

Pilot Program and Post Pilot Survey

IN OCTOBER, 2016, 2,500 homes in five neighborhoods were notified of a pilot program they would be part of. This pilot tested wheeled carts for collection by an automated side loading truck. The pilot ran from November 7, 2016 to April 21, 2017.

Each home in the pilot was provided one 96-gallon cart for combined garbage and yardwaste, and a second 96-gallon cart for recyclables. For any extra yardwaste, households were allowed to set out, up to six paper yardwaste bags. Recycling was collected every other week during the pilot. The carts were on loan from Waste Management, who also provided the special collection truck and the labor for cart delivery, at no cost to the City.

Recycling Analysis

During the pilot, one of the things the City wanted to examine was the impact on recycling. Before and after the pilot, and twice during the pilot, the



city pulled samples of recyclables for a one week period. These recyclables were then sorted to determine the amount of contamination (non-recyclable material).

From the pilot, there are strong indicators that recycling would grow when changing to carts. During the pilot, 73 percent of the households set out recycling. Outside of the pilot only 61 percent set out recycling.

Carts also had some bad results. The non-recyclable items placed in the carts got bigger, and they were not items that would easily be confused as something that was recyclable. In the samples of recycling we found; a wicker basket, a Speak-n-Spell® toy, a toddler's wooden puzzle, and a metal shower caddy. These contaminates were in addition to the more common contaminates of plastic bags, glass bottles, and Styrofoam®.

Survey

Near the end of the six-month pilot, a public opinion survey was conducted by Wiese Research Associates and the results analyzed by SCS Engineers.

The survey was conducted by phone with live operators over several weeks beginning March



25, 2017. The survey was sampled to give a high degree of confidence that the results would represent the whole city.

The results indicated that the residents in the pilot were overwhelmingly satisfied. A combined 85 percent were either totally or mostly satisfied with the pilot. Asked if they would favor the City moving to a cart collection system like the pilot, the survey again resulted in overwhelming approval. With 82 percent selecting either strongly, or moderately favoring carts as Omaha's new collection system.

Specific to the carts, it is clear that at best, "One size fits most." Those in the pilot were mostly satisfied with the size of the 96-gallon cart and only a very few found them difficult to wheel around. For both garbage and recycling there were responses that said the cart was either too large or not large enough.

To read the report on the survey, including the verbatim responses of those surveyed, visit <http://future.wasteline.org>