



## Committee of the Whole Report

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**Report Number:** WM2025-008  
**Meeting Date:** November 4, 2025  
**Title:** Leaf and Yard Curbside Collection Service Review  
**Description:** Review of request for additional leaf and yard collection  
**Author and Title:** Heather Dzurko

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### Recommendation(s):

**That** Report 2025-008, **Leaf and Yard Curbside Collection Service Review**, be received;

**That** Council maintain the existing level of curbside leaf and yard collection service; and

**That** staff consider options for leaf and yard collection as part of the next waste collection contract; and

**That** this recommendation be brought forward to Council for consideration at the next Regular Council Meeting.

**Department Head:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Financial/Legal/HR/Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chief Administrative Officer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Background:**

At the Regular Council Meeting on June 24, 2025, a deputation regarding a request for an increased frequency of yard waste collection was received. As a result of the deputation the following resolution was adopted by Council at the Regular Council Meeting:

**CR2025-221**

**Moved By** Councillor Warren

**Seconded By** Councillor Joyce

That the petition from Doug Whalen, **regarding a Request for an Increased Frequency of Yard Waste Collection in the City of Kawartha Lakes**, be received and referred to Staff for review and report back to Council by the end of Q4, 2025.

**Carried**

This report addresses that direction.

The petition from Mr. Whalen requests an increase in the frequency of yard waste collection that will provide better services to CKL residents and is more comparable to what is provided by surrounding municipalities. A summary of other municipal service levels for leaf and yard waste collection is below.

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Curbside and Depot Level of Service</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>City of Peterborough</b>	Weekly collection (April-November)	Urban centre –not a comparable municipality in geography
<b>City of Peterborough</b>	Depot service available at cost	\$10 minimum, \$120/tonne at landfill
<b>County of Peterborough</b>	Four fall collection events	Collection only occurs in 14 communities, not for every resident.
<b>County of Peterborough</b>	Some townships offer depot services. Cavan Monaghan and Douro-Dummer direct residents to City/County Depot	North Kawartha - \$5/bag or \$20/yard Selwyn - >100kg - \$120/tonne Otonabee South Monaghan, Trent Lakes, Asphodel Norwood – free
<b>Northumberland County</b>	Monthly collection	A separate area of the County is collected each week on rotation.

<b>Northumberland County</b>	Depot available to offset curbside	500kg free, \$130/tonne
<b>County of Simcoe</b>	Eleven collection events	4 spring events, 2 summer events, 5 fall events. Also completed on a rotating basis.
<b>County of Simcoe</b>	Fees vary depending on materials	Brush - \$75/tonne Yard Waste - free
<b>Region of Durham</b>	Weekly	between April and Dec.
<b>Region of Durham</b>	None	Not accepted at regional waste facilities.

Leaf and yard waste service level was also a theme that emerged through feedback during the development of the Integrated Waste Management Strategy Update (2025-2029). The Strategy includes a recommendation for monthly urban collection and call-in collection for rural areas in the next waste collection contract. The financial impact would be about a 7% increase to existing waste collection costs.

In August 2025, staff engaged the public to assess their preference for budget decisions in 2026. Through the process, residents provided feedback on 12 budget options to invest in, and the option of no additional spending. Enhanced Leaf and Yard Collection was included as one of the 13 budget spending options and of 586 votes, ranked 12 out of 13, with less than 5% of votes. Despite the interest in additional leaf and yard collection identified through the Waste Management Strategy, the budget survey results suggests that the majority of respondents have other priorities for spending tax dollars. The survey results included 7 comments about leaf and yard service – two in favour of program expansion, 4 strongly against program expansion, and 1 comment related to timing of existing services.

Ontario Regulation 101/94 – Recycling & Composting of Municipal Waste, requires municipalities with a population greater than 50,000 residents to establish and operate a collection program. The regulation does not specify the type of collection or management methods for the leaf and yard program. To address this requirement, the City currently provides curbside and landfill depot collection services to residents of the municipality.

The City offers 3 curbside collection events per year to all residents (one in the spring and two in the fall). City wide collection is currently just under 40,000 households per

year. These collection events are included in the budget, funded by the tax levy. The City collects roughly 25% of leaf and yard waste (between 700 and 800 tonnes) annually through the curbside collection program.

Residents are also permitted to bring leaf and yard waste to landfill sites during regular hours of operation. Up to 250kg of leaf and yard waste is accepted at no charge to residents, and quantities greater than 250 kg are charged the regular tipping fee. The landfill sites experience over 34,000 customers per year with leaf and yard waste. Over 90% of those customers drop off leaf and yard material at no charge. The landfill site collection program manages approximately 2500-3000 tonnes, or 75% of the total quantity of leaf and yard waste received annually.

The City manages leaf and yard waste, to produce wood chips, and compost materials.

### **Rationale:**

Staff recommend Council maintain existing service levels, including three curbside events and free leaf and yard waste drop off up to 250kg/day. Although there is an interest in increasing leaf and yard service that was identified by the petition and emerged through the Integrated Waste Management Strategy, it is clear from additional follow up that it is not a budget priority for many residents.

Staff recommend that changes to curbside collection frequency be considered in the future, when the waste collection contract is retendered.

### **Other Alternatives Considered:**

In developing options staff have carefully considered budgetary impacts. There are several alternative options that could be considered:

1. Additional curbside collection events
2. Adjust tipping fees (Option A, B, and C)
  - a. Option A: Regular Fees and add an Additional Curbside Collection Event
  - b. Option B: Increase Quantity of Leaf and Yard Accepted for the Minimum Fee and have a \$5 Minimum for all Leaf and Yard Visits
  - c. Option C: Increase Quantity of Leaf and Yard Accepted Free
3. Pilot a fee for service curbside collection program

### **Provide Additional Curbside Collection Events**

To align with the frequency of collection in other local municipalities, the City could provide curbside collection events during additional months in the growing season.

Through the Integrated Waste Management Strategy, the impact was estimated as a 7% increase to curbside collection contract. If this option is selected staff will have to complete additional public education to ensure all residents are aware of the added collection events, as the municipal calendar has been finalized for 2026. This option is not recommended as survey results indicate spending on leaf and yard service is not a priority. If this option is pursued, it is recommended that the program changes be implemented beginning in 2027.

### **Update Tipping Fees at Landfills**

Council could consider implementing a tipping fee for all leaf and yard waste received at the landfill sites.

#### Option A:

Applying a regular tipping fee for all leaf and yard materials received at the site would reduce the number of customers by encouraging them to bring all of their materials to the landfill in one visit. It is expected that some residents would continue to use the landfill, even with the tipping fees in place. The revenue is difficult to estimate accurately as more residents may choose to use the curbside program rather than bring materials to the landfill. Staff have estimated \$50,000 revenue could be generated by implementing these fees.

In conjunction with the change in fees at the landfill sites, staff recommend advertising one additional free curbside leaf and yard collection event in October. It is difficult to understand how a change in fees would impact revenues for leaf and yard materials and as such it is possible that there would still be an added cost to the tax base for providing this curbside service. Leaf and yard collection dates printed in the municipal calendar are currently scheduled later in the season to ensure that the curbside service allows as many people to participate as possible.

The net cost of this option would be budgeted at \$0, and the actual costs confirmed through evaluation after implementation.

#### Option B:

Council could consider implementing a \$5/visit minimum fee for bringing in leaf and yard waste. This fee would assist in establishing a user fee for costs of managing leaf and yard waste at the depots. The minimum fee could be implemented with an increase

to the quantity of leaf and yard waste accepted at the landfill for this minimum from 250kg to 500kg. Increasing the minimum quantity accepted for \$5/visit is expected to reduce visits to the landfill.

The revenue is difficult to estimate accurately as more residents may choose to use the curbside program rather than bring materials to the landfill. Staff have estimated \$30,000 revenue could be generated by implementing these fees.

Removing free drop off is likely to cause disagreement with residents. If this option A or B is pursued, it is recommended that the program changes be implemented beginning in 2027.

Option C:

Council could consider increasing the quantity of leaf and yard waste accepted at the landfill for free from 250kg to 500kg. There are currently about 500 visits out of 34,000 (about 1.5%) that are captured in this range. This could potentially reduce multiple trips from residents attempting to come in under the chargeable quantity. This option is expected to result in approximately \$10,000 loss in revenue.

### **Pilot a Curbside Fee for Service Collection Program**

Staff considered several options to provide additional curbside collection service including a fee for service curbside collection pilot program for four weeks of the year.

The program would allow members of the public to purchase an online tag (similar to bulky items or mattresses) and call in to schedule leaf and yard pick up during designated weeks. To account for seasonality of leaf and yard service needs, the weeks for the pilot project would occur in May, July, September, October. The cost of the tag would be intended to cover the costs of the service, estimate an initial cost for providing this call-in service would be \$40/collection of up to 10 bags of leaf and yard waste – equivalent to \$4/bag. The fee was determined by estimated rates to provide the service and expected participation. Once the interest in the program is understood, the fee can be adjusted to ensure cost recovery.

The benefits associated with this option are that:

1. Residents interested in additional leaf and yard curbside collection service have a collection option available.

2. Many rural residents compost or manage leaf and yard waste on property and are not interested in any leaf and yard waste services.
3. There is possibility that offering this additional program would reduce landfill site visits.

The drawbacks include:

1. Potential to impact business of property maintenance companies.
2. Residents requesting additional leaf and yard collection service are likely looking for the service to be covered by the tax levy.
3. Participation in a fee for service option is unknown and may not be cost effective if few residents are willing to pay for this additional service.

In order to make the program effective, there would have to be an investment in advertising the new pilot program. The program is being recommended as a pilot project to evaluate interest and cost recovery for the service. There is potential that the pilot program does not fully recover costs associated with the service depending on number of participants and their location within the municipality. Staff are not aware of other municipalities that provide leaf and yard service this way.

The City would maintain the three existing free curbside collection events in June, and November. As well as maintaining the existing structure for tipping fees at the landfill sites.

If this option is pursued, it is recommended that the program changes be implemented beginning in 2027.

### **Alignment to Strategic Priorities**

The City's strategic plan places a focus on balancing several priorities. This recommendation aligns with the priority of good governance by maintaining an affordable and sustainable level of service.

### **Financial/Operation Impacts:**

No new financial impacts are expected as a result of this recommendation. Longer term, recommendations to consider changes to leaf and yard collection program as part of the next collection contract are estimated at 7% of collection contract costs, and will be reviewed in the future.

**Consultations:**

Miller Waste

**Attachments:**

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**Department Head: Oliver Vigelius**