

REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

..Title

Cleanup Campaign Alternatives and Community Survey Results

..Report

COUNCIL PILLAR

Deliver and Enhance High Quality Efficient Services and Infrastructure; Promote Sustainability and Environmental Protection

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

R3 Consulting Group (R3) was hired to identify and analyze alternatives to the Cleanup Campaign (CUC) and gauge the community's interest in the alternatives. On-call collection programs, drop-off programs, and debris box drop-off events were identified as alternatives for hard-to-dispose-of items like bulky waste. An analysis was conducted for each alternative program that considered bulky item program types used by other cities, costs, community access, outreach needs, and advantages and disadvantages of other program types.

Following three community meetings to discuss alternatives to the CUC, a survey was conducted to gauge public opinion on other program types as well as the current programs offered by the City (CUC, city-wide garage sales, household hazardous waste drop-off events). Feedback from the community meetings and 86 percent of survey responses supported the current CUC format. Based on that information, the majority of residents prefer a hybrid approach, similar to what is provided today. This approach offers both single-family and multi-family homes multiple programs with collection and drop-off opportunities.

BACKGROUND

The Cleanup Campaign (CUC) has been conducted since 1961 and helps residential households dispose of 5,000 - 6,000 tons of unwanted debris annually. The primary mission of the current program is to remove unwanted debris (set out by residents) from the street as safely and swiftly as possible.

The City provides solid waste services to approximately 23,561 residential customer accounts that are comprised of 47,000 households. Approximately 14,000 of those households are not included in the CUC because there is inadequate space for setting out material and/or collection activities, and therefore do not pay for the service. Residents that do not have access to the CUC program are still provided opportunities to dispose of many of these same items through other programs, including two disposal days (no extra cost) at the Mission Trail Transfer Station, the on-call collection program offered by Mission Trail Waste Systems, two citywide garage sales and two Environmental Days (no extra cost) at the Recology facility.

On May 25, 2021 the City Council directed staff to hire a consultant to identify potential alternatives to the current CUC format, conduct a survey of customers, and draft a final report. The City hired R3 Consulting Group (R3) to:

- analyze program types actively used by other cities
- estimate costs of each potential alternative
- identify the advantages/disadvantages of each alternative program
- survey the community on preferences and needs to collect hard-to-dispose-of items

DISCUSSION

Current Cleanup Campaign

Under the current CUC format, the City is divided into four collection areas, each being serviced during a one-week period in May. Residents who are part of the program are able to place debris on the street for collection in accordance with the CUC guidelines. The size of setouts is unlimited, although \$25 per cubic yard is charged for setouts of construction/demolition debris over one cubic yard. The City and its contractors remove the debris and sweep each street during its respective collection week. Over 90 percent of the material collected is transported to Newby Island Landfill for disposal.

The CUC does generate some material that is not set out in compliance with CUC guidelines, such as household hazardous waste (paint, oil, batteries, pesticides etc.), loose construction/demolition debris on the street (concrete, dirt, etc.) and lightweight trash. Due to concerns that these materials can potentially be conveyed into catch basin inlets via run-off or wind, the City has undertaken past efforts to help mitigate the concerns. These mitigation measures include operating the CUC during the dry season, involving the County to collect illegally set out HHW, and requiring construction/demolition debris to be placed in bulk bags.

The CUC program is very labor intensive. DPW is only able to perform very limited non-emergency street, storm drain, traffic striping, and grounds maintenance activities during the CUC because approximately 30 employees are needed to fill the daily CUC roster.

Other Communities Providing Similar Service to Santa Clara

A small number of communities provide a similar annual cleanup program, but all are much smaller versions with setouts limited to certain sizes.

- City of Campbell has an annual program in which residents can set out a maximum of 70 pounds of material in 32-gallon bags or 8 cubic feet boxes. Loose items, construction/demolition debris, electronic waste, and large appliances are not accepted
- Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Management Authority provides two community cleanups annually in which residents can dispose of up to fourteen 32-gallon garbage bags or equivalent in items with no single item weighing over 50 pounds or longer than 4 feet.
- City of Citrus Heights coordinates three setout days per year and notifies

residents via door hanger one week prior to each pick-up day. Residents may set out up to 10 cubic yards of material and construction/demolition debris is prohibited.

- City of Inglewood has a program in which residents can set out up to 15 bags or 10 bundles of unwanted bulky items up to 60 pounds each, twice per year.

Cost Estimates

The current City of Santa Clara CUC program costs approximately \$2.5 million per year and is funded by participant charges of \$6.28 per household per month.

Advantages

- Access to transportation not necessary
- Low outreach effort required
- High program satisfaction rate
- Less illegal dumping
- Lower cost alternative

Disadvantages

- Others outside the City dumping
- Material in street
- DPW staff reprioritized for the month
- One event per year

Bulky Waste Collection Programs Used in Other Cities

Bulky waste collection programs used throughout the Bay Area and the State of California have been profiled as examples that could be considered in Santa Clara. Program types used by other municipalities can generally be broken down into on-call pickup programs where items are picked up in front of residents' homes, and drop-off programs where residents bring items in for free disposal. These collection programs are typically tailored to the specific needs of each community and primarily fall into three categories:

- On-call Collection Programs
- Drop-off Programs
- Debris Box Drop-off Events

While these program types all have the potential to improve aspects of the current CUC program, they also provide their own challenges, costs, and limitations.

On-call Collection Programs

On-call collection programs are one of the most popular models throughout California, as they are convenient for residents to use. Each single-family account typically has access to at least two scheduled pickups annually and in some cities, this can be as high as six annual pickups. Setouts are limited to certain sizes or number of items, unlike the current CUC format where setouts are unlimited.

Mission Trail Waste Systems (MTWS) offers a version of on-call collection to all residential customers at a rate of \$148.51 per pick-up, which is paid by the customer. Upon request, MTWS will drop off two 2-cubic yard heavy-duty bags to customers and return with a flatbed truck and a crane to lift the filled bags and up to three loose bulky items onto the vehicle. Electronic waste or appliances are also accepted as part of the three bulky items. The heavy-duty bags allow residents to contain multiple items of various sizes for disposal and ensure they do not become litter or end up in the storm drain. MTWS has provided bulky item collection services to 145 customers over the initial two years of the program.

An on-call collection program can be accessed year-round at the customer's convenience as opposed to once a year as designated by the City. Participation can range anywhere from 30-80 percent of customers. On-call collection programs still present some implementation challenges. First, residents still need adequate space to set out their items for collection by the hauler. Additionally, such programs may not be feasible for implementation in areas that are not currently served by the CUC program; for example, in larger, denser homeowner associations (HOAs). HOAs and other high-density dwelling areas often have private streets that do not provide access for collection vehicles and may require the permission of the HOA to enter. HOAs may also have aesthetic concerns about decorative stone being damaged by collection trucks, have limited parking/common areas for material setouts, or concerns that the setout site will turn into a dumping ground for everyone. MTWS has proactively reached out to 106 HOAs, but only five have authorized onsite bulky item collection.

Other Communities Providing On-call Collection Service

Some other local communities that provide on-call collection services include: San Jose, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Sunnyvale, Milpitas, Los Altos, South Bayside Waste Management Agency, Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Management Authority, Oakland, San Francisco, Fairfield, Vallejo, and San Rafael.

Cost Estimates

It is estimated that if an on-call collection program was established in lieu of the current CUC, the collection costs would be approximately \$148.51 per pickup. Participation levels have the largest impact on program costs. If the program were offered to the current 33,000 CUC customers whose participation rates are estimated between 80 - 90 percent, the monthly cost could range between \$10.00 to \$11.20 per month for each household. At a lower participation rate of 40 to 45 percent, it is estimated that the service could cost \$5.00 to \$5.60 per month. Staff would need to spend time working with MTWS to determine exact fees.

Advantages

- Access to transportation is not necessary
- Less illegal dumping
- Available all year
- Lower impact to DPW staffing

Disadvantages

- HOA permission needed
- Potential for higher costs

Drop-off Programs

Drop-off programs are a convenient local option where residents can drop off a set amount of material at a local waste facility at no cost. Residency is usually verified at the facility. An expansion of the City's current drop-off program in Santa Clara would likely use the Mission Trails Transfer Station (MTTS), where the City of Santa Clara currently holds its Rubbish Disposal Days. The City currently offers two disposal days (no extra charge) at the MTTS each year through the agreement with MTWS.

Appointments are required to attend a free disposal day. On average, 206 residents attend each free disposal day. The City would need to enter into a separate agreement with MTWS or amend the current exclusive franchise agreement with them to expand this service.

Other Communities Providing Drop-off Programs

Oakland, Fairfield, Vallejo

Cost Estimates

Drop-off programs are the cheapest alternative for bulky item disposal. Depending on participation, monthly costs could range from \$1.50 with a 40 percent participation rate to \$4.90 with a 90 percent participation rate per household account, with the ability to dispose up to seven cubic yards at a time. These costs are estimates only, staff would need to negotiate this type of program with MTWS and amend the current contract.

Advantages

- Program is accessible to all residents, including higher density multi-family dwellings
- Less illegal dumping
- Available throughout the year
- Lowest cost
- Low impact to DPW staffing because residents deliver materials themselves

Disadvantages

- Residents need to transport their waste to the drop-off site themselves, which potentially limits their ability to dispose of larger items due to physical constraints or not having access to reliable transportation
- Additional effort to outreach customers to participate

Debris Box Drop-off Events

Debris boxes can be strategically placed in neighborhoods or at a single designated location for a set amount of time. Debris box drop-off events require residents to load, transport, and unload bulky items. Residents would need transportation to access these events and would have to be physically capable to empty their own vehicles. It is often difficult to find adequate space to host these events in high-density areas, where a service like this could have the most value.

Other disadvantages to these events are that they are very time consuming to organize and often require more staff resources because each debris box is typically overseen by an employee. A substantial amount of public outreach is required in advance of each event. Debris box drop-off events are usually scheduled on a weekend to make them accessible to more residents which also increases labor costs.

It should be noted that the City of San Jose once had a robust neighborhood debris box program but is shifting to unlimited on-call scheduled junk pick-ups at individual residences, which are funded outside of their solid waste program. Additionally, most communities that provide debris box drop-off events also provide other options for bulky item disposal.

Other Communities Providing Debris Box Drop-off Events
Milpitas, San Jose, San Francisco, San Rafael, Berkeley

Cost Estimates

Debris box drop-off events can be scaled based on frequency. If a neighborhood was provided an event once every five years, the average cost per month per household (at an 80 to 90 percent participation rate) would range from \$3.50 - \$3.90. If a neighborhood was provided an event annually (again at an 80 to 90 percent participation rate) the monthly cost per household would range from \$17.30 – \$19.50. These cost estimates include modest assumptions regarding DPW staff time which would be necessary to schedule and promote each event; however, actual costs may be higher due to overtime costs to help staff them. Debris box drop-off events were the most expensive bulky item disposal program option analyzed.

Advantages

- Program is accessible to all residents, including higher density multi-family dwellings
- Less illegal dumping

Disadvantages

- Residents need to transport their waste to the drop-off site themselves, which potentially limits their ability to dispose of larger items due to physical constraints or not having access to reliable transportation
- Limited availability of events
- High impact to DPW staffing because staff will have to spend significant time scheduling, outreaching, and staffing each event
- Highest Cost

Benefits and Characteristics Comparison

The table below compares characteristics of each bulky item collection program discussed previously, including the current CUC.

Characteristics	On-call Collection	Drop-off Program	Debris Box Event	Cleanup Campaign
-----------------	--------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------

	Program		Program (offered annually)	(current)
Transportation limitations	No	Yes	Yes	No
Easily available to high-density dwelling residents	No	Yes	Yes	No
Minimizes illegal dumping from non-residents	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Available year-round	Yes	Yes	No	No
Commonly used in other jurisdictions	Yes	Yes	No	No
Monthly Cost (at 80% to 90% participation)	\$10.00 to \$11.20	\$3.00 - \$4.90	\$17.30 - \$19.50	\$6.28
Outreach needed to maximize participation	Medium	Low	High	Low
Impacts on current DPW staffing*	Low	Low	High	High

*DPW Staffing for these events is funded through the solid waste program so there is no cost to the general fund

Community Engagement

Three Community Meetings were hosted on April 20, 2022 (at 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.) and April 25, 2022 (at 6 p.m.) to give presentations outlining the various bulky item collection program types described above. The meetings were promoted on social media and advertised on the City's website. Approximately 65 residents attended the three events. Residents were provided the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback on the other bulky item collection program types. The majority of residents at each meeting were supportive of the current CUC format and voiced concerns about the City moving away from it.

The City did not receive any negative feedback on scavenging during the CUC in the form of participants scavenging useful items from neighbors' piles and taking pride in setting out items that get scavenged. This was surprising to DPW staff because scavenging related issues are some of the most received complaints each year. Feedback from the community meetings was incorporated into a statistically valid survey that was developed and conducted by R3's subconsultant, SCI Consulting Group (SCI). This included leading the development of questions to measure participants feelings about scavenging.

Survey

In September 2022, surveys were mailed to all 23,561 accounts, which encompassed all households in the City that either currently participate in the CUC or could potentially be eligible to participate in an alternative program. Survey participants had the option to submit the survey by mail or online. A total of 5,169 surveys were completed, representing a response rate of 21.9 percent. This was a good response rate and exceeded the consultant's expectations of 10 percent. A full summary of the survey

questions and responses is included in Attachment 1.

The survey questions measured residents' familiarity with the CUC program and participation rates in the current CUC program, as well as participation in Citywide garage sales, Recology's Environmental Days, and the Santa Clara County Household Hazardous Waste Program. The survey also queried the community about which of the four collection/disposal options they preferred. The final survey question measured the level of satisfaction with the current CUC program.

When asked whether the respondent was familiar with the CUC program, 94 percent indicated "yes." Most respondents (87 percent) participate in the CUC Program annually. Approximately 9 percent participate less often, and approximately 4 percent have never participated. Respondents indicated they use the current CUC program to dispose of the following items:

- 90% - Small items
- 78% - Bulky Items
- 60% - Yard trimmings
- 34% - Construction and demolition waste

Additionally, the survey produced data on the usage of other opportunities provided by the City to dispose of waste. Participation rates were as follows:

- 12% - Twice-a-year City-wide Garage Sales
- 19% - Recology's Environmental Days
- 60% - Santa Clara County Household Hazardous Waste Program

Residents that currently participate in the CUC ranked the four collection program options for bulky items and yard trimmings as follows:

1. Participate in a City-organized pre-scheduled collection at my property (current CUC format)
2. Schedule an on-call collection at my property throughout the year when needed
3. Schedule an appointment for drop-off at City-designated location when needed
4. Participate in a pre-scheduled drop-off event at City-designated location

Residents that don't currently participate in the CUC ranked their preferences as follows:

1. Schedule an on-call collection at my property throughout the year when needed
2. Participate in a City organized pre-scheduled collection at my property (current CUC format)
3. Schedule an appointment for drop-off at City-designated location when needed
4. Participate in a pre-scheduled drop-off event at City-designated location

The overall satisfaction rate for participants in the current CUC program was 86 percent. The survey also found that 29 percent of respondents' salvage materials that are set out by other residents and 82 percent of respondents did not mind that scavenging occurred. The survey provided participants with an opportunity to submit additional

comments as well. R3's final report noted that a total of 1,905 comments were received which is much higher than normally seen on this type of survey. Positive comments outnumbered negative comments by a ratio of 3:1.

Conclusions

There is not a single bulky item collection program that can be provided which addresses all the preferences of the community. Based on feedback received, a hybrid approach that includes both pick-up and drop-off options would be the best approach to meet the resident's needs. The City currently provides multiple pick-up and drop-off opportunities for residents to dispose of unwanted items, including the CUC.

The on-call bulky item collection program offered by MTWS is a good compliment to the CUC. Residents can utilize this program year-round and it is accessible to community members that don't have access to transportation to utilize drop-off events. Participation can be increased by working with MTWS to promote the program through outreach and marketing efforts. Additionally, MTWS and staff can actively engage with higher-density areas to enable bulky item collection on private property.

The City could also potentially add more free disposal days at the MTTs. This would require negotiating an amendment to the current franchise agreement and would add costs to implement, which could result in increased garbage rates. Increasing promotion of the additional free disposal days could expand community awareness of the new opportunities. Council would need to provide direction to Staff to enter into discussions with MTWS to add additional drop-off events.

The existing Environmental Day and Citywide Garage Sale events provide the community additional options to recycle or reuse unwanted items. DPW promotes the availability of these events through print, our website, and social media. DPW will look for opportunities to promote these programs at future City sponsored events to increase awareness.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The action being considered does not constitute a "project" within the meaning of California Environmental Act ("CEQA") pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(a) as it has not potential for resulting in either a direct change in the environment, or as a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

COORDINATION

This report has been prepared by the Department of Public Works. Meetings were held with the public on April 20 and 25, 2022. Also, surveys were distributed to all residential solid waste account holders.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall Council Chambers. A complete agenda packet is available on the City's website and in the City Clerk's Office at least 72 hours prior to a Regular Meeting and 24 hours prior to a Special Meeting. A hard copy of any agenda report may be requested by contacting the City Clerk's Office at (408) 615-2220, email clerk@santaclaraca.gov or at the public information desk at any City of Santa Clara public library.

RECOMMENDATION

..Recommendation

Note and file the Report.

..Staff

Reviewed by: Craig Mobeck, Director of Public Works

Approved by: Office of the City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Clean-Up Campaign Program Survey and Other Program Types Report