

## **Questions and Answers About Single Hauler Waste Services**

The City of Traverse City has received bids for providing waste collection services to residents of the City. The City Commission is currently considering whether to award a contract to a single hauler for all residential waste services in the City. The questions and answers below may help residents understand the single-hauler program and how it will impact them.

**Q. What is a single-hauler solid waste program?**

A. Under a single-hauler program, a contract is awarded to one waste hauler to provide all residential trash and recycling services. This hauler would be the only firm permitted to provide services to residential customers.

**Q. What is the advantage of a single-hauler program?**

A. One advantage is that waste haulers submit competitive bids for the various services they provide, which means that residents get the lowest prices available for waste collection. Another advantage is that there are fewer trash trucks on the streets and alleys, which should reduce wear and tear on infrastructure.

**Q. Who will decide whether a single-hauler contract is awarded?**

A. The City Commission established an Ad Hoc Subcommittee that is analyzing the bids and will recommend to the Commission whether or not to award a contract. The Commission will discuss the proposed contract at a Study Session on January 10<sup>th</sup> and at a regular Commission meeting on January 18<sup>th</sup>, and possibly approve a contract with a waste hauler on February 7th. If the City Commission decides to award a contract to a waste hauler, the new service may begin in April.

**Q. If the City Commission awards a contract to a single hauler, will I have to switch my service?**

A. Yes. The bid prices that waste haulers submit will be based on the assumption that all of our residents use the single hauler. The efficiency involved in serving a dense population base allows the haulers to provide low prices. In order to ensure that all residents use the hauler with which the City has contracted, the City Commission is considering adopting a Solid Waste Ordinance containing such language.

**Q. Will everybody in the City pay the same price for waste collection?**

A. Everyone will pay the same price for the same service, but there may be several services to choose from. For example, there may be options for either a 96 gallon cart or a 65 gallon or 35 gallon cart. The idea is that residents can choose the size of container that they need based on the amount of trash they generate. If you don't have much garbage, you can choose a smaller container and not pay as much. There will also be an option for budget bag service. Budget bags would be purchased as needed from the hauler or local retail stores.

**Q. How will we recycle?**

A. Recycling will be included in the cost of your service, whether you choose cart service or budget bag service. Recycling will not be mandatory but the cost of recycling will be included with all trash collection service levels.

**Q. How will I pay for the service?**

A. While we asked the haulers to provide prices for both the waste hauler billing residents directly and for the City collecting payments from residents, it appears from the bids that the haulers can do the billing at a cost that is less than what it would cost the City to add this administrative function. Therefore it is likely that the waste hauler will directly bill the residents.

**Q. What if I already have service with another company?**

A. If you have service with another trash hauler, you would want to make sure to end your service on a date that coincides with the beginning of this new contract service. If you have pre-paid service that does not expire until after the start date of the new contract, you will not have to switch until after your existing service term expires.

**Q. How will the hauler know what size of container that I want – or whether I want to use the budget bag option?**

A. Either the City or the waste hauler will contact you to find out what level of service you want. Possibly you will receive a questionnaire in your utility bill or be asked to fill out a questionnaire on line. If you don't make a selection, you will automatically receive the 96 gallon container and be billed for that level of service. If you discover you need a smaller or larger cart, the hauler will allow changes to service levels at the beginning of any quarter.

**Q. In answer to an earlier question, you said there would be several services to choose from; what other services are there?**

A. In addition to garbage collection and recycling, bulk item pickup by the hauler may be offered. This service would allow residents to dispose of one bulk item per month. Examples of bulk items are furniture, appliances (such as stoves, refrigerators (certified not to contain Freon), washers, dryers, and water heaters), carpet, wood, metal, and other materials with a weight and volume greater than allowed for container collection.

Yard waste collection will be an optional service for residents. Under this program residents would purchase stickers either from the hauler or from local stores. Residents would place the stickers on 30-gallon compostable yard waste bags purchased by the resident. The type of waste that could be disposed of in these bags includes grass clippings, leaves, brush, twigs less than two inches in diameter, and garden plants.

- Q. If my trash hauler is picking up bulk items monthly, will the City also pick up bulk items during Spring Cleanup?**
- A. That will be a decision made by the City Commission. If residents make use of the bulk item pickup included in the waste collection contract, it may at some time in the future eliminate the need for the bulk trash collection that has been a feature of Spring Cleanup.
- Q. If there is an option to have yard waste collected, does this mean I will have to pay for disposal of my leaves in the fall?**
- A. We anticipate that the City will continue to do a loose leaf pickup in the fall. But the yard waste program would be available from the waste hauler from April through November and would allow residents to dispose of grass clippings and garden waste – and leaves if they so desire.
- Q. I'm only a part-year resident and don't want to pay for trash service when I'm not here. What can I do?**
- A. A part-year resident may want to consider the budget bag service, which is paid for through the purchase of the bags.
- Q. Will this single-hauler contract apply to commercial establishments?**
- A. No. This program is only for customers in residential buildings containing four units or less (single family homes, duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes).
- Q. Who will I contact if I have a question or problems with my service?**
- A. Once the single-hauler is selected, that hauler will be required to provide a local, toll-free number to all customers.
- Q. When will my garbage be collected?**
- A. Once a hauler is selected, they will provide route maps of the City indicating the days of pickup. We require the hauler to collect between the hours of 7 am and 7 pm, Monday through Friday. No collection is allowed on certain holidays (New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day), so there could be Saturday collections during holiday weeks.
- Q. I have a handicap. Can I get help taking my trash to the curb?**
- A. Upon notification, the waste hauler will provide 'back-door' service for those residents unable to take their trash to the curb.
- Q. How will I know whether the City Commission decides to implement a single-hauler system?**
- A. In addition to monitoring this website, residents can follow City Commission meetings, news media, and information contained in monthly utility bills.