

Recycling Program Background and Goals

The purpose of this document is to identify appropriate and achievable goals through a curbside recycling program. The City currently operates its curbside program through a contract with a hauler for every other week, single stream collection of recyclable materials. Under the current contract, recyclable materials include glass containers, plastic containers, tubs and lids, metal beverage and food cans, newspaper, corrugated cardboard, boxboard (e.g. cereal, cake and chip boxes), aseptic cartons (e.g. juice, milk, soup and broth cartons), mixed mail, paperback books, magazines and phone books. The current recycling charge per month, per household, is \$2.95.

The City's current recycling program services all single family homes and townhomes. Apartment complexes and the manufactured home park are considered as commercial and are not covered by this contract. Ramsey's population is approximately 25,828 people (U.S. Census Bureau 2015 data) and includes an estimated 8,500 households (2014 Metropolitan Council data).

Recycling across the state has 'plateaued' over the last decade or so, accounting for approximately forty-one percent (41%) of the total municipal solid waste stream. However, the Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Policy Plan 2010-2030 (MSWMPP 2010-2030) outlines objectives of a recycling rate of fifty-four percent to sixty percent (54-60%) by 2030. Accomplishing this objective will require a significant increase of materials recycled across the metropolitan area, including Ramsey. It is important to keep this objective in mind as goals of the local recycling program are identified.

While the City wants to find the most cost-effective way to implement the recycling program, cost alone should not be the only factor in this decision. Other factors may be just as important to ensure an efficient yet effective program. The following goals are intended to help guide the City as it contemplates its course of action with the current recycling contract set to expire at the end of 2017.

- **Maximize recovery of recyclable materials from residents of the community to ensure the City meets or exceeds the tonnage goal set by Anoka County**
 - Anoka County sets an annual tonnage goal for each municipality that is based on 175 pounds per person for multi-family units (five [5] or more units) and 195 pounds per person for up to four (4) units (these goals are set with the objective within the MSWMPP 2010-2030).
 - Easily measured, can track on a monthly basis from curbside reports, and then add in data from recycling events. Reports must be consistent and provide a breakdown of materials and weights (currently, monthly report from curbside program includes newspaper, cardboard, magazines, low grade paper, glass, plastic, aluminum cans, tin cans).
 - Also want to receive a "Special Materials" list monthly that includes other, non-standard recyclable items (mattresses/box springs, tv-large/tv-small, tires, appliances, etc.) that are incorporated into reporting to the County.
- **Improve and Enhance Marketing and Public Education to Improve Participation and Recovery Rates**
 - Program requirements (per annual Recycling Agreement with Anoka County) include at least one (1) promotion mailed to each household focused exclusively on the recycling program, one (1) promotion advertising recycling opportunities available for residents within the newsletter or local newspaper, and two (2) community outreach activities at municipal events to inform residents about recycling opportunities. Operating with a

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single recycling hauler simplifies this somewhat because the materials can more specific about acceptable and non-acceptable materials.

- City Staff has developed the Ramsey Recycler, which is a four (4) page, full color mailer that is sent to each household at least twice per year (spring and fall). City Staff also attempts to include information about recycling and the recycling program in the Ramsey Resident newsletter.
 - City Staff also try to coordinate an interactive/educational program with students from Ramsey Elementary focusing on recycling and waste reduction.
 - There are six (6) issues of the Ramsey Resident newsletter. Each issue should have information that focuses on recycling, waste reduction, and/or reuse.
 - 'Refresh' recycling webpage with use of tool kits prepared by the Solid Waste Coordinating Board.
- **Maintain a High Level of Customer Service**
 - Strive for 100% customer satisfaction.
 - When complaints are received, contractor shall responsible for all corrective actions.
 - Contractor shall maintain a log of complaints and provide to the City on a monthly basis (would allow for a 'performance review') or upon request.
 - Contractor to correct all missed pick-ups by end of business day the day following scheduled service.
- **New Opportunities to Divert Materials from the Waste Stream to the Recycling Stream**
 - This is a critical element if the City wants to continue to meet or exceed the tonnage goals identified by the County. When stable markets become available for new materials to be recycled, such as food waste (organics), the City should take advantage of that opportunity and expand its program for residents. Likewise, any hauler working with the City would preferably have the same approach and be looking for opportunities for implementation as well. Examples could include:
 - Possibly a curbside or 'mobile' recycling event for electronics and appliances (maybe pay in advance and set out at curb on a designated day).
 - Opportunity for residents to 'add' organics to their recycling service (likely with an additional fee).
 - Consider providing an opportunity for Yard Waste drop-off.
- **Reduce the Number of Vehicle Trips on Residential Roads**
 - Based on most hauling operations within the metropolitan area, one (1) household *could* have up to four (4) different trucks servicing their property (different truck for garbage, recycling, yard waste, and organics). There are currently eight (8) licensed haulers in the city, which could *potentially* equate to thirty-two (32) trucks on a residential street if eight (8) households each had a different hauler. This adds a lot of extra vehicle trips to a neighborhood, has a greater impact on the lifespan of a street, and increases greenhouse gas emissions.