



## ***WHAT WE HEARD ABOUT THE SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN***

*Environmental Services  
Sept. 21 – Nov. 10, 2023*

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We humbly acknowledge that the land on which we live, learn, work and play is Treaty 8 Territory, the traditional and ancestral lands of the Cree, Dene, and unceded territory of the Métis.

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

Environmental Services is developing a Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP). The SWMP will direct what happens to garbage and recycling across the region to reduce waste, expand and enhance services, manage costs over time and extend the life of the landfills. It will also strive to meet resident recycling and composting expectations, align with provincial and federal policies while protecting the environment and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The process to develop the plan has a three-phase approach.

1. Phase one: Assessment
2. Phase two: Public engagement and SWMP development
3. Phase three: Adoption and implementation of the SWMP

Feedback received throughout this engagement will be reviewed and considered along with other factors in drafting the new plan as the team works to develop a shared vision of the region's solid waste management system.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

People chose to engage with the *More talk - Less trash* campaign 1,216 times Sept. 21 through Nov. 10. This total includes 867 completed surveys and nine engagement events where people took action approximately 349 times. Five of the survey participants that opted to enter the random draw, each won a \$100 gift card to the Peter Pond Mall, an optional Green Cone composter and an optional tour of the landfill facility.

## ENGAGEMENT PARTICIPANTS

1. Urban and rural residents
2. RMWB solid waste contracted services
3. Business community in Wood Buffalo

## COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

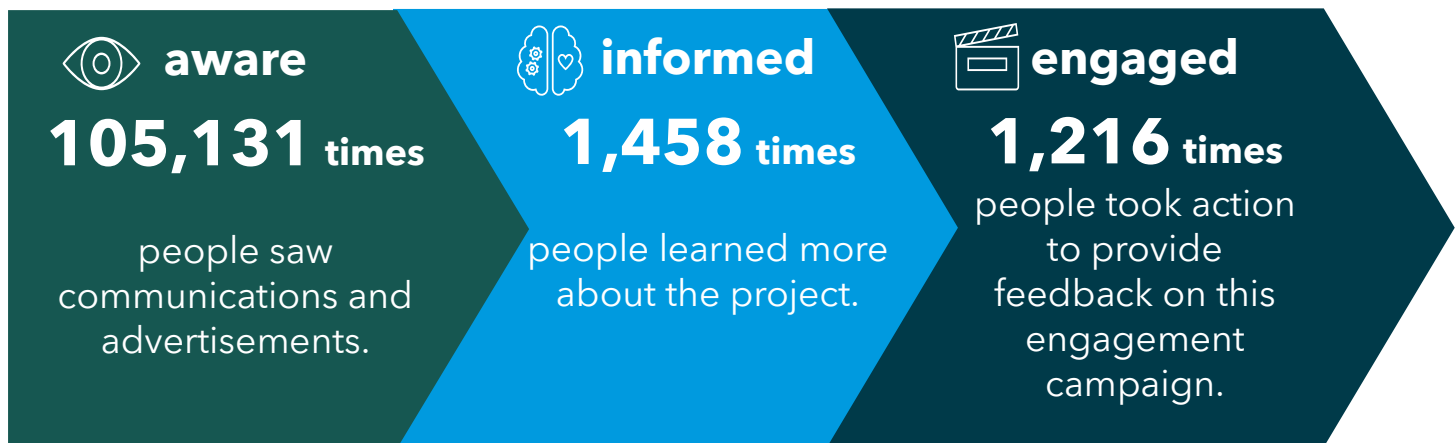
- ✓ News Release
- ✓ Radio
- ✓ Social media campaign
- ✓ RMWB's engagement portal – Participate Wood Buffalo
- ✓ RMWB's engagement newsletter
- ✓ Digital screens in urban and rural recreation centres
- ✓ Rural newsletters
- ✓ Direct contact with stakeholders
- ✓ MAC Calendar
- ✓ Printed materials distributed to the rural municipal offices

## ENGAGEMENT TACTICS



- In-person and virtual engagement sessions
- Online survey (available in print or through Pulse phone support)
- Printed post cards with survey QR code (handed out at in person events and at the Landfill weight scales to patrons)
- Random draw contest
- In-person and virtual Q&A and one-on-one conversations

## ENGAGEMENT IN NUMBERS



## KEY FINDINGS/THEMES

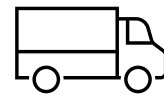
Throughout engagement, key themes emerged for the municipality to consider for the future of solid waste management. Here are the top five:



COMPOSTING



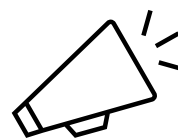
GLASS RECYCLING



CONVENIENT SERVICES



INCREASED RECYCLING



EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

# DETAILED ENGAGEMENT REVIEW

A variety of engagement opportunities were provided throughout the region to gather insightful feedback from residents, Indigenous and rural community members, and other stakeholders on current solid waste services, their level of satisfaction with those services and how they feel the solid waste management system can improve.

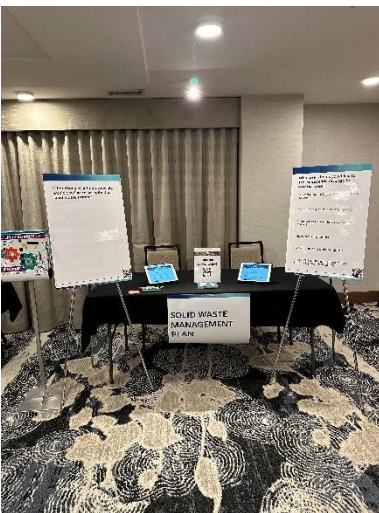
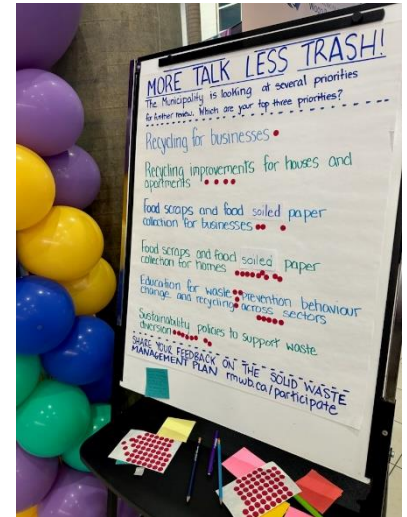
## ABOUT THE IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENTS

### In-person events

Engagement opportunities to provide feedback for the SWMP were held at three events in October and November, including the Fort McMurray Trade Show and Artisan Market and The RMWB Neighborhood Engagement Series (NES) events. Subject matter experts shared information, had one-on-one conversations with residents and encouraged survey participation.

According to feedback received at the fall trade show and NES events, participants feel that the Municipality should focus on these top three priorities for solid waste:

1. Food scraps and food soiled paper collection for homes.
2. Recycling improvements for houses and apartments.
3. Education for waste prevention behaviour change across sectors.



A Business Engagement Luncheon was held at the Pomeroy Hotel and Conference Rooms on November 2. The RMWB's Environmental Services and Planning and Development Departments collaborated with the Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce to bring the business community together, share information and gather feedback on their respective projects. A total of fifty-three attended representing twenty-seven businesses.

The business group also represented several provinces around Canada, with a strong working knowledge of available diversion programs. The following question was asked:

What changes or improvements would you like to see with the solid waste system?

Feedback provided showed that business owners are looking for more convenient recycling programs that are accessible for their businesses such as curbside collection. They would like the option to recycle more materials and increase diversion of waste from the landfills. Many businesses, especially those in the hospitality industry, would welcome the opportunity to recycle food scraps and compostable materials and would recycle food-soiled materials if they were able.

## Virtual events

Four virtual presentations took place via Microsoft Teams on October 18 and 19 at varying times. The presentations shared information with the public about how the current solid waste management system operates along with the waste trends of the region as observed through the assessment of phase one. Subject matter experts hosted a Q&A period in each session following the presentation answering questions including these:

Q: How big of a problem is contamination?

A: From what we've seen in our waste companies a large amount of the recycling stream is contamination. Educating residents and businesses about the programs can help.

Q: What construction would need to happen to the existing composting facility to accommodate diverted food scraps from both residential and commercial sources?

A: A windrow composting system is currently used at the landfill. They are able to compost biosolids, wood and yard waste at the facility. They can technically process food waste there as well, but it will require additional infrastructure to make sure that it's done well and has no environmental impact.

That's a question that, certainly would need to be discussed more if that's a direction that the RMWB would like to go.

Q: Is there a better system to provide recycling to residents such as myself who do not have access to curbside recycling?

A: That's exactly one of the reasons why we're engaging on this project. To get your feedback and find out what services people are looking for.

The intent of the plan is to ensure residents have access to user-friendly recycling via curbside or depot programs.

The virtual business engagement was held on November 9 with Environmental Services and Planning and Development Departments sharing presentations on their projects. This session included Q&A options and lots of discussion time with subject matter experts. Eight attendees from six companies were represented in the online audience including RMWB solid waste contractors.

## ABOUT THE SURVEY

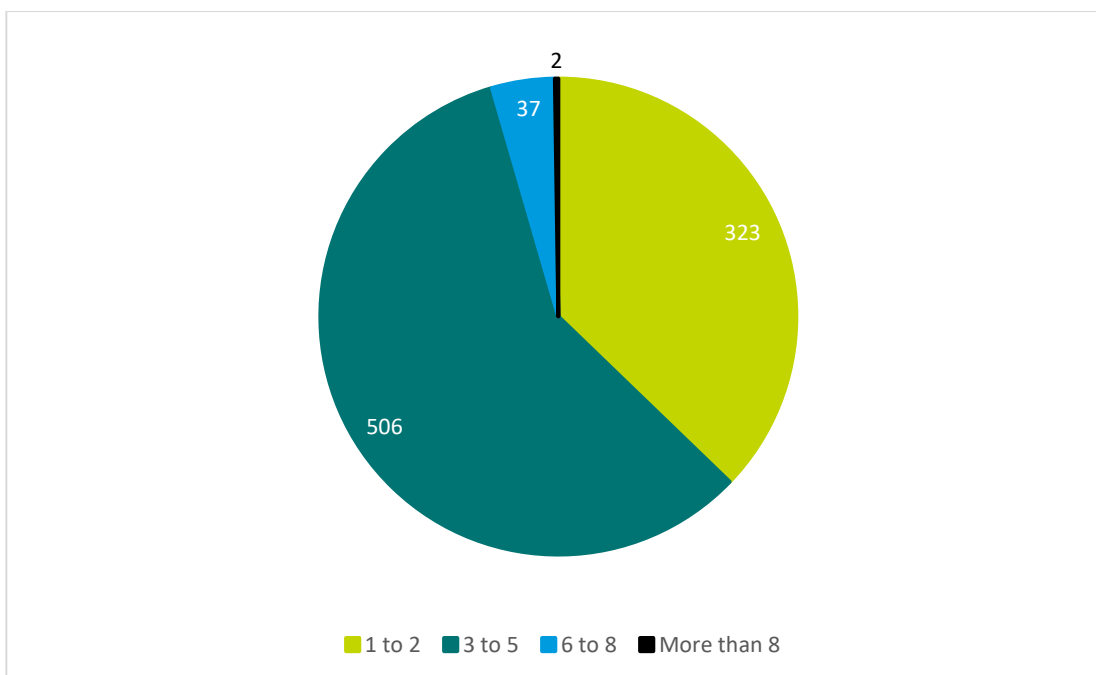
Questions in the Solid Waste Management Plan Survey focused on personal waste production, current solid waste services and the satisfaction level of those services. The survey questions were divided into sections (recycling and garbage at home, usage, satisfaction level and assessment) and included open-ended questions that asked what changes or improvements participants would like to see and what they think should be future priorities of solid waste for the Municipality. From Sept. 21-Nov. 10, a total of 867 surveys were completed.

## Demographics

### Q1: Which area of the RMWB do you live in?

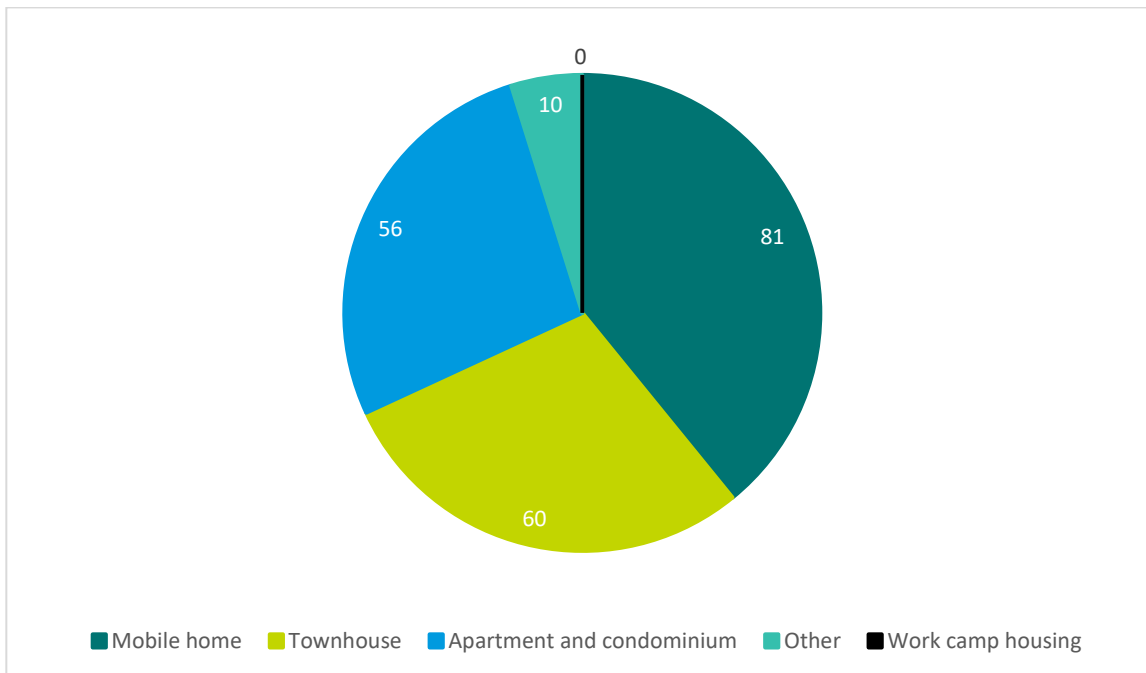
Community	Number of responses
Fort McMurray	801
Anzac	19
Saprae Creek Estates	19
Fort McKay	8
Other	7
Gregoire Lake Estates	5
Fort Chipewyan	4
Draper	3
Conklin	2
Fort Fitzgerald	0
Janvier	0

### Q2: How many people live in your household?

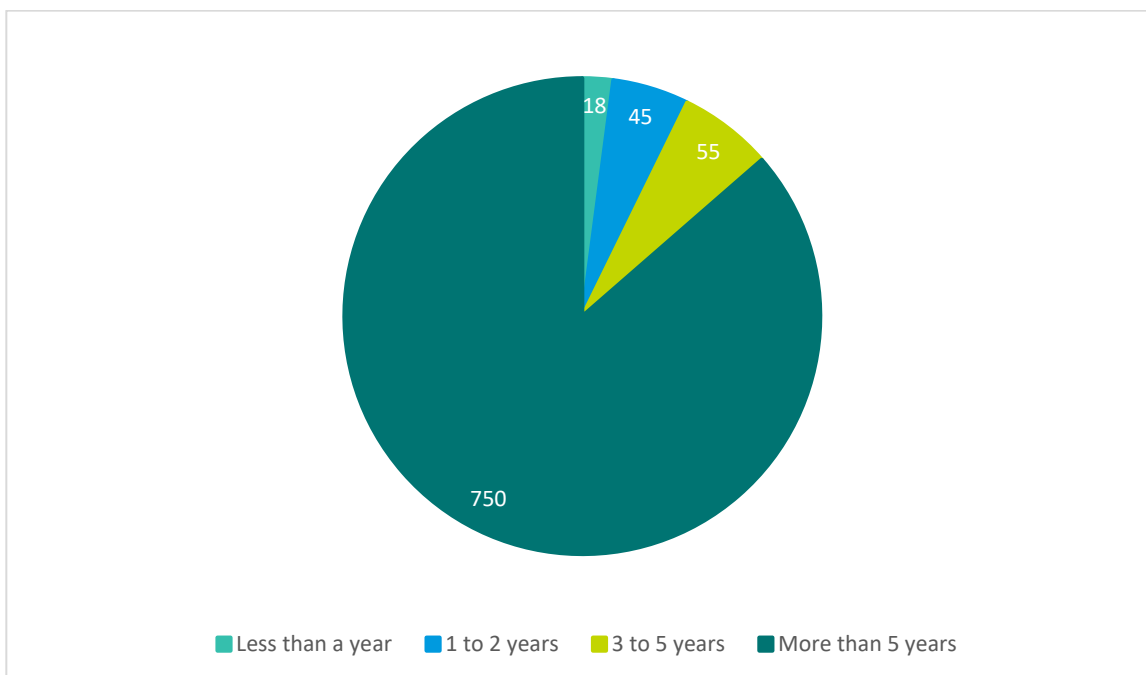




### Q3: What type of home do you live in?

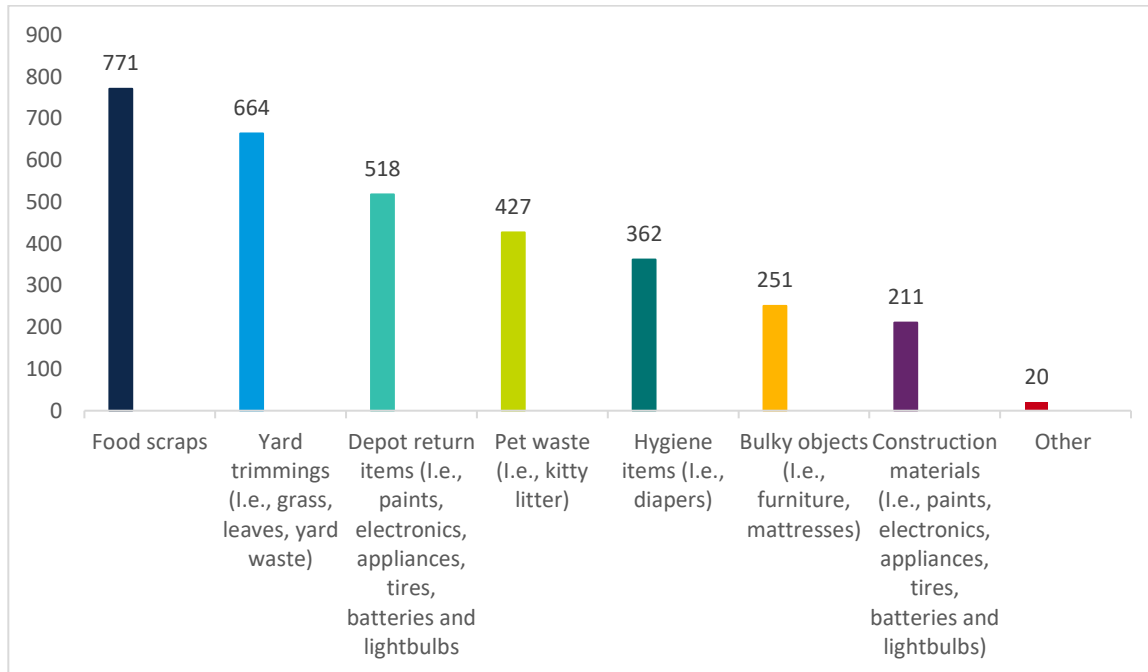


### Q4: How long have you lived in the region?



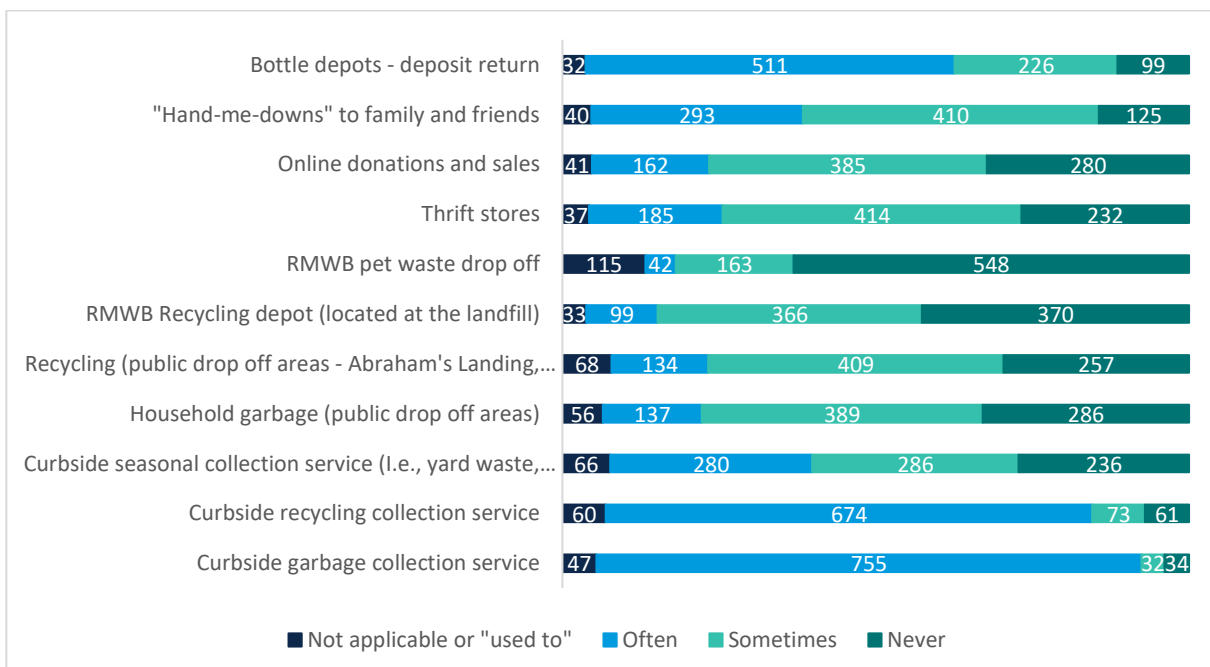
## Recycling and garbage at home

**Q5: What are examples of the types of materials/waste that you produce at home?**  
(Check all that apply)

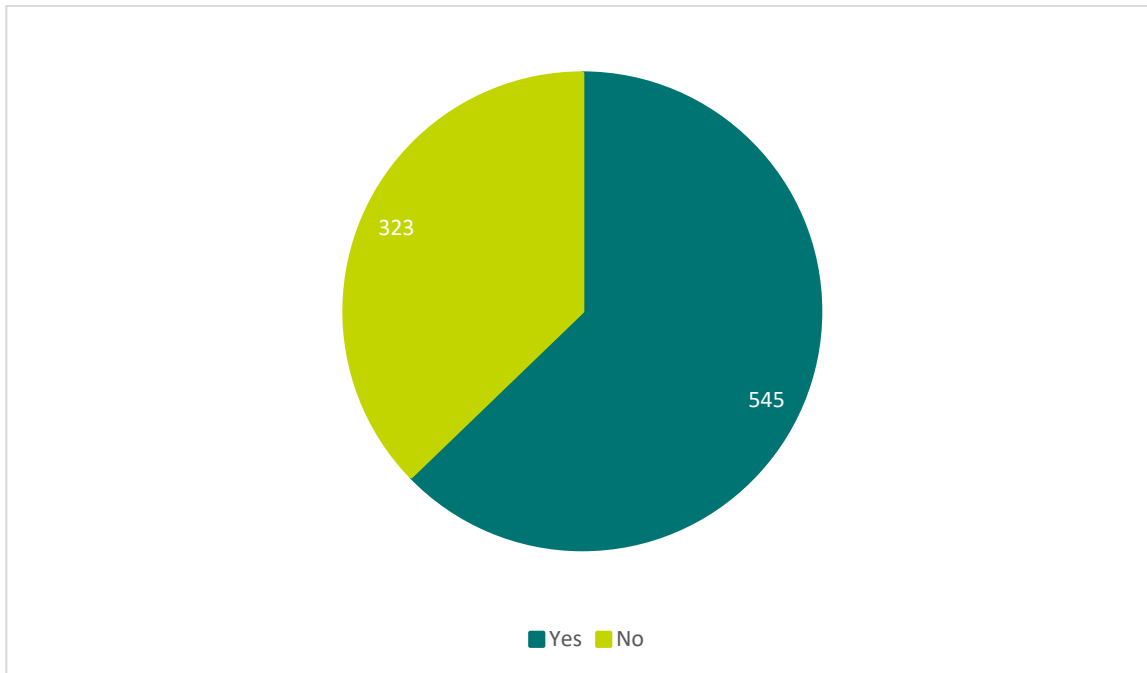


## Usage

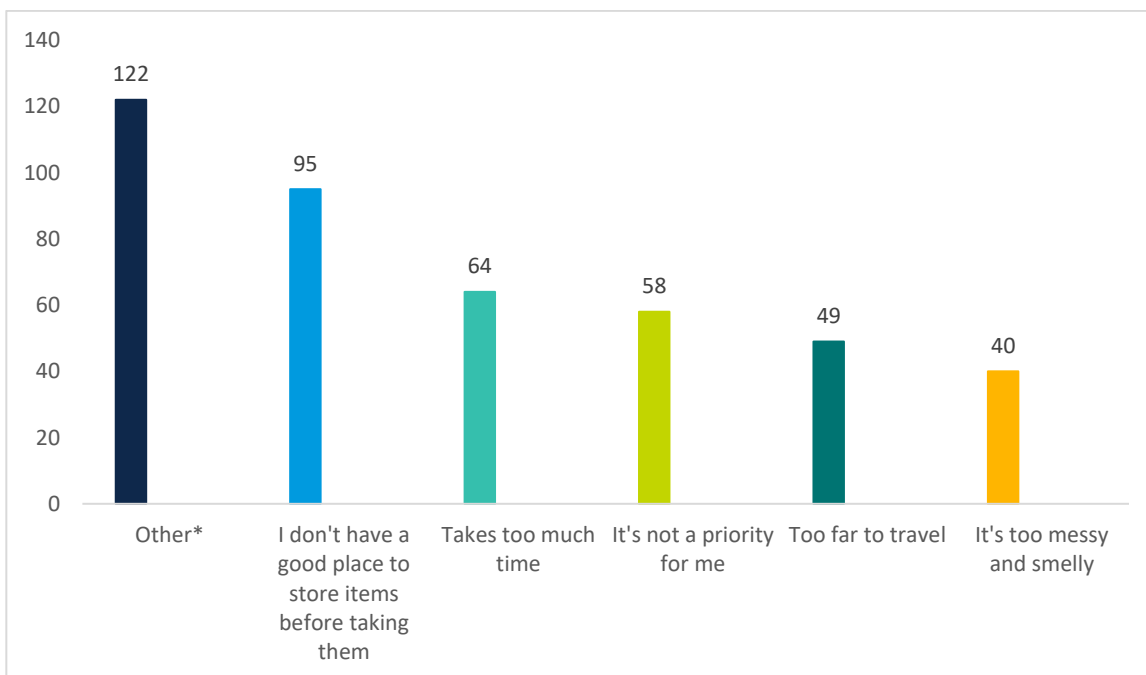
**Q6: How often do you use the following solid waste management approaches, as applicable?**  
(One check per line)



**Q9: Do you use public drop off areas for recycling?**

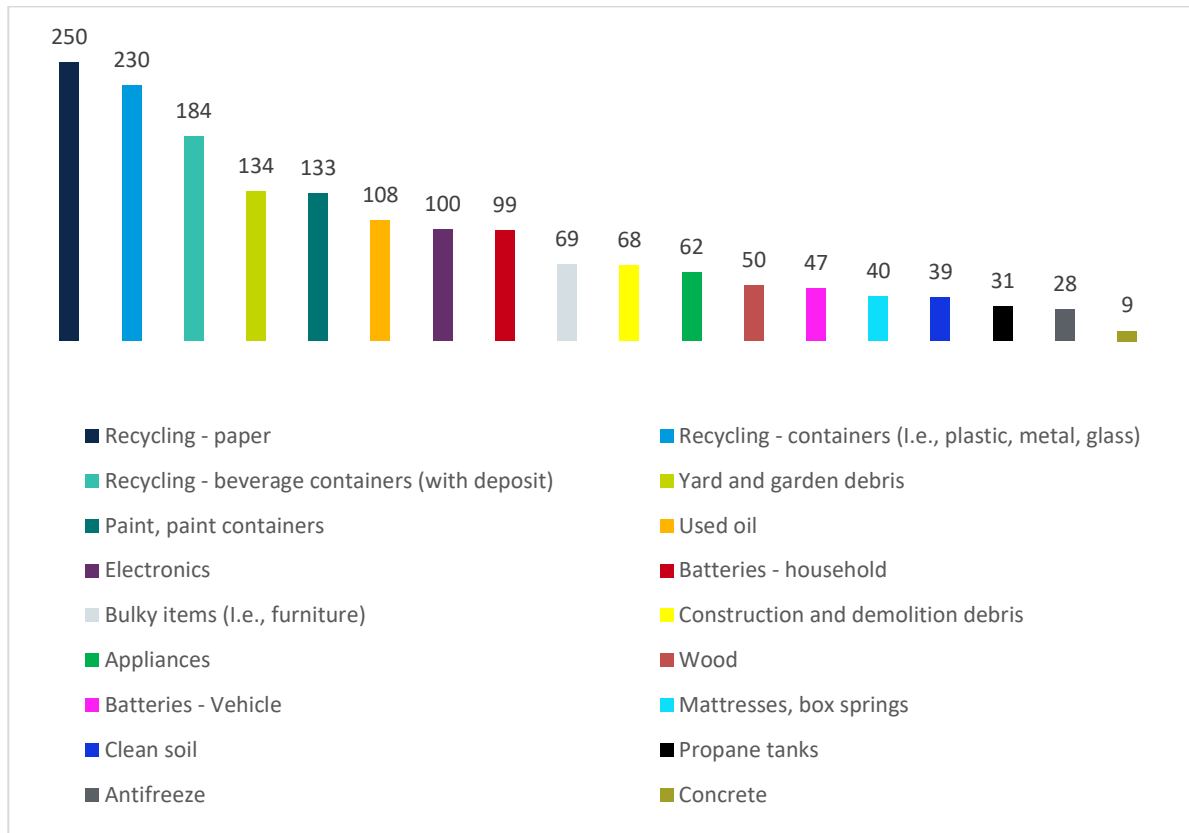


**Q8(A) Please tell us why. (Check all that apply) (Asked only if the answer was “no” to Q8)**

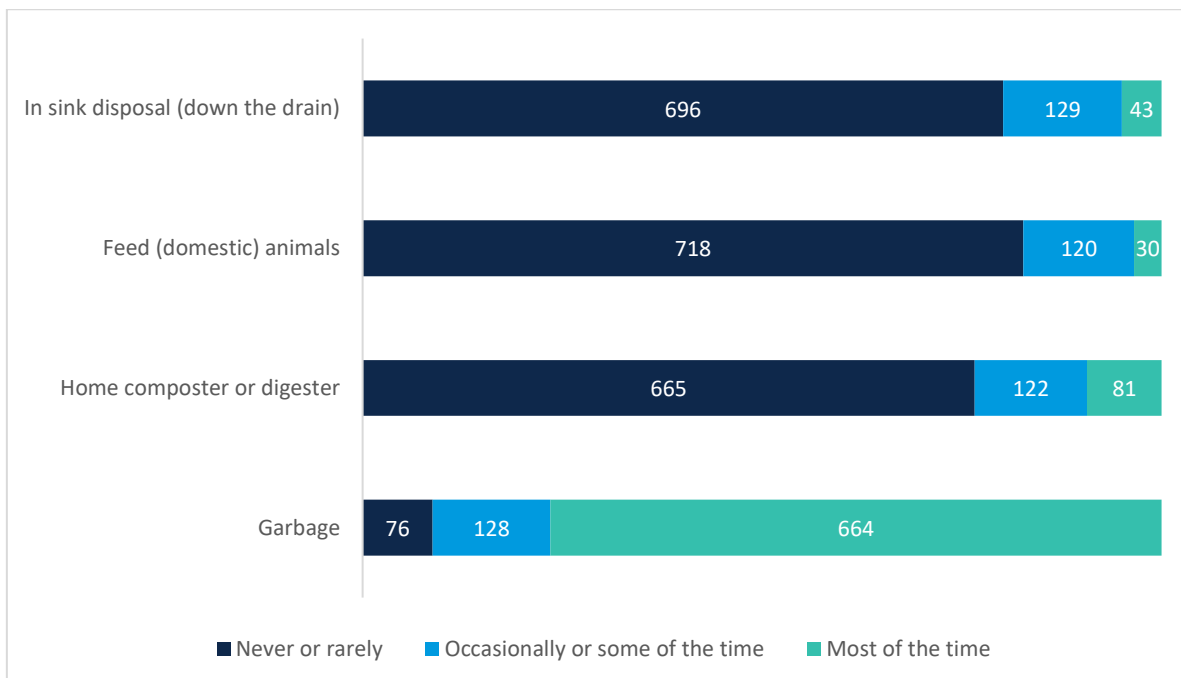


*\*Other – Curbside collection is meeting needs, unsure of where public drop offs are located, have other ways of recycling, my area or building does not have recycling, public drop offs are always full.*

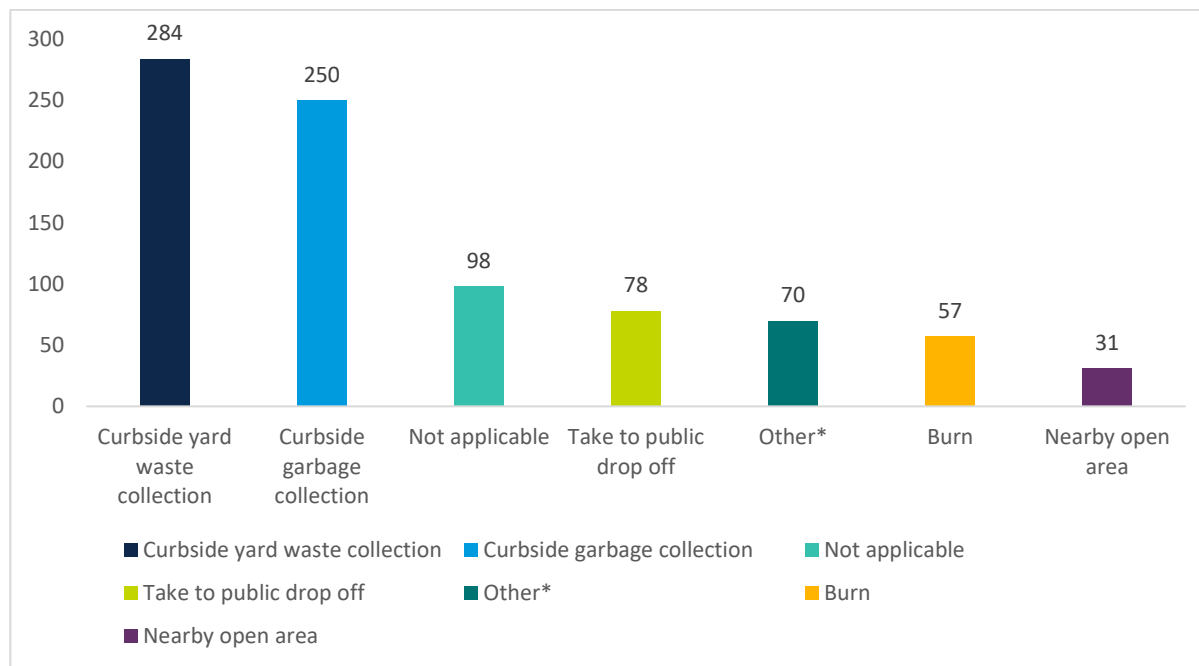
**Q9: Which of the following items have you recycled at a public drop off in the last year? (Check all that apply)**



**Q10: How often do you use each method to dispose of your food scraps? (One check per line)**



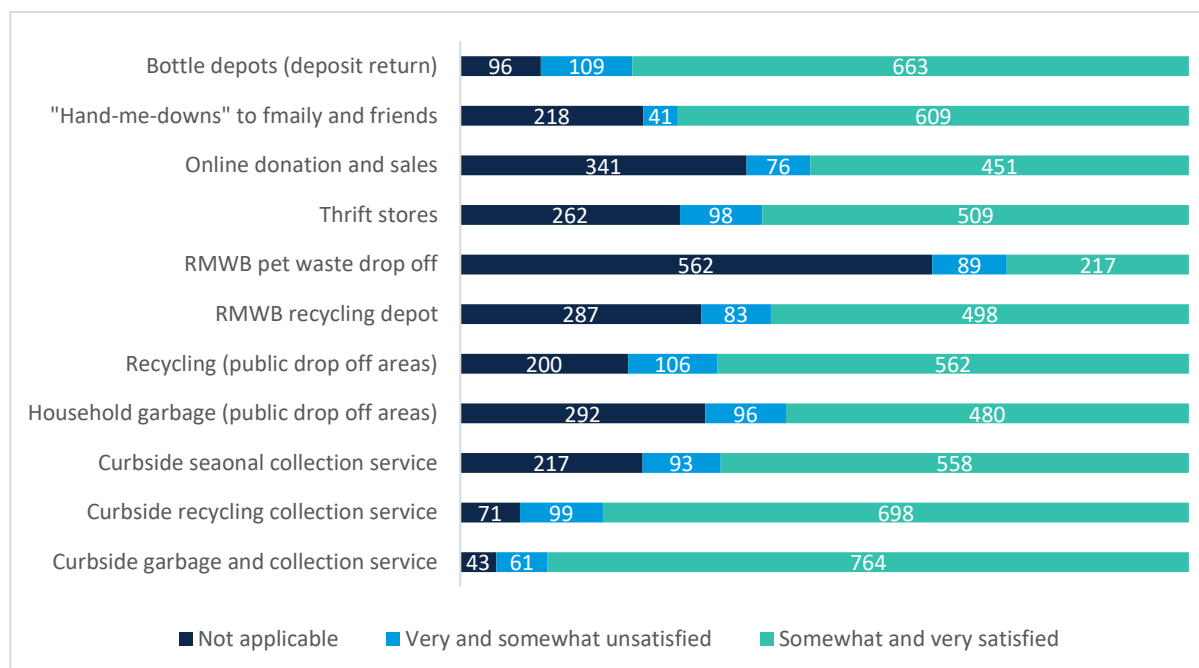
**Q11: How do you normally handle yard and garden debris? (I.e., grass, leaves, smaller branches)  
(Check one)**



\*Other – Re-purpose yard and garden debris as mulch to nourish gardens.

**Satisfaction level**

**Q12: As applicable, what is your level of satisfaction with your current solid waste management services? (One check per line)**



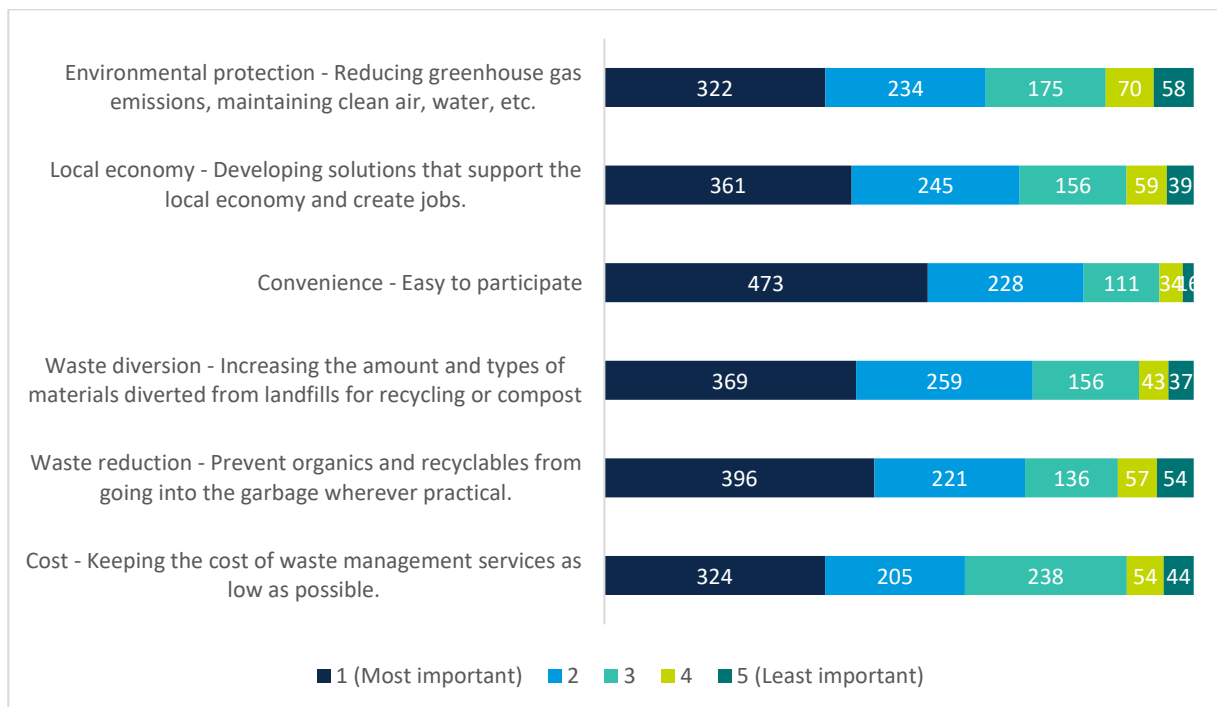
## Assessment

This section begins with question 13, an optional open-ended question. Answers 1-11 list the key themes based on the 569 responses received to this question which also reflect themes observed at in-person and online engagement events.

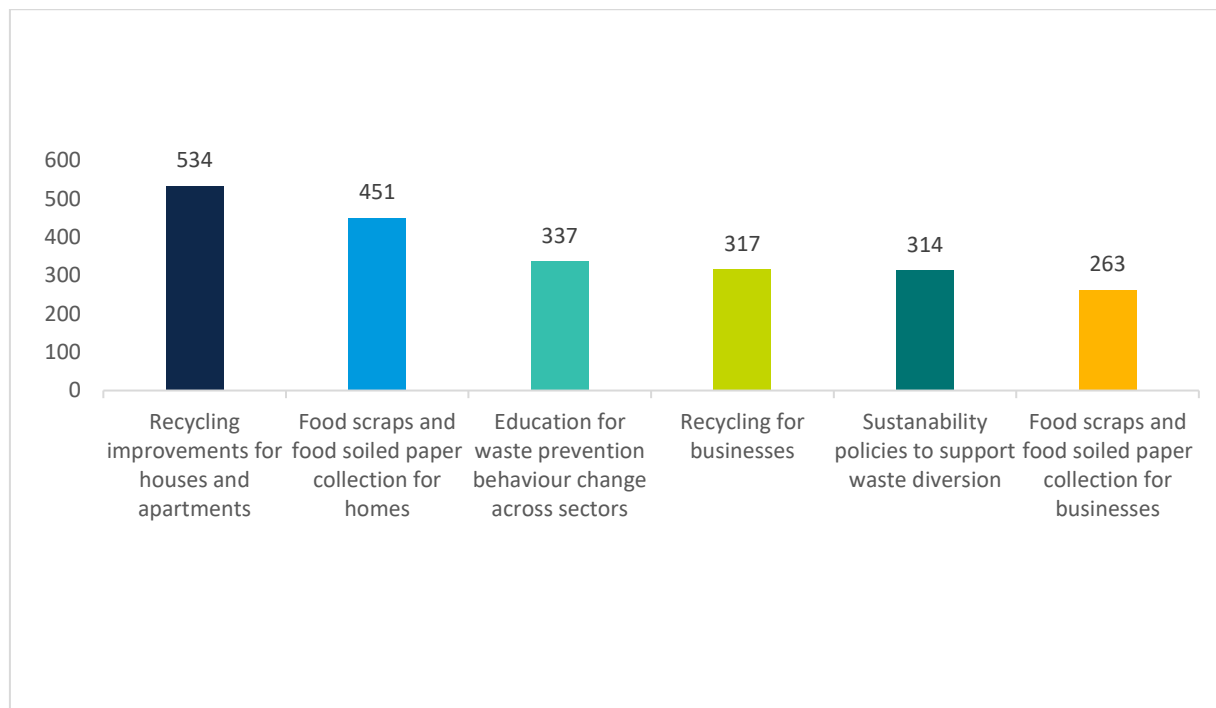
### Q13: What solid waste management service would you like to see change and why?

1. Composting (I.e., curbside collection, a residential composting program)
2. Glass recycling
3. More convenient services and programs (I.e., hazardous waste, big bin events and increased seasonal collection of yard waste)
4. Increased recycling (more options to recycle more materials)
5. Education and awareness – of garbage and recycling services, what, how and when.
6. More convenient pet waste options (I.e., curbside collection, more drop off options, increase education of pet waste programs)
7. Recycling for apartments, businesses and schools.
8. Costs
9. Collection services review (frequency of collection, size of bins, bear bins)
10. Enforcement (ensuring people are disposing of waste properly)
11. Local re-use centres

### Q14: What considerations are most important to you when you think about how solid waste services should be provided? (One check per line)



**Q15: The Municipality is looking at several priorities for further review. Which are your top three priorities?**



## NEXT STEPS

Engagement findings will be reviewed and considered along with other determining factors by the Environmental Services Department and their consultant team as a draft Solid Waste Management Plan is developed. Environmental Services is hoping to present a draft plan to Council in 2024 as a first reading.

The public is encouraged to participate in the public hearing when the time comes. Visit [rmwb.ca/council](https://rmwb.ca/council) to find out how to register as a delegate and learn more about participating at Council meetings.

Once the Plan has passed the second reading and Public Hearing, a third reading will proceed before the final draft is approved by Council.

Stay up to date on the progress of the Solid Waste Management Plan by subscribing to [participate.rmwb.ca/swmp](https://participate.rmwb.ca/swmp).

We encourage you to continue using your voice to make our region even better by learning about all current projects. Visit [participate.rmwb.ca](https://participate.rmwb.ca) to stay connected! Thank you for participating! Having more talk and less trash will help shape the future of solid waste in the region, and your involvement in this engagement isn't taken lightly.



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