

**DEPARTMENT OF  
BUILDING/ORDINANCE  
ENFORCEMENT**

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**Building**

Permits/Plan Review:  
State Construction Code  
(Res. & Commercial)  
Residential Zoning  
Review  
Residential Grade Review

**Inspections:**

Building  
Electrical  
(signs, fire alarm)  
Plumbing  
Mechanical  
(heat, air conditioning,  
fire suppression)

**Ordinance Enforcement**

Addressing  
Zoning Compliance  
Signs  
Weed Control

**Construction / Fire  
Board of Appeals**

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Prepared by: City Staff and Resource Recycling Systems Inc.

**Response to Questions/Statements Included in  
"Reject a Single Garbage Hauler" Flyer  
Paid for by Zero New Taxes**

**With a millage our trash pickup cost will automatically  
increase due to assessment increases.**

The hauler's costs are fixed at pre-determined rates for up to five years. Each year the Council will take these known costs, calculate the required millage rate and incorporate it into the annual budget approval process. With the increase in taxable value and continued growth in the City, the millage rate can actually be expected to decrease as these fixed costs are spread over a larger taxable base.

**This will eliminate competition and create a monopoly.**

There are over 10 solid waste management haulers providing single hauler services under contract to municipalities in SE Michigan. As the City of Rochester Hills gets into the final year of its first contract for a single hauler program the City will want to undertake another purchasing process, just as it did to select this vendor. At that time it is expected that at least three and as many as six to ten haulers will be bidding for that contract. This level of competition has been shown to produce quality services at very affordable prices.

**This will create another bureaucracy at great taxpayer  
expense.**

As a matter of fact, we already spend excessive staff time dealing with complaints made to the City against the hauler residents contract with. Most of these complaints involve failure to show up, spilling the trash, and costs. It has been our experience that few residents get their complaints resolved timely by calling the hauler directly. So, they turn to the City to help them with their private problem.

The Oakland County Sheriff's department and the cities Ordinance Inspectors also spend a large amount of time each year getting all the current haulers licensed and inspecting trucks for safety requirements. A single hauler would substantially reduce the amount of time spent on this process allowing the Deputy and Ordinance Inspector to perform other duties.

None of the communities in Oakland County or SE Michigan have big bureaucracy's handling their single hauler contracts. If anything, the communities using this approach have much less staff time and bureaucracy to handle these matters. Experience with similar communities like Troy and Birmingham indicate that one half time position is needed to manage the contractor and community.

The City would upgrade a current budgeted position. Half of this position would have the responsibility of Solid Waste Program management, other responsibilities would include supervision and ordinance compliance.

*Rec'd @ the 5/14/03  
City Council Work Session  
(copy for file)*

**A single hauler will not ensure lower rates; it can/will raise fees.**

This is not true. The cost quotes are in. The current rates charged by haulers are known. The cost quotes, which will be contractually binding for up to five years, are more than 30% lower than current costs and provide more services and are guaranteed pricing for five years.

**We don't need the city to pay our trash bills for us and charge us for doing so.**

More than 60% of Oakland County communities, and nearly all the ones that are Rochester Hills' size or larger, use the single hauler system because it saves the average resident lots of money and provides much more service at lower cost along with many other benefits.

We are not interested in paying your trash bill; we are interested in offering you a cost savings and enhancing the quality of life in our community by:

1. Increasing services
2. Improving quality control for city/residents
3. Reduce wear and tear on roads
4. Improve public safety for children
5. Reduced ordinance enforcement
6. Being environmentally responsible

**The City has already wasted \$50,000 on a garbage consultant. Why didn't Council consult the residents at no cost? Or ask us in the recent survey?**

Residents were consulted. An Adhoc Solid Waste Committee comprised of eight (8) city residents was formed in 2001. This committee developed a number of options and worked with the consultant to come up with the recommendation for a single hauler system.

The majority of the \$50,000 spent on consulting fees were dedicated to developing detailed specifications and contract language that protect the City and guarantee very competitive pricing to the City's residents for comprehensive waste management services including curbside recycling, yard waste collections, pickup of bulky waste, regular trash service, prompt response to resident complaints, special attention to handicapped residents, and more.

**This issue has been considered many times in past years and We The People soundly rejected it. Why does this idea keep coming back? Who will benefit?**

This issue has been before City Council on three different occasions, 1993, 1999, and 2003. It keeps coming back because of concerns expressed by residents about the quality of services they are receiving and the frustration of not getting their concerns addressed by the contractor. One of the benefits of a single hauler system reported by other communities is the quick response to complaints.

The majority of residents will benefit from better services at lower cost. This approach is used by nearly every major community in SE Michigan – to the point that it is almost standard practice. It is not something new that the City will be experimenting with – it is tried and true solution for providing curbside trash, recycling, and yard waste pickup at rates that are 30% to 50% of what most Rochester Hills residents pay for comparable services.

## **Trash fees will be based on the value of our homes. Isn't this discriminatory?**

As identified in the presentation, the millage funding method is not the most equitable. However, it does provide a number of other benefits that make it the preferred option such as:

- Least expensive to implement
- Least expensive to administer
- Tax deductible
- Provides lower cost to residents
- Provides lower cost to those who qualify for the homestead property tax credit

## **Other communities have either voted this idea down or are having problems with a single hauler. Why did some communities vote on this and we are being denied our right to vote?**

No one has been denied the right to vote. This is the first time this information has been presented to City Council. It has not even been considered or discussed. Voting is still an option.

## **State law allows City Council to levy up to three mills for trash service without our vote.**

Public Act 298 adopted in 1917 (MCL 123.261; MSA 5.2681) does give communities the ability to levy up to three mills for solid waste management services. Our project cost would be 1.1 mill to provide Solid Waste Services.

## **The City should concern itself with cost over-runs on the enormous City Hall Expansion for which they sold bonds without voter approval as required by city charter.**

The City Hall Project is within budget and is being monitored closely by the Project Manager and the Building Authority.

City Charter allows the sale of bonds for public projects without a vote of the people.