbage collection for a fee, cart/bin inspections, and enforcement of Solid Waste By-law.

Public Works Department: collection for street litter containers (garbage only) and park litter containers and needle debris clean up, encampment clean ups, transit shelter clean ups, and abandoned waste clean ups for items/locations that residential collections cannot service.

Community Services Department: enforcement of Neighbourhood Livability By-law such as littering, illegal dumping and property standards related to waste accumulation.

Working with PWD and Community Services Departments, Water and Waste will explore potential improvements to better integrate existing waste services or add new layered services, similar to Vancouver, to address waste concerns in the inner city. This could include the feasibility of overnight bulk collection and area clean ups, providing Collection Point collections for encampments, and providing services that are outside of typical collection contracts.

Community organizations also have cleanup programs in the downtown and inner city, including The Downtown BIZ, Downtown Community Safety Partnership, Main Street Project and Siloam Mission. These programs add to the layers of service provided for the inner city and should be factored into any considered improvements.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement **Date:** May 27, 2025

Project Name:

Consolidation of Garbage Collection Operations Review

COMMENTS:

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

Lucy Szkwarek, FCPA, FCGA

Lucy Szkwarek, FCPA, FCGA
Manager of Finance and Administration

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

- Public Works Department
- Community Services Department

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

This report is in accordance with the OurWinnipeg policies through

OurWinnipeg Reference:

Goal #1: Leadership and Good Governance.

- Policy 1.7 - Equitable Service Access: Identify and provide access to, a base level of municipal services to everyone, directly or facilitated through partnerships. Remove systemic barriers to participation, based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, physical or mental ability, official language used, citizenship status, socio-economic status, geographic location or climate change vulnerability

Goal #4: Good Health and Well-Being.

- Policy 4.9 Inclusive Public Places Provide and promote the amenities, and the design and maintenance standards, necessary to ensure accessible, safe and sanitary conditions in gathering spaces frequented by the public

Goal # 5: Social Equity. Policy 5.1 Equitable Service Access

- Provide municipal services through an age-friendly lens that promotes equitable access for all, with a focus on the youngest, oldest, and systemically disadvantaged members of the community

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

This report is in accordance with Winnipeg's Climate Action Plan through Strategic Opportunity #6 Waste Reduction and Diversion, and supports the following key directions:

6.4 Support Integrated Resource Recovery Opportunities (Primary Responsibility: Water and Waste Department)

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

4.6 – Supporting Encampments – Community Clean-ups

Collaborate with key community partners to provide timely support for mindful community clean-ups at encampments. The City will be mindful of the needs and circumstances of encampment residents, and will work in partnership with community partners who can provide social outreach and supports.

4.8 – Litter Collection in Main St. Area

Engage community partners in the Main St. & Logan Ave. area (specifically the Business Improvement Zones and shelter providers) to evaluate current location and number of loose litter receptacles and collaboratively program solve to address loose litter and garbage concerns

4.9 – Garbage Collection

Work across departments and with community groups who support low income and unsheltered Winnipeggers to identify and address garbage collection concerns, particularly in areas of high poverty

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Water and Waste Department
Division: Solid Waste Division
Prepared by: Kristy LeBaron
Date: June 6, 2025
File No.: G-303