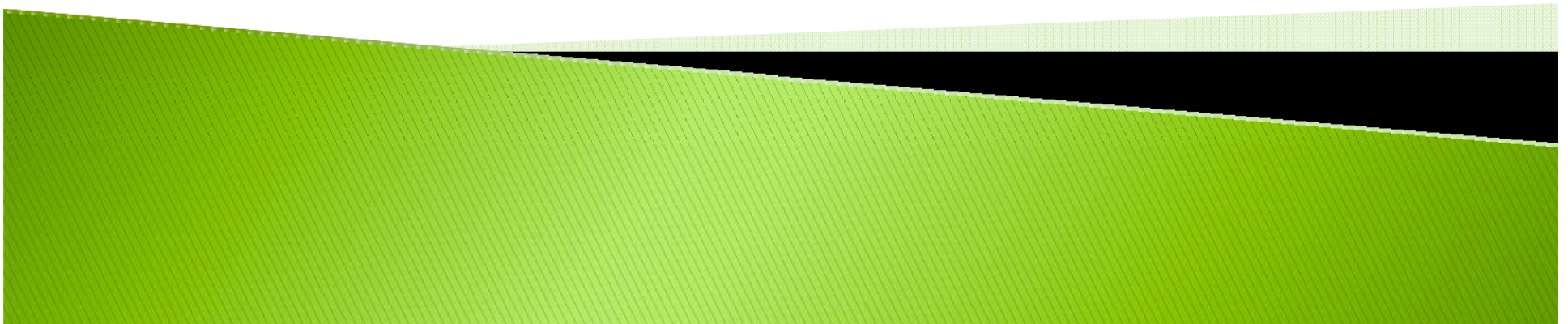


# Refuse & Recycling Task Force Recommendations

Mayor's Task Force 2009 - 2010  
September 15, 2010



# Executive Summary

- ▶ Goals of Task Force
  - Gain public input
  - Identify nationwide best practices
  - Collect best ideas from City Council, TARE Board and public
  - Begin public awareness/education of the issues

- ▶ Guiding Tenet is to determine services that meet these goals:
  - Uniform Service Offerings Throughout the COT
  - Fair Rate Structure To All Ratepayers
  - Encourage Maximum Recycling & Yard Waste Reuse

# Executive Summary, Cont'd

## ▶ Summary of Work Completed

- Interim reports of direction and working hypotheses to TARE, Council and COT
- Review of Best Practices from ~50 refuse & recycling systems
- Expert input from other cities, vendors, contractors
- Synthesis of data to make these recommendations

## ▶ Summary of Public Input

- District meetings in each of 9 districts with over 600 citizens
- Independent survey of 100+ citizens in each voting district
- Independent focus groups with input from 25 citizens

# Key Take-Aways from Public Input

- ▶ With education and awareness-building, most citizens prefer the services recommended by the task force; i.e. Pay As You Throw (PAYT) and expanded recycling
- ▶ Key challenges are the public's general reluctance to change and/or disrupt their known routines
  - ▶ Providing ample education and demonstrating to them how their lives can be enhanced by these new services will go a long way to gain public support for upcoming service changes
- ▶ Most people (~90% of those participating in qualitative surveys) state a willingness to recycle from their homes if we remove the following barriers:
  - ▶ Extra cost - fees charged
  - ▶ Inconvenience - limited items accepted; small bins; confusing pick-up schedule
  - ▶ Shows rationality of public to service provisions
- ▶ Most people, regardless of service, are at least somewhat satisfied with their current service
- ▶ Quantitative survey results (these are people's opinions today before any awareness building) show that there is no real difference in opinion by any tested demographic; i.e., age, district, service level, gender, etc.
  - ▶ Indicates similar messaging and education can be used throughout the City

# Key Take-Aways from Public Input

- ▶ From focus groups, there was a willingness to pay extra for twice a week service among those who are receiving it now; those with once a week service were unwilling to pay more for 2x week service; both quantitative and qualitative results indicate people prioritize cost over service frequency (i.e., they would give up the extra service to keep costs low or from changing)
  - ▶ Advocates for new service recommendations exist in our city. We can leverage many of the service experiences from the Northwest Quadrant
- ▶ There was no real convergence on solutions for green waste. After some education, however, most citizens agreed that a system geared toward PAYT was preferred
- ▶ The difference between the COT actually performing these services and a vendor performing them on behalf of the COT weren't tangible. What was important:
  - ▶ The COT was responsible; i.e., you called the COT when you needed something
  - ▶ Jobs weren't lost by local people
- ▶ Most people were unaware of:
  - ▶ Current bulky waste service offering
  - ▶ Subsidies provided by TARE
    - ▶ Education and awareness building are key in all service areas

# Major Myths

- ▶ Don't believe it is possible to successfully manage a PAYT system
- ▶ Don't believe their rates are currently being subsidized
- ▶ Think COT will benefit from some of this and benefits won't be realized by ratepayers
- ▶ Many myths about the carts
  - They will smell
  - They are hard to manage
  - Etc.
- ▶ Resistance to change creates barriers of nearly everything
- ▶ Anything different will be worse
- ▶ Frame of reference makes all the difference
  - If they have previous experience with these things, they are open/receptive to it
  - If they have heard complaints or perceive them, they are negatively predisposed

# Recommendations

## ▶ Residential Service

- Refuse Collection
  - Pay As You Throw System with offering of two, variable sized polycarts (i.e., 64 and 96 gallon containers)
  - Containers to be uniform in quality and appearance and will be provided by COT or its vendor
  - Carts will be emptied once weekly
  - Occasional overage will be collected alongside carts when placed in pre-paid, COT or approved vendor supplied bags; first box of 10 approved bags to be provided by COT gratis to existing customers
  - Refuse must be bagged prior to placement in carts
- Recycling Services
  - Service will be offered for no additional fee
  - All recyclable materials will be placed in the same 64 (or 96) gallon 'recycling' polycart - i.e., single stream for customers
  - Carts will be uniform in quality and appearance and will be provided by COT or its Vendor (color different from refuse cart)
  - Carts will be emptied once weekly
- Green Waste Service
  - Curbside collection of pre-paid approved bags supplied by COT or their vendors
  - Seasonal collection once weekly

# Recommendations, page 2

## ► Residential Service, cont'd

- Boutique Services
  - Backyard pick-up for refuse for a monthly fee
  - Backyard pick-up for recycling for a monthly fee
  - Additional services TBD
- Bulky Waste Pick Up
  - Approved items picked up upon request for a standard fee
  - Items must be curbside for pick up
  - No limitation on number of requests
  - Possibly work with the MET to provide locations for bulky waste as alternative to paying a fee
- General
  - Pick up days for refuse, recycling, and green waste will be the same day per customer
  - Process for pick up days that fall on holidays will be pre-determined with customers notified of procedure

# Recommendations, page 3

## ▶ Fees for Residential Service

- Monthly fees charged to payers based upon size and number of cart(s) required/selected for refuse; monthly fees include:
  - Cart(s) for refuse
  - Cart for recycle (additional cart for recycled materials may be requested for no additional fee)
  - Curbside collection of carts once weekly
  - Curbside collection of pre-paid bags for refuse alongside carts
  - Seasonal weekly collection of curbside pre-paid approved bags for green waste
- Additional fees include:
  - Backyard service for refuse, \$ additional per month
  - Backyard service for recycling, \$ additional per month
  - Bulky waste pick up request, \$ per request
  - Each additional refuse cart, \$ per cart per month
  - Pre-paid trash bags, \$/ea or bulk buys for \$
  - Pre-paid approved bags for green waste, \$/ea or bulk buys for \$
  - Fees for additional services TBD
  - One time fee for cart (size) change after grace period
  - Additional services for the disabled will be offered at reduced fees

# Recommendations, page 4

## ▶ Business Issues

- Turnover of services
  - Allow ample transition period and build allowances into contract with new vendors
  - Start delivering new items (carts, schedules, etc.) well in advance of the changeover day – use these opportunities for additional education. Perhaps put pick-up day on the polycart or use color coding for pick up days (i.e., blue carts for Monday, grey carts for Wednesday); stuff carts with information including all pertinent instructions for new services, what to do for holidays, etc.
- Recycled materials
  - Include many more items available for recycle; find a way to recycle more plastics, cardboard, etc. so that it is easier for people to divert these items from refuse
  - Encourage new contractor to build a MRF; provide shared incentive that will drive the contractor to encourage recycling
  - Start permitting process for a compost facility now so that it can be online when (or shortly after) the change in service occurs
  - Find feasible revenue models for recycled materials and incent contractors to assist. Create potential for revenue to offset cost to customers in the long run.
- Carts
  - Consider bidding out cart supply, maintenance, and delivery discretely from other services
  - Allow people to ‘personalize’ carts in order to keep the same cart and to facilitate identification with owner
  - Carts to be identified for various uses by color and symbol – i.e., green with a recycle symbol for recycle carts; tan with COT symbol for refuse.
  - External financing of carts for the initial purchase may be prudent

# Recommendations, page 5

## ▶ Business Issues, cont'd

### ◦ Grace Period

- Due to the number and spectrum of changes being introduced to the city at one time, we recommend a grace period be given to fee-payers for the first 6 to 9 months, including:
  - Providing first box of overage refuse bags (10 bags) to existing customers for free; thereafter, they will pay for additional bags
  - Allowing one free change in cart size during this period
  - Provide coupons for approved green waste bags to existing customers
  - Developing 'escalation of warnings' before refusal of collection and/or fines are imposed – i.e., if unbagged refuse is placed in cart

### ◦ Customer Opportunities

- Since bulky waste pick up will be fee-based in the new system, start advertising one year in advance to encourage customers to 'clean out' these items now and take advantage of the gratis service
- Consider holding option of a third, smaller and lower cost, refuse polycart for customers who prove to be low volume/high recycler users

# Recommendations, page 6

## ▶ Other

- Public Awareness & Education
  - Go 'heavy' on these campaigns. There were very few issues that education and awareness of the citizens did not resolve
  - Recommend TARE provide budget of ~\$11 /house per year for the next 2 years for PA&E and branding and marketing
  - Use the new contractor in the continuation of this campaign – by training them to interact/educate customers
- Branding & Marketing
  - Take advantage of this opportunity to engage the public, make this fun for the COT citizens, and improve the image of TARE with creative branding and marketing of the upcoming, new services
- Continued Public Input Cycle
  - Once options are refined on all fronts – branding, names, services, etc. – continue to get public input and test through focus groups, interviews, surveys, etc.
  - Build a great website tailored to refuse and recycling: put interactive maps showing collection routes; use webcams on collection vehicles so you can 'go for a ride' with a collector; provide interactive ways of reducing generation of refuse; etc.
  - The Mayor's Task Force is prepared to stay engaged and offer its services to work on any new tasks that will assist the COT in this important work -- alongside Beck or discretely

# Further Study Required

- ▶ Items we recommend that require additional study by Beck or others include:
  - Fees to be determined that incent payers to recycle and cover costs while minimizing overall costs
  - Feasibility and cost of providing an additional weekly refuse pick-up to payers who request it
  - Consider providing recycling services to commercial entities
  - Consider providing all services to multi-unit housing
  - Procurement/contracting strategy – advise using performance criteria rather than line item bid strategy due to the comprehensive requirements and creativity sought
  - Costs and operations required to provide any/all of these services by COT; if COT elects not to provide services, a discrete plan for resource (human, equipment, etc.) reallocation required; this should be available to the public who is very interested in this issue. Standards/legislation requirements, if any
  - Risk assessment
  - Performance specifications including age, maintenance and automation capabilities of equipment to be used (and specific instruction on ability to prevent leakage on city streets, etc.)



## Background >>

# Common Themes from Public Meetings

## Regarding refuse:

1. Carts are generally preferred to providing own cans, particularly when an option of “Pay as You Throw” (offering variable sized carts for different monthly fees) is introduced.
2. Several issues people raised with carts include:
  - a) They are worried about older people moving them particularly in hilly or difficult terrain;
  - b) Several situations where they don’t know where they can store a cart (especially for those who currently place their trashcans in their garage);
  - c) They don’t know what to do with bulky items that won’t fit in their cart.
3. There was almost unanimous opinion that they feel a need to keep the option of ‘backyard pick up’. They feel it is needed where safety/security is concerned; for those who travel often on trash pick up days; and they want to continue to provide this service for older and handicapped people (at reduced/no fees).
4. Most people are comfortable with one pick up per week, especially in conjunction with other new services (city provided carts and increased utility of recycling services).

# Common Themes from Public Meetings, page 2

## Regarding refuse, Continued:

5. Concerns are often raised about special circumstances, including:
  - a) Alternate days for Monday holidays (when your pick up day is Monday);
  - b) Allowance for 'occasional overages'; i.e., allowed extra bags after holidays or so many times per year.
6. Many expressed desire to keep current haulers; also several concerns were raised about retaining local jobs.
7. People like that we are going to the Walter B. Hall Resource Recovery Facility with our solid waste disposal.

# Common Themes from Public Meetings, page 3

## Regarding recycling:

1. Many cited the desire to have a 'real recycling program' and expressed doubts about the economic viability of recycling until such a program exists for Tulsa.
2. Many people go to great lengths to recycle; i.e., take recycling to their school or church or to the MET, but still felt the current residential program was 'too difficult'. Also, many stated they did not participate because of the extra fee to recycle.
3. They liked the idea of recycling is "included in the fee" but bristled at mandatory recycling.
4. Most want more variety to the recycling stream. They very much liked the idea of 'single stream recycling'.
5. Most want carts for recycling – especially when 'single stream' recycling is offered.
6. Many like the idea of collection once weekly and would prefer it on the same day as refuse collection.
7. Apartments want to be considered residential – want to get curbside service

# Common Themes from Public Meetings, page 4

## Regarding yard waste:

1. Yard waste service requirements were most individualized from those who have no yard waste to those who use the total allowance to those who mulch all year.
2. Most want an equitable system. They like the idea of prepaid bags or tags, especially in conjunction with the option to bundle branches.
3. Many expressed the need to have yard waste collection only part of the year.
4. Many were concerned about limbs that won't fit in bags or carts.

# Reference Pricing

- ▶ **Oklahoma City – \$17.20/mo.**
  - Refuse: Once-a-week collection of 90 gallon roll-out carts (2 max.)
  - Recycling: Curbside pickup with bin
  - Other: Monthly bulky waste collection (up to four cubic yards)
- ▶ **Owasso – \$13.90/mo.**
  - Refuse: Once-a-week collection of 90 gallon polycart (more w/ purchase)
  - Recycling: no residential collection
  - Other: Green waste is prepaid bags or polycart
- ▶ **Sand Springs – \$14.75/mo.**
  - Refuse: Once-a-week collection of 90 gallon polycart
  - Recycling: no residential collection
  - Other: Green waste is 8-bag limit per week
- ▶ **Fort Smith, AR – \$14.38/mo.**
  - Refuse: Once-a-week collection of 96 gallon (or 64 gallon) polycart
  - Recycling: Once-a-week collection with 32 gallon bin
- ▶ **Fort Worth, TX – Varies based upon polycart size**
  - Refuse: Once-a-week collection 32-gal (\$12.75), 64-gal (\$17.75), 96-gal (\$22.75)
  - Recycling: Once-a-week collection with polycart
  - Other: Once-a-week collection of yard waste



# Reference Pricing, page 2

Comparison of Residential Solid Waste Collection Rates 2010										
	Customer Base	Collector	Customer Frequency	Type of Service	Service Level	Rate for Service Level	Low Income/Disable Rate	Disable Backyard Service	Yard Waste	Recycling
<b>Tulsa Metro Communities</b>										
Tulsa 1x week (N.W. Quad)	23,000	City	1/wk	cart	cs	\$10.52	yes	na	yes	contractor, cs & drop off
Tulsa 2x week (TRI)	93,000	TRI	2/wk	customer cans, bags bundles	cs	\$13.44	yes	na	yes	contractor, cs & drop off
Bixby	0	Private	1/wk & 2/wk	cart	cs	\$ -	-	-	-	drop off
Broken Arrow	26,000	City	2/wk	bags	cs	\$14.50	yes	yes	yes	drop off
Glenpool	3,200	Contract	1/wk	cart	cs	\$11.95	yes	yes	yes	drop off
Jenks	5,500	Contract	1/wk	cart	cs	\$12.60	yes	-	\$3.60 for 3 bags	contr. cs & drop off
Owasso	9,300	City	1/wk	cart	cs	\$13.70 (base) + \$8.00 (yard waste)	no	yes	10 bags	drop off
Sand Springs	6,166	City	1/wk	cart	cs	\$14.75	-	no	8 bags	drop off
Sapulpa	7,600	Contract	1/wk	cart	cs	\$9.11	no	yes	yes	2x mo.cs subsc & drop off
<b>Regional Cities Rates</b>										
Austin, TX	155,000	City	1/wk	cart	cs	\$26.95	yes	-	yes	1/wk cs
Dallas, TX	242,000	City	1/wk	cart	cs or alley	\$22.71	no	yes	no	1/wk cs
Fort Worth, TX	-	Contract	1/wk	cart & pay bags	cs	\$12.75 (32 gal)/ \$17.75 (64 gal)/ \$22.75 (96 gal)	no	yes	yes	1/wk cs
Kansas City, MO	-	-	1/wk	2 bags/wk; Tags +	cs	General tax	-	-	cs, 1x spr. 1x fall	1/wk cs
Little Rock, AR	-	City	1/wk	cart	cs	\$20.99	-	-	1/wk	contract 1/wk cs
Oklahoma City, OK	69,000 city & 91,000 contracted	City/Waste Mgt.	1/wk	cart	cs	\$17.20	yes	yes	yes	1/wk cs
St. Louis, MO	147,000	City	2/wk	cart, bags, & alley	cs or alley	Property tax	no	yes	1/wk	1wk cs pilot, drop off
Wichita, KS	-	Private	-	no	-	N/A	-	-	-	Private
<b>NOTES</b>										
Private - agreement between customer & hauler		Contract - agreement between city & hauler			CS - Curbside		Dash - information was not available			

# Reference Pricing, page 3

**1 Austin - Unlimited volume of garbage, recycling & yard trimmings. Rate depends upon size cart customer chooses, (30 gal. 60 gal. 90 gal.) Residential billed \$2.60/month & commercial billed \$4.55/month on Austin Electric Bills to fund street sweeping, HHW facility, dead animal collection, enforce codes & anti-litter. Austin rate includes Texas sales tax. For survey 90 gal. cart use.**

**2 Jenks - rate includes \$1.00 charge for recycling.**

**3 OKC - you can have extra cart at no charge for cart and billed \$2.45 for service. Also, OKC flow fee-commercial refuse charge of \$4.12 per ton disposed.**

**4 Wichita - Sedgwick County - Solid waste revenue \$3.50 ad valorem both residential and commercial; \$0.33/ton of waste disposed.**

**5 Fort Worth - Customers chose cart size & monthly bill is base on cart size (32, 64 & 96 gal.) Rates also included Texas sales tax. Residential customers may purchase city-authorized Pay Bags for excess garbage, \$15 per 5 bags. Separate weekly collection of yard waste.**

**6 Owasso - All yard waste is required to be separated, during months of April - October, from other residential refuse and must be placed in the city-supplied clear compost bags or specifically requested red poly cart if curbside pickup is desired. \$8.00 per pack of 10 plus sales tax and city shall not assess any other fees for the disposal of yard waste contained in such approved bags. Red yard waste carts are for yard waste only. The carts are available upon request for a additional monthly refuse fee.**

**7 Dallas - \*New "Once-Weekly Collection Service" - effective 10/01/07. Recycling collection increase to once every week and garbage collection decrease to once every week. All yard waste (grass trimmings, branches, leaves) with the once monthly brush/bulky collection. Dallas also has a Home chemical Collection Center (HC3) for E-Waste items, paint, light bulbs and hazardous waste materials. Dallas rates includes Texas sales tax.**

**8 Sapulpa - requires that uncollected monies (losses) are split evenly between the city and the contractor; the contractor can fine the customer for improper cart placement.**

**9 Bixby - the city has 3 different private contractors with 3 different refuse rates. Customers can choose which contractor they want to use individually. cart placement.**

**10 St. Louis - City will perform eviction clean up. After notice, city will perform clean up for \$200 plus costs and assess owner.**

# Attachments (under separate cover) >>

Source Materials  
Presentations & Reports  
Press Archives