

MEMORANDUM

TO: Todd Gerhardt, City Manager

FROM: Jill Sinclair, Environmental Resources Specialist

DATE: August 2018

SUBJ: Staff Report – Chanhassen Yard Waste Collection Options

BACKGROUND

The City of Chanhassen has long had a history of managing yard waste for residents. In the 1980's the city would do curbside pick up throughout the city in the spring and fall. In 1991, the city opened a yard waste site in what is now Bandimere Park. Every Saturday, Chanhassen residents could bring yard waste to the site which was open on Saturdays, 9a – 3p, from April until November. Around 2000, the Bandimere compost site closed for park expansion. The city then offered spring and fall brush collection days. These collection days took place in the front parking lot of Lake Ann Park on one Saturday in the spring and fall. In 2002, the last year of collection, the cost to the city was \$10,000 for the two days.

In 2003, the Carver County Environmental Center opened. This became the new yard waste collection site and has continued to be such for 15 years. Over time, the Center justly became a popular drop off site for yard waste from Chanhassen residents. In 2015, the county began to search for an alternative site for yard waste drop off due to an increase in traffic at the Center. In 2018, the county proposed to the Board of Commissioners a partnership with the UMN Landscape Arboretum for a yard waste drop off site located on Arboretum property. Neighbors to the site strongly opposed the location and in the spring of 2018, the Carver County Board of Commissioners voted to not pursue an alternate location and not accept yard waste at the Environmental Center beginning in January 2019.

The City of Chanhassen had assisted the county in their search for suitable yard waste sites. Throughout the two-year search, the city had found no suitable parcels within Chanhassen for the relocation. Possible sites were too small, in residential neighborhoods, and/or lacked good access and traffic stacking capabilities. The city simply does not have public property that is appropriate for a community yard waste site. However, starting in 2019 the city will be forced to confront the yard waste issue.

Other cities in Carver County offer yard waste collection in addition to their residents being able to access the Environmental Center until 2019. See Attachment A for the city list and details.

City staff have been in discussions internally concerning various options for yard waste disposal within the city. This report will present all options available.

ISSUE

Starting January 2019, Chanhassen residents will no longer be able to drop off yard waste and brush at the Carver County Environmental Center.

SUMMARY

The city has assisted residents in managing yard waste from their properties since the 1980s. With the elimination of yard waste collection at the Carver County Environmental Center, Chanhassen residents will be looking for alternatives. The Carver County Board of Commissioners noted in their April 3 vote to end yard waste collection at the Center and that residents preferred a private sector option. From the county board meeting minutes, this preference was not voiced by any Chanhassen residents. The city now has to decide what options will be available to Chanhassen residents for yard waste in 2019.

The options available include:

- Residents contract with their private haulers for yard waste collection and/or haul it to drop-off sites in Minnetrista, Watertown or Shakopee. See Attachment B
- The city contracts with a single hauler to do curbside collection of yard waste.
- The city offers yard waste collection days at a specific location on specific days.
- The city operates a yard waste collection site open multiple days throughout the season.

ANALYSIS

Option 1: Private haulers and compost sites

Chanhassen residents are required to properly dispose of all waste, including yard waste. Homeowners can compost yard waste on their property, contract with their private hauler for yard waste disposal, or take the waste to a composting facility. The nearest facilities are in Shakopee, Minnetrista or Watertown. The cost for drop off varies by site. Homeowners can use this option as needed and with any amount and size of brush. The disadvantages include cost and time of driving to site, labor of loading and unloading, limited hours and days of operation at the sites.

Contracting for yard waste collection through a private hauler is available from every hauler servicing Chanhassen. Collection is weekly and is limited to one container and/or a certain number of bags and bundles. The average cost per season for yard waste collection is around \$100 per household and the season runs from the beginning of April through Thanksgiving

week. Extra bags or bundles are charged back to the homeowner per item. This option is very convenient, involving no extra loading time or transportation, the waste is taken away weekly, and for a price, homeowners can set out as much waste as they would like. Disadvantages include the cost of service, limited sizes of brush, and space needed for another waste container on the property.

Option 2: City contracts with private hauler for city-wide yard waste collection

The city could send out an RFP to contract directly with a hauler to collect yard waste throughout the city during the growing season. Residents would have a weekly collection that would run April through October, or whatever months designated by the city. While a number of cities contract with haulers for recycling and organics collection, staff couldn't find any city in the metro that contracts specifically for yard waste. This doesn't mean it can't be done. This option would provide the most convenience for residents, avoid all site improvement costs at the Public Works facility, and not require any daily ongoing staffing costs and issues. Disadvantages include contract negotiations and oversight of the contractor. The RFP could also include recycling collection which would help consolidate services, reduce truck traffic in neighborhoods and allow residents to continue to choose solid waste contractors on their own.

Option 3: Spring and Fall Yard Waste Collection

In the early 2000's the city offered Yard Waste Collection Days in the spring and fall for residents. On one Saturday in April and October, residents could drop off unlimited amounts of yard waste at no charge. The city contracted with a hauler to supply roll offs which would be filled during the event. Three city employees, two paid overtime and one salaried, worked the event, directing traffic and managing the waste. The cost for hauling the yard waste to a disposal site was \$10,000 in 2002.

The city could offer this option again choosing 1 or more days in the spring and fall during which residents could drop off waste for collection. This option would limit the cost of site improvements since only a parking lot would be needed as a temporary site for 2 or more days a year. Hauling costs and employee costs would still accrue, but only for the few days. A minimum of two employees would be required to direct traffic, check residency, manage waste, etc.

Costs for spring and fall yard waste collection:

Item	Cost ESTIMATE Per Daily Event
Employee – fulltime, benefitted, overtime	\$366.16 - \$594.88 (Average \$480.48)
Employee – seasonal, non-benefitted	\$214.24
Hauling - \$9.50/cu yd – 400 cu yd	\$3800
ESTIMATED Total per event	\$4,494.72

The quantity dropped off at such an event may be significantly underestimated.

For comparison, the City of Chaska has spent approximately \$15,000 - \$17,000 per event when hosting.

Option 4: City operated permanent yard waste site at the Public Works facility

This option would provide residents with a convenient disposal option for yard waste by potentially offering more hours of operation than spring and fall collection days, a closer location than the County Environmental Center and little or no fees for drop-offs. The site is centrally located within Chanhassen at the Public Works facility. There would be no impact on any residential neighborhoods since the site is in an industrial area. Traffic issues from stacking would not affect any major roadways.

Disadvantages of this option include the cost of site improvements, increase in costs for employee staffing, elimination of snow storage area at public works, wear and tear on site pavement, and elimination of storage areas for dumpsters, mulch, soil, backfill and spoils. Reconfiguration of the site would make operations more difficult for city staff by reducing the usable area for daily work and storage.

To modify the city Public Works (PW) site to accommodate a permanent yard waste collection operation the following items would need to be addressed:

- The best and only location on the PW site for yard waste collection is near the front of the site as shown in Attachment B. This area is currently being used to store soil, backfill, spoils and other incidentals that don't have dedicated storage elsewhere on site. This location would provide better safety for city employees if drop-off hours are concurrent with work hours, reduce the number of non-city vehicles in the PW site and provide better security for the site.
- A minimum of two employees would be required to direct traffic, check residency, manage waste, etc.
- Site improvements that would need to be made to accommodate a permanent yard waste site include:
 - Removing stored piles from area
 - Reconfiguring storage bunkers in rear to accommodate more materials
 - Improving the surface of the proposed yard waste area
 - Removing sections of berm to create flow-through traffic access to yard waste site
 - Building walls around the yard waste area to keep materials on site, assist with mechanical collection of yard waste, and buffer views.
 - Installing a security gate to eliminate afterhours access by the public into the site
 - Installing a security camera
 - Additionally, a gate house of some sort may be needed to accommodate staff checking residency of customers and collecting any fees.

The costs of site improvements are as follows:

Item	Cost
Storage bunkers – remove, replace, build walls to relocate storage	\$50,795.00
Yard waste area site improvements – class 5 gravel, block walls	\$14,559.75
Security gate	\$20,620.00
Power to gate	\$3,230.00
Security cameras and card reader	\$16,045.00
Power to cameras and card reader ESTIMATE	\$2,000.00
TOTAL	\$107,249.75

The quotes for site improvement costs are Attachment C.

The yard waste site would potentially be open every Saturday from April to November. Possible hours would be 8a – 4p to accommodate residents and allow for a pacing of customers. Additional hours on a weekday evening could be added to provide residents added convenience. Potentially, these hours would be Noon-7p to accommodate those going to evening work or activities as well as those returning home from work.

Employee needs for the site would range from 1-2 staff per event. The busiest spring and fall days would require 2 employees to ensure traffic safety and site management. At every event, one employee with the ability to operate a bobcat would be required. Since the event would happen on Saturdays and evenings, overtime rates would be required for staff. Employee costs for a public works staff to work the site would include the overtime hourly rate, PERA, SS/Medicare, HCSP Contribution and Workers Comp. A seasonal employee cost would include an hourly rate, SS/Medicare and Workers Comp.

Operational costs for yard waste site:

Item	Cost ESTIMATE
Employee – fulltime, benefitted, overtime – high end of pay scale	\$74.36 per hour
Employee – fulltime, benefitted, overtime – low end of pay scale	\$45.77 per hour
Employee – fulltime, benefitted, overtime AVERAGE	\$60.06 per hour
Employee – seasonal, non-benefitted	\$26.78 per hour
Yard waste hauling - \$9.50/cu yd – minimum 80 cu yds	\$760.00 minimum haul cost

ESTIMATED TOTAL PER WEEK — MINIMUM COSTS		
Item	Cost Per Event Sat (8a-4p) only – 8 hrs	Cost Per Year (35 weeks/280 hrs)
Employee – high rate (\$594.88) + 160cy hauling	\$2,114.88 per event	\$74,020.80 annually
Employee – low rate (\$366.16) + 160 cy hauling	\$1,886.16 per event	\$66,015.60 annually
Employee – average (\$480.48) + 160 cy hauling	\$2,000.48 per event	\$70,016.80 annually
Seasonal (\$214.24) + hauling	\$1,734.24 per event	\$60,698.40 annually
Employee - average + Seasonal +hauling	\$2,214.72 per event	\$77,515.20 annually

ESTIMATED TOTAL PER WEEK — MINIMUM COSTS		
Item	Cost Per Week Sat & Wkday (12-7p) – 15 hrs	Cost Per Year (35 weeks/525 hours)
Employee – high rate (\$1,115.40) + 160cy hauling	\$2,635.40 per event	\$92,239.00 annually
Employee – low rate (\$686.55) + hauling	\$2,206.55 per event	\$77,229.25 annually
Employee – average (\$900.90) + 160 cy hauling	\$2,420.90 per event	\$84,731.50 annually
Seasonal (\$401.70) + hauling	\$1,921.70 per event	\$67,259.50 annually
Employee average + Seasonal +hauling	\$2,822.60 per event	\$98,791.00 annually

RECOMMENDATION

Staff looks to the City Council for direction on the preferred option for the city.

ATTACHMENTS

- A) Yard Waste Collection in neighboring communities
- B) Nearby Private Compost Sites
- C) Public Works Site Improvement Quotes
- D) Diagrams of Site Improvement at Public Works