



Report to Council

Department: Corporate Services
Division: 48
Date: February 16, 2026
Prepared by: Kate Rowe, CPA, Director, Corporate Services/Treasurer
Report Number: Corporate Services-2026-02
Subject: Refuse and Compostainer Level of Service Summary
Number of Pages: 4

Recommendation(s)

That Corporate Services-2026-02 entitled Refuse and Compostainer Level of Service Summary prepared by Kate Rowe, CPA, Director, Corporate Services/Treasurer dated February 16, 2026 be received, and

That Council direct Administration to initiate a public consultation in the Fall of 2026 on proposed service levels, and

That Council direct Administration to provide a report on the results of the public consultation, including consideration of reducing collection frequency to bi-weekly, effective in 2028.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present Council with a summary of the current levels of service for garbage, organics and yard-waste for the Town of Essex and

to consider the impacts of the Essex-Windsor Solid Waste Authority's (EWSWA) Green Bin Program on such levels of service.

This report is not intended to address service levels with respect to recycling. The collection cycle remains unchanged, despite the program and administration changes mandated by the Province under the single-stream collection program.

Background and Discussion

In recent years, waste collection contract costs have increased significantly. At the same time, provincial policy direction and regional waste diversion initiatives have placed greater emphasis on reducing landfill reliance and increasing diversion rates. These environmental priorities necessitate a review of existing service levels to ensure they remain aligned with both sustainable and fiscally responsible.

With the Green Bin Program fully implemented, administration is now assessing the operational and financial efficiencies that may be achieved by aligning garbage collection service levels accordingly. As such, Administration is recommending a review of refuse pickup frequency in 2027 with a change in service (if approved) becoming effective in 2028. A change such as this requires extensive public consultation which would be targeted for fall of 2026. This will ensure that measured, evidence-based recommendations can be presented for Council's consideration.

Through the public consultation, an assessment of uptake of the new Organics program will be conducted. It is important that households have sufficient time to

adapt their waste management habits and accurately assess their residual waste volumes. Scheduling the consultation for Fall 2026 will allow a one-year period of use prior to seeking input and will help ensure residents feedback is based on their refuse levels with the Organics program in full use.

The Town of Essex currently provides weekly refuse collection and bi-weekly/seasonal yard-waste collection to residential properties. It also provides enhanced yard-waste/organics collection in Ward 1 (“compostainers”) during the off-season from December through March. Therefore, Administration is recommending that public consultation include consideration of a consistent bi-weekly yard-waste collection schedule for all wards from April through November.

Across Essex County, most lower-tier municipalities have not yet implemented service-level changes, but have brought, or are preparing to bring, similar reports to their respective Councils. The City of Windsor aligned its service-level reduction with the launch of the Green Bin program in October 2025 and has since experienced a steady increase in diversion.

Financial Impact

Should Council ultimately adopt a reduction in refuse collection frequency from weekly to bi-weekly, the Town could realize estimated annual savings of approximately \$370,000, representing a 27.6 percent reduction to the garbage levy. This equates to approximately \$50 in annual savings per household.

With the rising cost of garbage collection and disposal costs, aligning refuse frequency with reduced waste volumes represents a fiscally responsible strategy. Decreasing the quantity of material directed to landfill also mitigates future disposal cost pressures and long-term environmental liabilities. The financial savings associated with service alignment are therefore complementary to the environmental benefits in addition to mitigating future financial pressures.

Consultations

Kate Giurissevich, CPA – Chief Administrative Officer.

GFL Environmental Inc.

Link to Strategic Priorities

- Embrace asset management best practices to build, maintain, and continuously improve our municipally owned infrastructure.
- Leverage our Town’s competitive advantages to promote jobs and economic investment.
- Take care of our natural environment and strengthen the sense of belonging to everyone who makes Essex “home”.
- Deliver friendly customer service in an efficient, effective, and transparent manner while providing an exceptional working environment for our employees.
- Build corporate-level and community-level climate resilience through community engagement and partnership and corporate objectives.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Refuse and Compostainer Level of Service Summary - Corporate Services 2026-02.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Feb 25, 2026

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Giurissevich". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name.

Kate Giurissevich, Chief Administrative Officer - Feb 25, 2026 - 9:59 AM