

Waste & Diversion Programs

2019 Annual Report to Council

Prepared by: Waste & Diversion Programs Branch

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PURPOSE

This report is a summary of the programs and services provided by the Waste & Diversion Programs branch in 2019.

This branch provides curbside collection of garbage, organics and recycling to 20,000 single family and 40 multi-family households. The City operates a year-round Recycling Depot and a seasonal Compost Depot, and coordinates seasonal waste programs such as Take It or Leave It, Curbside Large Item Pick-Up, and Compost Giveaway.

This report compliments the Report on the Environment, which has been released annually to the community since 2003. The Report on the Environment focuses specifically on the metrics and goals established in the Environmental Master Plan.

This report provides an update on the full range of services provided by the Waste & Diversion Programs branch according to the “Service and Service Levels Inventory”.

2019 HIGHLIGHTS

- Curbside Leaf Pick-Up became a paper bag or reusable containers only program. Plastic bags are no longer acceptable for collection.
- The Mike Mitchell Recycling Depot piloted extended hours from July to the end of September, opening on Sundays and Mondays, excluding holidays.
- Styrofoam blocks from electronics, appliances, and furniture are now accepted for recycling at the Mike Mitchell Recycling Depot.
- Launched the “Keep Your Distance” education campaign to inform the public to be safe around City equipment, due to hazards and dangers such as blind spots, loud noises, and moving parts.



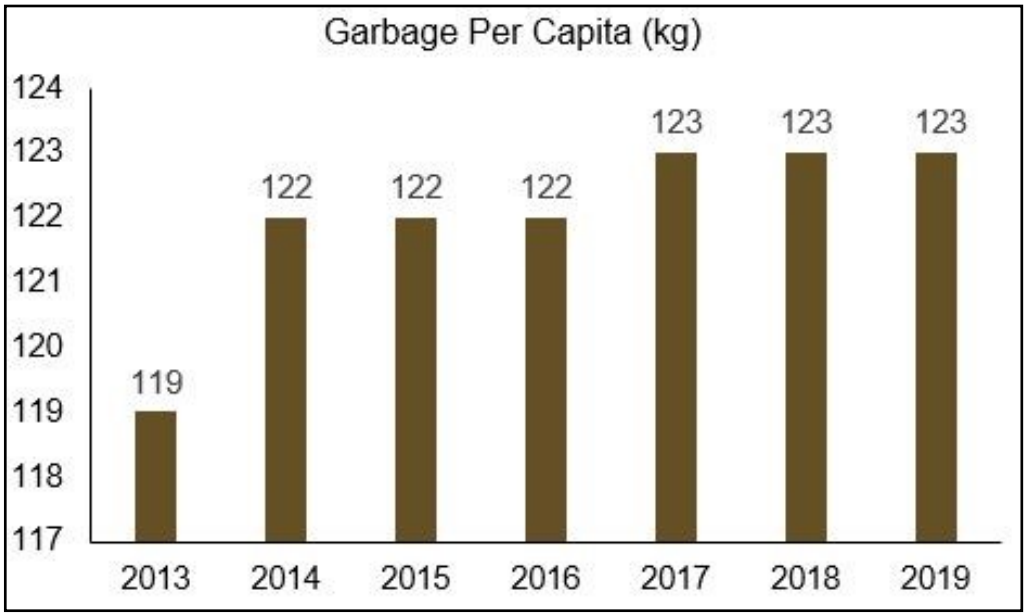
ENVIRONMENTAL MASTER PLAN GOALS

In 2014, St. Albert City Council approved the updated Environmental Master Plan. The Plan includes nine goals and 21 targets that were identified through consultation with the public, the Environmental Advisory Committee, and City staff.

The two goals related to waste management are:

- Reduce solid waste generation to 105 kilograms or less per person per year by 2020
- Increase waste diversion rate to 75% by 2020

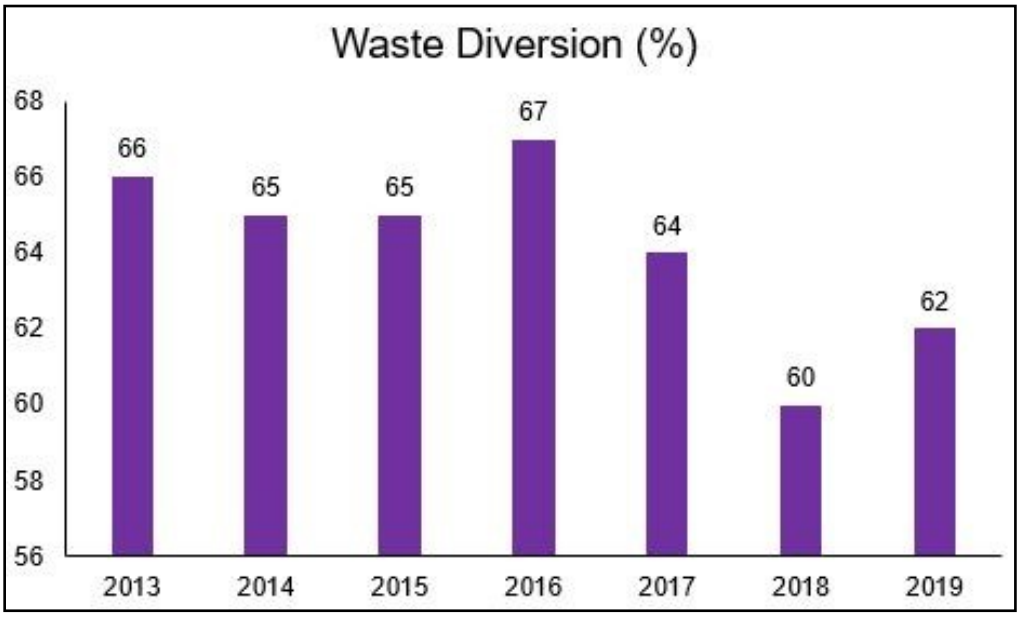
GARBAGE PER CAPITA



In 2019, St. Albert residents generated just over 123 kg of garbage per person. This is consistent with previous years.

Garbage per capita is calculated by dividing the total amount of residential garbage from the Brown Garbage Carts by the city's total population (based on the 2018 Municipal Census Report). Waste that is composted or recycled is not included in the garbage per capita calculation.

WASTE DIVERSION



In 2019, St. Albert's waste diversion rate was 62%. Diversion is when waste does not go to the landfill, but instead goes into the Green Organics Cart to be turned into nutrient-rich compost, or into the Blue Recycling Bag to be recycled into new materials. Electronics dropped off at the Mike Mitchell Recycling Depot are also included in the waste diversion percent calculation.

Diversion was higher than 2018, due to the increased tonnage of leaf and yard waste in the Green Organics Cart. This number is higher than normal due to the wet summer season.

$$\text{Diversion} = \frac{\text{Recycling} + \text{Organics} + \text{Electronics}}{\text{Recycling} + \text{Organics} + \text{Electronics} + \text{Garbage}}$$

The City will be reviewing the Environmental Master Plan in 2020, determining new targets and goals for our air, land, water, and people. Goals related to the Waste & Diversion Programs branch will be a part of this review.

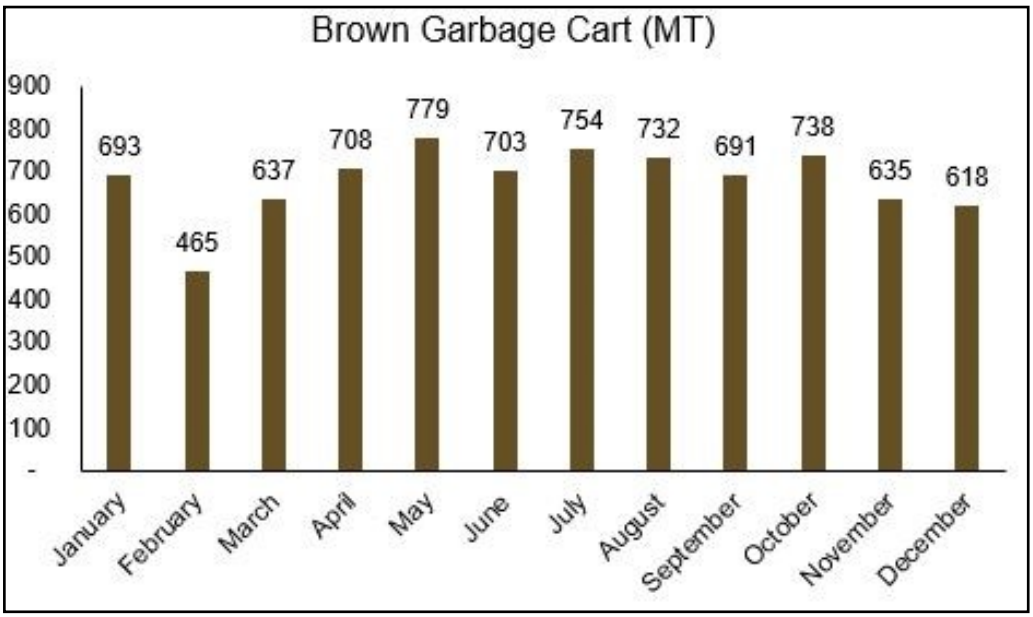
CURBSIDE COLLECTION

The City of St. Albert provides curbside waste collection of garbage, organics, and recycling to 20,000 single family and 40 multi-family households. Multi-family households that do not receive City collections contract private haulers to collect and remove their waste.

BROWN GARBAGE CART

Brown Garbage Cart - Tonnage Collected

In 2019, 8,153 metric tonnes (MT) of garbage was collected through the Brown Garbage Carts and sent to landfill. The following chart identifies the weight in MT collected by month.



Home Health Care Waste Exemption Program

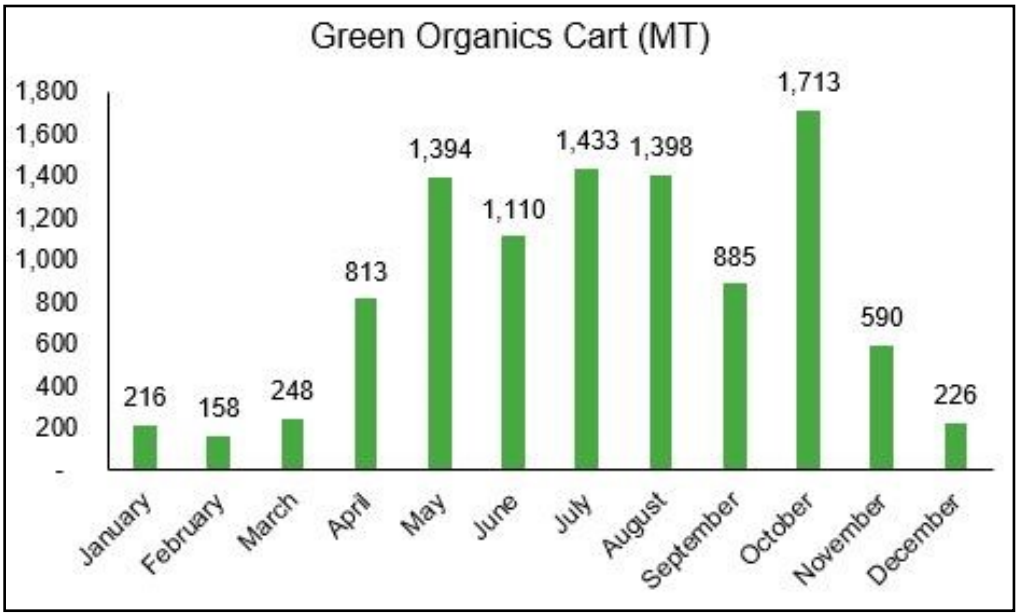
The City continued its Home Health Care Waste Exemption Program in 2019. 34 households (18 new, 16 renewals) received this service to assist with their home health care waste disposal needs.

GREEN ORGANICS CART

Green Organics Cart - Tonnage Collected

In 2019, 10,183 MT of organics was collected through the Green Organics Carts. This is in comparison to the 7,708 MT that was collected in 2018. This number is higher than normal due to the wet summer season.

The following chart identifies the weight in MT collected by month. The months with the highest tonnage correlate with outdoor leaf and yard waste disposal.

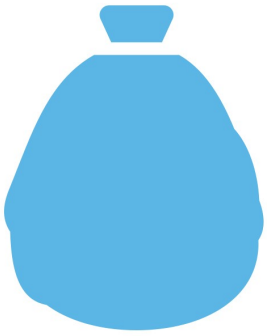


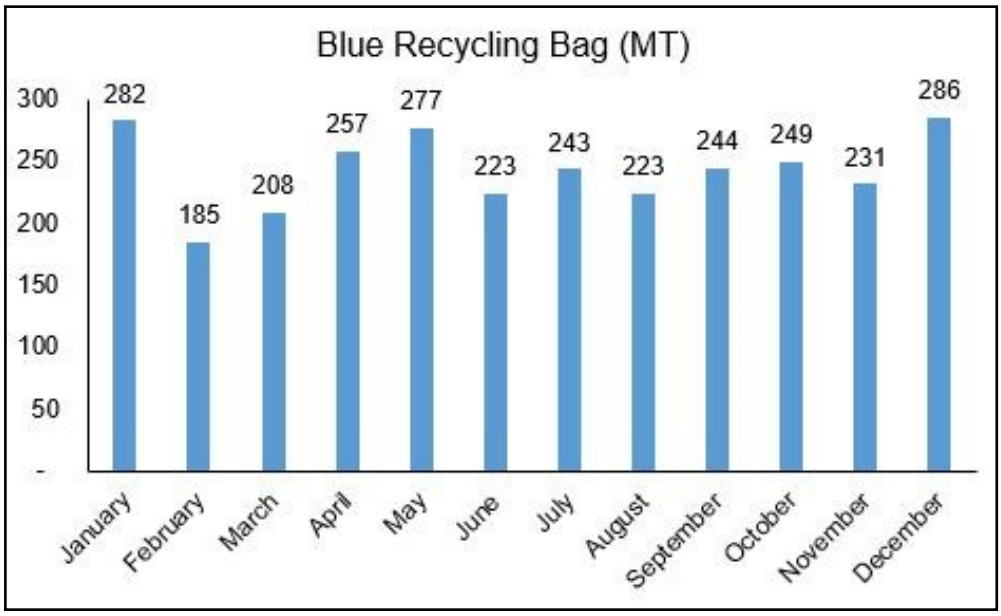
BLUE RECYCLING BAG

Blue Recycling Bag - Tonnage Collected

In 2019, 2,908 MT of recycling was collected through the Blue Recycling Bag and sent to a materials recovery facility to be sorted.

The following chart identifies the weight in MT collected by month.





The City continued education and outreach to promote proper waste sorting to reduce contamination in recycling, including the “Oops! What Goes Where?” campaign. Messages were shared on the City’s social media pages, Be Waste Wise App, website and Citylights in the St. Albert Gazette.

Below are examples of items that were featured in the campaign.









DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

The City of St. Albert operates a year-round Recycling Depot and seasonal Compost Depot for residents to drop-off household waste in a convenient and environmentally-friendly way. Depots are open to residents of St. Albert only; proof of residency may be required. Non-residents and commercial vehicles will be turned away by on-site staff.

MIKE MITCHELL RECYCLING DEPOT

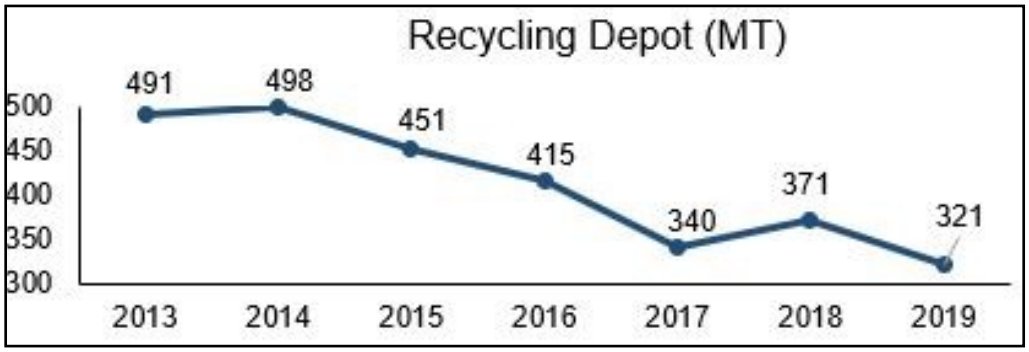
The Mike Mitchell Recycling Depot is a facility staffed during operational hours, where residents can dispose of acceptable items including: cardboard, newspaper, tin cans, paint, hazardous waste, electronics, and tires.

Mike Mitchell Recycling Depot - Tonnage Collected

In 2019, 321 MT of recycling was collected at the Depot and sent to be recycled. This included cardboard, newspapers, mixed paper, glossy magazines, and tin cans. Tonnage has decreased over time. This may be a result of residents using the curbside collection program and product packaging changing.

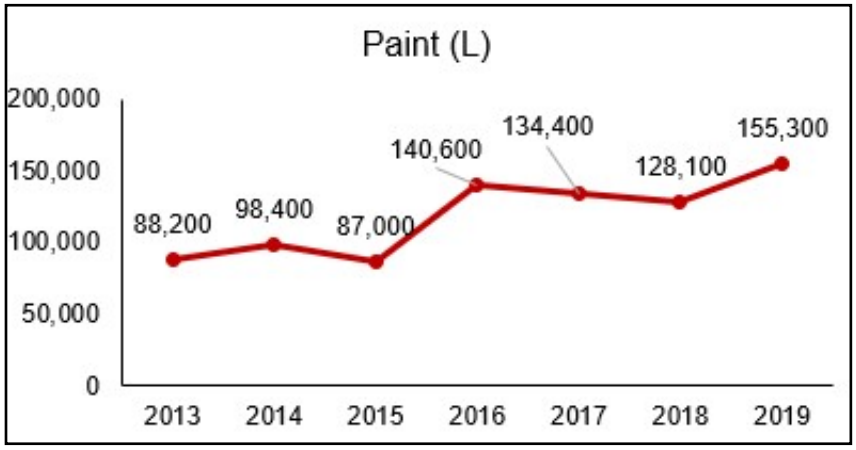
In November 2018, glass was removed from the curbside recycling program. Glass is difficult to recycle as it can break at many points of the recycling journey, contaminating other recyclables in the Blue Recycling Bag. Anything broken cannot be recovered and must be sent to the landfill.

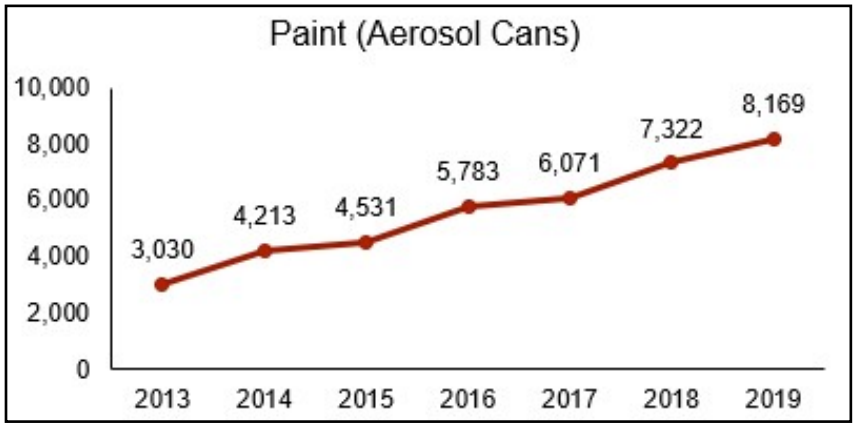
Glass bottles and jars can be brought to the Mike Mitchell Recycling Depot where they are collected separately from other recyclables. The City collected 25.04 MT of glass from November 2018 to June 2019, which was sent off to be reused in sandblasting. This tonnage was not included in the figure below.



Hazardous waste is also accepted at the Mike Mitchell Recycling Depot. It is collected, packed, and sent away to be recycled or disposed of safely.

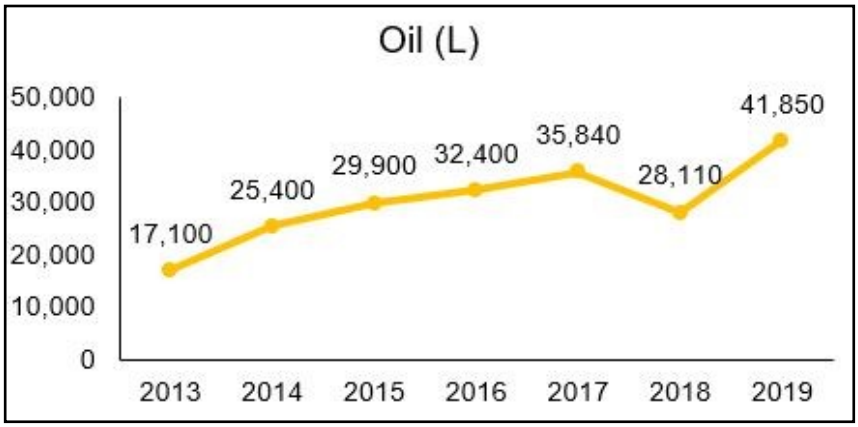
The Depot has been accepting increasing quantities of hazardous waste each year. This can be seen in the following graphs. Electronics are the exception, as electronic devices are becoming smaller, thinner, and lighter. The City receives funding through Alberta Recycling Management Authority's rebate programs for electronics, oil, paint and tires; however, this funding does not cover the cost of operating the Depot.

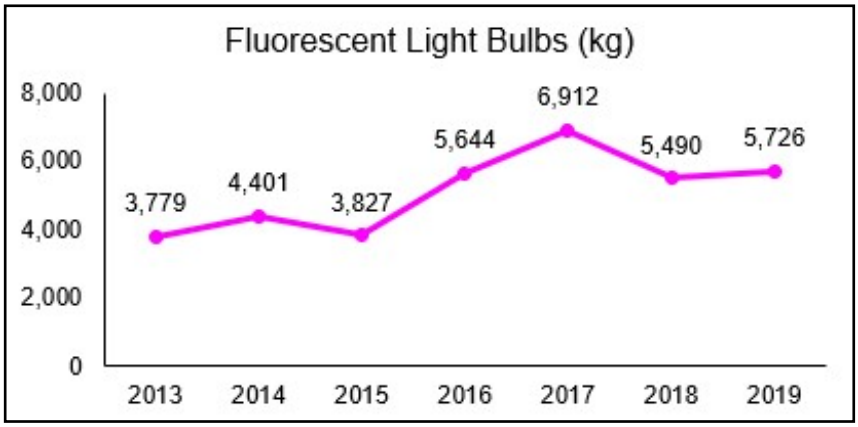


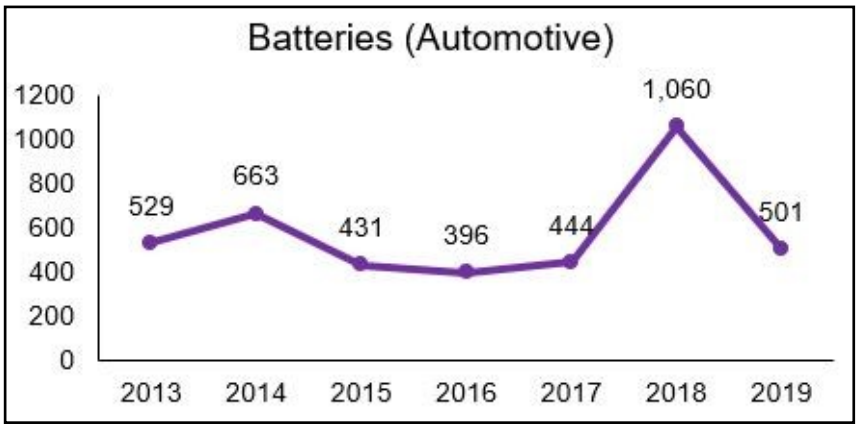


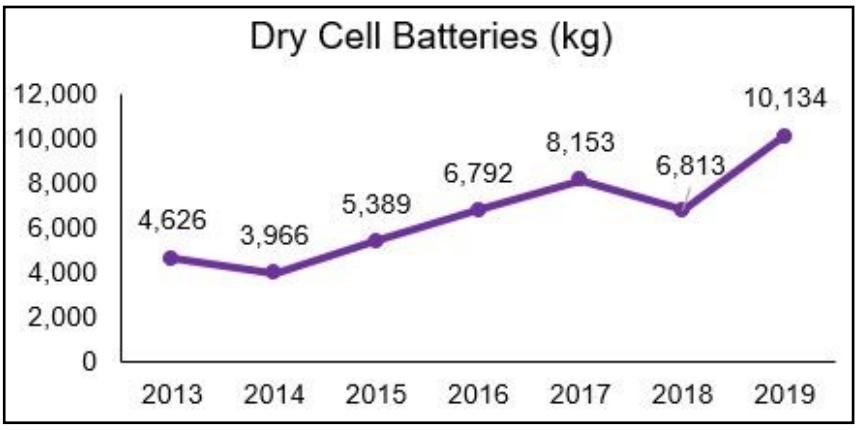


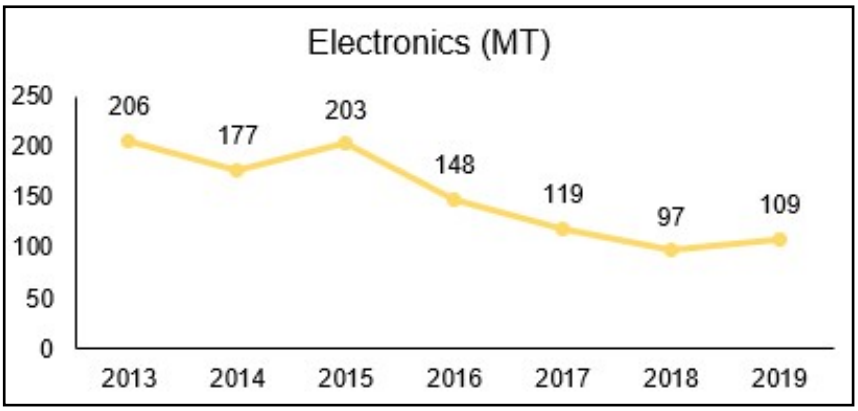

Hazardous Waste (Aerosol Cans)
10,000
8,000
6,000
4,000
2,000
0
3,257
4,740
4,023
5,942
7,514
8,468
8,852
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018
2019

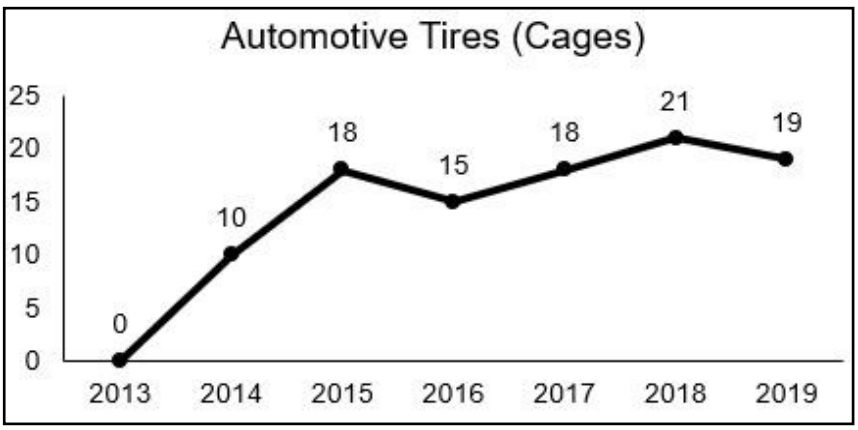

Oil (L)
50,000
40,000
30,000
20,000
10,000
0
17,100
25,400
29,900
32,400
35,840
28,110
41,850
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018
2019


Fluorescent Light Bulbs (kg)
8,000
6,000
4,000
2,000
0
3,779
4,401
3,827
5,644
6,912
5,490
5,726
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018
2019


Batteries (Automotive)
1200
1000
800
600
400
200
0
529
663
431
396
444
1,060
501
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018
2019







Note: Each tire cage holds approximately 300 tires.



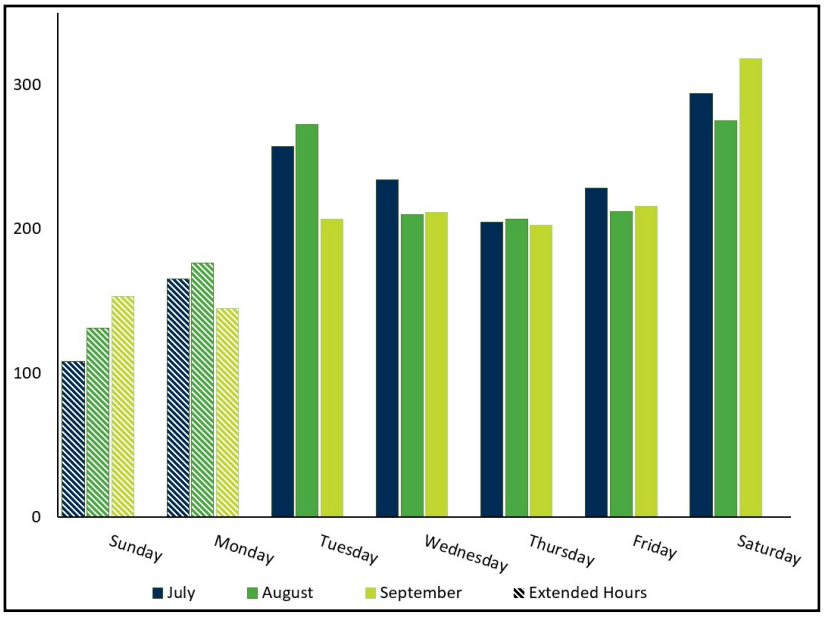
Mike Mitchell Recycling Depot - Extended Hours Pilot

The Mike Mitchell Recycling Depot operates five days a week, from Tuesday to Saturday. In the Spring, Council proposed a pilot to extend Depot hours of operation to seven days a week. The pilot ran from July to the end of September, offering 16 additional hours of service per week. The Depot was closed for holidays.

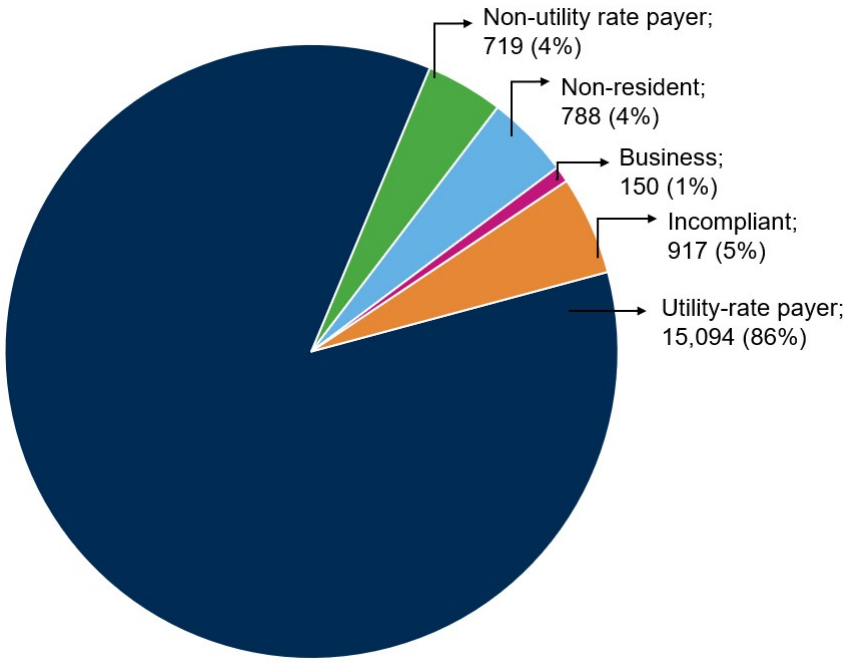


During the pilot, a staffed check-in station was set up to collect data from users of the Depot. Data collected determined the number of visits (per hour, day, and week) and if users were St. Albert residents and rate payers, or if they were non-residents or businesses.

Throughout the pilot, the Depot was busiest on Saturdays and Tuesdays. The Depot received more visits on Monday (average of 161 vehicles) than on Sundays (average of 132 vehicles). The following chart shows average vehicles per day throughout the pilot program.



Of the 17,668 visitors to the Depot during the pilot, 86% were utility-rate payers. There were 917 vehicles that would not provide information or stop at the check-in station.



Administration will be providing an update to Council in 2020 about the pilot.

Mike Mitchell Recycling Depot - Styrofoam Recycling Pilot

On July 1, the City began accepting Styrofoam at the Mike Mitchell Recycling Depot. Only clean, white packing blocks from electronics, appliances, or furniture are accepted.

Since the launch of the pilot program, residents have brought 3,370 kg of Styrofoam to the Mike Mitchell Recycling Depot, diverting it from the landfill.

Administration will be providing an update to Council in 2020 about the pilot.







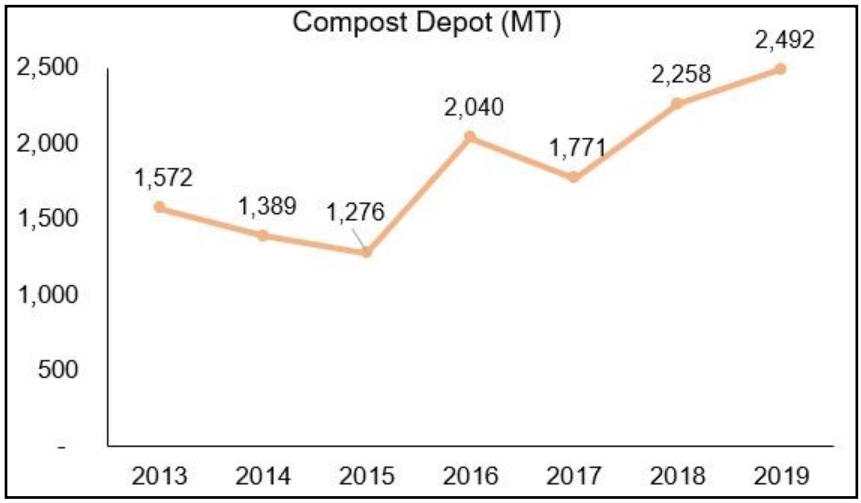
COMPOST DEPOT

The City's Compost Depot is located on Villeneuve Road (between Ray Gibbon Drive and Hogan Road). It is open daily from 7:30 a.m. to 10 p.m., typically from April to November. Depending on weather conditions, the Depot may be open past November.

Residents can drop off yard waste such as branches, grass, leaves, and garden waste at the Compost Depot. Natural Christmas trees are also accepted after the holidays. This new service was welcomed by residents who wanted flexibility and convenience in disposing of their tree, rather than waiting for the curbside collection program. Items are chipped or composted instead of entering the landfill.

Compost Depot - Tonnage Collected

In 2019, 2,492 MT of leaf and yard waste was collected at the Depot and sent to be composted. This is the highest yearly amount of leaf and yard waste received, as seen in the chart below. This number is higher than normal due to the wet summer season.







SEASONAL WASTE PROGRAMS

The City of St. Albert offers seasonal waste programs to allow residents to reuse, recycle, or dispose of items that are not accepted in the curbside program.

CHRISTMAS TREE PICK-UP

Natural Christmas trees were collected from households from January 7 to 11 (Zone B) and January 14 to 18 (Zone A). 1,308 trees were collected, chipped, and composted.



The quantity of natural Christmas trees being collected has declined in comparison to previous years (**2016**: 1,632; **2017:** 1,675; **2018:** 1,500). This may be due to an uptake of residents purchasing artificial trees.

COMPOST GIVEAWAY

In May and October, over 172 MT of finished compost was available to residents for pick-up at the Mike Mitchell Recycling Depot.



TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT

The 26th annual Take It or Leave It event was held on Saturday, June 15. Vehicle counts of residents dropping items off was 409, which was higher than 2018 (304 vehicles) but lower than previous years (**2015:** 630 vehicles, **2016:** 582 vehicles, **2017:** 505 vehicles). This does not represent the amount of materials being dropped off to be reused.

At the end of the event, four 40-yard bins were sent to landfill with items not taken. One 40 yard bin was filled with scrap metal to be recycled.



CURBSIDE LEAF PICK-UP

The Curbside Leaf Pick-Up program allows residents to set out bagged leaves at the curb to be picked up and composted. The program was held from September 30 to October 11, and October 28 to November 8.

In an effort to reduce the number of single-use items being used in our community, the City made changes to the program in 2019. Yard waste was only eligible for this program if placed in paper bags, or reusable garbage can or bins.

Leaves in plastic bags were tagged with an “Oops!” sticker and not collected.

The City used the following methods to communicate the changes:

- Newspaper advertisements in the St. Albert Gazette
- Shelf talkers at local hardware and grocery stores
- Social media posts on the City’s Facebook and Twitter pages
- Updates to the stalbert.ca/waste website and the Be WasteWise App
- Green Oops! stickers on plastic bags set out for collection

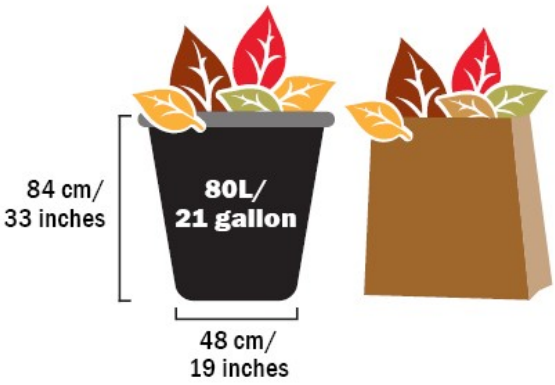


The quantity of leaves composted in 2019, 133 MT, declined when compared to previous years (**2016**: 205 MT; **2017*:** 27 MT; **2018**: 333 MT).

This may be due to the program changes implemented, or residents using alternative methods for disposal, such as the Green Organic Cart or the Compost Depot.

**The City of Edmonton’s Edmonton Waste Management Centre — Compost Facility closed unexpectedly, impacting the 2017 Curbside Leaf Pick-Up Program. Alternative composting processing was arranged for 2018 and beyond.*

Upon completion of the Curbside Leaf Pick-Up program, staff engaged with local grocery and hardware stores to better understand successes and challenges associated with the program changes. Feedback from these store managers, staff, and residents will be incorporated for future programming.



133
MT OF LEAVES COMPOSTED

LARGE ITEM DROP-OFF

Two Large Item Drop-Off events were held in 2019. The summer event was held on Saturday, July 27 with 145 vehicles attending, and the fall event was held on Saturday, September 14 with 236 vehicles attending.

381
VEHICLES
DROPPED OFF

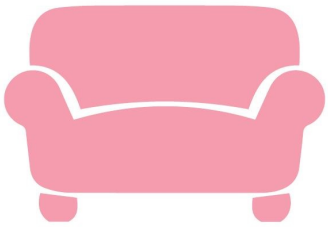
9 BINS
GARBAGE FOR LANDFILL

2 BINS
SCRAP METAL RECYCLED

CURBSIDE LARGE ITEM PICK-UP

Based on feedback from 2018, one Curbside Large Item Pick-Up event was held in 2019 to coincide with many households' spring cleaning.

The event took place from June 17 to 21 (Zone A) and June 24 to 28 (Zone B). Acceptable items include furniture, appliances, mattresses, and electronics.



154 MT
GARBAGE
FOR LANDFILL

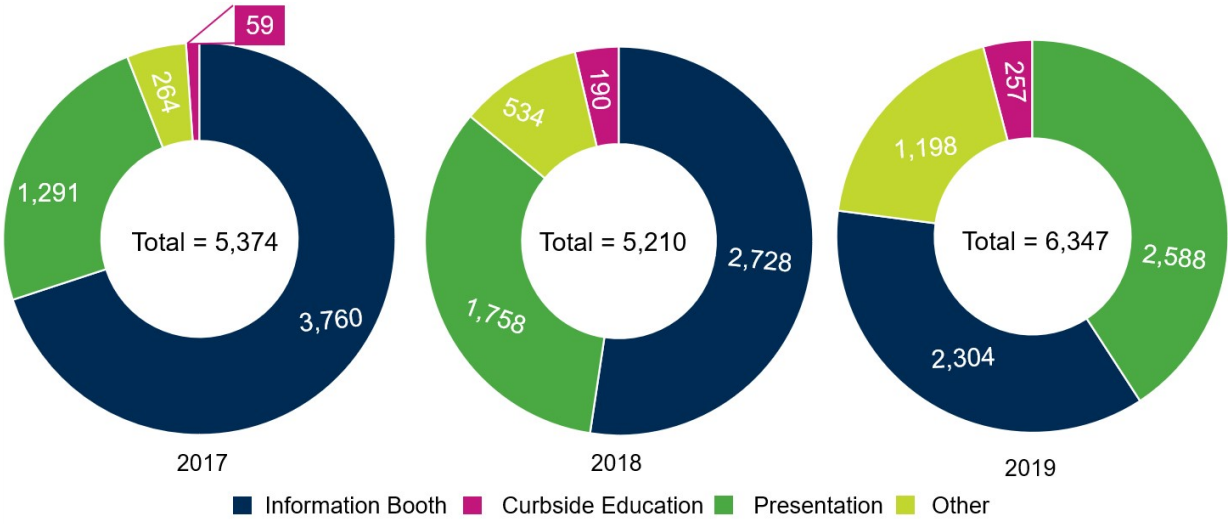
114 MT
SCRAP METAL RECYCLED

8.5 MT
ELECTRONICS RECYCLED

568
MATTRESSES RECYCLED

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

In 2019, Waste & Diversion Programs staff conducted education and outreach with over 6,300 recorded residents through methods such as information booths, presentations, and the Curbside Waste Education Program.



Note: “Other” includes tours, interactive displays, and workshops, etc.

EDUCATION EVENTS

Staff set up 13 information booths and interacted with 2,304 people in 2019. Staff attended new events such as the Public Safety Open House, Food Truck Events and the St. Albert International Children's Festival, reaching new members of the community.

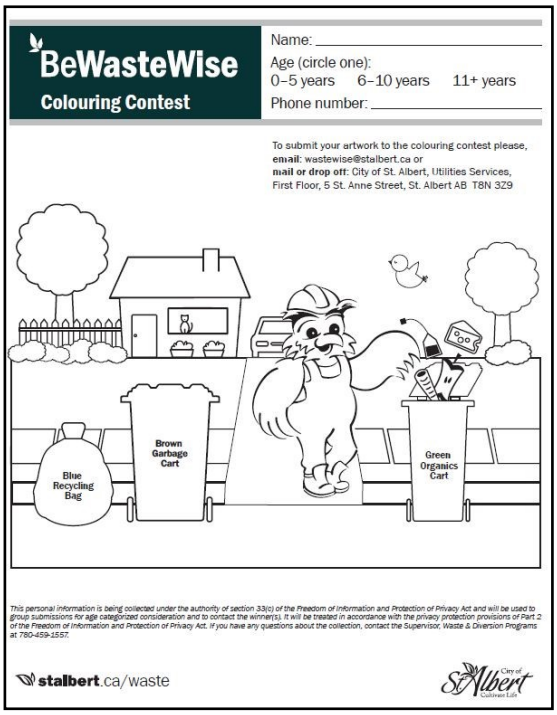
Presentations were held in grade four classrooms to align with the “Waste and Our World” science unit, and within the community to further discuss the 2018 Blue Recycling Bag program changes. In total, 29 presentations were delivered to 2,588 people in 2019.

Five new schools joined the Green Organics Cart program, diverting their food waste from the landfill. A school-wide kick-off presentation is held to remind students and staff of acceptable items, and how to set out their school’s cart for collection. This brings the total to 15 schools in St. Albert participating in the program.

BE WASTE WISE COLOURING CONTEST

For National Public Works Week, the City hosted a colouring contest, where children of all ages were encouraged to highlight their artistic abilities.

22 entries were received and waste related prizes, such as reusable snack bags and educational books were awarded.



"KEEP YOUR DISTANCE" CAMPAIGN

The City of St. Albert operates many different types of equipment that are used throughout the city to perform tasks, create improvements, and meet standard service levels within the community. It is dangerous for pedestrians to approach equipment. Safe operation is necessary to maintain the good condition of our parks, facilities, roads, and utilities.

Messages were shared on the City's social media pages, website, and Citylights in the St. Albert Gazette. The Waste & Diversion Program branch assisted in developing this campaign to bring awareness to keep everyone as safe as possible when near City equipment.

Below are examples of equipment that were featured in the campaign.





CURBSIDE WASTE EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Curbside Waste Education Program Team was out in neighbourhoods from July 2 to August 30, visiting 6,612 households on 152 streets. This was the third year of the program. All waste streams (garbage, organics, and recycling) were observed.

1,191 “Thank You” stickers were awarded for households that sorted and set out their waste properly.

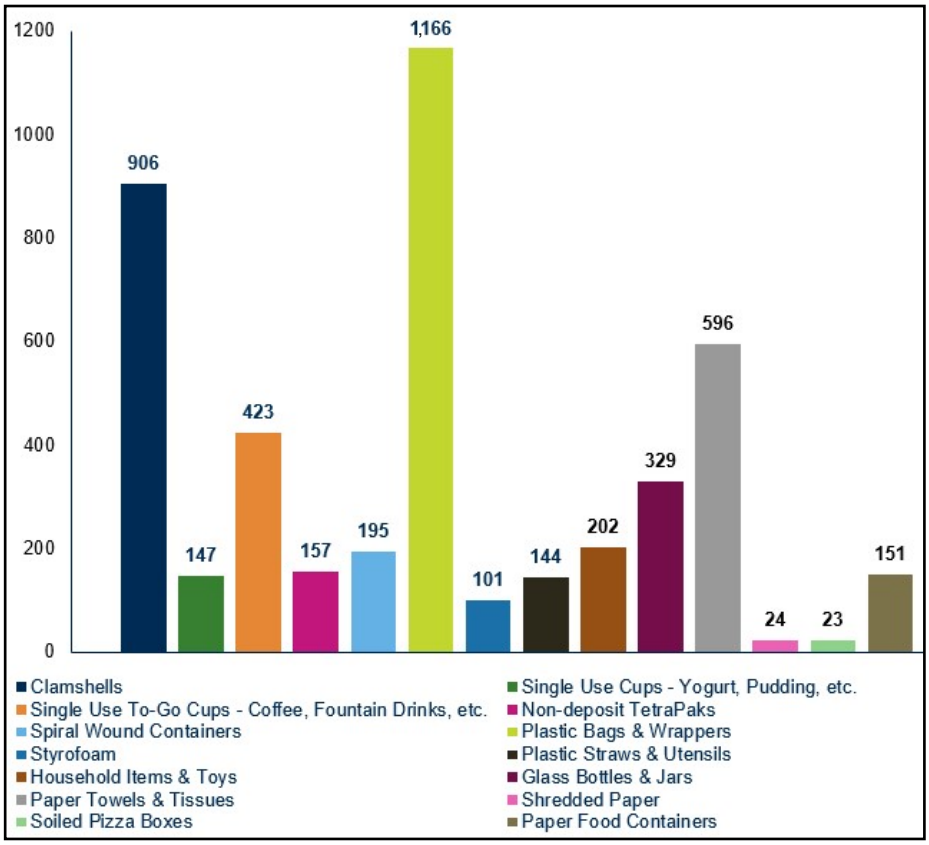


A combined total of 3,578 errors due to sorting and set out of waste were observed.

Most Common Recycling Sorting Errors

With the Blue Recycling Bag changes in 2018, emphasis was placed on informing residents about sorting errors in the recycling.

If minor errors were seen, staff would remove the items from the bag, and leave behind a door hanger with information. If multiple errors were seen, the recycling would be tagged with an “Oops!” sticker and not collected. The chart below shows the most common recycling sorting errors.



EDMONTON REGION AND ALBERTA WASTE RELATED COMMITTEES

The City of St. Albert participates on various waste related committees in the province.

The Edmonton Region Waste Advisory Committee (ERWAC) continued its collaborative approach in data and information sharing, and program harmonization, such as curbside recycling.

The Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) - Metropolitan Region Servicing Plan Task Force began to explore delivering solid waste management services as a region. A shared regional approach has the potential to create opportunities for shared investment and service delivery that meets the needs of growth, neighbouring communities, and increased demands on waste management services and infrastructure. A Regional Collaborative will be established in 2020 to advance regional collaboration for solid waste.

The Alberta Collaborative on Extended Producer Responsibility Committee (ACES) worked on a report that advocates for the shift of the responsibility and costs of recycling from local governments to producers. It incentivizes producers to reduce waste associated with their products and packaging, and to create products that are readily reusable or recycled.

The City will continue to work with other regional municipalities and organizations to move waste diversion forward in Alberta.

CONCLUSION

In 2019, the Waste & Diversion Programs branch continued to provide excellent services through curbside collection, drop-off locations and seasonal waste programs while maintaining our service levels.

New pilot programs, such as Styrofoam recycling and extended hours at the Mike Mitchell Recycling Depot were initiated to provide additional services to residents, and to divert waste from the landfill where possible.

Improvements to existing programs, such as the Curbside Leaf Pick-Up were initiated to reduce the number of single-use items being used in our community.

The City will continue to promote waste reduction within the community in 2020 and beyond, as the Single Use Item Reduction Strategy will begin with education and outreach, public participation and research being conducted.