



DATE: October 3, 2024  
TO: Environmental Services Commission  
FROM: Jon Gire, Solid Waste Program Manager, (425) 452-6025  
*Utilities Department*  
SUBJECT: **Solid Waste Annual Customer Satisfaction Surveys**

## BACKGROUND

This briefing reports on the annual customer satisfaction surveys of the City's solid waste collection contractor, Republic Services (Republic), currently in the eleventh year of the 2014 Comprehensive Garbage, Recyclables, and Organics Collection Contract (Contract). The Contract is valued at over \$30 million annually and runs through June 2028. The City outsources solid waste collection, including customer service and billing functions, to Republic to serve customers from over 30,000 single-family residences and nearly 2,000 multi-family/commercial facilities.

As part of the City's annual review of Republic's performance under the Contract, the City conducts customer surveys to gauge satisfaction with Republic's services. Customers were asked the following questions for both the single-family customer sector and the multi-family/commercial customer sector:

- Republic Services supplies garbage, recycling, and compost collection services to Bellevue. Thinking about the service you received over the past year; how would you rate your satisfaction with Republic Services?
- How satisfied have you been with the collection crew that picks up at your location?
- How satisfied were you with the response time following the missed collection? \*
- How satisfied were you with the response time following a request for a new or replacement cart? \*\*
- How satisfied are you with the telephone courtesy you get from Republic Services? \*\*\*
- How satisfied are you with the helpfulness of the customer service staff? \*\*\*

\*Asked only of customers that had a missed collection in the last year, excluding days when service postponed due to inclement weather.

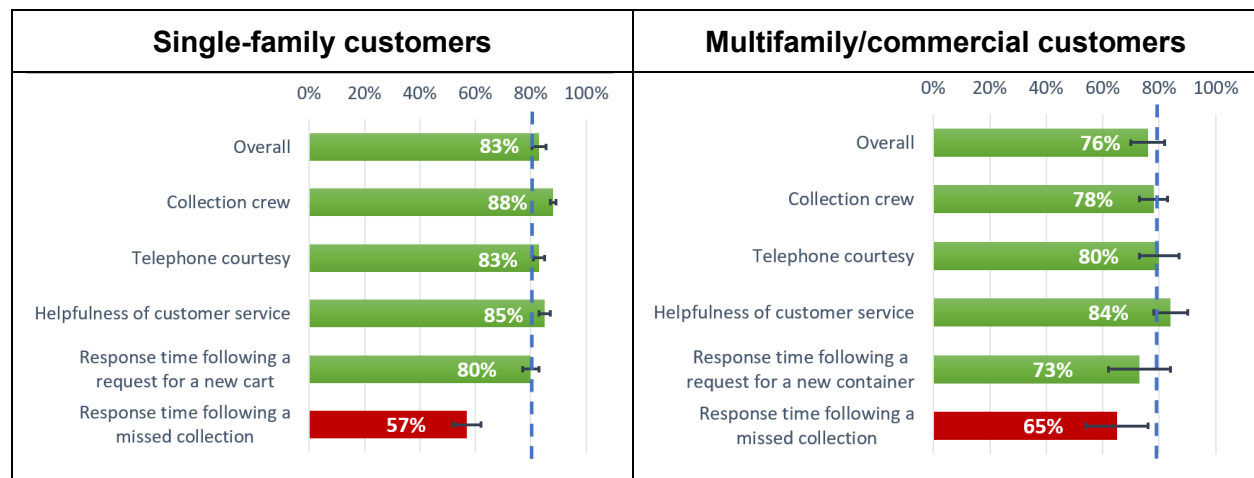
\*\*Asked only of customers that had requested a new or replacement container in the last year.

\*\*\*Asked only of customers that had reason to call Republic in the last year.

## KEY FINDINGS

To comply with the minimum satisfaction levels established in the Contract, Republic must score at least 80% satisfaction for each customer satisfaction question, including the relevant margin of error. Republic's satisfaction ratings for each question are based on the combined score of "very satisfied" and "somewhat satisfied". Surveys were conducted in August 2024, and

customers were asked about their experience over the previous year. The following graphs summarize this year's results, with green bars showing areas where Republic achieved the customer satisfaction goal and red bars showing where Republic did not meet the customer satisfaction goal. Each survey area also includes blue error bars to show the relevant margin of error.



As has been the case for all surveys conducted under the Contract, overall satisfaction scores continue to remain high among single-family and multifamily/commercial customers. Customers in both sectors also rated Republic above 80% satisfaction (including relevant margin of error) in the following areas: collection crew, telephone courtesy, telephone helpfulness, and responsiveness with replacement cart. However, like previous annual surveys, Republic Services did not meet minimum satisfaction scores in two areas: satisfaction after a missed collection in the single-family residential survey and satisfaction after a missed collection in the multifamily/commercial survey.

### CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

This year's customer survey results show that Republic continues to achieve a generally high level of overall customer satisfaction. However, because the minimum satisfaction ratings required by the Contract were not met for satisfaction after a missed collection in the single-family residential and multifamily/commercial surveys, Republic Services is subject to a contractual performance fee and is also required to develop and implement an action plan for improving satisfaction following a missed collection.

The action plan, mutually agreed-upon by Republic and the City, will include scheduled milestones for implementing changes that improve response times to missed collections to meet the minimum customer satisfaction rating at the time of the next annual survey in 2025. Republic and the City will seek to build on the improvements in key performance metrics following this past year's action plan that saw average monthly overall missed collections improve from a monthly average of 181 in 2022 to 179 in 2023 to 156 through July 2024, and missed collections subject to fee (an instance when Republic did not return within 24 hours to collect a reported missed collection) improve from a monthly average of 14 in 2022 to 9 in 2023 to 7 through July 2024. Maintaining this trend of improvement in missed collections will continue to be an area of focus for Republic and the City.