

Henderson County Solid Waste

2020 Solid Waste Master Plan

Public Comments



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I. Background

On Tuesday, February 18th in the Henderson County Community Room, Henderson County Engineering and Solid Waste staff held two preliminary meetings at 4:30 PM and 5:30 PM to present a draft of the Solid Waste Master Plan to stakeholders to receive input before it was presented to the Board of Commissioners tentatively on March 18th.

The following document summarizes questions and comments (bolded) received from haulers, environmental groups (EAC, ESB and Mountain True) and staff at the stakeholder meeting or via email after it was published online on Wednesday, February 19th. The responses are denoted by an “A.”

II. Board of Commissioners

Below are comments received by Henderson County Board of Commissioners during presentations.

Bill Lapsley suggested a truck washing area to maintain the trucks transporting MSW to Union County, SC. He also suggested a left turn lane off Stoney Mountain Road for the Convenience Center entrance and clarifying the definition of Countywide curbside collection, so citizens know it means recycling and trash pickup.

III. Environmental Groups

Eight people attended the meeting with representatives from the Environmental Advisory Committee, Environmental Sustainability Board and Mountain True Recycling Team. Four Henderson County staff attended and one representative from McGill Associates.

Questions and comments received at the stakeholder meeting:

1. When are we [Henderson County] at capacity with the landfill?

A: We are at capacity for how much waste goes through the facility (we only transfer waste, there is no landfilling onsite) and operations will suffer without a new shed. These projects will also improve safety of the staff and customers. Landfills are easy to measure the capacity, but Transfer Stations are based on perception.

2. Will the \$180 parcel fee consider that there will no longer be any revenue?

A: Henderson County Solid Waste will still capture revenue from tipping fees at the Transfer Station, but it will be less with the \$10 – \$12/ month per household. The parcel fee is competitive with commercial flow.

3. Does the Solid Waste Master Plan correlate with population growth?

A: Yes, but with more waste growth than population. The benchmark is one ton /per person /per year.

4. What are the current waste disposal and diversion trends for the County?

A: Currently, 15% is diverted with 13,000 tons recycled in Henderson County. This is an improvement since 2012. Recycling collection increased when single stream was implemented.

5. How often does Henderson County Solid Waste reevaluate its operations?

A: We evaluate costs, programs and equipment annually. We have a maintenance schedule and work to select years that correlate with projects. Each year, we have 250K budgeted for capital improvement projects.

6. What is the timeline for [the Solid Waste Master Plan] public input or survey?

A: Staff will tentatively present the plan at the March 18th Board of Commissioner meeting and allow a month for public input. We will then come back to the Board with additional comments.

7. Do capital improvement projects require an RFP and RFQ? Do they require a separate RFQ/P or all in one plan?

A: Individual contracts require a separate RFP required by state statues.

8. Do we [Henderson County] have any specific waste reduction goals?

A: Not yet for recycling but we have one for organics.

9. Does staff have concerns about [recycling] end markets?

A: The Material Recovery Facility (MRF) handles the end markets and we are currently paying more for recycling than trash. We have heard of new recycling end users opening domestically and that will offer stability to the markets. Additionally, recycling is banned from the landfill.

10. Why is the Bag-for-Bag program not enforced?

A: It is enforced through spot checking and enforcement. The Bag-for-Bag program worked well 20 years ago, but it now devalues recycling. A transition to “Pay as You

Throw” would be difficult. However, the program does provide benefits, but it is not perfect.

11. Have you [Henderson County] considered purchasing a bailer for cardboard?

A: A bailer needs to be inside, and the cardboard is currently comingled into the recycling. We also outsource sorting and preparing the recycling for market with the Material Recovery Facility. It could be an option in the future for the addition of the Multipurpose Waste Diversion Shed.

a. What if it just had a roof?

A: A bailer would have a costly impact on operations and staff.

IV. Haulers

Thirteen haulers attended the meeting with representatives from Etowah Lion’s Service, Inc., JJ’s customer Garbage, McMinn Waste Removal, LLC., C&J Waste Removal, The Trash Company, Consolidated Waste Services, LLC., and Maybin’s Garbage Service. Four Henderson County staff attended and one representative from McGill Associates.

Comments received by email:

1. Tom Wooten from the City of Hendersonville noticed the proposed tipping fee increase in FY 2022 and will pass the information along to the Hendersonville City Manager. Tom also stated that he would support stopping the outflow of solid waste from the county over a price increase but would still like to continue to work with the County on increasing recycling tonnages and education projects for the public.

Comments received at July 1st, 2020 Board of Commissioner Meeting:

1. Gregg McMinn feels the Solid Waste Master Plan as written will franchise the county and hurt the future livelihood of the independent haulers in Henderson County. He asked the Board to look into the costs for haulers, as he doesn’t feel it is done fairly.
2. Debbie Hicks is concerned with the 10 Year Solid Waste Plan. She feels it will put haulers out of business and franchising is not the answer.
3. Mauricio Mercado asked the Board to review the 10 Year Solid Waste Plan further and consider the haulers who go to houses that the big trucks cannot get to.
4. Jeremy McMinn agree with Gregg McMinn. He does not feel the bag for bag program works and hurts the garbage haulers. He asked the Board to make the system fair for all.

5. Dwight Lively is in agreement with the other speakers and against franchising.

Questions and comments received at the stakeholder meeting:

1. **How did you get that [20 tons] number of materials leaving the county?**

A: Solid Waste reports from the Department of Environmental Quality.

2. **Did the Board of Commissioners shoot down flow control?**

A: Yes

3. **How would the hauling work [for the addition of carts]?**

A: Staff is going to recommend to the Board that we conduct a feasibility study. The study will explore options and give haulers an opportunity for input.

- a. **How would we do it [hauling with carts]?**

A: One way would be to implement a bill for collection of garbage and recycling.

4. **Would Henderson County become a franchise like Buncombe County?**

A: The County would transition haulers to contracted services. The haulers would provide service for every parcel but would also provide a 90-gallon container.

- a. **If it comes to that point, wouldn't the County just want to deal with one hauler?**

A: No, there is not a good way to transition without our local businesses. We can incorporate haulers into the system, but more details are required that would be included in the feasibility study.

5. **Why not charge Bag-for-Bag at the Convenience Center?**

A: If we take away Bag-for-Bag, the Convenience Center customers would have an outcry to the Board of Commissioners.

6. **On countywide curbside collection, are you suggesting service is not being provided countywide? Why is that? We [haulers] are tearing up our vehicles going up these mountain roads. Are you insinuating they [the Citizens] are not being serviced?**

A: Every parcel would have to pay via a tax or an availability fee.

- a. **So, it would be a tax?**

A: Yes, but we are not making any changes now. Any change will require a different way of funding Solid Waste (tax, flow control, etc.). We are fortunate nothing is currently broken but we [the County] need to start planning now to be prepared.

7. **Why do we [Citizens] pay for TVs and CRTs?**

A: TVs and CRTS are banned from the landfill.

8. If you [Henderson County] went in this direction, who would take care of wear and tear on the vehicles? We cannot all go up the mountains.

A: We would look at the contract and discuss a “backdoor service” that has an extra charge for picking up past the curb.

9. What is your thought on businesses selling alcohol that must recycle? What are we going to do with the volume? Do you [Henderson County] accept glass?

A: We accept glass in single stream recycling at the curb but make customers separate it out at the Convenience Center. American Recycling is still accepting our glass bottles and jars in the recycling.

10. How long is the contract with American Recycling [Henderson County’s contracted Material Recovery Facility that processes the recycling]?

A: 10-year contract coming to an end soon.

11. Are you still hauling trash to Spartanburg, SC [Union County Landfill]?

A: Yes, we just renewed the hauling contract.

12. Are we [Henderson County] ever going to explore incineration?

A: Potentially, incineration generates electricity and can sell energy but the process itself takes a lot of energy. It requires high tipping fees because of the technology. If landfill space becomes an issue, we could explore it in the next 10 years as an option. You see that process more in the Northeast where there is less room for landfills.

13. What is Shed 3 [in the Solid Waste Master Plan]?

A: Shed 3 would be a stand-alone shed that could serve commercial or residential waste streams. If the shed was developed for commercial customers, this would eliminate commercial traffic from Shed 1 and 2 and provide better flow efficiency and improve safety. This is our thought process and we need comments from businesses.

14. Will the increased tipping fee pay for [Capital Improvement] projects?

A: No, hauling fee contracts will pay for Capital Improvement Projects (CIP). There are two ways to get money, more trash or a higher fee.

15. What is the capacity at the Convenience Center?

A: We are approaching capacity on certain days but not at full capacity.

16. With an increased tipping fee, will you [Henderson County Solid Waste] see an increase at the Convenience Center’s Bag-for-Bag program?

Note: Haulers expressed they do not like the Bag-for-Bag program.

17. When is the Board of Commissioner meeting date?

A: Tentatively Wednesday, March 18th at 9:30 am.

18. Is the Bag-for-Bag program a sink hole?

A: Yes, the program is an expense not a generator. We disposed of 3,500 tons of trash a year from the Convenience Center.

Note: Some haulers feel like they lose money picking up recycling.

19. If the minimum tipping fee increase is \$3, what is the maximum?

A: We are comfortable with \$3 from the cash flow model. We took revenue and expenses and projected them to model the new tipping fee structure.

a. So, we’re looking at a tipping fee increase every 5 – 7 years?

A: The model shows a 3\$ increase through 2030 without another one.

20. It would be nice to have places throughout the county to drop off recycling that is just accessible to haulers (some hauler’s recycling baskets are full before their route is complete).

A: We could consider this option. An unstaffed location requires less money and recycling is not regulated.

21. Whose idea was it to get a compactor [at the Convenience Center and Transfer Station Area 3]?

A: It was funded by a grant to help staff empty the dumpsters less.

22. What is the main goal of changing hauling [in Henderson County]?

A: It provides value for customers and citizens if we change the collection system.

23. Would residents look around for other haulers?

A: Haulers would stay the same.

24. What happened to flow control?

A: The economy recovered before the Board had to make a decision.

V. Henderson County Staff

Toby Linville, Code Enforcement Officer, requested the Solid Waste Master Plan include language for the abandoned manufactured home grant (listed below), just in case it is required in future grant applications.

Abandoned Mobile Homes

(1) Identification Method

Henderson County began enforcement of a Public Health Nuisance Ordinance in September 2006. This ordinance prohibits abandoned manufactured homes as defined: (**Abandoned Manufactured Home** means a manufactured home that has not had legal power or was not properly connected to a permitted septic system and water supply in the last 6 months, not to be interpreted to include a manufactured home stored or parked in accordance with a valid zoning permit.) This ordinance is complaint driven and we give the violation the opportunity to permit the home to a livable condition or remove the home. There was a windshield survey performed in 2002 and approximately 80 abandoned manufactured homes were documented. An estimated 40 homes have been demolished in the two years that this ordinance has been in place. In that time there have been more homes that have become uninhabitable. There are at least 50 abandoned manufacture homes currently in Henderson County.

Once a complaint is received concerning an abandoned manufacture homes, the Code Enforcement Services Department investigates the complaint. If there is a home which has not been properly connected to utilities in the last six months, the property owner is issued a Notice of Violation (NOV). This violation allows the owner 30 days to permit the home or begin removal. If the property owner wishes to appeal the right to appeal is spelled out in the ordinance as stated below:

126-7.01 Right of Appeal. When a public nuisance is declared, an owner and/or an occupant of the affected property may appeal the declaration, including an order for abatement or remediation from the Department, by filing a written request with the Henderson County Zoning Board of Adjustment for an administrative hearing within ten calendar days of the date of service under sections 5.01. In the event of an unknown or absent property owner, the appeal must be requested within ten calendar days of the day of posting of the notice under section 5.02.

Manufactured homeowners or other responsible parties may request designation of their home as an abandoned manufacture homes by calling or writing our office with that request. We have previously received several calls from property owners who had abandoned homes who were seeking assistance in removing those homes.

(2) Deconstruction Plan

Henderson County will conduct a Request for Proposal to find qualified demolition companies who can properly dispose of abandoned manufactured homes. There are

currently two local companies who have provided this service on a private basis to homeowners and charged them directly. Either company would be able to provide this service at a reasonable cost. There may be other companies able to provide this service once we advertise for proposals. Code Enforcement staff will identify abandoned manufacture homes by complaint or request. Staff will inspect the home for contents and remove thermostats for mercury switches. The thermostats will be housed at the Henderson County Landfill and disposed with household hazardous waste. The private company would either demolish the home on site or transport to a specific location for demolition. Each company would be responsible for recycling any available metal (outer sheeting, frame, axles, white goods, panel boxes, and accessible wiring) and properly disposing of non-recyclable items at our transfer station or other approved locations.