

# Charting the Future of Residential Waste Collection in Vaughan

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION PARTICIPATION GUIDE**



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# INTRODUCTION

## About this guide

Welcome to the City of Vaughan’s participation guide for the 2028 Residential Waste Collection Contract public consultation process. This guide has been created to ensure you, a valued member of the community, have the information and tools you need to meaningfully engage in the decision-making process that will shape the future of Vaughan’s municipal waste collection services. Your input is crucial, and this guide is designed to empower you with the knowledge required to contribute to the conversation effectively.

## Importance of public participation

At the heart of effective governance lies the inclusion of public voices in decision-making. Your participation in this public consultation process is an essential part of the democratic process. By sharing your perspectives, ideas and concerns, you play a crucial role in shaping the future of waste collection services in our city. Public participation ensures decisions are well-informed, transparent and representative of the diverse needs and priorities of the community. Your involvement makes a difference, and we are committed to providing you with the resources you need to engage meaningfully.

## Guide overview

This guide is your comprehensive resource for navigating the engagement process for the development of the City of Vaughan’s 2028 Residential Waste Collection Contract. In the following pages you will find insights into the contract’s significance, information about key topics and issues, an outline of the consultation timeline and much more.



# UNDERSTANDING PUBLIC CONSULTATION

## What is public consultation?

Public consultation is a collaborative process that involves engaging the community, stakeholders and residents like you in the decision-making processes of local government. It provides a platform for sharing information, gathering feedback and ensuring diverse perspectives are considered when making decisions that impact citizens. Your participation in public consultation ensures your voice is heard and decisions are more representative of everyone's collective needs and aspirations.

## Purpose and benefits of public engagement

Public engagement serves multiple purposes, each of which plays a vital role in the growth and development of Vaughan into a world-class city. By involving you in the decision-making process, we aim to achieve the following:

- **Foster transparency:** Open and transparent communication builds trust between the City and its residents, enabling informed decisions based on shared information.
- **Promote inclusivity:** Public consultation aims to include and consider the voices of the community, preventing the marginalization of certain groups or viewpoints.
- **Enhance accountability:** Engaging the public holds decision-makers accountable for their choices, encouraging them to make decisions aligned with citizens' preferences.
- **Strengthen civic engagement:** Public engagement encourages active civic participation, promoting a sense of ownership and responsibility in shaping the future of the city.

## How your input shapes decisions

Your input is integral to the decision-making process. Decision-makers take your feedback into account, combining it with expert analysis and other factors to make informed and balanced decisions. Your insights help ensure recommendations and decisions align with community needs and reflect the values of our diverse population.



# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

## Government working together: A co-ordinated approach

Municipal residential waste management is a shared responsibility across governments. The City operates within a two-tier municipal structure, which means two levels of government provide services to the community – a local government and a regional government. The roles of both Vaughan and York Region intersect in a collaborative effort to create a comprehensive waste management framework that addresses local and regional priorities.

Vaughan’s waste management initiatives align with the goals and objectives outlined in [Green Directions Vaughan](#), the City’s community sustainability plan, specifically supporting the goal to significantly reduce the use of natural resources and the amount of waste generated by Vaughan citizens, businesses and institutions. Vaughan’s early commitment to [York Region’s SM4RT Living Plan](#) (their Integrated Waste Management Master Plan) further strengthens the City’s leadership in municipal waste management. The SM4RT Living Plan identifies initiatives that set the stage for waste management to 2059 and beyond, focusing on the four Rs: reduce, reuse, recycle and recover – working toward a “world in which nothing goes to waste.” The plan sets long-term waste reduction targets for garbage and organics. By 2031, the City’s goal is for each household in Vaughan to reduce and recycle an additional bag of garbage per collection and reduce food waste by consuming all food purchased.



The City is accountable for managing the curbside collection of residential organics, recycling, garbage and leaf and yard waste and appliance/large metal item collection. Beyond these essential services, the City also seeks innovative ways to host and engage residents in waste reduction events and initiatives, delivers customer service by responding to customer requests and inquiries and designs and delivers the annual Waste Collection Schedule. The City is responsible for the contractual process for procuring a vendor for waste collection services. Vaughan contracts out waste collection to enhance operational efficiency, reduce costs and tap into innovations in waste collection technologies. This approach entrusts waste collection to professionals who possess the necessary equipment, workers and expertise.



York Region provides the infrastructure and expertise needed to process and manage waste once it is collected. Most garbage collected is sent to an energy-from-waste facility to be converted into energy. Some of these facilities can process up to 140,000 tonnes of non-hazardous municipal garbage per year. The heat generated by the waste combustion is used to generate electricity and steam, and recyclable metals are recovered from the ash. Want to learn more? [Take a virtual tour of the Durham York Energy Centre](#). Landfill disposal options are still required for bulky items not suitable for energy recovery, like large pieces of furniture, broken exercise equipment or mattresses. The Region also manages a number of [waste depots](#), where residents can drop off garbage, recycling, yard waste, electronics and other waste.

## Ontario

The Government of Ontario plays a significant role in municipal waste management, providing a framework and regulations that guide waste-related activities across the province. They set standards for garbage disposal, recycling and environmental protection to ensure the health and safety of communities. For instance, the province has introduced the [Blue Box Regulation](#) to shift responsibility for recycling to producers of packaging and paper products, aiming to reduce waste and encourage recycling. Ontario also supports initiatives to promote circular economy practices, which involve reducing waste by reusing and recycling materials.



## The core project team

The success of the public consultation process for the 2028 Residential Waste Collection Contract relies on a dedicated and skilled core project team consisting of cross-functional City departments and professional consultants. By collaborating closely, this core project team aims to create and execute a comprehensive consultation approach that encompasses various engagement methods, ensuring a wide range of perspectives are considered in shaping the City's future waste collection contract.

## City project team

Comprising experienced professionals from various departments, the City project team plays a central role in providing subject matter expertise as well as planning, co-ordinating and executing the public consultation process. This team ensures that process aligns with the City's policies and community needs. They facilitate information and feedback exchange, assist in the collection and analyzing of public input, and ultimately contribute to informed decision-making.

## Engagement consultant

The engagement consultant team is a specialized group of professionals with expertise in public participation. This consultant works closely with the City's project team to design and implement a robust engagement strategy. Their role involves being advocates for and facilitators of a neutral consultation process.

## Market research consultant

To gauge the perspectives of a representative sample of Vaughan residents, a market research consultant has been retained to conduct a statistically significant citywide telephone survey. This consultant employs rigorous research methodologies to ensure the survey accurately reflects the diversity of viewpoints in the community. The consultant prepares survey questions, administers the survey, analyzes the data and provides insights that will help inform the decision-making process.

## Vaughan Council

Council's involvement reflects a commitment to responsive governance and is paramount in ensuring recommendations and final outcomes are expertly informed and aligned with the community's best interests. Community preferences, concerns and recommendations, alongside other important research, best practices and industry trends will be considered to make informed choices. Council members also act as conduits between the City administration and their constituents. They inform their communities about the consultation process, encouraging residents to participate and share important updates and outcomes of the engagement activities.





# YARD WASTE

AURORA  
(905) 709-1075

NEWMARKET  
(905) 896-5152

EAST GWILLIMBURY  
(905) 478-4282

RICHMOND HILL  
(905) 884-6813

GEORGINA  
(905) 476-4301

VAUGHAN  
(905) 832-2281

KING  
(905) 832-5321

WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE  
(905) 640-1900

MARKHAM  
(905) 479-7555

In partnership with  
*York Region*

# VAUGHAN'S WASTE COLLECTION CONTRACT

## Overview

The City of Vaughan is responsible for providing residential waste collection services to approximately 100,000 homes, including multi-residential and mixed-use buildings. This comprehensive waste collection program covers various types of waste, such as residential garbage (every other week), blue box recyclables (weekly and in unlimited amounts), green bin organics (weekly), leaf and yard waste (seasonally from April to November), Christmas tree collection (two consecutive weeks in January), bulky items, metal items and residual garbage. For more information about Vaughan's comprehensive waste collection services and reduction initiatives, visit [vaughan.ca/waste](https://vaughan.ca/waste).

Vaughan's municipal waste collection contract is a substantial and extensive agreement, representing one of the City's most significant contracts. Valued at approximately \$100 million over a duration of 10 years, it stands as one of the longest and largest contracts in Vaughan's portfolio. With the current contract's expiration on the horizon, the City is actively preparing for the next 10-year residential waste collection contract, scheduled to begin in 2028. Developing and executing these waste collection contracts is a crucial process that ensures efficient waste collection services for the community. This comprehensive planning process involves several key steps and considerations to meet the waste management needs of our growing city.

### STEP 1: CONTRACT PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT

As the current contract nears its end, the City initiates a detailed assessment of its waste management requirements. This includes evaluating the existing services, analyzing community needs and identifying areas for potential improvement. The City considers factors such as population growth, changes in waste composition, waste reduction goals, industry best practices and environmental considerations among other things.

### STEP 2: PUBLIC CONSULTATION

To ensure the new contract reflects the needs and expectations of residents, public consultation becomes a vital component. The City engages with residents through various feedback channels to gather valuable input on service levels, future waste services requirements and other related aspects.

### STEP 3: DEVELOPING CONTRACT SPECIFICATIONS

With insights gathered from public consultation, the City formulates detailed contract specifications. These specifications outline the scope of services, performance standards, waste collection schedules, equipment and personnel requirements, and much more.

### STEP 4: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) PROCESS

Once contract specifications are established, the City issues a public RFP that waste collection companies can respond to. The RFP outlines the City's expectations, requirements and evaluation criteria. Interested companies submit their proposals, detailing how they intend to meet the contract specifications and provide effective waste collection services, including overall pricing to deliver said services over the contract term.

## **STEP 5: VENDOR SELECTION AND CONTRACT FINALIZATION**

A thorough evaluation process follows, involving a review of each submitted proposal. The evaluation includes factors such as technical expertise, proposed service methods, experience, pricing, environmental considerations, the ability to meet the City's waste management goals, etc. The City selects the vendor that best aligns with its requirements and the contract is finalized and signed.

## **STEP 6: IMPLEMENTATION AND OVERSIGHT**

The new contract's implementation involves ensuring a smooth transition from the old contract so waste collection services can continue uninterrupted and new services or initiatives (if any) are successfully launched. Throughout the contract's duration, the City monitors the vendor's performance and compliance with contract terms and conducts regular performance reviews to evaluate whether the contract is meeting its intended goals.



# KEY ISSUES AND TOPICS

## Clear bag program – garbage collection

### What is a clear bag program?

A clear bag program for garbage collection is a waste management approach where residents are required to use transparent or translucent bags to dispose of their garbage. Many municipalities in Ontario are moving to clear bag programs for garbage collection. The goal of this program is to increase diversion by making it easier for waste collectors to identify recyclable and compostable materials that are being put out as garbage (and potentially refuse collection). It also aims to raise public awareness about responsible residential waste disposal. The City is exploring the option of adopting a city-wide clear bag program for garbage collection.

### Benefits of a clear bag program

- **Increased recycling and sorting:** A clear bag program encourages residents to be more conscious of their waste and sort waste properly, potentially leading to increased recycling efforts and diversion of recyclable and compostable materials from landfills. The program may even foster a behavioural shift toward waste reduction and more sustainable consumption patterns. Other communities that have adopted this program have seen up to a 30 per cent reduction in traditional garbage.
- **Improved accountability and contamination:** Clear bags make it easier for waste collectors to identify (and potentially refuse) improper disposal, leading to better enforcement of waste diversion requirements. Because they allow for visual inspection, clear bags may reduce the likelihood of hazardous or prohibited items being placed in the garbage, which can improve waste stream quality and safety.
- **Enhanced public education:** The program contributes to raising awareness about waste generation and encourages residents to think about their consumption habits and waste disposal choices.
- **Environmental impact:** Encouraging proper waste sorting and reducing contamination contribute to a more sustainable and environmentally friendly waste management system.

### Trade-offs of a clear bag program

- **Perception of intrusion:** Some residents might perceive clear bag programs as intrusive or an infringement on their personal space as the contents of garbage bags would be visible to others. As a result, residents might initially resist the change to using clear bags.
- **Behavioural resistance:** Some residents may continue to dispose of waste improperly or may not fully comply with or simply disregard the program's requirements.
- **Educational efforts:** Successful implementation requires ongoing education and outreach efforts to ensure residents understand the program's goals and requirements.
- **Enforcement challenges:** Monitoring compliance with clear bags might be challenging, especially during an initial period of transition, and addressing non-compliance could require additional resources.
- **Cost implications:** Introducing a clear-bag program may require residents to transition from their current opaque garbage bags to transparent ones, which could involve the purchase of new see-through bags for waste disposal.



**DANGER**  
DANGER

**SAFETY NOTICE**  
AVIS DE SÉCURITÉ

# Medical waste exemption program

## About the program

The City's medical waste exemption program is specifically tailored to provide support for individuals who require the disposal of additional waste that cannot be recycled due to various medical conditions. This includes situations where residents may need to discard items such as medical packaging, used dressings or other related items that arise from medical treatments or conditions. Medical conditions like home dialysis, wound care or specific medical treatments can generate waste that falls outside the scope of regular household waste. The program, which is subsidized through tax dollars, aims to alleviate the challenges faced by these residents, ensuring they have a proper and convenient means to dispose of such waste in a way that is both respectful and environmentally responsible. To access the program, residents must complete an application form and obtain a signature from a medical professional before it is submitted to and reviewed by the City. If approved, garbage tags for 20 additional bags/bins are provided per year at no cost. Below are some benefits and trade-offs to consider for expanding the program.

## Benefits of expanding the program

- **Enhanced service and quality of life:** By allowing individuals with medical conditions to dispose of waste more conveniently, an expanded program may contribute to a higher quality of life and improved well-being, while also providing greater support to individuals with medical conditions, ensuring they have a safe and efficient way to dispose of medical waste. Expanding the program also demonstrates the City's commitment to supporting residents' health and well-being, fostering a sense of community care and support.
- **Health and safety:** Proper disposal of medical waste reduces health risks associated with improper disposal methods and helps prevent the spread of infections or diseases. By making medical waste disposal easier and more accessible, the program may reduce instances of improper waste disposal, minimizing environmental and public health risks.

## Trade-offs of expanding the program

- **Budgetary impact:** Expanding the program incurs additional costs for the City, including the provision of more free garbage tags, which would be subsidized through municipal tax dollars.
- **Equity concerns and public perception:** Expanding the program could raise concerns about equity, as residents without medical conditions may question why certain groups receive additional benefits. It might also lead to differing opinions among residents about fairness and prioritization of services.
- **Lack of clarity:** Expanding the program might lead to confusion about eligibility criteria, potentially causing frustration among residents who do not meet the eligibility criteria.



## Manual (bin) versus automated (cart) collection

### Manual collection

Currently, waste collection is carried out manually. Residents use designated containers such as blue boxes and green bins to sort recyclables and organics, while garbage is placed in bags or bins for collection. Collection crews manually handle these materials and load them onto collection vehicles.

### Automated collection

With automated collection, households in Vaughan would receive large carts equipped with wheels and flip-top lids. Automated collection trucks are fitted with mechanical arms that lift and empty the contents of the carts into the trucks.

### Benefits of automated collection

- **Efficiency:** Automated collection systems streamline the waste collection process, reducing collection times and optimizing routes.
- **Reduced injuries:** The use of mechanical arms and carts significantly reduce the physical strain on collection crews, minimizing the risk of injuries.

### Trade-Offs of automated collection

- **Initial investment:** Implementing automated collection requires a sizeable initial investment in specialized equipment, such as standardized carts for all households.
- **Visual impact:** The use of large carts can impact the visual aesthetic of neighbourhoods, which may not be favoured by all residents. For example, the introduction of larger-size carts might be visually more prominent compared to smaller bins or bags.
- **Infrastructure constraints:** Certain infrastructure challenges, such as narrow streets or limited storage space for carts for some residences, can hinder the implementation of automated systems.
- **Reduced waste diversion:** Large carts encourage contamination, leading to reduced diversion rates and a potential for more waste to be sent to landfill.

## The transition to automated collection could cost between \$16 million and \$24 million

The transition to automated collection is a significant undertaking with associated costs that need to be carefully considered. The estimated cost to transition all eligible residential properties to wheeled carts with flip-top lids for automated waste collection is projected to be between \$16 million and \$24 million, a financial responsibility that would ultimately fall to Vaughan taxpayers. To manage this substantial cost in a way that is equitable and manageable for the community, there are different methods of covering the expense.



One approach is a one-time tax levy, which would involve spreading the total cost across all taxpayers in a single fiscal year. While this might have a more immediate impact on residents' finances, it would ensure the entire cost to transition to carts is covered swiftly. Alternatively, there is also the option of implementing a smaller levy applied over a few years. This approach would distribute the financial burden across multiple years, potentially reducing the immediate financial strain on residents while still ensuring the necessary funds are collected to cover the transition costs.

## Extended producer responsibility for recycling

### Producers and manufacturers of recycling waste to take a lead role in its management and collection

In June 2021, the Province of Ontario introduced the [Blue Box Regulation](#) (O. Reg. 391/21: BLUE BOX), which transfers the financial and operational obligations of recycling to producers and manufacturers of packaging, paper and similar products. The City is currently working with the provincial government and the regulatory authority in an effort to safeguard the interests of Vaughan residents, manage this transition and determine the role Vaughan will play in the future of recycling.

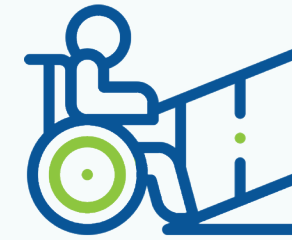


**Manual collection** relies on people to pick up and place/empty materials into a collection vehicle.

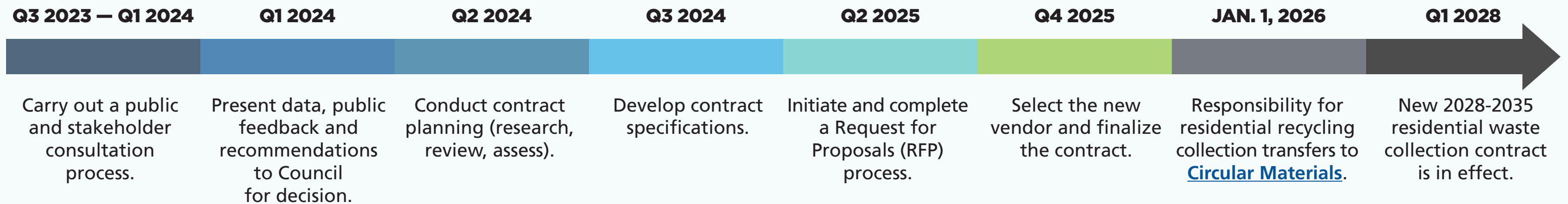


**Automated collection** relies on trucks fitted with mechanical arms to pick up/empty carts into a collection vehicle.

## PHASES OF THE CONSULTATION PROCESS



## KEY DATES AND MILESTONES



# Additional resources and who to contact

## Relevant reports, studies and related reading

- [Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks | Reducing Litter and Waste in Our Communities: Discussion Paper \(PDF\)](#)

## Websites for more information

- [City of Vaughan | Solid Waste Management Services](#)
- [York Region | Waste Management](#)
- [Government of Ontario | Waste Management](#)
- [Government of Ontario | Producer responsibility for Ontario's waste diversion programs](#)
- [Government of Ontario | Ontario Enhancing Blue Box Program](#)
- [Circular Materials | For Producers, By Producers](#)





VAUGHAN



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