

**To:** Mayor and Council  
**From:** Paul Gipps, CAO

**Meeting Date:** June 17, 2025  
**Meeting Type:** Regular Council Meeting

**Prepared by:** Matthew Salmon, Infrastructure & Development Engineering Director  
**Department:** Engineering and Environmental Services

**Title:** Food Waste Diversion  
**Description:** To consider participation in a regional curbside food waste collection program

## RECOMMENDATION

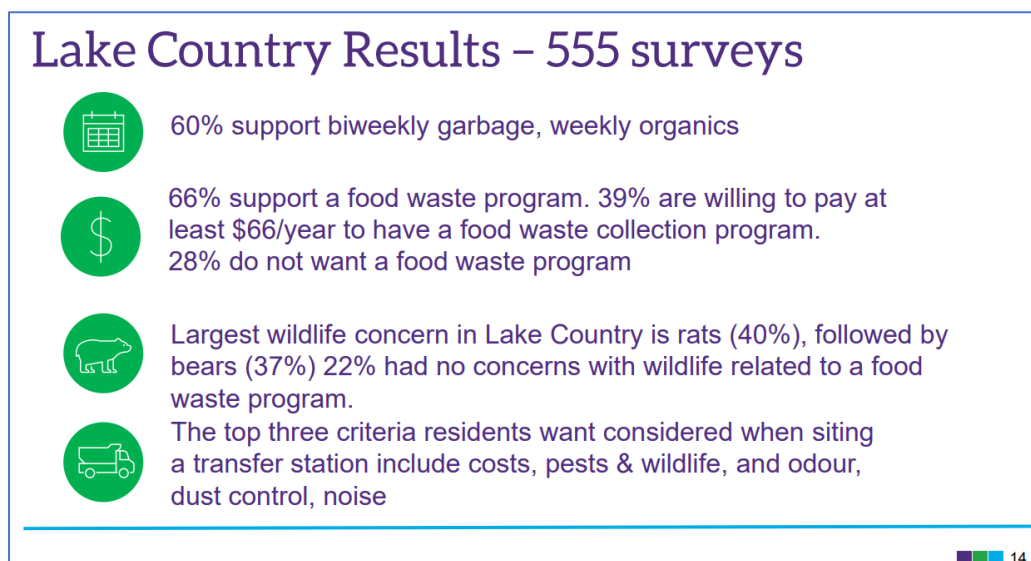
Council Decision.

RDCO RESOLUTION: THAT the District of Lake Country confirm their participation in the Regional District of the Central Okanagan's Curbside Food Waste Program.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RDCO staff have led the evaluation and public engagement relating to the cost and feasibility of adding food waste to the regional curbside organics collection program. RDCO staff are seeking formal participation from all municipal councils prior to presenting the outcome to the Regional Board on June 19, 2025.

As presented by RDCO staff to Council on September 3, 2024 ([RDCO Presentation](#)), Waste Characterization Studies (2021 & 2024), over 40% of residential waste from single family homes is compostable (food waste, soiled papers, and other organic materials). RDCO staff performed public engagement in 2023 and 2024. The results of the engagement showed 73% of respondents support a curbside food waste program with the top concerns identified as cost, managing wildlife and rodents, odour management and, reduced frequency of garbage collection. When asked about costs, 49% of residents in the region (and 39% in Lake Country specifically) said they are willing to pay up to \$66/year for a curbside food waste program. Proposed changes range from an increase of \$63 to \$172 annually based on a number of options when it comes to level of service options, see Table 1 for a more detailed breakdown. The current curbside collection program is fully funded by user fees. In 2025 this user fee is \$174.00 per dwelling unit.



**Figure 1.** Curbside Food Waste Collection survey results.

## DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The District provides curbside collection of garbage, recycling and yard waste to 5,400 single family homes and town homes. This is a mandatory program for single family homes and duplexes, and an optional program for street level oriented multi-family properties if the contracted service vehicles can safely service the property. Based on a six-year average, this program historically adds approximately 90 units to the curbside collection program annually.

To maximize economies of scale and improve customer service across the region, the District currently partners with the City of Kelowna, the City of West Kelowna, the District of Peachland and the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO) in delivering a consistent program. RDCO staff administer the program and collection contracts on behalf of the municipal partners.

A Food Waste Feasibility Study performed by the RDCO (2021) identified the best option to manage food waste for our curbside customers is to include it with current curbside yard waste carts for composting. The study estimated that 7,000 tonnes of curbside collected food waste per year across the central Okanagan could be diverted from the 150,000 tonnes of garbage landfilled annually.

The changes being proposed to municipalities across the region are summarized as follows:

1. Allow food waste to be added to the curbside yard waste collection cart;
2. Increase yard waste (organics) collection to a weekly, year-round service from the current every other week from March 1 to December 31;
3. Decrease garbage collection from a weekly service to every other week. As food waste is removed from the garbage stream the quantity of garbage, along with much of the putrescible waste is reduced, allowing for a reduction in collection frequency.

To provide curbside food waste service, an annual cost increase of approximately \$63 per household would be required (based on 2025 costs). A new transfer station would also be required for this change, with costs required for land acquisition, construction, hauling costs, and composting co-mingled food and yard waste from the curbside bins.

The estimated cost for a new transfer station is \$12 million (including \$6 million for 3 acres of land). Actual costs could be higher than this, since a facility located within an urban setting such as Kelowna would need higher investment to enable indoor odour-controlled operations. Therefore, for the consideration of this level of service change Council should consider a cost range of \$63 to \$70 per household as potential cost impact.

Scenario	Current Service Cost	Curbside food waste collection (with CoK participation)	Curbside food waste collection (without CoK participation)	Weekly garbage collection (instead of proposed fortnightly)	Total (\$)	Total (% increase)
	\$174	\$63	\$150	\$22		
1	X				174	0
2	X	X			237	36
3	X	X		X	259	49
4	X		X		324	86
5	X		X	X	346	99

**Table 1.** Potential level of service options and associated costs.

In summary:

Providing food waste pickup would include the following benefits to the District:

1. Increases landfill lifetime;
2. Reduces overall Greenhouse Gas emissions;
3. Increases return of nutrients back into the natural environment.

However, this change in service would have the following challenges:

1. Additional odours, wildlife and pest attraction to curbside bins;
2. Initially, services would only be available to residents of the curbside collection system;
3. Increased cost of at least 36% to residents and the District.
4. Decrease garbage collection from a weekly service to every other week



**Figure 2.** Curbside Food Waste Collection timeline presentation to Lake Country Council Sept 3, 2024

Respectfully Submitted.

**Matthew Salmon, Infrastructure & Development Engineering Director**

**Attachment 1** - Delegation Report - Curbside Food Waste 2025\_DLC

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**Report Approval Details**

Document Title:	Curbside Organic Waste Collection.docx
Attachments:	- Attachment 1 - Delegation Report - Curbside Food Waste 2025_DLC.pdf - Food Waste Update to Councils_DLC.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jun 12, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

**Reyna Seabrook, Director of Corporate Services - Jun 5, 2025 - 12:47 PM**

**Paul Gipps, Chief Administrative Officer - Jun 11, 2025 - 8:38 PM**

**Makayla Ablitt, Legislative & FOI Coordinator - Jun 12, 2025 - 6:59 AM**