



Department of Public Works

CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

MATERIALS MANAGEMENT BRIEFING TO CITY COMMISSION

MARCH 25, 2025



Purpose of the Briefing

- Review Recommendations from 2024 Rate Study
- Review of Materials Management Services
- Brief History of Trash/Recycling Disposal
- Key Policy and Operational Considerations
 - Single / Exclusive Hauler for Residential Trash Service
- Update on Community Engagement
- Next Steps



2024 Rate Study

Components of Rate Study

- Current model vs. exclusive hauler for residential service
- Per-tip fee vs. more traditional monthly/quarterly billing
- Ready-to-serve charge to distribute fixed costs
- Rebalancing revenue for new/updated services
- On-Board truck technology updates
- Kent County Sustainable Business Park

Rate Study Recommendations

- Align rates with the costs to provide services
- Adopt a selected rate plan
- If Ready-to-serve charge is adopted, consider how this charge would be billed and costs associated with collecting revenue
- City should become the exclusive hauler for residential service

What is Materials Management?

- Refuse Collection and Disposal
- Recycling Collection and Disposal
- Yard Waste Collection and Disposal
- Compost Facility



17 Core Activities

- **Enhancements:**
 - ROW Cleanup
 - Corridor Cleaning
 - Neighborhood Cleanups
(Dumpster Days)
 - Additional Cleanups
 - Recycling
 - Scrap Metal Collection
 - Textile Recycling
 - Styrofoam Recycling

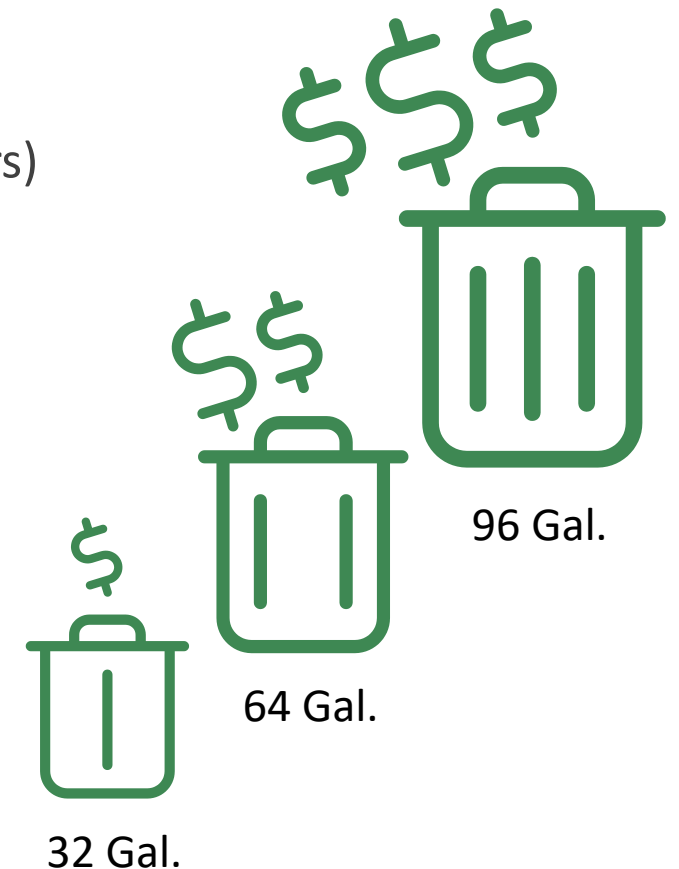
Cost of Service Summary

Service Fees	Revenue Source	Expenses	%
PAYT	Rates	\$ 8,200,616	41.9%
Recycling	Millage	\$ 5,272,228	26.9%
Yard Waste	Rates	\$ 1,706,277	8.7%
Bulk	Rates	\$ 239,225	1.2%
Dumpsters	Rates	\$ 212,804	1.1%
Dead Animal Collection	Millage	\$ 14,036	0.1%
Illegal Dumping	Millage	\$ 11,668	0.1%
Graffiti Abatement	Millage	\$ 154,739	0.8%
ROW Cleanup	Millage	\$ 56,642	0.3%
Street Sweeping	Millage	\$ 892,033	4.6%
Neighborhood Cleanups	Millage	\$ 242,123	1.2%
Special Events	Millage	\$ 44,136	0.2%
Compost/Yard Waste Site	Millage/Revenue Reimbursement	\$ 1,255,660	6.4%
Closed Superfund Site	Millage	\$ 92,637	0.5%
Trash Reduction Program	Millage	\$ 455,204	2.3%
Cart Maintenance	Rates	\$ 451,532	2.3%
Forestry Support	Millage	\$ 285,305	1.5%
Total Service Fees		\$ 19,586,867	100.0%

Refuse Collection

Pay as You Throw

- Open market (open to the City and private haulers)
- City has ~80% - 90% of the residential market – (52,500+ customers)
 - Single Family / 4 unit / 6 unit
 - Prior to Pay as You Throw (2010) – 12,000 customers / 2016 – 43,000 customers
- Customizable to the needs of each household (3 cart sizes)
- Self managed accounts (pay for service only when needed)
- Income Qualified Service – Home Repair Services of WM (~900 customers)
- Assisted Service
- Blue Bags
- RFID Technology – 98.5% to 99% accuracy
 - Tag replacement schedule and costs



Refuse Collection

Commercial Service (~35 customers)

- City Departments
- Commercial Businesses

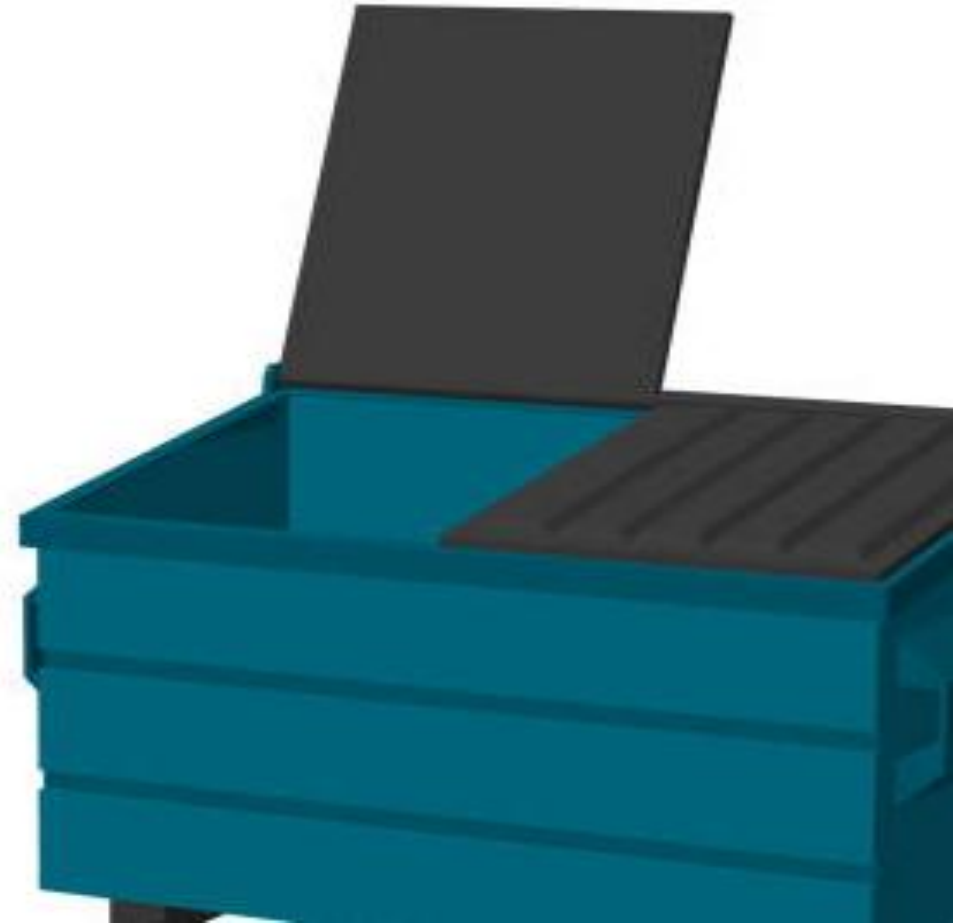
Bulk Items

- Mattresses, Furniture, Appliances, etc.

Illegal Dumping

- Alleys, Public Property

Dead Animal Clean-up



Disposal:

Waste to Energy Facility

Kent County

Department of Public Works





Historical Context: Waste to Energy

- 1950s to 1973 – waste material generated in the City disposed of at the City of Grand Rapids Butterworth landfill.
- 1973 – 1990 - waste material transported to Kent County landfill.
- 1985: City entered Combustible Waste Agreement with Kent County Board of Public Works.
- Partnership with the core six cities (Grand Rapids, Kentwood, Wyoming, Grandville, Walker and East Grand Rapids) and Kent County Board of Public Works. Each adopted ordinances that require “Flow Control” as part of the agreement with Kent County. Regardless of waste hauler, all refuse collected within the six cities is required to go the Waste To Energy facility.
- Construction completed in 1990 and facility accepted trash at \$39.07/ton.
- 40-year agreement expired in 2025.



Historical Context: Waste to Energy

- WTE tip fees steadily increased up to \$79.37/ton in 2008, primarily due to debt service, and then decreased to \$45/ton in 2013.
- Current WTE Tip Fee increased in 2022 to \$74/ton plus a landfill legacy surcharge of \$1.68/ton.
- Approximately 31% of material received at WTE is transported to South Kent Landfill due to overcapacity.
- \$42 million in capital improvements currently underway at facility.
- Sustainability Park – Kent County is working on a sustainability park built in phases, including County wide “Flow Control.”

Recycling Collection

- Millage-funded
- No direct cost to resident
- Approximately 56,000 customers
- Challenges with contamination
- Multi-family recycling grant
 - EGLE
 - Recycling Partnership
 - Prairie Robotics



Disposal:

Material
Recovery
Facility

Kent County
Department of Public Works



RECYCLING GUIDE

Kent County Recycling & Education Center | reimaginetrash.org



KENT COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC WORKS

RECYCLE THESE ITEMS

CLEAN, EMPTY & LOOSE (NOT BAGGED OR BUNDLED)

CARDBOARD & PAPER



PLASTIC BOTTLES, CUPS & CONTAINERS

Rigid plastics #1-7; no foam or flexible plastics



GLASS BOTTLES & JARS



METAL CANS, BOTTLES & FOIL



MILK, JUICE & SOUP CARTONS



If the cap/lid and container are the same material, keep them attached. If they're different materials, detach and recycle separately.

KEEP OUT OF RECYCLING CONTAINERS!



**SEPARATE
OUT
RECYCLING
TRASH**



**No hazardous waste
or chemicals:**
Batteries, electronics,
propane tanks, fuel,
chemicals, ammunition
or other hazardous waste.



**Nothing that
would tangle:**
Plastic bags, flexible
plastics, string lights,
extension cords, clothing,
hoses, tarps, hangers, etc.



**No bundled or
bagged recycling:**
Recyclables need to be
loose in order to be
sorted properly.



No foam plastics:
Foam take-out containers
or cups, blocks of styro-
foam, packing peanuts,
foam coolers, etc.

Have an item you'd like to recycle that's not on this guide? We can help!
www.reimaginetrash.org | recycle@kentcountymi.gov | 616-632-7920



Historical Context: Material Recovery Facility

- 2010 - Established partnership agreement with Kent County thru 2030, unless terminated by either party.
- 2010 – Kent County Single-Stream Material Recovery Facility (MRF) opens - \$0 tip fee
- 2016 – MRF implements a recycling tip fee - \$10/ton
- 2017 – Tip fee increases to \$35/ton (71% increase)
- 2019 – Tip fee increases to \$65/ton (46% increase)
- 2022 – Tip fee increases to \$70/ton (38% increase)



Curbside Yard Waste & Composting

- Carts, bags, and tags
- Millage support
- Storm Debris
- Street Sweeping
- Leaves
- Contract with WeCare Denali
- Organics Collection Pilot



Establishing future strategy

- Conducted operational analysis in 2019-2020
- Historically, rate changes have been reactionary to changes in the market vs. based on long-term strategy & community goals
- 2024 rate adjustment based on equipment/technology & labor costs as well as forecasted disposal costs for Sustainable Business Park
- Community expectations continue to increase, particularly around bulk collection, “clean community” services, yard waste and organics collection
- Rate study (completed in 2024) can be paired with operational analysis (completed in 2020) to chart future path for materials management aligned with the City’s sustainability goals

Exclusive Residential Hauler

Exclusive Hauler Assumptions

- 10%-23% increase in customer base
- 4-8 Full-Time Equivalent Employees (FTEs)
- 4 new sideload trucks
- 6,500-12,500 additional refuse carts

Exclusive Residential Hauler

Why Exclusive Hauler?

1. Ensure every residential property has refuse service
2. Less wear and tear on local streets
3. Lower Greenhouse Gas Emissions
4. Level of service and options provided by the City vs. Private Haulers

Exclusive Residential Hauler

Why Exclusive Hauler?

Ensure every residential property has refuse service

- Currently, not every residential property has trash removal service – renters are generally required to contract on their own
- Reduce instances of illegal dumping and hoarding/deferring to “dumpster days”
- Clean community

Exclusive Residential Hauler

Why Exclusive Hauler?

Less Wear and Tear on local streets

- The typical refuse trucks weighs 15,000 to 30,000 pounds
- The weight can increase to as much as 50,000 pounds when fully loaded
- One refuse truck on every local street each week vs. 4-5 trucks
- Resurfacing one mile of local street costs between \$400,000 and \$1,000,000
- Lifecycle of local streets potentially extended

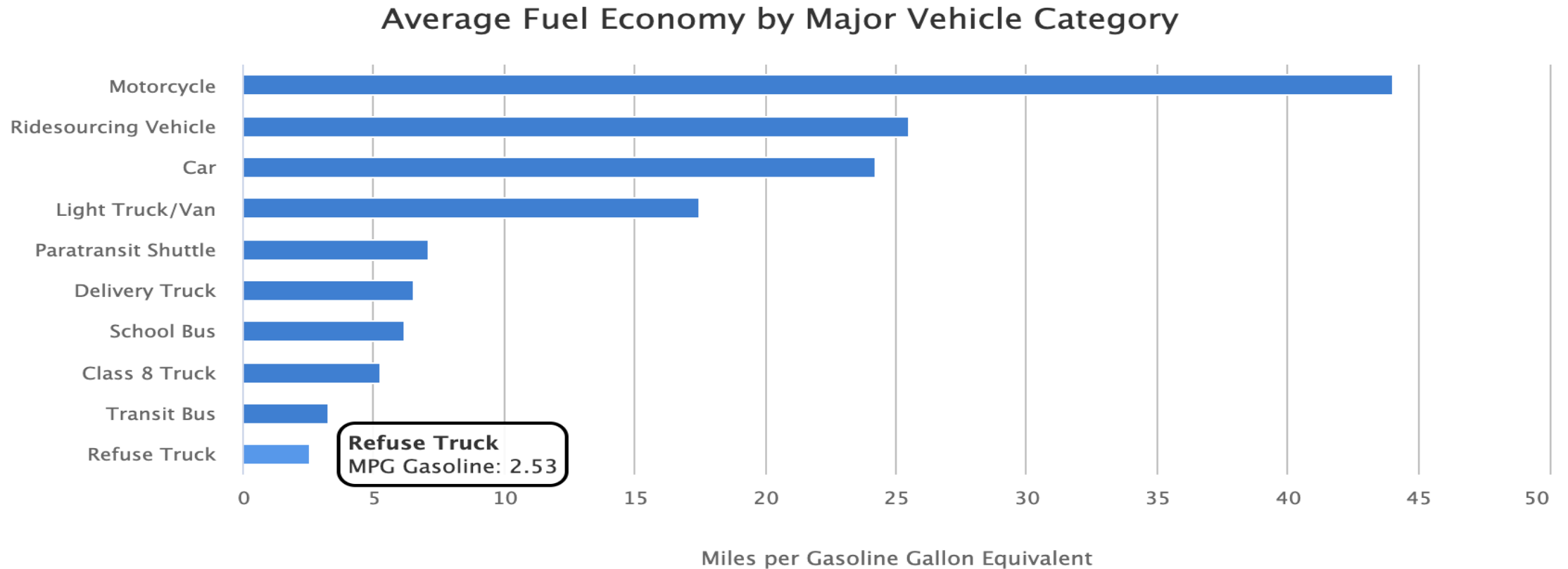
Exclusive Residential Hauler

Why Exclusive Hauler?

Lower Green House Gas Emissions

- The average conventional diesel refuse truck emits 100 metric tons of eCO₂ annually
- Single Hauler would reduce the number of trucks on residential streets to 1 refuse truck per week, lowering eCO₂ emissions by approximately 400-500 metric tons annually
- City changing over refuse fleet to CNG

Why Exclusive Hauler?



Last updated: February 2020
Printed on: November 9

Exclusive Residential Hauler

Why Exclusive Hauler?

Level of service and options provided by the City vs. Private Haulers

- Three cart size options
- Pay as you Throw
- Income-based service
- Assisted service
- Millage based services
- Customer Service
 - 311 – One Stop Call for City Services (Water/Sewer/Refuse)

Exclusive Residential Hauler

Impact to Residents

Pay as You Throw (average presentment rate of 50%)

- $\$8.47 \times 2 = \16.94 monthly (96-gallon cart)
- $\$6.05 \times 2 = \12.10 monthly (64-gallon cart)
- $\$3.63 \times 2 = \7.26 monthly (32-gallon cart)

Private Hauler (average cost of residential service)

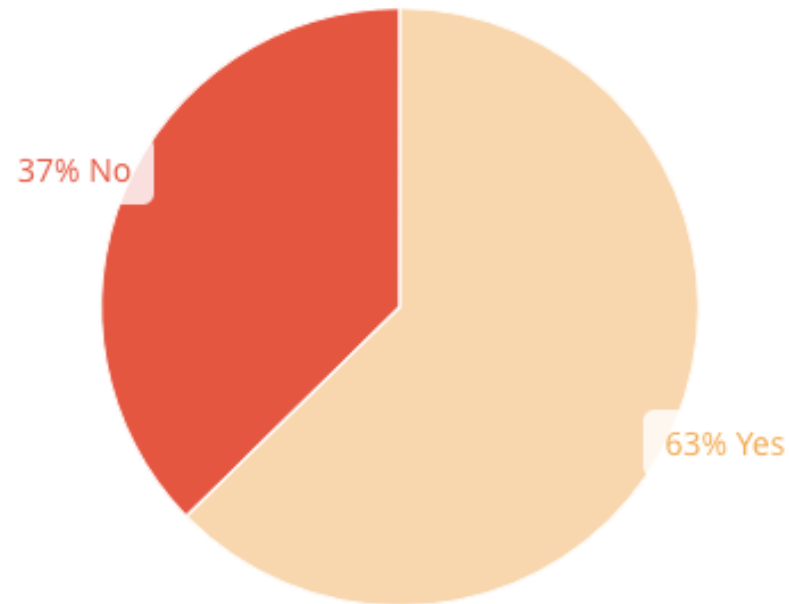
- \$30 monthly fixed rate

Community Engagement

- Neighborhood Associations
- Neighborhood Clean-ups (Dumpster Days)
- Rental Property Owners Association (RPOA)
- Private Waste Haulers
- Chamber of Commerce
- Kent County
- Commission Nights Out
- Community Survey
 - March through end of August

Community Survey

Would you support Grand Rapids shifting to an exclusive trash hauler program?



1,109 respondents

Next Steps

- Continue engagement with Community
- Community Survey – through August 2025
- Determine if single residential waste hauler model is desired
- Return to City Commission with recommendations, including proposed ordinance changes

Timeline

- Community Outreach and Survey through August 2025
- Recommendation to City Commission – October 2025
 - Implementation Timeline (If approved by City Commission) – 2-year process

<u>Timeline</u>	
October 2025	Commission Approval
October 2025	Order Trucks
October 2025 – May 2027	Community Mailers and Outreach
December 2026	Order Carts
January – March 2027	Hire and Onboard New Staff
May 2027	Start Signup of New Customers
July 2027	Complete Cart Deliveries and Begin Service
August 2027	Project Closure

A photograph of a city skyline at sunset. In the foreground, a river flows under a multi-arched stone bridge. The bridge is crowded with people. Behind the bridge, there are several buildings. On the left, a tall, modern building with a grid-like facade is partially visible. In the center, a large, curved glass skyscraper reflects the bright orange and yellow light of the setting sun. To its left is a shorter, multi-story brick building with many windows. To the right of the glass skyscraper, there are more modern buildings of varying heights. The sky is a clear, pale blue, and the overall scene is bathed in the warm, golden light of late afternoon.

Questions?