

City of Saint Paul
Garbage Advisory Committee
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SAINT PAUL
MINNESOTA

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I. Introduction

The November 2019 consideration of the 2020 garbage rates included comments by the public which proposed creation of a garbage advisory group to provide input to the Council for future changes to the Coordinated Collection (CC) Program. The current contract for garbage, bulky item, and yard waste collection ends September 30, 2023. The City must consider what the next iteration of the program will be, and what changes should be considered.

A Garbage Advisory Committee, comprised of residents who applied for a position, was convened. Eighteen members were appointed by the Mayor with the advice and consent of Council Members. The members represented the wide diversity of St. Paul residents:

- Various geographic, income, language, and cultural areas of the City
- Homeowners, renters, and rental property owners with 1-4-unit or townhouse properties
- Persons who wished to adjust and improve the CC program and those opposed to it
- Persons with some garbage knowledge and those without
- Persons highly engaged in the Sustainability movement, and those who were not

The charge of the Committee was to advise the City on issues associated with the City's solid waste management programs and as individually interested, to be an ambassador for the Committee and the City with neighbors and neighborhood organizations. Changes to recycling and organics collections were not included in the Committee's work, except as they informed the Committee on the role of those programs in an integrated solid waste management system.

All meetings of the Committee were open to the public. A public web page specific to the Committee's work was established which held all meeting and recordings, materials and a web form for submission of public comments ([Garbage Advisory Committee | Saint Paul Minnesota \(stpaul.gov\)](https://www.stpaul.gov/garbage-advisory-committee)) were posted. There was also time on the Committee's meeting agendas for non-Committee individuals to provide comments and advice.

This Report of the Committee provides program areas for the City to evaluate as it moves forward with the CC program.

History

Between 2009 and 2015 the City of Saint Paul enhanced the City's efforts toward sustainability, environmental and public health protection, and conservation of energy and natural resources. Studies by the State of Minnesota and the Wilder Foundation found that many City residents paid a higher cost for solid waste management than surrounding

cities. In 2015 the Macalester-Groveland Community Council researched trash collection in Saint Paul through surveys, community meetings and interviews and urged the City to adopt organized trash collection. The City began a process to implement a coordinated collection program in 2016. A series of community meetings, surveys, and Open Saint Paul activities sought additional input and advice from residents (RES 16-337 <https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Public%20Works/OTC%20Resolution.pdf>).

On July 19, 2017, the Council directed City staff to negotiate with the existing licensed residential collectors in accordance with Minnesota Statutes. On November 18, 2017, the Council authorized the execution of a 5-year contract between the City of Saint Paul and St. Paul Haulers, LLC for the provision of trash collection services. All 1-4-unit residential properties located in Saint Paul became part of this system.

The City Council defined the following goals and anticipated benefits of the Coordinated Collection Program:

- Stable, uniform rates and reasonable, low cost.
 - A survey of residents found wide disparities in prices charged by haulers. Review of (# of invoices received) invoices submitted by residents noted a small (Q: was it really just small cart size? If not sure, just delete “small”) cart with weekly service cost between \$10.33 and \$53.65 per month. The City wished to ensure that residents would get consistent service at a reasonable price throughout the City.
- Reduction in illegal dumping.
 - When people choose not to or are unable to sign up for garbage service, they may find other ways to dispose of their garbage, including illegal dumping. Illegal dumping affects the entire community by decreasing property values, harming the environment, and costing the City over \$300,000 a year to clean up. It was hoped that standard service throughout the City would reduce illegal dumping.
- Reduced truck traffic.
 - Before coordinated collection, there were 15 haulers serving overlapping areas. Multiple trucks in alleys and streets creates unnecessary noise, alley and street wear and tear, additional exhaust, and safety issues. Coordinated collection resulted in one truck per week serves most alleys or streets for garbage collection.
- Equitable service and pricing.
 - Saint Paul is home to new residents from throughout the world. A standard service allowed all residents to receive uniform prices which were not based on their ability to negotiate lower prices or availability of service in their area.

Additional information can be found on the City's Residential Garbage website page:
[Coordinated Collection | Saint Paul Minnesota \(stpaul.gov\)](https://www.stpaul.gov/Coordinated-Collection)

The Next Generation of the City's Solid Waste Management Program

The following report sections detail the program areas the Committee considered to improve the Coordinated Collection Program. Each section contains an outline of the topic, the ideas and comments the Committee had during discussion of the topic, the majority option and differing or minority option(s). Minority options are not "less than" majority options; there are several sections in which the diverse options did not receive a majority. Comments by Committee members are included in the options, and a complete list of all comments and ideas, from the Committee and from the public, are included in Appendix A.

Additional Program Recommendations

While these items are not part of the next contract, the committee would like the next generation of the City's solid waste management program to include the following:

- Efforts to promote waste reduction
- Recycling incentive(s)
- Develop and/or promote City programs to encourage reuse (e.g., FreeCycle)

II. Next RFP and Contract Mechanics

The Committee members considered the process of implementing the next garbage program and ways it could be improved. The Committee members focused on elements that could be included in the RFP and contract processes to improve transparency.

Existing Program

The City has a contract with the Saint Paul Haulers' Consortium. An amendment to the contract was made in 2019 to clarify billing issues. The contract ends September 30, 2023.

The terms of the contract require the haulers to be the primary customer service entity, to bill customers, to manage cart inventory, to collect garbage and deliver it to the County-designated location, to receive requests from customers for bulky item disposal and to provide that service and bill appropriately. The haulers pay the tipping fee at the disposal facility. The haulers must also provide data and reports to the City.

The City provides "next-level" or dispute resolution customer services. The City reimburses the haulers for any late fees, non-payments or other "bad debt" they incur in for the Saint Paul customers through assessment of the fees on property taxes. The City provides the garbage carts and cart parts to each hauler. The City provides education to residents on setouts and proper placement of garbage carts and the rules for garbage collection. The City provides the tags haulers use to communicate with residents when there are problems. The City enforces contract provisions for collection services, customer service, and billing disputes.

Committee Comments, Concerns, Pluses, Minuses

- The focus of the garbage program should be to keep Saint Paul clean. All committee members want this.
- Small garbage haulers, included in the first contract process, were able to sell their routes for good price. They had time to adjust to the new program or sell.
- There needs to be transparency in the reasons for the increase in the Ramsey County tipping fees, taxes on garbage, and their impact on prices that residents pay for garbage service.
- A focus of the next contract should be to invest in and promote reduce/reuse/recycle and NOT just throw away more. The trash and recycling companies' line is "When in doubt, throw it out," which just adds fuel to the throw away mentality.
- There is a desire to contract with a local hauler who cares if customers are happy (or not) with their garbage service.
- There is a desire to move garbage collection to a City department versus a private garbage hauler.
- There is a desire for a single hauler and/or a municipal service citywide.



- The committee would like more teeth to guarantee excellent customer service.
- The length of the current contract is too long.
- There should be open meetings or hybrid meetings for contract negotiations so that the public can watch the meetings live or recorded, but not necessarily contribute during the meeting.
- Transparency in the negotiations and the contract details should be improved.
- There is frustration that details of contract negotiations and details weren't clear and large promises to the community weren't kept.
- The City should be clear about what is possible (legally and practically) in the next contract.
- Before the Citywide garbage program, some committee members had a <national hauler,> who is now in the Consortium, and fired them for poor service.
- We wish the trucks didn't have to make 2 passes down the alley
- We wish the garbage company was more local.
- The contract should allow the expansion of the City's garbage program to properties with 5+ units. They would be able to use the bulky program; to help prevent illegal dumping.
- Larger and adjacent properties should be able to have dumpsters instead of carts.

Recommendations

Majority

1. The Committee supports an RFP to select the next garbage contractor(s). There is consensus that haulers should compete for the City's garbage collection service.
2. More teeth should be included in the contract to hold haulers accountable for service.
3. The next contract should promote reduce/reuse/recycle, and not promote the idea to just throw away more stuff.
4. Notification should be sent to customers if a hauler is being purchased by another hauler.
5. Include a municipal collection option and/or make the City the hauler
 - Fewer complaints, City workers get benefits
 - Could be very expensive
 - Over time the City should look at being the hauler (generate revenue for the City?)
6. Hire expert Counsel. We (the taxpayers) must have good negotiators this time around versus the last time.
7. Shorter contract than current one. The next contract should be for 3 years.
8. Require Customer Service/Operations office within the City government.
9. Track total waste across City so we can accurately gauge waste reduction to meet goals.

Minority

There is varying support to include the items below in the RFP process or RFP:

1. Track and reduce vehicle miles travelled, including from hauler’s garage to the service area.
2. Explore including 5+ unit properties as an opt-in in the next contract to reduce the number of trucks in neighborhoods.

III. Opt-Out

This topic contains the situations Committee members discussed to allow Very Low waste generators to opt out of the City’s CC program.

Existing Program

The contract with the Haulers’ Consortium requires each dwelling unit to have at least one garbage cart. The contract does not allow opt-out from garbage services.

Committee Comments, Concerns, Pluses, Minuses

Comments from committee members who are in favor of an opt-out option:

- Opt-outs should be allowed.
- Allows garbage service to be more affordable for low waste generators.

Comments from committee members who are not in favor of an opt-out option:

- Everyone has waste and needs to dispose of it.
- It costs money to check to make sure properties are correctly disposing of garbage.
- Opt-out allows some residents to get a discount and creates inequality. Current citywide garbage system, which requires all to have carts, is more equitable.
- Opt-out risks only some residents will have the knowledge and resources to use the system and will be subsidized.

Recommendations

The Committee discussed the topic of opt-out extensively. The Committee discussed a range of recommendations. There was not a majority recommendation for any one of these scenarios, therefore all are presented as minority recommendations. Some committee members are concerned that having too many options and/or too many exceptions may result in a loss of efficiency.

Majority

1. The Committee agreed on the common goals of fair and equitable garbage service for everyone and flexibility to meet different needs with a range of options.



2. Address opt-out options separately for single family and multi-unit (2-4 units) buildings.
3. If opt-out is allowed, right sizing should be the goal.

Minority

Single Unit Residences

1. Do not offer opt out services.
2. Allow opt-outs with an application fee for all properties.
3. If the garbage is not properly managed at an opt-out property, the City could require garbage service.
 - Alternate: If there is a garbage issue and it is brought in front of the City Council, the owner would lose the ability to opt out.

Multi-unit Residences

1. Do not offer opt out services.
2. Allow opt-outs with an application fee for all properties.
3. Allow Homeowner Associations to opt-in or opt-out. Homeowner Associations are considered “Common Interest Communities” (CIC) in the Saint Paul Code of Ordinances. It does not appear there are specific ordinances regarding CICs in relation to the CC program. Buildings, whether part of a CIC or not, of four units or less were considered part of the CC program. Several options for HOAs were discussed:
 - HOAs could manage their own trash as a commercial entity.
 - No opt-out application fee required but would have to prove that the HOA is providing garbage service.
 - Require an opt-out application fee, but only one fee per HOA, not per unit.
 - Exempt HOAs from the City ordinance so they are not in City garbage program.
 - HOAs over __# units are exempt from ordinance/City garbage program. For example, a HOA comprised of mixed size buildings (some 4 unit and some 6-unit buildings) has some buildings in and some building out of the current City garbage program.
 - HOAs under __# units must pay an opt-out fee.
4. Allow 5+ units to opt-in to the City garbage program and be able to opt-out at a future time (i.e., change of ownership).
 - Have flexibility to change but not every month.
5. If the garbage is not properly managed at an opt-out property, the City could require garbage service.
 - Alternate: If there is a garbage issue and it is brought in front of the City Council, the owner would lose the ability to opt out.

IV. Cart Sharing

This topic contains the situations Committee members discussed to allow Very Low waste generators to share services, and situations in which persons in multi-unit properties or who are neighbors could be allowed to share cart(s) and services.

Existing Program

The contract with the Haulers' Consortium requires each dwelling unit to have at least one garbage cart. The contract does not allow cart sharing between units of a residential property or between consenting neighbors.

Committee Comments, Concerns, Pluses, Minuses

Comments from committee members who are in favor of cart sharing:

- Cart sharing should be allowed.
- Cart sharing decreases the number of carts at a property, which enhances the neighborhood.
- Allows garbage service to be more affordable for low waste generators.

Comments from committee members who are not in favor of cart sharing:

- Everyone has waste and needs to dispose of it.
- It costs money to check to make sure properties are correctly disposing of garbage.
- Cart share allows some residents to get a discount and creates inequality. Current citywide garbage system, which requires all to have carts, is more equitable.
- Cart sharing risks only some residents will have the knowledge and resources to use the system and will be subsidized.

Recommendations

The Committee discussed the topic of cart sharing extensively. The Committee discussed a range of recommendations. There was not a majority recommendation for any one of these scenarios, therefore all are presented as minority recommendations. Some committee members are concerned that having too many options and/or too many exceptions may result in a loss of efficiency.

Majority

1. The Committee agreed on the common goals of fair and equitable garbage service for everyone and flexibility to meet different needs with a range of options.
2. Address cart sharing options separately for single family and multi-unit (2-4 units) buildings.
3. If cart sharing is allowed, right sizing should be the goal.

Minority

Single Unit Residences



1. Do not allow cart sharing.
2. Cart-sharing could be applied for, with a fee to pay for enforcement.
 - Allow neighbors (different address) in single family homes to share carts.
 - Be clear about who to share with – just a different address; doesn't need to be next to your house.
3. If there is an overflow of garbage at a cart-sharing property, the City could require more carts.
 - Alternate: If there is an overflowing garbage issue and it is brought in front of the City Council, the owner(s) would lose the ability to choose cart number/size.

Multi-unit Residences

1. Do not allow cart sharing.
2. Cart-sharing could be applied for, with a fee to pay for enforcement.
3. Allow multi-unit properties to share carts (right sizing).
 - At least one cart per address, but no mandated number of carts based on number of units.
 - Allow multi-units to have dumpsters.
4. If there is an overflow of garbage at a cart-sharing property, the City could require more carts.
 - Alternate: If there is an overflowing garbage issue and it is brought in front of the City Council, the owner(s) would lose the ability to choose cart number/size.

V. Billing

This program area provides recommendations on the billing of residents for solid waste services.

Existing Program

Haulers mail out invoices on the 5th day of the first month of quarterly service (January, April, July, and October). The invoice covers the next three months. Payment is due the 25th of the billing month. For the hauler to receive payment, it must clear your bank or financial institution by the due date. Payments not received by the due date, will incur a late fee of 5% and the end of each month of the billing cycle. Up to three late fees are possible per billing cycle. At the end of the quarter, all unpaid bills are turned over to the City for assessment. Your hauler can no longer take payment for that quarter in accordance with the contract.

Committee Comments, Concerns, Pluses, Minuses

- Multi-language support should be easily available.



- Physical presence less important; understand our contract and operations here.
- Have a single bill with yard waste and bulkies all in one.
- There was a question of the legality of property tax assessment if trash was never picked up from the dwelling unit and there was no documented public health hazard of refuse on the property.

Recommendations

Majority

1. City should handle Customer billing, with costs comparable or better to the existing hauler costs.
2. Multi-language support (at a minimum the major languages spoken in Saint Paul: English, Hmong, Spanish, Somali) should be easily available. Customers should be able to request a bill in a different language. The City should promote the service by sending message(s) in multiple languages that this service is available.
3. The winning <contractor> should have office/presence in Saint Paul for local help with pickups and questions
 - If the City handles billing this isn't needed; but recommended if City Council doesn't adopt billing by the City.
4. Due date for billing should be 30 days from when the bill is received.
5. Single bill should be available for multi-unit properties if customer wants it.
6. There should be an option to have monthly billing versus quarterly billing. Customers would have to request monthly billing. The default should stay as quarterly.
 - Since rental properties need to refund tenant bills within 21 days, they need monthly billing and/or the ability to get current charges between quarterly bills.

Minority

1. None

VI. Customer Service

This program area provides recommendations on the handling of customer service.

Existing Program

If residents have problems with the collection services and/or the bills, they are to first call the Haulers to resolve these issues. If satisfaction is not achieved, the City will attempt to mediate/resolve the dispute. The City offers an opportunity for residents to contest any assessments via the legislative hearing process.

Committee Comments, Concerns, Pluses, Minuses

- Consistent customer service will be provided if it all goes through the City.
- If hauler is providing customer service, they need to understand our contract and operations in Saint Paul.
- Offer an online portal for customer service.
- Do more cart placement education, including using photos to show where carts should be placed in relation to the curb, edge of alley, and street.
- Provide more information for new residents about cart size options.

Recommendations

Majority

1. City should handle Customer Service.
2. Implement the most cost-effective option between the hauler providing customer service and the City providing customer service.
3. If the hauler provides the customer service, require hauler to report issues/customer service, including call volumes and trends, to the City so that the City can monitor quality of service.
4. Multi-language support (at a minimum the major languages spoken in Saint Paul: English, Hmong, Spanish, Somali) should be easily available for customer service.
5. Walk-up service should be available to seniors/disability/anyone who asks.

Minority

1. Keep system as it is now. The hauler does customer service; residents could contact City if issues not addressed.

VII. Service Holds

The process for temporary suspension of services is discussed in this section.

Existing Program

The City's program has two options for temporarily stopping garbage service: Temporary Service Hold and an Unoccupied Dwelling Unit Registration. Service holds may not be used to avoid paying for service if a residence is occupied.

Temporary absences for service holds can include, but are not limited to extended vacations, temporary employment or education relocation, extended absence due to health reasons, or other similar situations.

Property owners that have a vacant unit can request an Unoccupied Dwelling Registration Form to suspend service until the unit becomes occupied. Unoccupied Dwelling

Registrations go into effect the 1st of the month after the month they are received by the City of Saint Paul and are evaluated annually.

Temporary Service Holds can be used to suspend garbage service for a short time. Examples for temporary services holds include extended vacations, temporary employment or education relocation, extended absence due to health reasons, or other similar situations. Requests must be made, to the hauler, two weeks prior to the hold start date. Qualifying absences must be a minimum of four weeks and cannot exceed 26 weeks in a calendar year. Residents may request up to two service holds per calendar year.

Committee Comments, Concerns, Pluses, Minuses

- Use the same form for opt-out and service holds.

Recommendations

Majority

1. Do not require residents to provide a reason for a temporary service hold.
2. There should be a written plan to hold or stop garbage temporarily that outlines:
 - What qualifies?
 - How much is saved?
 - When is service stopped and started?
 - The actual costs and savings related to the service hold (i.e., what is the amount of the credit that will be applied on the next bill?) and/or a widget/calculator that allows the customer to figure out the costs and savings related to the service hold.

Minority

1. Allow service holds even if dwelling is occupied (alternate for very small generator)
2. Service holds and opt-outs should remain separate. Service hold should not be used in place of opt-out. The concern is that if don't allow opt-out then service hold gets used and there is no fee associated with it

VIII. Costs & Pricing

Discussion of the cost and prices of solid waste services are discussed in this section.

Existing Program

Residential properties with 1-4 dwelling units, are required to have service and a garbage cart per unit. Depending on cart size either 2 or 3 bulky items can be collected each calendar year at no additional cost. Cart size/collection frequency can be changed once per year at no additional charge. The costs of garbage service has been:



2019 Rates

Cart Size	Gallons	Collection	Bulky Items Annually	Quarterly Rates, taxes included
Small	35	Every other week	2	\$60.83
Small	35	Weekly	2	\$70.34
Medium	64	Weekly	3	\$96.08
Large	96	Weekly	3	\$102.44

2020 Rates

Cart Size	Gallons	Collection	Bulky Items Annually	Quarterly Rates, taxes included
Small	35	Every other week	2	\$57.60
Small	35	Weekly	2	\$67.29
Medium	64	Weekly	3	\$93.09
Large	96	Weekly	3	\$99.45

2021 Rates

Cart Size	Gallons	Collection	Bulky Items Annually	Quarterly Rates, taxes included
Small	35	Every other week	2	\$59.23
Small	35	Weekly	2	\$69.04
Medium	64	Weekly	3	\$94.87
Large	96	Weekly	3	\$101.23



2022 Rates

Cart Size	Gallons	Collection	Bulky Items Annually	Quarterly Rates, taxes included
Small	35	Every other week	2	\$59.30
Small	35	Weekly	2	\$69.81
Medium	64	Weekly	3	\$96.56
Large	96	Weekly	3	\$106.81

An annual fee is added to the Ramsey County property tax statement for each dwelling unit to cover costs of carts, program administration and assessments, outreach, and education efforts. The annual fee has been:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Dwelling Unit Annual Fee</u>
2018	\$24.60
2019	\$24.60
2020	\$24.60
2021	\$27.12
2022	\$28.08

The Annual Fee is used for the following purposes:

2022 Budget

Employee Expenses:	\$483,487
(5 persons in PW, 1 person Assessments, ¼ person in DSI)	
Services	\$3,847,336
Assessment Recording Fees (\$3,497,041)	
Phones, PCs, Enterprise technology	
Graphics and Printing, Postage	
City services overhead	
Materials and Supplies	\$147,229
Carts	
Paper and computer supplies	
Financing	\$971,972
Transfer to General Fund	
Transfer to Debt Service Fund	
Transfer to Internal Service Fund	
Total	\$5,449,975

The contract with the St. Paul Haulers, LLC provides specific annual cost adjustments based on the Consumer Price Index, the tons of garbage hauled the previous year, and the tipping fee charged by the County. County and State Solid Waste Management taxes are added to the bill for garbage and bulky item services.

The tipping fee charged by the County affects the rates each year. The rates have been:

Net Disposal Rate at R&E, 2018	\$65.00
Net Disposal Rate at R&E, 2019	\$69.00
Net Disposal Rate at R&E, 2020	\$82.00
Net Disposal Rate at R&E, 2021	\$84.00
Net Disposal Rate at R&E, 2022	\$87.00

Recycling and yard wastes organics separately collected for composting are not taxed by the County or the State. (Mn.Stat. 297H. Solid Waste Management Taxes.) Ramsey County's planned organics collection program will collect organics in the same cart as garbage and it will be processed at the same facility as garbage. Thus, Ramsey County will be taxing organics as allowed under state law.

Committee Comments, Concerns, Pluses, Minuses

- The garbage program pricing structure should encourage waste reduction by using pricing and cart sizing.
- A pricing structure with extreme differences to encourage waste reduction could incentivize people to do other things with garbage, not necessarily recycle it.
- The Administrative fees that the City charges on the property taxes are too high.
- The City should consider charging for garbage service by the amount of garbage picked up. For example, if little trash is in the cart, give a discount, since currently the haulers bill extra when the cart lid is open six inches or more because of excess garbage.
- Bill by weight if possible.
- There is a minimum cost to garbage <service> that should be paid regardless of how much is thrown out.
- Give monetary incentives to recycle.

Recommendations

Majority

1. Decrease overall costs for all customers.
2. There should be a charge for excess garbage in the cart. The hauler should charge this fee, if they have to remove a bag in order to tip the cart.



3. There should be more transparency in the City Garbage Annual Service Fee. For example, show the categories that make up the total cost into categories.
4. County and state taxes should take into account the separated organics proposed to be in the cart. [Alisa's NOTE to committee: do we need to expand on this one more based on the explanation of Ramsey County vs Hennepin County?]
5. Customers with small cart every-other-week service should be able to call for temporary weekly or extra service for a fee.
6. There should be monthly garbage service at a reduced cost unless it is a public health hazard.
7. There should be a discount for paying the garbage bill yearly.

Minority

1. Different views on how to charge for garbage services:
 - Base unit cost per property plus cart(s) fee
 - Base unit cost per dwelling unit plus cart(s) fee
 - Yard waste and bulky pickup should be a la cart services for a fee
 - All garbage services (regular pickup, yard waste, bulky items) included in the cost for a cart, varying by cart size
 - The base fee should not include bulky item pickup and/or yard waste
2. Pricing structure should have a base unit cost that is the same for all cart sizes to pay for collection, trucks, billing, administration, and non-variable services. Cost per cart size to be added to base unit cost.
3. Pricing structure should be based on volume so small carts do not subsidize large carts. For example:
 - 96 gallon \$50 + taxes
 - 65 gallon \$33.50 + taxes
 - 32 gallon \$18 + taxes
 - 32 gallon EOW \$9 + taxes
4. If carts are empty, the fee should be reduced (Converse of fee for overstuffed carts or carts with lid open more than 6 inches).
5. There should be fewer cart sizes, ideally one standard cart size for all.
6. Different views on how to pay for the administrative cost on the property taxes (currently the City Garbage Annual Service Fee) separate from the cart and garbage service:
 - Administrative fee per parcel ID
 - Administrative fee per dwelling unit
 - The administrative fee should be included in the garbage service costs and not charged on the property tax.

7. Maplewood has a program to opt-out of garbage service through an application (with fee), subject to certain rules. Minneapolis city ordinance requires solid waste and recycling services for all residences with four or fewer units.
8. Provide incentives to encourage waste reduction.

IX. Bulky Items

Bulky items include furniture, large plastic toys, appliances, electronics and TVs, and other waste items that do not fit into a garbage cart. Bulky items do not include construction and demolition wastes, car parts, stumps and large branches, or large landscape materials.

Existing Program

The citywide garbage collection program includes collection and disposal of 2 or 3 bulky items, depending on cart size, per residential property unit per calendar year at no additional charge. Haulers must be contacted in advance to determine the set-out date. Collection and disposal of additional bulky items can be arranged with the Haulers for specified additional charges (\$10-\$35 per bulky item (plus tax)).

The City is provided data only on the number of bulky items collected through the Contract provisions. The number of bulky items collected by service (car) size is not known, neither is the number of bulky items collected for additional fees.

The bulky items collected, and the percentage used as a function the total possible bulky pickups to be used are:

	Bulky Collected (Included)	Total Possible	% used
2019	14,509	191,496	7.6%
2020	21,000	190,833	11%
2021	19,493	196,045	9.9%

Limited data is available on the number of illegal dumping cleanups performed by Public Works and the cost. Illegal dumping cleanups are also performed by DSI, Ramsey County and MNDOT on areas they are responsible for.

Requested Cleanups of Illegal Dumping

By Saint Paul Public Works

Year	Number of Requests	Dollars Spent
2022:	423	\$218,325 (January through April 15)
2021:	2,541	\$703,734
2020:	2,621	\$513,850
2019:	2,573	\$445,937
2018:		\$447,122

Committee Comments, Concerns, Pluses, Minuses

- There is a concern that bulky item pickups have not stopped illegal dumping.
- Bulky item pickup should occur regularly as part of the garbage service.
- Bulky item pickup should be available as an additional charge on the bill.
- Bulky item pickup should happen once a year at the curb, like the City of Bloomington has historically done.
- Concern was expressed that folks can't store bulky items for a whole year as needed if bulky pickup is annually as historically done in the City of Bloomington.
- There should be consistent rules on how many hours/days (48 hours, 1 week, etc.) to call ahead for bulky item pickup.
- A committee member tried to use bulky item pickup. The hauler kept asking what size the bulky was and then said it was too big to qualify as one of their bulky items allowed per the current contract.
- A committee member tried to use the included bulky item pickup and it was too difficult to contact the hauler to schedule the pickup.

Recommendations

Majority

1. Committee members agree that bulky item disposal should be addressed.

Minority

The committee feels that bulky item pickup is a complicated topic and divided the recommendations into several areas.

Options for the Type of Bulky Pickup Program

1. Bulky item pickups should be included as part of the garbage service pricing.
2. Increase the number (more than 2 or 3) of bulky item pickups.
3. Have same contract as Maplewood in which the hauler collects bulky items for a fee all year, and there is a 20% discount on bulky items during the Fall Cleanup Campaign.
4. Have a program like Minneapolis in which up to two large items are taken each week at no additional charge. Bulky items with recyclable parts are to be set out only on recycling day (every other week), other items can be set out any week.
5. If bulky item pickup is part of garbage service pricing, then an end-of-year rebate should be given if the bulky service is not used.
6. Offer 1 bulky item pickup per address and let owners buy in for additional pick-ups (like yard waste service charged per bag).
7. Allow one day per year curbside pickup across Saint Paul as an opt-in option with a participation charge.
8. If cart sharing is allowed, then the number of bulky items allowed as part of the garbage service pricing should be dependent on the cart number/size.



9. Bulky item pickup should be a separate opt-in service (no pick-ups as part of cart service).
10. Bulky item pickup should be charged by the item and accessible as needed.
11. There should be no limit on the number of bulky item pickups allowed to reduce illegal dumping, like the City of Minneapolis.
12. Bulky item pickup should be year-round and not seasonal.
13. Special program for garbage and bulky pickups around colleges/universities occur during move in/move out times to address additional bulky items and overflowing garbage. Notice is given prior to move in/move out times that bill payers will be charged if they have bulky items/extra garbage bags on the curb or alley during this time.

Ways to Improve a Bulky Item Pickup Program

1. Re-use/recycle mattresses like Second Chance Recycling does.
2. The person (owner, renter/tenant), who is authorized to schedule a bulky item pickup, needs to be defined.
3. A better and easier way to schedule a bulky item pickup is needed.
4. Better communication is needed about the bulky item pickup program:
 - Existence of program and program details, including how to use it
 - One number to call for bulky item pickups and questions
 - Interpretation and translation (language line) to assist limited English speakers

X. Yard Waste/Organics

Yard wastes include grass clippings, garden weeds, bundles of small branches, and fall leaves. Yard wastes do not include organics, pet wastes, stones, hardscape materials, large branches, or stumps. Yard waste may not be placed in mixed municipal solid waste, or in a (resource recovery facility except for the purposes of reuse, composting, or co-composting. Yard Wastes may not be disposed of in plastic bags. Yard waste services are not subject to the State and County Solid Waste Management taxes if they are dropped off at a yard waste facility, or put in separate containers and disposed of at a qualified facility

Organics include food wastes, non-recyclable paper (paper towels, tissues), and compostable to-go containers. Ramsey County is developing an organics collection program that will allow residents to put organics in a special compostable bag which will be collected with their garbage and processed at the R&E Center. Because the organics will be placed in the garbage carts, they will be subject to the State and County Solid Waste Management taxes per state law.

Existing Program

Residents can contract with haulers for April – November weekly service, including a yard waste cart and up to eight (8) yard waste bags per week. Residents can also purchase “a la carte” service by calling the hauler. Yard waste services do not have a State or County Solid Waste Management Tax added.

Organics can be taken to a Ramsey County drop-off site, or vegetative organics can be composted in a back-yard bin. There is no charge or tax for use of the County drop-off program.

Committee Comments, Concerns, Pluses, Minuses

- Not everyone uses yard waste collection; many back-yard compost or use the Ramsey County drop-off sites.
- Include yard waste in cost of full-service (not separate) so that everyone has yard waste service.
- Encourage more composting in yard or leaving the grass clippings on the lawn.
- Yard waste collection, either annual or a la carte, should be easier to arrange. It’s difficult to contact hauler and/or arrange for pickup of yard waste.
- When durable compostable bag program begins in 2023 compost will be taxed as a part of garbage collection and disposal.
 - Be transparent to community about this.
- Increasing the garbage cart size to allow room to throw in compost bags, instead of taking them to a drop-off site means a higher cost to the resident.
- Yard waste by the bag instead of whole year commitment.
- Should be able to get stickers from City for yard waste by the bag or extra bags of trash.

Recommendations

Majority

1. Keep yard waste collection as a separate paid service.
2. Have the option to pay for yard waste collection per bag or full season (have both annual and a la carte options).

Minority

1. Incorporate cost of yard waste into the full garbage program so everyone has yard waste service.

XI. Appendix

Will contain all Committee and Public comments received; we will continue to add to this

Comments from the form Advisory Committee Feedback posted on stpaul.gov/garbage. All comments as of May 18, 2022.

Two changes that I'd request that the committee endorse:

- 1) Allow neighbors to share carts
- 2) Adopt a program similar to that in Maplewood where residents who are "zero-waster" (i.e. low volume of trash, recycle heavily, compost their own garbage, etc.) be allowed to fill out a one time form to opt-out of the mandatory participation collection program and pay a nominal one time fee to do so. "We" haul our own trash to transfer stations at a GREATLY reduced annual cost.

Thanks.

I am disappointed with Waste Management as my garbage hauler. I wish we could've gotten a more local business that understands/cares how things are done in St. Paul. For the second year in a row we have had to call in to the company (they don't make it easy to find a phone number) to get them to pick up our Christmas tree, even though the St. Paul Holiday collection page clearly states that in St. Paul we don't need to call our hauler, rather we can just bring the tree to the curb and it will be picked up by Jan 15. After a week and a half of the tree being at the curb I finally called them today and they act mystified that they should pick it up without me calling ahead to create a "ticket" for this. Can you please communicate to them how their contract with St. Paul works? And please consider replacing them with a local hauler in the future? I miss calling an actual Minnesotan who cares that I am happy with their service.

Hello,

I'm pleased to see that a committee has been formed to review the current state of our garbage system. In reviewing the notes from January 6, I noticed two significant items missing from the dislikes list: customer service, and ability to have yard waste picked up. Both bulky item and yard waste is very difficult to schedule and actually have it get picked up and customer service is very poor with my current provider (waste management). Customer service is an issue of high concern for many residents since we have no choice in choosing our provider and there is no accountability from providers.

I would like to hear what your community engagement plan is and suggest that you work with the district councils to host surveys to collect meaningful data on challenges with current providers.

Thank you. I look forward to hearing more about your work on this issue.

ward 3

1. This is the second year in a row that Christmas trees have not been picked up as promised. We received a notice that trees would be picked up between January 2 and 15. However, numerous trees have been sitting in my alley for a couple weeks now and are still there as of today, January 20. Can this be addressed in the next contract? There is no space for trees to be piled up in our alley for weeks. It would be helpful if we could be given a more accurate estimate of when they will actually pick up the trees so we can put them out at the appropriate time.

2. Waste Management does not give an adequate amount of time to pay bills and then they aggressively impose late fees. I received my bill in the mail yesterday afternoon, January 19, 2022. The "invoice date" shown on the bill was January 6, 2022. It apparently took 13 days for my bill to arrive. The "due date" was listed as January 26, 2022. Thus they are expecting us to mail the bill the next day and for it to arrive in 6 calendar days (four business days). Seems like an unfair double standard. It is also pretty unreasonable and dare I say, possibly being done in bad faith. Could the next contract possibly require them to give us a more reasonable amount of time to send in our payments?

Thank You!

We like having one truck per week in our alley. We like having the option of bi-weekly pick up as we recycle a lot of waste.

We wish the truck didn't have to make 2 passes down the alley.

We wish the company was more local; disappointed that waste management concentrated their share of the program.

Thanjs to this mandatory program we are getting less service than we git from Jen Berquist and Son at about a 25% higher price, not including the City fee. Competition has been eliminated and the large national haulers have out many of the small haulers out if business. This orogram is an utter disaster. As far as it stopping illegal dumping, simply drive down Pleasant Avenue by the yard waste site and look at all the trash and electronics dumped along the street.

Very happy with current service

I'd like to see free pickup of all large items instead of just two or three a year. Minneapolis has this with their garbage collection. If they can do it, so can we. Also, the community pickups that happen a few times a year should go back to taking everything instead of just a few specific types of items. The collections this year were useless to me and I had a lot of stuff I was planning to bring which is now sitting in my basement.

Big fan of the new coordinated garbage program. Additionally, have nothing but top marks for the garbage collector Gene's Disposal. Thank you for implementing this system.

It would be great if compost and yard waste could be picked up from separate containers on trash day and brought to the Ramsey county sites. It would save on the emissions from the many cars and trucks of individuals going there now. I realize many would still go to get compost and wood chips, but it might help air quality.

Hi,

I have some thoughts and comments on the current Saint Paul waste removal setup from my view as a homeowner of a single residence.

- The current price differences between cart sizes doesn't seem well balanced. For example I could easily use a bi-weekly cart by recycling a little more and cutting back on disposables, but for a mere \$3.50 more a month I can get weekly service instead and still have room in the cart to spare some weeks.

- I can set out an extra bag of trash for \$3 but cannot set out any surplus recycle. If I have extra recyclable stuff with the current system, it's easier to toss it vs. driving way over to the Como drop site.

- Why is our cost total for having trash/recycle/yardwaste hauled so expensive?? Surrounding cities (Minneapolis, Richfield, SLP, Maplewood) have lower rates when adding everything up from what I've researched.

- Would doing a citywide contract or bidding districts of the city directly with individual haulers vs. the current hauler pool agreement get lower prices for residents?

- It would be nice to have the option to choose a local hauler vs. being stuck with a national conglomerate. That said my service from Advanced was good. Since WM took over it's been okay.

- I like the annual yardwaste service option, very convenient as I have a lot and also never have time to go to the compost sites when they are open due to odd work schedule.

- I like the idea of collecting organics waste to be recycled in special bags with the trash, vs. getting yet ANOTHER cart.

- I think the city looks way more cluttered since coordinated hauling came out with all the surplus recycle and trash carts sitting around in the alleys and along streets. I'd certainly support allowing smaller multi-family properties the option of replacing 3x 30 gallon carts with 1 90 gallon one and similar sensible solutions.

- It would be nice to get a small credit back for unused bulkies, or be able to carryover 1 or 2 to the next year. I've been paying into this service plan for 3 years now and have not used a bulky item collection yet.

- Make it easier for residents by having a way for all trash/recycle service requests to go online thru a city website portal. (cart size change, cart repairs, bulky item pickup request, request yard waste service or cancel, etc.) Having to call a call center in Phoenix or wherever, navigate a robo phone menu, and then be on hold for 15 minutes just to get a question answered is annoying.

Thank you

To reduce costs, I would like sharing of carts and either fewer or no bulky pick up or pay as you go. I have been entitled to 12 bulkies and have used it once. I would like this service changed as most of my neighbors are not using this service either. Yet rates keep going up which makes no sense.

Doing a great job garbage team!

We've been consistent users of the Ramsey County organics recycling program and are confused about St. Paul's plans to accept organics with trash in the near future. Up 'til now, the organics have gone in thin biodegradable bags, which definitely wouldn't hold up if they were mixed with regular trash in a trash truck. How will this work? Thanks!



WM sucks! The last couple months our trash has been left untouched. My husband then spends the entire next day trying to reach someone there which escalates his PTSD. It looks like our neighbors have the same problem.

We have placed our trash can in the same spot once the snow accumulates and suddenly this year that is not ok. Both of us have health issues and we cannot carve out a chunk of sludge to get the can "on" the curb next to the street. We have done this for 30 years! (we closed during the Halloween Blizzard)

We previously had WM and fired them for poor service. They are not a good choice.

I am so glad that the city is doing organized trash and I appreciate all of your work on this project.

Requests: compost pick-up; lower costs, ability to share bins with neighbors.

added yard waste pick up

Organized yard waste pickup is needed!

Please tell me who exactly is this form being sent to? Names? Titles? Address? Please identify the persons with whom are these communications being shared.
Thank you.

Hello - I would love to attend a meeting, even though I have not been vaccinated. Will wait until the weather gets warmer. In the meantime, will read the minutes. If someone could pass along my suggestions, would greatly appreciate your effort.

1. Would like to find out if smaller containers can be offered - smaller than small - for those who use very little garage. Or if sharing a container with a neighbor is being discussed. I own a duplex and would love to go back to one container.
2. Assume there will be compost pick at at some point or a place to drop it off within 6 blocks. Feel adding more containers only adds to alley build up of plastic.
3. Is anyone discussing the fact that trucks are leaving containers in the middle of the alley? Is everyone having this problem?
4. Are schools giving tours of recycling plants to educate children how to recycle? Seems as important as bringing kids to farms.

Thank you for addressing concerns, aiming for a better system and cleaner earth.

My small every other week trash bin costs too much. I never fill it. I compost and recycle and give away what I don't need. Big families that generate huge amounts of trash are being subsidized by charging me for services I barely use. It is not right. My trash costs doubled because of St Paul taking away my right to find a hauler who charges a low fee based upon my low garbage. And don't tell me voters voted to do this. I didn't vote for this. Stop forcing me to pay for other peoples trash.

Need to address issues with homeowners that own a duplex who are no longer using their property for rental to use one cart. I'm still getting charged for two carts for myself and my wife for both the garbage (2) and recycling (2) programs despite repeated contacts with city council member and SPPW.



I am glad this committee is meeting and I hope you will do a better job of setting up garbage collection than was done in the recent past. I am a low-waster and used to have on-demand pickup from Highland. I needed pickup about once every 3-4 months with a normal cart. Now I have a small cart, which I put out about once every two months (even though I pay for bi-weekly pickup). Garbage pickup used to cost \$80-90 per year. Now it costs over \$200, especially since during Covid I wasn't able to travel and therefore put holds on pickup for a while. I am retired and have very little income, so this matters to me.

If the city really cares about the environment, they need to incentivize waste reduction. (By the way, I have a small recycling cart, and that only goes out to the curb once every 4-6 weeks.)

I am also irritated that I have to pay for the picking up of bulk items when I've never tossed a bulk item once in the 20+ years that I've lived here. I shouldn't have to pay for that.

Those are the issues touching me directly, but I am also bewildered by the ridiculous rules requiring every household to have a cart, not allowing sharing, filling our alleys with new carts when the old ones worked just fine (how is that environmentally responsible?), and not allowing plans that fit the situations.

My alternate week pickup with a small container is only \$3 difference per quarter. Should be much less, esp since I rarely fill my container. For years I shared with my neighbor and am now compelled to pay more by having my own service.

Households that produce low waste are subsidizing everyone else. Since county and state goals demand reduced waste in the next decade, costs should be allocated based USE (eg those those generating it). Those who do not, should be REWARDED. Even Minneapolis gives you choices with significant differences between size and frequency of collection.

A small base fee per quarter, say \$25, makes sense for everyone. THEN have different levels of service, that are optional in case people want to share. Fewer pickups and fewer stops by trucks reduces carbon production, noise and air pollution.

Lastly, all garbage containers should be MANDATED to be made of 100% post consumer waste plastic. Period. Since they aren't recyclable, may as well be responsible on the upstream side.

Thank you



Thank you for your work! The apartment building at the T of our alley has a dumpster that is chronically over-filled. Their pick up date is Tuesday and garbage tends to pile up over the weekend. I've called to complain, but the city tells me that if we call on Friday or Monday, they likely won't come out and cite them because the pick up is so soon after they receive the call. What's more, they are allowed to overfill their dumpster as long as the trash doesn't spill out (which it frequently does). As homeowners, we (thankfully) are not allowed to heap our cans to overflowing. In the interest of the environment and all of us, please can we hold everyone- apartment building owners too- to the same standard of more sanitary disposal?

I am totally against mandatory sign up. Before this I was not paying a thing to dispose of my limited trash. I compose and recycle I have trash pick up every two weeks and at times never fill my bin. If they wish to continue this they should give us the option to sign up for this service. I am a senior citizen own my home and this fee I pay could be of better use to me. I did not vote for this program. What gives mayor Carter thee authority to do this. Not happy with his leadership. Thank you all & hopefully you can help me and others to change this.

I believe St. Paul is better for having organized trash collection. As both a resident and a landlord I have received EXCELLENT service from both Highland Sanitation and Republic Services. As the "alley plowing organizer" for my two block alley bounded by Thomas Liquor and Speedway, populated with both multi and single family housing, I'm familiar with the space challenges large recycling bins present, especially in winter. In my fantasy world people could share but I understand the challenge that presents. Some bins are over-flowing and some are empty but, as much as I encourage redistribution, neighbors can be territorial over their bins. My student tenants in our four-plex and duplex are willing to cooperate with each other. I believe we can do better than the one-size-fits-all but it would require EVERYONE'S cooperation. Ten years on the MGCC Board has taught me that it's not possible to make everyone happy, so why not stir the pot a little more? I would be VERY happy to have St. Paul collect organic/food compost. PLEASE add that to your trash contract. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE TO THE CITIZENS OF ST. PAUL. I'm praying for you.

Can we please make the process for temporary service holds more user friendly? I tried to initiate the process on the Waste Management website but that was not possible. (Even though you can pretty much do everything else on their website.) So I got the city's hold request form but was unable to find out where to send it to. So I called Waste Management and, after waiting on hold, a person there gave me the e-mail address to send it to. I e-mailed them the form and didn't hear anything back for over a month, despite the fact that the form says they will respond in 7 business days. So I called there today and they said they never received it. Then they searched their e-mails and claimed they got my e-mail but the form was not attached. In fact, I checked my sent items and the form was definitely attached. It feels like they are trying to make this process too difficult to bother with.

Waste Management is a waste of money. I put in an order to pick up old couch on Tuesday, not done, called said they would pick up Wed. not done, Called Thursday I was told they would pick it up. Poor poor poor service. It's so sad we aren't able to pick our own garbage hauler and sad the city can't pick a local service like Bergquist. Moving out of St.Paul soon!!!!!!

Are we paying taxes for the garbage collection even though we pay for our own garbage removal through our Townhome Associatiion?????????????????????

As much as possible please keep the number of haulers using our alley down to one per week.

Curbside compost and yard debris pick up please.



Our HOA was required to participate for 8 of our 50 units. The HOA covers the costs, however the wear and tear on our streets is unacceptable, not to mention having 8 units with different vendor and rules. Revisit this! ALSO, it was pushed as less garbage on the streets, yet all I see is old furniture, garbage bags, etc. We have so many complaints of people dumping garbage bags into our bins on a private road. While I like the service of Waste Mgmt over the HOA chosen Republic, it is very damaging to our private roads to have three companies on it on one day every week. REVISIT THIS!

I have Republic. I don't have a complaint about my service. However, I am charged for 2 small containers with every other week pick up. I am single and live alone. My house is listed as a duplex from some time in the very remote past. I have lived here 34 years and the folks I bought it from lived here. I think the City deciding what type of pick up is appropriate is extremely wrong. There are folks who used to share pick up for 2 to 3 households; folks who own a business and took their garbage to their work location where they were paying for service; some older folks whose children picked up their garage and put it in with theirs. All of this is no longer allowed. I say if you don't have a mess by your garbage, then whether or not you need the service of what type of service is required should be up to the resident.

We feel that the list of approved items we're allowed to throw away with this service is too limited. We compost our food waste, so besides that the only thing we can get rid of is essentially retail packaging. If we were allowed to get rid of basic construction waste (i.e. sheet rock, lumber, etc.) It would be a much more useful service.

First of all, I'd like to thank the members of the Garbage Advisory Committee for their participation and service. Your volunteerism in the cause of service to our city is laudable.

I'd request that your committee advise the mayor and council that reduction of waste or conservation is not a serious goal of the organized trash program. The city should strike that presumption from its talking points about the trash program.

If the city really wanted to encourage households to be low-wasters, there would be incentives to reduce trash or recycle. Instead, an analysis of the cart pricing shows that low-wasters are subsidizing those households where there is little or no attempt to reduce either their trash or organic garbage.

Also, there seems to be some on the committee who believe that those who strive to be "low-waste residences" are somehow "privileged" because they make the effort to live a greener lifestyle compared to others. Reading the city's original Legislative Text about the reasons for setting up the original trash program, there is also a baseless assumption reflected in the Text (and shared by some on the committee) that those who proclaim to be low-wasters are simply dumping their trash illegally. There is NO EVIDENCE to support either idea.

Rather, low-wasters, no matter how much they recycle or reduce their actual trash, and no matter if they opt for the smallest cart picked up every other week, subsidize other residents in two ways:

- 1) If they do use the smallest cart, picked up every other week, their cost per unit of trash is higher than heavier users (up to three times higher).

- 2) There is the assumption that a low-waste household would put out their small cart each and every time bi-weekly per the rules. That's a baseless assumption.

I have stated that, for 26 years, I have taken my 30 gallon metal trash can to the Twin City Refuse transfer station about once every three or four MONTHS. I still do this and have never used the 35 gallon cart provided me. This practice costs me about \$16-20/YEAR! I have also composted my organic garbage for those 26 years.

With this in mind, if I WERE to use the city's 35 gallon cart, it would be placed on the curb once every three or four months for collection---resulting in higher profits for the hauler because of their lower labor costs over a year + they'd pay no tipping fee for my trash in Newport. Therefore, I am subsidizing everyone else who doesn't follow this plan.

So...back to my original premise: the city talks about trash reduction but isn't willing to really incentivize it. Is anyone's green consciousness rewarded by the city? It's not--in fact, we're stigmatized as "privileged" or "illegal dumpers" and penalized for it.

If this committee IS serious about incentivizing households to reduce their waste, they'll recommend to the mayor and council to allow low-wasters to opt-out or to share carts with a neighbor. Those suburban cities where opt-ing out is allowed can and do penalize scofflaws who violate the spirit of the opt-out agreement. To deter any possible illegal dumping the opt-out fee (plus fees paid for any violations found) could be used for investigation and enforcement.

You may contact me with any questions. Thanks for considering my points on this matter.

Curbside compost pick up please



GET RID OF HIGHLAND SANITATION. TERRIBLE COMPANY TERRIBLE SERVICE. It does not make sense to put a 5% late fee on bills as that is way to high just like the SPW. Landlord do not always find out to its to late if a tenant has not made on-time payments.

The sanitation company should have no legal right to put anything on your taxes as it is not a government business. The homeowners should have a right to choose who they have for service and the prices that you have contracted with them are more than they should be. You give a company a easy way to make more money in a day buy monopolizing the whole neighborhood. The amount should actually be less.

Let the people have more options and let the people paying the bill for these services have a choice. Highland sanitation only has one person, the owner Sue that you can get answers from... I sent in a hold letter and followed all the rules and the city employees recommended I send it certified, is this a good practice, should I send my payment certified. they never credited me my time on hold, They never send return envelopes with invoices but my payments have always gotten there... The city is in the middle and this causes headaches for those of us who are responsible in following the rules. I should just be able to call the company direct and put my service on hold.

Like Minneapolis St. Paul should have a voucher system for dumping up to 2,000 lbs. Free. the trash service says nothing but garbage, what about a ceiling fan, tearing up a sidewalk, old pieces of carpet.

I am a strong believer in zero waste, and have been recycling since the 70s. I compost food waste or feed it to my chickens, I reuse unwanted items, give them away or donate. The new Buy Nothing website has been great for allowing people to give items away for others to use. Before this current contract, my garbage hauler was Berquist and Son. I used them on an on-call service. When my can was full, I called and they picked it up and they were very generous in taking the odd bulky item. I paid around \$20/quarter. I have refused to pay for current garbage collection. I have the least expensive option, but it is still \$264.68 per year compared to \$80/year previously. I now haul my own garbage down to Twin City Refuse on Water Street. Last year, I paid a total of \$85 for all garbage that came from my household and I paid nothing to Waste Management in protest. Those fees were added to my property taxes. I not only do this on principle because this contract offered absolutely no incentive to recycle, but because I am trying to live on Social Security at around \$21,000 a year. And there are so many people with low incomes that would benefit by sharing a can. Why are those people who generate the least amount of garbage not being rewarded for that? Everyone knows that we are destroying the plant with garbage and there is no incentive for people to stop this behavior until there is some way of making those who generate the most garbage feel some pain. This should include the excessive amount of packaging that makes up so much volume in our garbage collection and the microplastics pollution found in polar regions, oceans and even in babies' lungs. Public responsibility needs to start somewhere, and you have the power to make a difference. Please use it.

Prior to the garbage collection program, I took my trash to Twin City Refuse every 2-3 months and paid \$7 for two 30 gal. trash bags. Total cost in a typical year: \$28-35. I now pay \$60 per quarter for trash collection, though I place a service hold for 2 quarters, as permitted. Total yearly cost: \$120. Even opting out of 6 months a year, my cost is several times what I previously paid. Having one hauler does reduce noise and traffic and I applaud that. However, I am concerned that the system penalizes those of us who generate very little trash.

I am concerned about the quality of pickups since the change. My alley is cluttered with broken and chewed-up garbage bins that sit in the way of traffic or are overturned after pickup. There is always debris left behind when windy or bad weather as the arm of the truck swings the bin into the truck. The reliance on one driver, not being able to get out of the truck to remedy errors, and the condition of the bins are problematic.

The lack of options for picking up bulk items makes this program costly with more debris left out in the alley.

Pricing - for me - I would like to see lower costs for every week's pickup

I would like the city to end the contract and go back to the free market approach where we choose our own trash haulers. This current system is way too expensive.
I will vote accordingly.
Thank you

I would like a way to "opt out" of the mandatory garbage collection. I live alone and compost ALL food as well as recycle non food items. I don't have a need for garbage pick up at my house. I maybe generate one bag of trash every 6 months and I would be happy to take that to the dump myself. OR... I would love to 'pay for what I use' in terms of trash pick up. If I don't have trash to pick up, I would rather not be charged. Could we calculate what we pay by the amount of trash we generate? That might be a very good way to get people to be more mindful of their trash.

I own a 4plex and am required to have 4 carts so our prices have almost doubled. We don't need 4 carts. We only use 2 or 3 each month. We are paying for an extra cart we never use. We also do not have room in our driveway to put out 4 carts and 3 recycling carts with the required space between them (we have an 11ft driveway, and would need twice that for 4 trash & 3 recycling carts. This policy discourages people from recycling & composting as there is no monetary benefit to throwing less in the trash.

We live in a duplex! Only a couple times since inception have we used the 2nd garbage can we need to pay for & we only used it since we had it. However, families on our block consistently overflow garbage & rarely can they put the lid on their can fully down! Waste Management would have enough history now to know who need one or two garbage cans. We recycle & we keep organic items from the landfill by composting too! By now haulers have evidence on who uses what.

We want the option to eliminate our mandatory garbage can. Please include this when you negotiate with haulers again!

My cost went up roughly \$45 per bill for the same size trash container. Included in the city wide program I get to “set up for big ticket items” to be picked up once or twice a year for free. However I never have used that option, and probably never will.

My questions are:

1) How can I be charged \$180 per year more for the exact same service and not be irritated. This was a concern and question that I had asked during the force of making us tax payers switch to something that “is better for everyone”, without a clear answer. Then making, or forcing me to have a garbage collection at an added cost. I could dispose of my trash cheaper myself by bringing it to any of the refuse locations within St.Paul.

2). Seeing I have not needed to use the “big ticket item pickup” that is offered, I should receive a rebate, or a credit to my account for not having to use it. I am paying for a service I do not need or will not use, and if I do use it I will gladly pay the cost! But since we have been forced to be on this “garbage” waste program, I would like to see a credit or rebate for not using this “option”.

For example if I have not used that option for 2 year, make 2 bills a “zero” balance, essentially making one mailed out bill free of charge for each year the service is not used.

I am for the program and I do not support a opt-out version. The is a communal issue, and we should ALL be part of it. We own and live in both parts of our duplex. We managed to get it arranged that we have only two cans, but it took a lot of yelling and screaming to get to that point. Please get this fixed so it will be equal for all.

Is it really true that the City has spent \$26M on this program? It was my understanding that the City would, for a fee, facilitate the program by collecting the fees and pay the haulers. Where did all that money go?

Garbage is a huge American environmental problem and heavy wasters need to be charged appropriately for the mindlessly excessive waste they create. If families are producing giant overflowing garbage canisters every week, they need to PAY the MOST for their waste. Please stop sympathizing with, accommodating and validating heavy waste lifestyles and instead educate and incentivize people to produce less garbage and reward them by a smaller bill. Leaders need to lead on this matter - we are running out of landfills and those are horrible anyway. Having a tight budget or a family doesn't mean you can't recycle and be mindful of your waste. Please stop pandering to people's excuses and charge 3-10 times more for the giant canisters and next to nothing for the small ones - and offer educational material and programs about creating less waste and why its important. Most people only care about their bill anyway, so make it high if they are excessive waste producers and less if they conserve and you will have begun the change.

Great program. The city FINALLY did it and consolidated it into a unified pickup system. Thank you for getting rid of SO many trucks running up/down our streets & ally's every frigg'n day. 1-truck for trash, 1-for recycling ... that's it! I'd like to see better (lower) pricing options for low trash generators, maybe correlate the amount of trash picked up per household vs their recycling, charge more for people that make no effort to recycle, less for those that do. Also, go after the recycle thief's that rob the city of the aluminum value. We still have WAY TOO much dumping going tho esp. in the low income neighborhoods such as the St Paul East Side. I'm calling in furniture/trash dumps weekly just in my narrow travel corridors. We need cheaper large item pickup/drop off options, and more marketing of the benefits/options to households...and not just direct mail, use billboards etc.



As owners of several properties in Saint Paul, 959, 969, 957 and 942 Beech Street, we have been frustrated with the trash program as it was initially negotiated. We would like to have an option for sharing a large can between our units instead of being required to have 2 carts for a duplex. The prices are also more than we are paying previously, so we would like them to be negotiated down. We also shouldn't be paying for the 3 bulky items a year as a part of the plan. These are rarely used and are driving up the costs of the program. This can be an option for people to pay for when they schedule a pickup, or we can bring them to the dump themselves. I imagine the idea behind this was to cut down on bulky items left out, but since they have to be scheduled, it has not changed anything for our renters. Another idea I had would be an option to bring bulky items to dump sites for free. This could cut down on the dumping that happens if there is a place where people can legally do it themselves.

Please end the cities contract. We can get garbage service on our own for less.

No increase in cost, The City shouldn't be making any money.

I wish to opt out of the city of Saint Paul garbage program. Since I recycle most of materials I consume, I hardly ever use the service.

The new contract has to eliminate the one can per unit idiocy. If one large can serves the needs of the address it doesn't matter the number of units. One large family could have 6 to 8 members and a duplex, triplex or 4plex could have the same amount of garbage produced. Opt out and sharing should be available. As a single person I shared with a neighbor for years and only produced one grocery bag sized amount every 10 days.

Dear Garbage Advisory Members: I want to advocate the committee begin the process of creating a City of St Paul trash collection program that is run by the City, hires City employees, and includes a fair program that allows residents to share trash receptacles to cut costs. Fewer stops will reduce wear and tear on equipment and to make such a major change in sanitation policies, you will need citizen allies. A program that would provide tax breaks for those who generate less waste would result in more public support for such a change.

I feel strongly about this issue for two main reasons. First, I do not want my money going to Waste Management (WM). I'm very careful how I spend my money. I go to great lengths to avoid bad actor companies and services that treat workers like second class citizens. At present, due to some business arrangement, I am now forced to do business with WM, a corporation that exists far below the standard of a bad corporate citizen. Their employees are treated very poorly and their anti-union rhetoric is pervasive.

Further, WM continues to support Republican Congressional representatives who voted to overturn the 2020 presidential election. Now, through St Paul broken sanitation collection policies--I know, a process that was broken a long time ago--my money goes to support anti-democracy Republicans.

You have a chance to get this right. The City should have its own sanitation program--from start to finish, as most other large cities have. Make the investment in equipment and do it right. Hire workers who will be able to choose union representation freely without fear of retribution and termination. WM's anti-union campaign, if the workers can risk the wrath of management, would rival that of Amazon's, and I could be forced to support that anti-worker effort as well.

Please do the right thing, stop supporting vulture capitalist companies like WM and more importantly, stop supporting a broken policy that forces your citizens to do the same.

With Great Sincerity and Appreciation

I own a 4plex and am forced to pay for 4 carts when I only need 2 or 3. My trash costs have doubled and I'm paying for what I don't use. 1 or 2 large carts would be less expensive and would be more than enough. I should be able to decide the capacity I need just like I easily did with the previous system.

Please disband this foolish Garbage Program; we don't need our city wasting time on wasting our HARD EARNED MONEY. Our city leaders have successfully wasted millions on this unnecessary service. Let the citizens of this city use whoever they chose to haul their trash! We've been doing it before and our trash should not be ANY of our city leader's business!!! Let the free market work like it always has. Too many unintended consequences happen whenever government gets their hands on our money. Fix our damn streets and take care of the basics in our city and quit wasting our money!!!

The current trash contract has inflicted an unnecessary financial burden on our household. We compost, recycle, reuse, and conscientiously try to reduce waste. Because our family of four occupies a duplex, we have been required to pay for two trash bins—even though we fill less than one small bin each week. This arbitrary, inflexible requirement is not only wasteful but also patently unfair!

Change the system/contract/law to allow residents to opt out or to select and pay for only what they need!

I would love to be able to obtain a different hauler. I would also really enjoy getting a small dumpster garbage can back at my 4 plex instead of 4 overflowing garbage carts out in the street every week plus 3 recycling bins in the street every other week. That's way too many carts out there and not enough for all my tenants trash for a week. I cannot put any more garbage cans out there as there is no more room. The price is also ridiculous.

I hate this system, trash pick up is sporadic at best.
The price is too high, I'm a disabled senior.
Stop this price gouging by this take over of services.

We are not happy with Waste Management. They have no local customer service. You have to call an 800 number, and that rep won't know anything about St. Paul. Just a representative example: EVERY single January we have to call to remind them to pick up our Christmas tree, even though it's part of their contract to pick it up, and we aren't supposed to have to call. But they seem surprised every time. I really miss our old hauler, who had local agents who picked up the phone right away and knew where we lived and could quickly radio our driver if there was an issue. I would never in a million years choose the evil empire Waste Management but yet here I am. I'm not opposed to the citywide contract but please give local haulers an edge, and please consider customer service (or lack thereof) before you lock us into these undesirable relationships with haulers who know nothing about St. Paul and care even less.

Dump the city-controlled garbage program! It is really expensive and awful. We don't need the size of service the city is now requiring, our costs went WAY up, and we are forced to send our money to a huge company based in IOWA at a much higher cost than the local company we were doing business with. The argument about truck noise is bogus. Delivery trucks run constantly here. We need someone going through our alleys (a daily trash truck would be great!) because of all of the increased vandalism and theft we now get in the alley. This city-run program is a failure that is increasing our garbage hauling costs and our property taxes. Kick it to the curb and let us make our own decisions again, so we can support local and save money.

Provide better incentives for reduced trash. We have very little trash. (2-3 small-medium sized bags / month). Even with 2x / month pickup there's very little savings vs weekly pickup. Focus on encouraging all of us to reduce our trash. With city (& backyard), composting, Farmer's Markets (less packaging) - it's viable as a city for us to drastically reduce waste. Some ideas: Let people call when they need a pickup; allow 2-4 households to share cost of pickup; let people opt out, The overall goal should be waste reduction.



I would like to know why we pay so much but get so little in return. In Minneapolis, for example, people can cut up and bundle their branches. Here, you have to haul them to a compost site, and some of them don't take branches. Not to mention, that not all homeowners have cars or drive. Or you can pay at least \$120 extra for it, which is a lot of extra money for many of us. In Minneapolis, you can put large items out pretty much as often as you want to. Here, you get two or three items a year. I would bet that most landlords here will not let their tenants do so because they might need those disposal spots for stuff that tenants leave behind. So I wonder if this garbage program really cuts down on illegal dumping. I definitely preferred my old service, a local business that was driven out of business to a national company like Waste Management. I don't feel the city had the right to force people to hire a business service that they didn't want.

Added to document on 5/18/22

I appreciate the effort for coordinated garbage collection. There needs to be a simple mechanism for people to share bins, not be charged more to have smaller bins (its crazy to pay more for less), etc. I live in an association and some of us are in the general St. Paul collection arrangement and some of us are not. It should be the same for anyone in the association. Please make this system more user friendly and equitable.

I live in a 50 unit HOA and because of the ordinance, 8 of our 50 units are required to use the city ordinance garbage service. The HOA pays for all the rubbish removal. What a nightmare and an additional expense to the HOA. The 8 units have to pay out of pocket to Waste Management and then ask the HOA to reimburse them every quarter. The bills are a lot more than the other 42 units through Republic. The wear and tear of having three trucks coming down our private road has also been noted. This ordinance was not properly thought through. There should have been a provision regarding the 4 connected units or more when it relates to an HOA and some type of exemption. We tried with our rep, the mayors office, and any other person that would listen to our appeal; no one would own this mistake or help correct it, even though all admitted it was wrong. Now we have 4 units on each end of our private road that have different rules pertaining to garbage while the other 42 in the middle do not, including disposal of 2 large items per year. The extra expense for the same service has affected the HOA and their budgeting/improvement needs. **FIX THIS FOR THE HOA's IN THE CITY!** HOA's are dictated by governing documents, yet this ordinance conflicted 8 homeowners and caused financial loss.

Trash is a municipal service, we should treat it like one and have the city provide that service. Right now, we're exporting tax dollars outside the city and even outside the state. Let's create a bunch of family wage, union jobs right here in Saint Paul, and provide the service ourselves.

This trash program has been outrageously expensive for the services received. Compared to nearby cities with programs we are paying a ridiculous amount for less. A thorough review and comparison of programs should be done and the best option for residents, not the haulers out the city, selected with options to opt out and actual consequences for the hauler (s) when they fail to fulfill their commitments.

I understand that each household must contact their hauler to get a damaged bin replaced. There are numerous ones in my alley (between Hamline and Syndicate) that are truck damaged and squirrel damaged and should be replaced. I am sure most of the families don't know they can call the hauler for a replacement and it is most likely a low priority on the long list of tasks each family needs to do in a given day, week, or month. Could this be handled by the hauler with the truck driver noting bins that are damaged or broken and reporting them to the person accountable for replacing bins? They have become an eyesore not only on pick-up day, when the bins are left lying on their sides or lids open and askew but all week long as they are filled with bags and squirrels.

I am not disappointed by our company, but am disappointed that my choice was taken away. For over a decade our one block alley of 13 homes, researched LOCAL trash haulers for the most reasonable price and settled on one. It was easy to have an agreement when all the customers were in one block, and we could get and support a local hauler. I don't believe we were the only ones doing that either. We had one truck per week. Instead of working with the community members who wanted to build community that way, the City stepped in, and even when Carter knew he was wrong, and eventually shoved the City's idea down community members pocketbooks. Many community members have been unable to resolve billing issues with their company, or have been disrespectfully told that they didn't miss a pickup at their house, or if they did, the hauler would be back in a few days, only to be called and told that the hauler would get the garbage next week and if there was too much, they would charge them for it. Many people still don't know the process they are allowed for large item disposal - another glaring gap in communication. I personally have called on dump pieces of furniture and tires 4 or 5 times, so getting the excessive dumping in communities obviously has not stopped or even diminished. There are no options in the current contract set aside for anyone who has numerous large items to dispose of. There isn't support of local haulers, as had been agreed upon in advance of the contract being signed. The vetting of companies like Waste Mgmt obviously was not done, as they are notorious for gobbling up small local trash businesses, and at the time of "negotiations" had already agreed to buy Advanced Disposal, which they proceeded to do without notice to their customers, while also negotiating with a conglomerate in Canada, now also, I believe, to no longer exist in St. Paul.

Then there was the treatment of those customers who shared their garbage cans because they had so little garbage. They weren't rewarded by the city for being environmentally conscious, but rather penalized and told that they had to have their own can. The same happened with duplexes and other multiple housing units who no longer operated as duplexes or needed a can for each unit, one can for each unit, even when they were told there was only one family and that there was no need. Cans set empty but still had to be paid for by the customer. No exceptions were made. Absolutely no forethought went into the conscientious intent of being a good caretaker of the earth and minimizing waste through the intentional decisions of the customer.

I could go on, but you can tell by my many paragraphs of experiences, that I am not happy with how the City dealt with their challenge.

Plus it is my understanding that there's one million dollars still on the table from collections from our annual "contributions" for this contract. I do not want that to go into the general fund. Perhaps the city could use some of the money to take a communication course and explain it's shortcomings and resolutions. Or to learn how to vet companies who bid on contracts. Or how to build community.

Just my thoughts on the contract!

Should have an option to opt out , shouldn't be subject to a 28 dollar fee for this program which I get nothing for , hoping to leave this rundown city and this forced collection program is one of the main reasons Thank you

The trash contract as negotiated is a freaking mess. I strongly encourage you to make these changes:

*Duplexes, tri-plexes, and four-plexes should be able to share a single bin, or a couple bins. There is no good reason to charge every household for its own bin when sharing makes more sense.

*Contractors should have to meet some higher standards for customer service, web site transparency, and complaint response. From what I see now, there currently are none.

<p>*There should be a cap on price increases, or (better yet) contracts should include fixed prices for 5 years.</p> <p>*Rules and policies governing disposal of bulky items and Christmas trees need to be standardized for all vendors on this contract, then widely posted and obeyed.</p> <p>*I believe the City Council has badly mismanaged this contract. It needs regular oversight from the people who actually use it. It would make me feel better if the contractors had to answer to a public board consisting of private citizens and City staff, with at most one (1) Council member.</p> <p>May I say, in passing, that Waste Management is an unethical vendor and has execrable customer service standards.</p>
<p>Please allow our four unit buildings to have less than four carts which we don't need and also don't have room for. Before the new trash program we had two large carts which served our properties well.</p>
<p>Please eliminate requirement that each unit of a 1-4 unit building must have its own trash bin. It adds unnecessary costs and contributes to higher rents as landlords recoup the expense.</p>
<p>We live in an association in Saint Paul comprised of 232 condimium units and 52 townhomes. All but one of the townhomes is in a group of four, one a group of five. We had one garbage hauler for the entire Association, because we are one community. We as homeowners contribute, through our monthly dues, to all costs related to the community including trash and recycling pickup. We don't pay the bill individually, our Association does.</p> <p>When this trash program was instituted we were required to find a new hauler for the townhomes because of the 1 - 4 unit "rule". We tried to communicate that our governing documents state that we are one community, that we all contribute to items such as trash based on our particular cost center and percentage of ownership. We got absolutely nowhere. So, we have two haulers rather than one. The townhome trash costs doubled for us. Our costs are broken out to different cost centers so we have the privilege, if you will, of paying twice as much or more.</p> <p>This was poorly thought out and I suspect poorly understood that Associations are one community, not individual homes on individual lots.</p> <p>I don't know if this has been part of the discussion but would like the issue addressed and remedied.</p>
<p>We need to be able to opt out of organized garbage collection and be able to take our trash to whatever disposal site we choose to dispose of it.</p>
<p>Please. Please, get rid of the 1-4 unit rentals that have to have service. This is not right to force people to HAVE to have a trash can. It's obvious this is just a money grab. My rental properties do not have the space (or a need) for 2 containers per unit.</p>
<p>I would like to opt out.</p>
<p>Amnesty for those who have never used the service but have continued to be billed.</p>
<p>I've owned this building for over 30 years. I always took care of my own garbage. My cost was at a 1/3 of what I am paying now.</p> <p>Now, with higher garbage cost, I have to up the rent to the tenants. I have to pass it along.</p>



<p>And having all these bins in front of my house is a terrible eye soar! I did vote no at the ballots.</p>
<p>We live in a 4-unit condo, old stone church, 4 carts is just too many. We all recycle and don't have much to put in the garbage. We used to have the condo handle the trash and used two carts for all 4 condos.</p>
<p>As a Zerowaster, I still have not used my trash can, I don't make trash! I don't have bulky items. Allow for true Zerowasters or low wasters who can share with a neighbor an option to opt out of a service they do not use. Our environment is better off with Zerowaste lifestyles and those with these lifestyles are great examples to our entire city. Opt out of an unnecessary bill is a great incentive to learn how to Zerowaste, especially in the poorer neighborhoods who are most hurt by high trash costs. Take St Paul into the 21st century with a Zerowaste future. Allow us to opt out and encourage our city to reduce trash.</p>
<p>Be able to partner with neighbor for trash; neither of us have much trash & it makes sense to save costs, 1 stop instead of 2.</p>
<p>I pay for 2 trash containers because some time over 40 years ago my house was classified as a duplex. I am a conscientious recycler with regular recycling and organic recycling. It is unfair that I pay for 2 bins when I use just 1 with pick up every other week. I would hope the City Council would devise a more equitable plan that truly meets resident needs, not line the pockets big business trash removal.</p>
<p>We used to take one bag to the waste site every 6-8 weeks and pay \$3-\$4. Now we pay almost \$20 a month (roughly \$32 more), and it's painful. I would love to see more incentives and rewards for reducing waste.</p>
<p>We have owned this duplex since 1973 and never needed more than 1 trash cart for both units. Please implement cart sharing in the next contract. We recycle and compost and produce very little trash. It's been an unbelievable expense that is not necessary. Thank you</p>
<p>I demand that low waste residents of St. Paul are allowed to share trash containers. I live in and own an owner-occupied duplex. It is myself and sole person in the rental unit. The home is 1200 square feet total (this includes both the owner portion and the rental unit). Because of the draconian law you passed, I am forced to pay for two (2!) trash bins. The two humans in this house barely fill a 35 gallon garbage can every week, let one multiple containers. The 2nd container I am forced to pay for stays in my backyard and has never been used since this inane policy began. Your actions as City Council members directly affect affordable housing in the city of St. Paul as I had to pass on the additional cost of having to pay for one garbage can per unit to my renter. Since your law passed my garbage fees have increased by 102% since I have to pay for 2 cans. Prior to this, my renter and I could share one can. It seems like you, city council members are all talk and no action, since you want more affordable housing in the city, and then you force additional and unnecessary costs upon owners. Please ensure that owner occupied rental units are exempt from the 'one cart per unit' mandate. In addition, there needs to be accountability and service level agreements tied to trash haulers ability to participate in St. Paul's program. I have Aspen, who has provided very good service. But I am aghast at the horror stories that residents who have Waste Management have shared. Going forward all haulers must be evaluated yearly on their service levels and complaints generated and if above a certain threshold be forced to pay very large penalties and/or removed from the program.</p>