

WASTE REDUCTION ROADMAP 2026-2030

Recommendation

That the Waste Reduction Roadmap '30, as set out in Attachment 1 of the March 9, 2026, City Operations report CO03265, be approved.

Requested Action	Council decision required		
ConnectEdmonton's Guiding Principle	ConnectEdmonton Strategic Goals		
CONNECTED This unifies our work to achieve our strategic goals.	Climate Resilience		
City Plan Values	LIVE. PRESERVE.		
City Plan Big City Move(s)	Greener as we grow	Relationship to Council's Strategic Priorities	Climate adaptation and energy transition
Corporate Business Plan	Transforming for the future		
Council Policy, Program or Project Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25-year Waste Strategy • Bylaw 20363 - Waste Services Bylaw • C627 - Climate Resilience Policy • C558C - Waste Services Fiscal Policy • Climate Resilient Edmonton Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan • Edmonton's Community Energy Transition Strategy and Action Plan • FRESH: Food and Urban Agriculture Strategy • The City Plan 		
Related Council Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 29, 2019, City Operations report CR_5829, Waste Strategy - Comprehensive Waste Management Strategy - Waste Diversion Strategy • April 30, 2021, City Operations report CO00390, Waste Reduction Roadmap • April 4, 2022, City Operations report CO01033, Single-use Item Reduction Strategy • September 5, 2023, City Operations report CO01992, Single-use Item Reduction Bylaw Implementation Update • January 22, 2024, City Operations report CO02085, Single-use Item Bylaw Bag Fees 		

Executive Summary

- Waste Reduction Roadmaps advance the City's goal to reduce residential waste per person by 20 per cent from 2019 levels by 2044.¹ The first Waste Reduction Roadmap was approved in 2021.
- By 2025, Edmonton achieved a 10 per cent waste reduction per person, partially influenced by Roadmap '24 actions, as well as economic, social and environmental factors outside of the City's control.
- Roadmap '30 has the goal to further reduce waste generation per person to 14 per cent from 10 per cent by 2030.
- Roadmap '30 includes five focus areas and 14 actions, aligned with City goals and strategies. The three desired outcomes are:
 - Edmonton residents make behavioural changes to reduce waste.
 - Barriers to zero-waste innovation and circular economy developments are reduced.
 - Awareness of and participation in waste reduction programs increases.
- After an in-depth research, analysis and review process, a shortlist of actions was developed. Administration engaged more than 5,000 residents and 39 organizations to refine Roadmap '30 actions.

REPORT

Waste Reduction Roadmaps are a series of action plans designed to support residents, businesses, public events and Administration in reducing waste. They support the 25-year Waste Strategy, which is aligned with the City Plan and Council's energy transition and climate resiliency strategies. The Roadmaps prioritize actions that prevent materials from becoming waste, support the circular economy and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the manufacturing, transportation, processing and disposal of materials. Waste reduction activities are integrated into the City's public-facing offerings and through internal processes.

The 25 year goal is to reduce residential waste generated per person by 20 per cent from 2019 to 2044. Roadmaps are developed as approximate five-year plans and include multiple short-term targets to advance the 2044 goal. This provides Administration opportunities to review previous Roadmaps' performance and develop new Roadmaps based on the outcomes of previous work, environmental and socio-economic conditions. Key performance indicators (KPI) are tracking three desired outcomes:

1. Edmonton residents make behavioural changes to reduce waste.
2. Barriers to zero-waste innovation and circular economy developments are reduced.
3. Awareness of and participation in waste reduction programs increases.

¹ City of Edmonton. (May 17, 2021). [Waste Reduction Roadmap '24](#). City of Edmonton

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Waste Reduction Roadmap '30

Roadmap '30 (Attachment 1) is a five-year plan from 2026 to 2030. Its goal is to reduce residential waste per person by 14 per cent below 2019 levels. Administration shares yearly progress on Waste Reduction Roadmaps and residential waste generation per person through the Waste Services Annual Report to Council. When Roadmap '30 concludes, a summary of outcomes will be presented to Council with the next Waste Reduction Roadmap. Roadmap '30 has five focus areas with 14 actions:

1. Make sharing and donating easier
 - a. Pilot a Curbside Giveaway Weekend program.
 - b. Support and encourage organizations to expand donation drop-off locations.
 - c. Increase donations at City locations and drop-off events.
 - d. Continue to support community waste reduction through grant offerings.
 - e. Encourage and promote community swap events.
 - f. Improve access to information about reuse opportunities.
2. Encourage residents and businesses to choose reusable foodware
 - a. Launch a Circular Foodware Pilot.
 - b. Promote the adoption of reusable cups, bottles and foodware.
3. Support public events to reduce waste
 - a. Create low-waste event tools and guides.
 - b. Provide events with waste reduction education and consultation.
4. Prevent food waste at home
 - a. Share guides and toolkits about how to waste less food.
 - b. Create opportunities to use or share excess food.
5. Reduce waste from City facilities and operations
 - a. Further City employees' knowledge of waste reduction.
 - b. Explore actions for waste reduction with City staff.

The Waste Reduction Roadmaps use a three tier performance framework. Each Roadmap '30 action is linked to one or more outcomes, whose KPI contributes to the Roadmap's main waste reduction goals. Measurements have been established to evaluate the success of each action as outlined in Attachment 1. This system allows the City to measure performance and effectiveness as it continually improves.

Roadmap Development Process

Roadmap '30 is based on extensive research and engagement, highlighted in a What We Heard report (Attachment 2). The work included:

- A literature review and scan of 55 jurisdictions which helped identify over 200 potential actions.
- An extensive analysis to create a short list of attainable, financially responsible and environmentally friendly actions.

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- An analysis of Roadmap '30 for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) to assess and mitigate possible issues.
- Engagement with 36 interest groups, 1,100 Edmontonians in-person and more than 4,200 Edmontonians online through a survey.
- Integration of public engagement data to formalize the actions for Roadmap '30.

Roadmap '24 Summary

Roadmap '24 established 10 waste-reduction actions to meet the goal of zero per cent growth in residential waste generation per person from 2021 to 2024. That target was achieved, and during this time, residents reduced their waste generation 8.8 per cent below 2021 levels per person. While Roadmap '24 contributed to this reduction, factors outside of the City's control, such as environmental, economic and consumption trends, also played an important role. More information can be found in Attachment 3.

Roadmap '24 introduced the single-use item (SUI) reduction strategy and bylaw. Bylaw 20117 - Single-Use Item Reduction regulates single-use polystyrene foam items, food accessories, cups and shopping bags. Voluntary programs were offered to encourage the reduction of other SUIs not covered by the Bylaw, including takeaway food containers. The goal is to reduce SUI consumption at home by 10 per cent per person by 2025 and 20 per cent by 2027. Preliminary waste characterization results show a seven per cent reduction per person in 2025, with a 33 per cent reduction in regulated items. After an additional study is completed in Q2 2026, a memo with the final results will be released.

Budget/Financial Implications

Budget requirements for Roadmap '30 will be included in the 2027-2030 Waste Services Utility Budget, scheduled to go to Council in Q4 2026. An estimated total of \$1.5 million will be required to implement 14 actions over the course of the five-year plan. \$300,000 has been allocated to Roadmap '30 in 2026, included in the approved Waste Services 2026 Rate Filing.

Legal Implications

Grant funding initiatives will need to comply with City policies and align with Administrative Policy A1476A - Municipal Funding Arrangements to ensure fairness and transparency.

Community Insight

The City conducted public and interested party engagement from April to June 2025. The public were invited to provide their feedback through the City's Engaged Edmonton website discussion hub, an online survey and in-person pop-up events. Administration gained insights from 4,223 survey respondents and interacted with 1,114 residents at four pop-up events. Engagement opportunities were promoted using tactics that included digital and print advertising, traditional media, social media and direct community outreach.

Targeted interest groups were invited to provide feedback at four topic-specific workshops. Administration invited 256 interest groups with 39 organizations and 50 representatives

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participating. Indigenous groups were invited and the City spoke with a representative of the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations.

Analysis of engagement feedback revealed a strong desire among Edmontonians to reduce and reuse more, provided that it is convenient and accessible. Key priorities identified include educational resources on reducing home food and yard waste and waste at public events. The public wants the City to support businesses that are not currently required to offer reusable dishware for dine-in customers.

More information about the process and findings is included in Attachment 2.

GBA+

While developing Roadmap '30, a GBA+ process was used to gain a deeper understanding of the diverse experiences and needs of Edmontonians. The project incorporated engagement approaches that broaden outreach and encourage equitable participation, including the following tactics:

- Pop-up events were held in transit-accessible shopping centres across Edmonton from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Workshop events were accessible by multiple modes of transportation or held virtually.
- The City employed best practice facilitation techniques during the workshops to ensure all participants were given the opportunity to provide feedback.
- Invitations were sent to select Indigenous groups and organizations with guidance from the City's Indigenous Relations Office.

The proposed actions incorporated best practice GBA+ considerations from other jurisdictions. Examples of GBA+ learnings included in the Roadmap '30 rollout include:

- Conducting pilots before implementing programs citywide to minimize unintended consequences and optimize delivery before expanding or cancelling programming.
- Reviewing barriers to accessing waste reduction programming.
- Communicating culturally sensitive waste reduction messages in multiple languages to residents, businesses, environmental organizations and other interest groups.

Environment and Climate Review

The City of Edmonton has set out a corporate goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2040.² Reducing GHG emissions and adapting to climate impacts requires a coordinated and integrated approach in planning and taking action throughout the City. Roadmap '30 provides a comprehensive plan to reduce waste by 20 per cent by 2044 from the 2019 baseline and contributes to the goals of reducing per person GHG emissions envisioned in the Greener as We Grow goal of The City Plan. Specifically, Roadmap '30 has the following climate and environmental benefits that demonstrate how it aligns with the City's climate and environmental sustainability goals, which demonstrates how core business decisions support and implement these goals:

- At a strategic level, Roadmap '30 aligns with the foundations of climate actions identified in Council Policy C627 - Climate Resilience to drive carbon neutrality for the corporation by 2040

²City of Edmonton. (April 19, 2021). [Edmonton's Community Energy Transition Strategy and Action Plan](#). City of Edmonton.

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and the community by 2050. It signals Administration's roles as a planner, regulator and a sustainable consumer by outlining how and where to reduce waste for both the corporation and the community.

- Roadmap '30 aims to reduce avoidable food waste, a policy area identified in the City Plan (directive 5.3.1.6). Avoidable food waste is edible food that is thrown away instead. From 2022 to 2024, Edmontonians disposed of an estimated 47,000 tonnes of avoidable food waste on average, with 32,000 tonnes being sent to landfill and 15,000 tonnes sent for composting. This food waste represents approximately 26,000 tonnes of CO₂e.³ The reduction and diversion of this avoidable food waste supports Edmontonians' transition to a low-carbon future.
- Diverting all possible waste streams away from the landfill under the processes of rethinking, reducing and reusing supports a circular economy and fosters environmental sustainability. Operationally, this will reduce the total tonnage that is landfilled. This creates landfill capacity for unavoidable residual waste that can not be designed out of the product creation. Minimizing waste supports operational maintenance of the landfill infrastructure.

Additional linkages between Roadmap '30 actions, the City Plan's climate and environmental sustainability goals, and additional considerations where applicable, are shown in Attachment 5.

Attachments

1. Waste Reduction Roadmap '30
2. What We Heard Report
3. Waste Reduction Roadmap '24 Summary
4. Preliminary Single-use Item Reduction Results
5. Environment and Climate Review

³ These estimates were prepared by using the US EPA's Emissions Factor Hub and estimated weight of food waste landfilled in Edmonton from 2022-2024.