

STAFF REPORT

02/14/2022

Topic: Converting to an automated solid waste curbside collection system upon completion of the current manual collection contract

Discussion: The City's curbside collection contract with Casella ends on September 30, 2022, and the Concord Cooperative's contract with Win Waste's incinerator expires on December 31, 2022. Due to inflation, labor shortages, and limited household trash disposal options, the cost for disposing of the City's solid waste is increasing by over \$300,000 in FY 2023 compared to what was budgeted in FY 2022.

Public Works issued a request for bids in early 2021 for automated curbside solid waste collection as part of the Department's efforts to control the growth of costs in collecting and disposing of solid waste. Due to bid prices the City Council decided not to convert to automated collection and asked staff to further investigate ways to lower the costs associated with curbside collection. Belmont is the only nearby community that also collects solid waste at the curb. Belmont's contract is also with Casella and their contract expires on December 31, 2022. The City issued a request for bids for a company to provide curbside solid waste collection for both communities in November of 2021 and received bids in December.

Due to the problems with finding and retaining commercial truck drivers and laborers, the bids exceeded the early 2021 bids and only one contractor, Casella, submitted a bid. A discussion with one of the potential bidders determined that one of their considerations for not bidding was a concern that they would not be able to hire the staff required to perform the contract. Additionally, research has determined that nationwide other municipalities have had to eliminate the collection of recycling and focus on trash collection due to labor shortages, and both contractors and municipalities have had to raise salaries from 20% to 40% to hire commercial truck drivers and laborers.

The order to ship time for a new commercial truck is 12 to 15 months. Thus, the City will have to negotiate an extension of our current collection contract until the time the trucks are scheduled to arrive and are ready for service. Public Works is asking for the City Council's decision on converting to an automated curbside collection system at the February 14, 2022 City Council meeting, so that staff can award the contract in February and the contractor can begin the process of ordering the trucks minimizing the underlap between contracts.

As part of the conversion to automated trash collection the City will provide eligible property owners and businesses both trash and recycling carts. Public Works continues to be in contact with the Recycling Partnership, a non-profit organization that provides onetime grants of \$15 per recycling cart, to assist with the conversion if the City's cart distribution program meets their requirements.

The effort to obtain and deliver the carts needs to be synchronized with the start of automated collection. Additionally, the bid prices including the two received early in 2021 are based on the number of stops where a stop is defined as a container not a house or a business. Therefore, Public Works must finalize the number of containers to determine the number of stops and finalize the grant application for recycling carts. Public Works requests that the City Council also approve an updated container allowance per household/business at the February 14th meeting. Approving the cart allowance at this meeting will allow Public Works to survey City businesses to determine if their need is less than 4 carts and work with the contractor to refine their collection price to the actual number of stops.

Public Works' recommendation for the new cart allowance follows:

| | Allowance - Trash Containers | | Recycling Containers | |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Current (30 gallon) | Proposed (64 gallon)+ | Current (30 gallon) | Proposed (96 Gallon)* |
| Single family & 3 Units and under | 2 | 1 | unlimited | 1 |
| Business | 7 | 4 | unlimited | 4 |
| Apartments & Condo over 3 units | 7 | 4 | unlimited | 4 |
| | | | | |

+ Public Works is working on a system that will allow residents to request a smaller trash container before the request for bids is finalized.

* The Recycling Partnership allows the City to establish a policy that enables certain households to obtain a smaller recycling cart. This policy is based on age and disabilities.

Public Works will be recommending Transfer Station fees and other solid waste fee increases as part of the budget process.

Public Works will brief the Council on the proposed change to an automated curbside collection system and cart allowances at the meeting.

Public Works recommends the City Council approve Public Works recommendations to control the growth of costs of collecting and disposing of the City's solid waste.

Fiscal Impact: The City's solid waste disposal cost for FY 2023 is \$300,000 over the budget for FY 2022.

Recommendation: No action is being requested at the February 14, 2022 meeting. The presentation and background material are meant to be for discussion purposes only. However, in the future the recommendation will likely be that the City Council approve converting to an automated solid waste collection system for the new solid waste curbside collection contract and approve Public Works' recommendations on solid waste container allowances.

Report Submitted by: Wesley B. Anderson, Director of Public Works.

Proposed Motion: