



Let's Talk Organics

Organics Pilot Program - Engagement Report

Phase 2 Summary of Communication and Engagement Activities

Phase 2 - Pilot Program

Phase 2—the pilot program—involved testing organic waste collection in five select neighbourhoods for one year to learn what would work well and what would need to be improved for a community-wide program. The test routes included 2,246 households across all five collection zones.


A key aspect of the pilot program was informing households on the chosen pilot routes that they were a part of the pilot group, where they could find information, and how they could provide feedback and fostering ongoing engagement with these residents to gain feedback throughout the pilot program.

A comprehensive pilot communication and engagement plan utilized several tools to inform, consult, and involve the target pilot audience using the framework of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Participation, as shown below. Note: In addition to specific communication or engagement activity, the pilot program itself is a method of involving the audience.

IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation



IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process. The Spectrum is used internationally, and it is found in public participation plans around the world.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION 					
	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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The following table outlines the communication and engagement activities in a chronological framework.

Radio campaign City Newsletter (quarterly utility bill insert) Newsletter to Let's Talk Organics project subscribers Sustainability newsletter Intranet (internal)	a pilot route and if so, subscribe for updates		
INFORM (PUBLIC) Internal online information session for City staff	Program overview How to register and provide feedback if you are on a pilot route	August 11 & 12, 2021	13 staff members attended over 2 sessions
INFORM Door hanger hand delivered to addresses not yet registered/ subscribed	Focus on reaching this segment to continue increasing registrations	July–August, 2021	Knocked on 2,000 doors, spoke to 750 residents
INFORM Newsletter #1	Thank you for subscribing Tell a neighbour Anticipated date of cart delivery Join us for an online information session to learn more	August 26, 2021	750 newsletter recipients (558 pilot households registered)
INFORM Online information sessions for pilot households	Program overview How to provide feedback Q&A	August 31 (two sessions), September 2, 2021	8 people attended over 3 sessions
INFORM Newsletter #2	Carts to be delivered starting today, do not use yet Tell a neighbour	September 7, 2021	781 newsletter recipients (609 pilot households subscribed)
INFORM Information Package Delivery to all pilot households -Information guide booklet delivered with cart and kitchen bin -decal for kitchen bin included	Program overview Why are we doing this What to expect How to provide feedback What can/can't go in the cart Tips to reduce wildlife encounters, control odours/insects, prevent material sticking in cart, cleaning How to make a bin liner Food waste prevention	September 9-17, 2021	Delivered to all pilot households

	<p>information</p> <p>New (biweekly) collection schedules for September 2021 to August 2022</p> <p>How to contact us with questions</p>		
INFORM In person pilot information/demo sessions	n/a	Cancelled due to covid gathering restrictions	n/a
COLLECTION BEGINS SEPTEMBER 20, 2021			
INFORM Newsletter #3	<p>Collection begins this week</p> <p>You should have received a cart and information guide</p> <p>Take our survey</p>	September 22, 2021	871 newsletter recipients (682 pilot households registered)
INFORM Hand delivered tri-fold to all pilot addresses	<p>Reactive piece to let all households (namely any not yet registered) know of a brief grace period, given that many households may not have received information about a forthcoming biweekly schedule for all pilot households</p> <p>Pilot (and therefore biweekly collection) has started, but we will collect all carts at the curb until October 4</p> <p>Zone-specific collection calendar showing all garbage, recycling, and organics collection days from September 2021 to August 2022</p> <p>Visit our pilot website or call us with questions</p>	Week after collection launched	Delivered to all pilot households
CONSULT Survey #1	Gather baseline pilot participant/respondent data	September 21-October 29, 2021	535 respondents (including 12 paper surveys mailed in)
INFORM Newsletter #4	<p>Reminder - take our survey</p> <p>Excess garbage and recycling accepted</p> <p>Pilot resources section now available on pilot website</p> <p>How to make a bin liner from newspaper</p> <p>How to report an issue or leave a comment</p> <p>Tell a neighbour and bookmark our page</p>	October 26, 2021	945 newsletter recipients (757 pilot households registered)

INFORM Business card handout for operators on pilot routes (available if approached by residents)	Reactive piece to equip operators with a small handout for any resident approaching with questions Overview of Curbside Organics Project phases indicating we are now in Phase 2 - Pilot Website and Civic Ops phone number	October 2021	n/a
INFORM Newsletter #5	Survey #1 highlights Tips to prevent material sticking in cart Tips for managing excess recycling Why we are not accepting compostable plastics Where to find pilot resources section on our website How to report an issue or leave a comment	December 8, 2021	978 newsletter recipients (788 pilot households registered)
CONSULT Survey #2	Gather mid-point pilot participant/respondent data	February 16–March 14, 2022	733 responses (including 7 paper surveys mailed in)
INFORM Mid-point in-person or online information sessions for pilot households	n/a	Did not proceed due to continuing lockdown restrictions, general fatigue with online engagement	n/a
INFORM Newsletter #6	Take our survey Leaving excess garbage and recycling at the curb Where to find pilot resources section on our website How to report an issue or leave a comment	February 16, 2022	991 newsletter recipients (801 pilot households registered)
INFORM Waste Wise app campaign	Take our survey	February 16–March 14, 2022	2 (geotargeted) push notifications sent out to over 2,300 devices on pilot routes Message also displayed passively in the app during duration of survey

INFORM Hand delivered door hanger	Inform residents of survey #2, emphasize importance of feedback Push for increase in subscribers How to take the survey or receive a paper copy List of resources available on pilot website	Week of February 21, 2022	Delivered to all pilot households Note: Due to timeline and capacity limitations, some households, for example the more spread out/rural properties in Westsyde, may not have been reached.
INFORM Newsletter #7	Reminder – Take our survey #2	March 7, 2022	1,110 newsletter recipients (887 pilot households registered)
INFORM Newsletter #8	Bear Aware Where to find pilot resources section on our website How to report an issue or leave a comment	April 7, 2022	1,152 newsletter recipients (929 pilot households registered)
INFORM Newsletter #9	Survey #2 highlights Tips on managing yard waste in the cart Bear Smart tips Where to find pilot resources section on our website How to report an issue or leave a comment	April 28, 2022	1,150 newsletter recipients (929 pilot households registered)
INFORM ECO Smart Team door Knocking campaign	Meet pilot residents, provide opportunity to ask questions (specific targeting to households that had been tracked as not having put out organics cart) Handout or leave door hanger Key message shift to “Why Curbside Organics”	May-June 2022	108 households targeted Door hanger left on all doors whether resident home or not In a follow-up inspection, 23% of these households were found to be participating
INFORM Newsletter #10	Tips for managing sticky yard waste material Tips for managing excess material Tips for properly separating materials Bear Smart tips Where to find pilot resources section on our website How to report an issue or leave a comment	June 27, 2022	1,148 newsletter recipients (929 pilot households registered)

INFORM Newsletter #11	Fall 2022 collection calendars Excess garbage and recycling until November 1 only Tips for managing sticky yard waste material Where to find pilot resources section on our website How to report an issue or leave a comment	August 30, 2022	1146 newsletter recipients (932 pilot households registered)
CONSULT Survey #3	Gather end-point pilot participant/respondent data	September 9–30, 2022	630 responses (including 8 paper surveys mailed in)
INFORM Mailout: Rack card size	Inform residents of survey #3, emphasize importance of feedback Push to gain some additional subscribers for the final survey How to take the survey or receive a paper copy The pilot is wrapping up - what's next	September 2022	Mailed to all pilot households
INFORM Waste Wise app campaign	Take our final survey	September 9–30, 2022	Message displayed passively in the app during duration of survey to over 2,300 devices on pilot routes
INFORM Newsletter #12	Take our final survey Fall 2022 collection calendars	September 9, 2022	1,146 newsletter recipients (933 pilot households registered)
INFORM Newsletter #13	Take our final survey Fall 2022 collection calendars Excess garbage and recycling until November 1 only Tips for managing sticky yard waste material Where to find pilot resources section on our website How to report an issue	September 14, 2022	1,114 newsletter recipients (933 pilot households registered)
INFORM Newsletter #14	Take our final survey Fall 2022 collection calendars Excess garbage and recycling until November 1 only	September 23, 2022	1,178 newsletter recipients (958 pilot households registered)
INFORM Newsletter #15	Reminder: Take our final survey	September 29, 2022	1,182 newsletter recipients (964 pilot households registered)

INFORM Mailout: 5x7 Postcard	Thank you What's Next Pilot program snapshot	October 2022	Mailed to all pilot households
INFORM Newsletter #16	Holiday collection - excess accepted on collection day after Christmas Survey #3 highlights 2023 collection calendars Why biodegradable plastic doesn't belong in organics cart	December 20, 2022	1,184 newsletter recipients (966 pilot households registered)

Summary

In preparation for the pilot program, a web page was established as a central digital space for information on the pilot program. In the months leading up to the start of the pilot program, residents and any rental owners on pilot routes were sent direct mail (and later a detailed Information Guide) informing them of the program, that they were on a pilot route, where they could go to learn more, and how they would be able to provide feedback during the pilot and to encourage them to register for pilot newsletter updates.

Communication efforts during this time were focused on informing as many residents on pilot routes as possible that their home was on a pilot route and building a database of residents along pilot routes to be able to communicate directly with this targeted audience through a customized newsletter that would be used as a tool throughout the pilot program to inform residents of news, updates, tips, resources, and opportunities to provide feedback.

A broad public awareness campaign was also conducted during summer 2021 to inform all citizens that pilot routes had been selected and the general areas of those routes. The goal was to encourage residents to take action in viewing a detailed online map of the pilot routes to confirm if their residences were on a pilot route if they lived in one of the general neighbourhoods mentioned.

Various advertising and communication channels were used during this campaign with the goal of continuing to build the pilot resident database (a secondary benefit was informing the public that an organics pilot program was indeed being undertaken). The web traffic analytics behind the high number of unique web page visits (4,434 total) to [Kamloops.ca/OrganicsPilot](https://kamloops.ca/OrganicsPilot) reflect that the various forms of both the targeted and public messaging were reaching the intended audiences, with high numbers of direct traffic (typing in the URL) followed by organic traffic (Google searching) and referral traffic (landing on the [Kamloops.ca/OrganicsPilot](https://kamloops.ca/OrganicsPilot) web page via a link on another web page [e.g. a media article or the Let's Talk Organics web page]).

The web page at [Kamloops.ca/OrganicsPilot](https://kamloops.ca/OrganicsPilot) included an overview of the pilot program and the specific ways in which pilot residents could provide formal feedback (i.e. feedback that would be captured and measured and considered in decision-making processes). The main methods for providing formal feedback (which were also outlined in the Information Guide distributed with the carts) were to take surveys or submit a comment directly at any time via the pilot program web page. Pilot residents were encouraged to subscribe for updates on the website in order to receive survey notifications and links through the newsletter.

To remain accessible, paper newsletters and surveys were available, and instructions to sign up for paper updates were included in the Information Guide. It should be noted that staff had wanted to conduct in-person information sessions during the first month of the pilot program as way to incorporate live demonstrations to those in pilot neighbourhoods; however, that was not an option as a result of pandemic gathering restrictions).

Pilot residents were encouraged to use the "Submit a Comment" tool on the [Kamloops.ca/OrganicsPilot](https://kamloops.ca/OrganicsPilot) web page. This feedback tool was provided as a way for pilot residents to provide feedback as it happens. A total of 136 submissions were received, which captured a total of 304 comments. Table 1.1 summarizes the themes of these comments.

Will not participate/ do not support	28
Concern with bi-weekly garbage and recycling	28
Concern with bi-weekly garbage	26
Negative comments	24
Odours and insects	24
Would like to see more options for bin liners	21
Positive comments	18
Concerns about bears/wildlife	16
Ideas/concerns about communications	16
Material stuck	15
Concern with bi-weekly recycling	14
Backyard composters/ opt out option	13
Concerns about cost	9
Want larger organics carts	9
Suggest seasonal bi-weekly organics	8
Organics cart too big/not enough food waste	8
Concerns about impact of holiday collection scheduling	7
Bin/cart cleanliness	5
Recycling program concerns	4
Kitchen bin concerns	4
Felt a lack of Citizen consultation	3
Want larger recycling carts	2
Concerns about processing facility/location	2
Grand Total	304

Table 1.1 – Thematic summary of all comments received via “Submit a Comment”

Another method of collecting feedback was through phone calls and emails to the Civic Operations Centre. Phone calls and emails were primarily about helping to resolve an issue and, at the same time, provide insight into common concerns or issues. “How to Report an Issue” was a key message throughout the pilot program. A total of 645 calls and emails were received, which captured a total of 831 comments or issues reported. Table 1.2 summarizes the themes of these calls and emails. Note: Lines with an asterisk reflect categories also used in Table 1.1; lines without an asterisk reflect new categories for the Table 1.2 summary (i.e. inquiries to directly ask a question or report an issue).

Kitchen bin concerns	104 *
Questions about the program	100
Concern with bi-weekly garbage and recycling	91 *
Container delivery, exchange or repair	77
Will not participate/ do not support	59 *
Backyard composters/ opt out option	51 *
Can't store/don't want organics cart	47
Upsizing	35
Material stuck	34 *
Concerns about bears/wildlife	32 *
Concerns about costs	27 *
Concern with bi-weekly garbage	24 *
Ideas/concerns about communications	22 *
Negative comments	19 *
Positive comments	18 *
Would like to see more options for bin liners	16 *
Odours and insects	15 *
Bin/cart cleanliness	12 *
Concern with bi-weekly recycling/ recycling program concerns	10 *
Concerns about impact of holiday collection scheduling	9 *
Missed pickup	8
Suggest seasonal bi-weekly organics	7 *
Organics cart too big/not enough food waste	6 *
Felt a lack of Citizen consultation	5 *
Concerns about processing facility/location	3 *
Grand Total	831

Table 1.2 - Thematic summary of all comments/issues reported to Civic Operations Centre

To support success in data gathering and awareness, there was a focus on continually building the database by increasing the number of registered households and email subscribers. In particular, one of the goals was to increase the number of pilot residents taking the pilot surveys in order to gain as much feedback—whether negative or positive—as possible.

This effort is reflected in the numerous outreach tactics to promote the surveys (and how to take them), such as direct mailouts or door hangers. As a result, staff saw a steady increase in registrations and subscribers over the duration of the pilot program, reaching almost 1,000 registrations and almost 1,200 subscribers by the end of the pilot program (i.e. timing of the final survey). The number of survey respondents also increased steadily from 535 respondents in the first survey to a peak of 733 for the second survey and 630 respondents for the third and final survey.

Key Pilot Feedback and Takeaways

A key part of the pilot program, using a communications and engagement lens, was to incorporate principles from the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation. Staff informed, consulted, and involved the target pilot audience using this framework (refer to page 1 for the IAP2 Spectrum).

In the framework, the goals of consult and involve include a promise to the audience to share how input influenced decision making. Note: In addition to specific communication or engagement activity, the pilot program itself is a method of involving the audience. Below is a summary of key concerns heard and comments on how staff responded.

Pilot Feedback - What We Heard	Staff/Operational Response - What We Learned/How We Responded
Concerns about biweekly garbage and recycling (in survey #3, just over 21% of respondents indicated a significant impact)	<p>Key messaging during the pilot included tips on managing excess material and that limited excess amounts would be collected during the pilot.</p> <p>Education on managing excess garbage included how to learn more about what could be recycled (and therefore diverted from the garbage), including promoting the Waste Wizard in the Waste Wise app to look up what can be recycled (ie. in curbside or depot drop-off).</p> <p>Education on managing excess recycling included breaking down items, what to do with excess/large cardboard, and promoting the Waste Wise app to look up where (depot drop off) items could be recycled.</p> <p>Messaging included options available for households that consistently experienced excess garbage and/or recycling, namely that they could upsize their garbage cart for free and/or order a second garbage or recycling cart (relevant solid waste or utility fees would apply) based on their household needs.</p> <p>One of the key messages communicated during the pilot program has been that a broad objective of an organics program is to help residents divert (organic) waste from the landfill (i.e. reduce emissions and extend the life of the landfill). Additional waste reduction messaging and campaigns during or beyond the organics rollout could support more general waste reduction objectives and could more directly encourage individual/household waste reduction behaviour.</p>

<p>Concerns about material sticking in the cart (i.e. material frozen to the sides in winter, sticky yard waste in summer)</p>	<p>A one-page resource with visuals/images and instructions on using tips to mitigate frozen or stuck material was created and added to the resource section on the pilot program website.</p> <p>Repeated messaging/information on the topic was included in multiple newsletters.</p>
<p>Concerns/complaints about limitations regarding bin liners (i.e. compostable bin liners not accepted in pilot program); A desire for the City to provide bin liners</p>	<p>During the pilot program, compostable plastic bags (bin liners) were not accepted by the processing facility. While researching potential long-term processing options, it was the intention of staff to include the acceptance of compostable plastic bin liners as a preference in evaluating requests for proposals.</p> <p>Further, the City planned to include an initial supply of compostable plastic bags for all curbside households as part of the community rollout and sought additional funding approval from Council to include budget to supply the liners to residents during community rollout.</p> <p>However, since that time, the Province released a report indicating that all compostable or biodegradable bags would be removed from the list of acceptable materials in composting facilities in the revised <i>Organic Matter Recycling Regulation</i>. City staff have pivoted to planning to supply residents with an initial supply of paper-based liners as part of the community rollout instead.</p> <p>Information about why compostable bags were not accepted during the pilot program was communicated continuously through pilot newsletters and on the pilot program website. Pilot participants were encouraged to contact staff to request samples of the accepted style of bin liners. Staff delivered or mailed a supply of bin liners to over 60 pilot households.</p> <p>A one-page instructional sheet and short instructional video on how to create your own paper liner from newspaper.</p>
<p>Concerns about cart cleanliness/keeping cart clean (in survey #1, this was indicated as a top barrier to participation for those intending not to participate; on all three surveys, cart cleanliness was a top concern with high impact)</p>	<p>A new question was added on survey #2 to gain insight about support for a possible cart-washing service in a permanent organics program.</p> <p>Staff researched feasibility and viability of including a cart-washing service in a permanent organics program to include this consideration in decisions about a permanent program. Research revealed that other communities put this task back onto the resident rather than providing as a service. City staff will continue to review the concept of washing organics carts on a regular basis (more research is needed to determine the best approach in providing this service).</p>
<p>Concerns about attracting wildlife/bears</p>	<p>During the pilot, uniform organics carts with a typical flip lid were used across all pilot routes, and it is not recommended that bear-resistant carts be included as a part of community-</p>

	<p>wide rollout. However, staff acknowledges there is a desire for bear-resistant carts in some areas and will continue to research options to introduce these carts into the solid waste collection system.</p> <p>Summer 2023 – planned bear-resistant cart pilot program on select routes.</p> <p>Continued education and awareness that mitigating human-bear conflict and wildlife interactions are still the responsibility of residents in managing solid waste as a wildlife attractant.</p> <p>The Solid Waste and Recyclables Bylaw was amended to include more stringent language around securing solid waste containers.</p>
New collection frequency resulting in excess material	<p>Allowed excess material during the pilot.</p> <p>Offered free upsize of garbage cart for pilot households, provided information on other alternatives (i.e. second garbage cart, recycling tips, second recycling cart).</p> <p>A video on better managing recycling in carts by breaking down boxes and flattening large jugs was produced.</p>
Collection frequency - add-a-day model in general resulting in collection gaps longer than the already new biweekly schedule	<p>Researching the feasibility and viability of shifting to a set collection schedule (i.e. each zone has a set day of the week (biweekly), even on stat holidays.</p>
Collection frequency - 2021 holiday impact of multiple statutory holidays resulting in longer periods without collection	<p>Planned collection of excess material post Christmas 2022 holidays (excess allowed on the next garbage or recycling date). Staff will take the same considerations for the 2023 holiday period to incorporate a need for post-holiday excess collection.</p>
Many pilot households unaware of organics pilot when it started	<p>Quick pivot to collect all three commodities on a weekly basis for the first two weeks of the pilot program. A trifold page was hand delivered to all pilot households with a prominent message about new collection schedule and included new a collection schedule for that zone, directions on where to find more information.</p> <p>Acknowledgement that no matter the amount of direct and indirect communication leading up to the start of collection, some residents will still not be aware until it is impacting their household (i.e. when they notice collection schedules have changed); therefore, a grace/adjustment period will be planned for the beginning of the community-wide program.</p>
Concerns related to general home use including insects, odours, liners, material	<p>Continued education, tips, and resources shared through use of communication tools such as website content, videos, print materials, mailouts, social media, and live demos (where</p>

sticking (insects, odours, and material sticking were consistently rated as the items in which pilot survey respondents had the least amount of confidence in understanding on all three surveys)	possible).
Desire to be able to choose kitchen bin and/or curbside cart size	<p>Based on the varied feedback about the kitchen caddies, staff determined that it is not feasible to offer options; rather, one size will be provided by the City, but individuals may use whatever they like inside their own homes.</p> <p>A 120 L cart is common for food scraps programs but not programs that also accept yard waste. Staff had intended to focus on food scraps but also allow small amounts of yard waste. A larger cart option could be considered if there is a future decision to collect larger amounts of yard waste.</p>
Concern that not enough organics to fill up the curbside cart in winter for a weekly organics collection	Staff are researching the viability and feasibility of potentially shifting to biweekly organics for the winter months (December to February).
Home composters requesting an opt-out option	<p>Staff researched communities with organics collection regarding opt-out options. It was discovered that opt-out programs are not common practice because such fees increase overall program administration cost.</p> <p>Educating home composters that items that should not be composted at home, such as meat, bones, dairy, cooked foods, oils, and soiled paper products, may still be included in the organics service.</p>
COMMUNICATION TOOLS	
Many pilot households unaware of organics pilot when it started	<p>A broad public and targeted campaign was undertaken in summer 2021 to try to reach the target audience of households on pilot routes. Despite using various mediums, reaching all households in this narrow audience with the intended message proved challenging. Even those who may have understood they were on a pilot route may have perceived that it did not apply to them (i.e. not aware being on a pilot route meant automatic inclusion in the pilot; in other words, that the collection format was changing for pilot routes whether a household intended to participate in organics collection or not).</p> <p>The rollout of a community-wide program, by virtue of affecting all (curbside) residents, will allow for greater flexibility and reach in the communications approach to public awareness of a forthcoming program. A robust communications and advertising plan will include awareness messaging on a broad scale in the months leading up to the launch.</p>

Readability of the design of collection calendars given a third type of collection added	Redesigned the collection calendar for clarity and simplicity. Added icons to support accessible viewing (i.e. colour blindness).
In survey #2, respondents indicated which platforms they used to gain knowledge or understanding about the program. The response rate was highest for the Information Guide, followed by the kitchen bin decal (sticker) included with cart delivery (the decal acts as a quick guide to what can go in the bin, plus a website where more information is available)	<p>Using the pilot program Information Guide as a template, staff will develop a comprehensive Information Guide to be delivered with carts during the community-wide rollout as well as a decal with any necessary revisions.</p> <p>Staff will endeavor to communicate the existence and availability of the Information Guides widely during the period when carts are being delivered to ensure all are aware and have received it and/or can pick up additional copies.</p>
Further to the above, in survey #2, 47% of respondents indicated they learned information, updates, tips, and resources through the pilot newsletter	Staff have set up and are promoting a public newsletter sign up on the Let's Talk Organics web page to build a broad public email list, which will support in communicating information on the community rollout such as key milestones like cart delivery and collection start date.