

City of
Gainesville

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Solid Waste Update
October 23, 2025

Agenda



Background/General Updates



Food Waste



Recycling and Cart Size Information



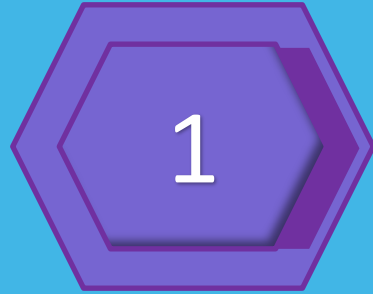
Cubic Yard Fee for Commercial Collection



Ordinance Options for Commercial Haulers



Staff Recommendations



Background / General Updates

Background



December 12, 2024 General Policy Meeting

Staff provided updates on:

- pay as you throw campaign
- service costs & proposed fees
- exclusive waste hauler invitation to negotiate status
- options for rebidding of the invitation to negotiate with exclusive residential collection only

Background



December 12, 2024 General Policy Meeting

City Commission directed staff to:

- advertise the Ordinance to amend Appendix A
- issue the invitation to negotiate in the first quarter of calendar year 2025
- review solid waste franchise fee restructuring and bring back options
- bring back to the general policy committee ordinance-based options and benefits reflecting that of an exclusive hauler

General Updates



Department & Ordinance Initiatives

● Pay as You Throw

- Customers still have the option to downsize their cart to offset costs and reduce their solid waste output to the landfill. Annual mailer and Right Size Your Cart mailers will go out January 2026.
- No costs incurred by the customer on a request to downsize their cart.

● Invitation to Negotiate (ITN)

- Pre-bid set for late October and final scoring currently set for March.
- ITN presentation to Commission when negotiation process is finalized and intent to award is requested.

● Zero Waste Ordinance

- Ordinance education is ongoing. Letters sent to Multi-family properties, Convenience stores, general businesses, Pharmacies, Restaurants and Bars on July 1, 2025.
- Still facing challenges with lease transition plans and bulk waste reuse.

● Anaerobic Digester Feasibility Study

- Phase I ongoing, final report expected October 2025. Future of Phase II TBD by year end.



Food Waste

Food Waste



Food Waste Collection

- Ordinance requires food waste diversion for food generators 25,000 square feet or larger, effective January 2023
- Ordinance requires food waste collection for commercial locations with more than one cubic yard of food waste with food waste containers next to trash and recycling containers, effective June 2023
- Ordinance requires food waste collection for multi-family properties and in-house containers to be provided to each unit, effective June 2024
- Residential curbside food waste pilot program since 2021; current contract up to 700 homes.
- Basis of food waste collection is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from methane generation in landfills

Food Waste



Pilot Program

Throughout the pilot program a total of 10 full-time private sector positions were created for collection and processing.

Cumulative residential food waste diverted as of June 2025 was 181.63 tons which is the equivalent of 141.67 MTCO_{2e}.

Year	House Count/ Up To	Cost per House	Annual Cost to City	Food Waste Diverted
2021	200	\$15.00	\$16,995	7.34 lbs/House
2022	200	\$15.00	\$36,765	7.34 lbs/House
2023	500	\$15.00	\$70,000	7.34 lbs/House
2024	700	\$15.00	\$94,000	7.34 lbs/House
2025	700	\$19.40	\$164,360	7.5 lbs/House

- Program started in 2021. Utilizes a local vendor for food waste collection & composting. Agreement currently end December 31, 2025
- Participants averaged smaller garbage carts by 5.8 gallons.
- Commission direction needed: continue current program; expand current program (into what areas/citywide?): an RFP can be pursued to obtain more competitive pricing; or sunset program.

Food Waste



Recycling and Diversion Goals

- City has a Zero Waste goal by 2040.
- Estimated 52 tons in FY25 of food waste diverted from 681 homes in pilot program at \$2,885/ton.
 - Currently \$65/ton to haul to Leveda Brown with regular residential waste which get hauled to New River Landfill by Alachua County.
- Currently City is averaging a 9.5% contamination rate on recycling and would expect same of food waste
- Currently the City has a traditional recycling rate of 44% as of 2024.



Versus



Food Waste



Request for Proposal (RFP)

- Residential collection of food waste will be drafted and advertised, if directed to do so, for residential food waste diversion efforts to begin January 1, 2026.
- New composting companies have entered the market and could make prices more competitive.



Versus



Food Waste



Benefits of New River - Credits

- FDEP has a 75% goal for recycling and diversion of waste.
- This City gets credit for 22,100 tons/year for RNG diversion through New River Landfill from their methane capture partnership with OPAL Fuels, operational as of January 2023.
- Total residential MSW is approximately 21,000 tons/year.
- Leverages the full waste stream with FDEP crediting the City with 44% for standard recycling diversion and 22% for RNG diversion for residential and commercial waste stream of 100,450 tons/year to a total diversion credit of 66%.

City of Gainesville is ranked #5 in the State, along with Alachua county, with 44% traditional recycling rate and 66% adjusted overall recycling rate.

Food Waste



Food Waste Collection Costs

- Total costs are dependent on negotiated contract but are assumed to be approximately \$0.75-\$2.00 per door for multi-family properties, \$125-\$300 per month for commercial locations, and \$12-\$67 per residential household per month.
- Total Estimated Annual Cost to Public: \$4,690,764 to \$24,178,704 (plus start up costs)
 - Multi-Family (35,696 doors): \$321,264 to \$856,704 (plus start up costs)
 - Commercial Locations (225 locations): \$337,500 to \$810,000
 - Residential Curbside (28,000 homes): \$4,032,000 to \$22,512,000 (would be funded with the Solid Waste Fund)
- Multi-family & commercial will need to construct cart/dumpster enclosure for food waste collection. Restaurants without wait staff will need to purchase food waste containers.

Food Waste



Food Waste Collection Recommendations

Due to cost of collection, methane capture at New River Landfill and contamination rates:

- Sunset residential curbside food waste collection pilot program
- Modify Ordinance to remove multi-family collection requirements and front of house food waste containers.
- Continue food generator (grocery store) requirements
- Continue back of house food waste collection for restaurants with more than 1 cy of food waste per week

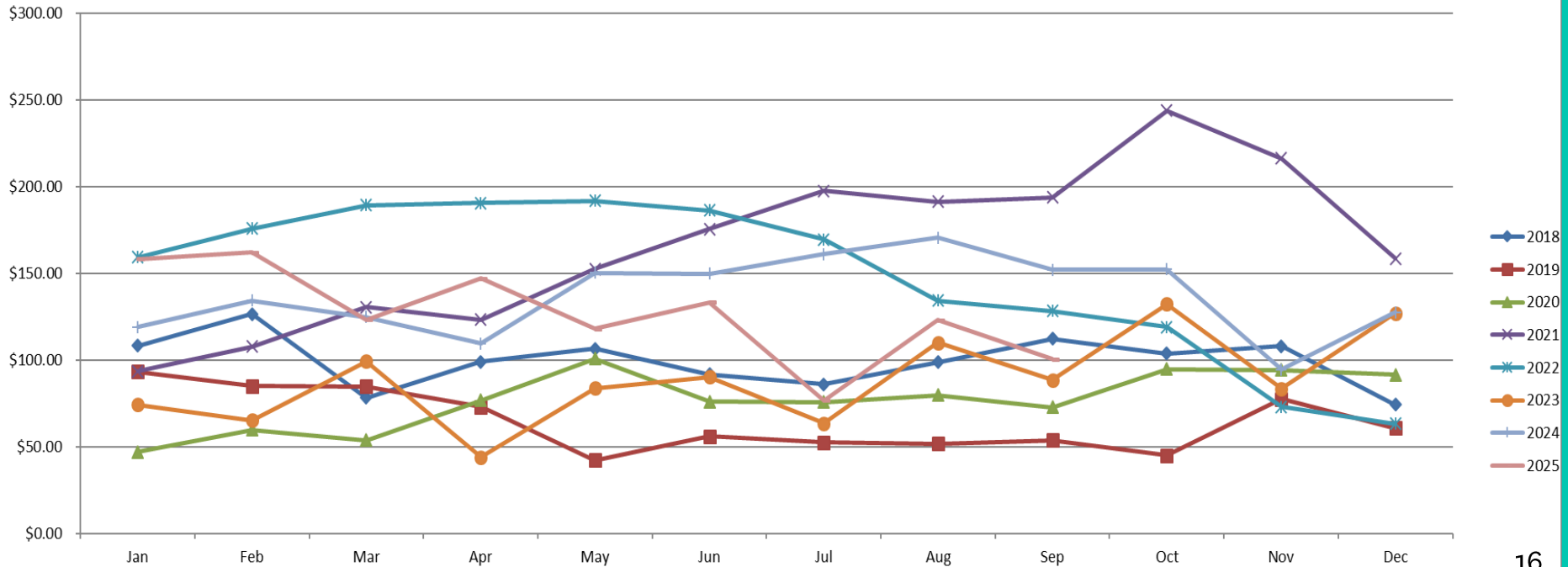


Recycling and Cart Size Information

Recycling



Combined Material Sales Price Annual Average



Recycling



What Happens to City Recyclables

Commodity	Company Recycling/Reusing	Final Product
News	Greif's Sweetwater Paper Board Corporation	Protective Packaging Uses
Mixed Paper	Greif's Sweet water Paper Board Corporation	Protective Packaging Uses
OCC	International Paper or WestRock	Backing for New Cardboard Boxes
Aluminum	Constellium Aluminum Manufacturing	New Beverage Containers
Steel	National Materials Processing	New Food Cans and Rebar
Mixed Glass	Strategic Materials Inc.	Glass Containers, Fiberglass, highway beads, paint filters, glass abrasives, and specialty Glass
Plastic (PET)	Clear Path or Mohawk Industries	Plastic Flakes for Carpeting/Clothes
Plastic (Natural)	Blue Ridge Industries	Pipes and Plastic Lumber
Plastic (Color)	Blue Ridge Industries	Pipes and Plastic Lumber
Plastic (HDPE)	Unifi	Paint Containers and Toy Molds

Recycling



Are Residential Recyclables Making Money

- City pays anywhere from \$10,000 to \$42,000 per month to Alachua County for processing

City Averages 315 tons per month of residential recycling at the percentages and market rates in the table.

Percentages and Values as of August 2025

Commodity	Value	City Average Percentage
News	\$60.00	0.00%
Mixed Paper	\$35.00	6.54%
OCC	\$75.00	21.93%
Aluminum	\$1,882.89	3.31%
Steel	\$89.29	2.97%
Mixed Glass	(\$12.50)	43.02%
Plastic (PET)	\$111.40	7.00%
Plastic (Natural)	\$900.00	1.74%
Plastic (Color)	\$91.40	2.06%
Plastic (HDPE)	\$0.01	0.49%
Trash	(\$65.00)	9.50%

Residential Cart Sizes



By District and Quadrant

District	20 gal	35 gal	64 gal	96 gal	Total
I	830	1,348	2,693	1,399	6,306
II	1,555	3,915	5,480	1,539	12,489
III	514	344	574	139	1,571
IV	1,353	2,275	2,843	1,032	7,503

Quadrant	20 gal	35 gal	64 gal	96 gal	Total
NE	746	1,217	1,856	918	4,737
NW	2,509	5,584	7,817	2,410	18,320
SE	235	363	835	421	1,854
SW	762	754	1082	360	2,958

Multi-Family Properties



By District and Quadrant

District	Number of Apartment Complexes	Number of Apartment Units
I	101	8,585
II	25	3,035
III	108	16,029
IV	116	5,240

Quadrant	Number of Apartment Complexes	Number of Apartment Units
NE	16	809
NW	127	6,412
SE	11	1,138
SW	196	24,530

Residential Opt Out



By District and Quadrant

District	Number of Opt Outs
I	679
II	1,407
III	106
IV	906

Quadrant	Number of Opt Outs
NE	555
NW	2,106
SE	185
SW	252

- City Ordinance allows a residential service exclusion through a petition to the City Manager or designee for owners of dwelling units which would fall under the residential collection contract.



Cubic Yard Fee for Commercial Collection

CY Fee for Commercial Collection



- Cart rates are a charge for services for residential curbside garbage, recycling, yard and bulk waste pick-up,
- Franchise fees are based on gross revenues of each hauler, are collected per ordinance and authorizes haulers to provide solid waste collection in the City Limits. Fees support all Solid Waste Services.
- Commercial Collection: garbage, recycling, yard waste and bulk item pick-up based on private contracts with hauler for multi-family properties with 5 or more dwelling units, businesses, and residential multi-family properties who have opted out of residential collection.

CY Fee for Commercial Collection

Commercial Service Contracts

- Currently the City cannot determine how much each commercially collected property is paying for service contract.
- Potential price breaks for larger waste producers doesn't align with the Pay as You Throw campaign.
- Cubic Yard restructuring will allow the City to control its rates charged to each commercially collected unit ensuring consistent charging for of each commercial customer by the City while providing reliable franchise fee data and payment accountability by hauler.

CY Fee for Commercial Collection



Commercial Service Contracts

- Commercially Collected service contracts account for approximately 1.2 million cubic yards of solid waste within the City.
- Restructuring away from a 15% Franchise Fees would require the hauler pay the City based on a cubic yard basis instead of gross revenues for their customers placing the commercial market in line with the Pay as You Throw campaign.
- City of Gainesville would set the price for each cubic yard of solid waste collected in the commercial market.
- Annual audits already completed by the County of commercially collected properties would ensure City is paid appropriately.

CY Fee for Commercial Collection



Franchise Fee Restructuring

- Current fee is 15% based on gross revenue from each hauler.
- Some communities charge a per CY franchise fee; this would more directly implement pay as you throw for commercial properties.
- Charging approximately \$1.85/CY is revenue neutral.
- Assuming a \$2.85 per CY fee and 1.2 million CY of commercial waste, restructuring would generate an additional \$1,186,590 annually. Compactors would be assessed 2.5x more or \$7.90/CY.
- Cart rate of \$10.00/cart/month by the haulers to the City for commercial carts.

CY Fee for Commercial Collection



Cubic Yard Charge, Fund Revenue and Other Cities

\$/CY	Revenue
1.85	Neutral
2.05	\$226,590/Year
2.25	\$466,590/Year
2.45	\$706,590/Year
2.65	\$946,590/Year
2.85	\$1,186,590/Year
3.05	\$1,426,590/Year
3.15	\$1,546,590/Year

- Pensacola Florida = \$1.50 per cubic yard non-compacted and \$3.00 per cubic yard for compacted
- Davie Florida = \$3.51 per cubic yard non-compacted and \$5.35 per cubic yard for compacted
- City of San Jose California = \$2.84 per cubic yard for garbage and \$1.00 per cubic yard for recycling, no upcharge for compacted garbage

- Pensacola is located in Escambia County which ranks #41 in the State with 21% traditional recycling and adjusted recycling rates.
- Davie is located in Broward County which ranks #33 in the State with 29% traditional recycling and adjusted recycling rates.

Solid Waste Fund



Budget & Fund Balance

End of FY24 Fund
Balance: \$8.2 M

Year	Revenues	Expenses	Transfers to Include Roads & Debt Service	Fund Balance
FY24 Actuals	\$13,276,018	\$11,057,591	\$648,969	\$1,569,458
FY25 Projected	\$13,907,662	\$14,648,808	\$2,128,891	\$(2,870,037)
FY26 Adopted	\$15,363,826	\$14,227,189	\$2,000,000	\$(863,358)

● Fund balance is utilized for capital expenditures related to solid waste or for emergency response debris

● Target fund balance:

- 3 months of annual budget less one-time expenses: \$3,200,000
- Significant emergency response: \$8,000,000

**Projected End of
FY26 Fund Balance:
\$4.5 M**

Solid Waste Fund



Franchise Fee Restructuring Recommendations

- Finalize Solid Waste Fund sufficiency study that is underway
- Finalize Solid Waste ITN to determine costs and impacts to fund balance
- Requesting Feedback from Haulers and Commission: Per cubic yard charge, instead of standard percentage franchise fee based on gross revenues, for commercial haulers.
- Requesting Commission to provide feedback on restructuring franchise fee



Ordinance Options for Commercial Haulers

Ordinance Options for Commercial Haulers



Benefits of Exclusive Hauler by Ordinance

- Not Recommended: Strictly enforce dual stream recycling allowing for violations and fines for noncompliance.
- Recommend: Add mandatory reporting of violations and container size reporting.

Ordinance Options for Commercial Haulers



Appendix A Updates for C&D Haulers

- Current Appendix A charges and current C&D hauler practices are posing issues that need to be addressed.
- Look into a flat fee for all C&D hauler instead of for wheels on a C&D hauler's vehicle.
- Currently smaller haulers are entering the market without a franchise with the City and dumping C&D at Leveda Brown instead of designated C&D transfer station to avoid higher tipping fees.
- Currently a C&D hauler would need to be caught six times operating without a franchise with the City to equal the franchise fee. They are taking the chance they will not be caught.
- Need to establish repeat offender ordinance to fine and stop un-franchised haulers.

Ordinance Options



Prescription Drug Drop-off

- Currently the ordinance requires a take back program for prescription drugs. This requires providers to provide on-site publicly accessible containers for the collection and disposal of prescription medicines or drugs and disposal in accordance with state and federal laws.
- Publix desires to not use traditional kiosk collection and go to pre-postage bag they provide customer.
- Another disposal method is for the customer to dispose of prescription medicines or drugs at the Leveda Brown Hazardous Waste Collection Center.
- Requesting Feedback: Whether to change the ordinance to allow other proper disposal methods.



Staff Recommendation

Staff Recommendation

Direct the City Manager to:

1. Sunset the Curbside Food Waste Collection Pilot effective December 31, 2025
2. Research and return with options to address staff concerns related to C&D haulers.

Direct the City Attorney to work with the City Manager to advertise Ordinances to:

1. Eliminate multi-family food waste collection requirements.
2. Eliminate front of house food waste collection requirements.
3. Permit pharmacies to have options other than containers for drug collection.
4. Add mandatory reporting requirements of violations for haulers.
5. Require haulers to provide collection container types and sizes.

General Policy Committee:

1. Hear feedback from haulers regarding the franchise fee restructuring.
2. Provide feedback or direction to Staff regarding franchise fee restructuring.

Questions?

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