

Waste Bylaw Amendments to Reduce Wildlife Conflicts

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Community Development Committee recommend that Council give three readings to the bylaw amendments as proposed in Attachment 1 to amend the Waste Bylaw 4M2020.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Bears and other wildlife may come into our communities looking for easy sources of food, which can include waste. When food-conditioned, bears can lose their fear of humans and create risks to public safety. To supplement communication and education, we are proposing changes to the Waste Bylaw to encourage Calgarians to manage their waste with wildlife in mind.
- **What does this mean to Calgarians?** In areas identified as having problems with bears or other wildlife, Calgarians may be required to store waste in a garage or other secure enclosure and set residential waste out for collection no earlier than 5:00 a.m. on collection day.
- **Why does this matter?** Changes to how waste is stored and set out for collection can improve safety for Calgarians and local wildlife. Having bylaw requirements proactively in place means that The City is prepared to respond rapidly in future situations where public safety is at risk. They are one part of a comprehensive approach that starts with communication and education.

DISCUSSION

In 2022, a black bear sow and three cubs were euthanized by Alberta Fish & Wildlife after they had been repeatedly scavenging in waste carts in the community of Discovery Ridge. Administration has been working with the Discovery Ridge Community Association to prevent future bear-human conflicts. To supplement communication and education, Administration is proposing amendments to the Waste Bylaw 4M2020.

Administration researched practices in other municipalities that have a history of living with wildlife. Many of these municipalities rely on communication, education, and bylaw provisions to reduce wildlife attractants by making sure waste is stored securely and only set out on collection day (e.g., Kamloops, Prince George, and Nelson, B.C.). Overnight waste cart set-out has been identified as a significant attractant for bears and other wildlife.

Based on input from the Discovery Ridge community and research into practices in other municipalities, Administration started a bear awareness campaign in Discovery Ridge in May 2023. This awareness campaign is based on storing waste in a secure enclosure and limiting overnight waste cart set-out.

Administration is proposing changes to the Waste Bylaw to support waste storage and set-out messages and allow enforcement of requirements when needed to protect public safety.

- Allow the Director, Waste & Recycling Services to designate temporary "wildlife affected areas" as needed, based on wildlife interacting with waste, reports of problem wildlife, or advice from provincial Wildlife Officers.
- In a "wildlife affected area," to require that:

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- Residential waste carts and extra waste be set out no earlier than 5:00 a.m. on collection day;
- Residential waste carts be put away no later than 7:00 p.m. on collection day; and
- Residential waste carts and extra waste be stored in a garage, shed, or other secure enclosure.
- Provide penalties for contravening the requirements in "wildlife affected areas".

The proposed amendments to the Waste Bylaw are part of a comprehensive "education first" approach to address the existing concerns about bears scavenging waste in Discovery Ridge and to proactively prepare us to respond in future situations where public safety is at risk. The bylaw requirements help to address the intersection in jurisdiction with Alberta Fish & Wildlife. While Alberta Fish & Wildlife manages wildlife across the province, they rely on municipalities to support their efforts through actions like closing city parks or enforcing community standards.

Administration will continue to investigate potential options for changes to waste storage requirements for multi-residential and non-residential properties in wildlife affected areas. Changes for those properties are not included in the proposed amendments.

EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public engagement was undertaken | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dialogue with interested parties was undertaken |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public/interested parties were informed | <input type="checkbox"/> Public communication or engagement was not required |

Administration has worked closely with the Discovery Ridge Community Association, Ward 6 office, and Alberta Fish & Wildlife to identify and explore potential solutions to bear-human conflicts related to waste. The proposed Waste Bylaw changes stem directly from this work.

Administration is leading an awareness campaign in Discovery Ridge, starting in May 2023 and consisting of alerts in the Garbage Day app, ads in the community newspaper, social media posts, outdoor signs in the community, a booth with Alberta Fish & Wildlife at the Discovery Ridge Stampede Round-up BBQ, and door-to-door communications (including post card and cart reminder sticker).

The awareness campaign is presenting the proposed waste storage and cart set-out changes as recommendations to community members. The campaign's messages will be updated to indicate that residential waste storage and cart set-out changes are requirements once the proposed bylaw amendments have been approved.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

The proposed changes to the Waste Bylaw support the protection of public safety related to food-conditioned bears and other wildlife.

Environmental

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The proposed changes to the Waste Bylaw support the protection of local wildlife and biodiversity.

Economic

Not applicable.

Service and Financial Implications

No anticipated financial impact

Changes will be managed within existing resources.

RISK

Risks associated with not approving the recommendation include

- Waste carts may be stored and/or set out for collection in ways that continue to attract bears and other wildlife due to an inability to enforce improvements to waste storage and set-out and resulting in negative impact to The City's reputation.
- Human-wildlife conflicts related to waste management may continue or escalate in Discovery Ridge and/or other areas in Calgary, resulting in impacts to public safety and/or trapping and relocating or euthanizing animals and/or negative impact to The City's reputation.

Risks associated with approving the recommendation include

- Calgarians may be dissatisfied with increased requirements for waste storage and set-out in the identified "wildlife affected areas," resulting in increased complaints to 3-1-1 or ward offices and/or negative impact to The City's reputation. Calgarians may be concerned about the proposed changes if they do not have access to a garage or other secure enclosure to store waste, or if their work or life schedules conflict with the residential cart set-out time requirements.

The risks associated with approving the recommendation will be mitigated through communication and education, including the awareness campaign underway in Discovery Ridge.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Proposed Waste Bylaw Amendments
2. Presentation

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Julie Radke	Waste & Recycling Services	Approve
Doug Morgan	Operational Services	Approve
Jill Floen	Law, Legislative Services & Security	Consult
Katie Black	Community Services	Consult