



## Proposed City Trash/Recycling Contract Frequently Asked Questions

### **Background:**

The collection, transport, and disposal of solid waste in the City of Moab is administered via a franchise agreement with a service provider.

The City has not solicited formal proposals for service since 1999. Last year, the City sent out a request for proposals for service and received one qualified response. The parties have drafted a franchise agreement for the Moab City Council to consider that updates and revises the City's approach to trash and recycling services within City limits.

### **Why Does the Proposed Contract Require Recycling?**

The Moab City Council established ambitious carbon reduction goals in 2017. Nationally, emissions from municipal solid waste account for approximately 14% of methane gas emissions.

It is estimated that the hauling, disposal, and storage of unrecycled material within Moab City accounts for approximately 10% to 12% of the City's overall greenhouse gas emissions.

The current landfill diversion rate of less than 13% is well below the national rate of 35%, and per-capita trash volumes exceed the national average by nearly 50%. Significantly increased diversion rates equal lower greenhouse gas and carbon footprint.

### **Who is Required to Recycle Under the Proposed Contract?**

- Residential customers would receive and pay for a recycling bin.
- Commercial recycling bins would be optional, at least in the beginning.

### **Why Not Require Commercial Recycling?**

When communities transition to full-service curbside recycling as Moab is considering, there are a number of ways to approach it. The proposed agreement tries to balance a whole range of competing and sometimes complimentary issues such as cost and convenience to customers, increasing diversion rates, greenhouse gas emission impacts, convenience and cost to administer, and rate of change (meaning at what point is too much change, even if good change, happening too rapidly). Include in that the notion that the City received one qualified bid for services from the current provider (who understandably expects a reasonable profit from this endeavor over time), and the result is a complex set of factors to work with. Not everyone gets everything they'd like to see in the agreement (at least right away).

Staff were tasked with preparing a draft agreement that attempted to balance those factors. The City Council may decide to modify that draft, which is a normal part of the process and reflects their specific views on what is in the long-term interest of city residents and the businesses that are located in Moab.

### **Here are some factors relevant to the proposed approach:**

- Approximately 1,600 household accounts are served in Moab; around 11% were receiving curbside recycling service.
- There are approximately 320 commercial accounts in Moab; approximately 26% receive some degree of curbside recycling service now.
- Commercial trash rates as proposed are a significant increase, which in part is meant to help offset the cost of a residential recycling program, in part creates an incentive for commercial accounts to recycle more, and in part reflects increased landfill transport and disposal costs.
- While some businesses currently have space for additional bins or larger 2/4/6/8 yard containers, many do not; imposing the requirement to have a bin on-site could be done but in some cases is currently not practical. Balancing the tension between having larger bins and thus fewer pickups and smaller bins and more pickups/impacts to roadways, traffic, emissions, staffing, etc. is also part of the mix; the space that some businesses have for their dumpsters is already tight and requires greater than optimal pickup frequency. However, one could say that the writing is on the wall, and it's likely that recycling service will become required citywide at some point in the near future. We felt that giving businesses some more time to prepare and plan for that was fair, particularly in conjunction with the cost increases associated with trash pickup. With Monument Waste employing a new outreach coordinator, and the City's Green-to-Gold program that Dr. Russo created, education and outreach efforts will help make that transition easier and happen quicker.

### **How Frequently Would Trash and Recycling Be Picked Up?**

- Trash pickup would be once each week.
- Recycling would be picked up every other week.
- Commercial and residential trash pickup within the City is mandatory.
- Monument Waste will offer many options for frequency of service for commercial trash pickup and fees vary depending on size of trash bin and frequency of pickup.

### **What is Single-Stream Compared to Source-Separated Recycling Service?**

**In single-stream recycling**, mixed recyclable materials are taken together to a sorting facility, or Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). The MRF has magnets and blowers that separate types of plastics, paper, and metals mechanically so workers are not cut or exposed to pathogens.

In Moab, Green Solutions stopped taking glass because workers were being cut. They were also being exposed to pathogens because people were putting human and dog waste in the recyclable containers around town, especially in the park drop-offs. The MRF system allows for higher volumes because it is cheaper for collection and sorting. The commodities have higher values based on quantity because if you are re-melting glass and plastics you want the energy to do this to cover the end value. Hubs are generally located in areas that have remanufacturing facilities. For example, glass from a hub can go to a brewery and be used repeatedly, especially when using darker glass brown or green. Given the current "green wall" and China's prohibitions, domestic markets are emerging.

Collection is a key to keeping contamination low. Monument Waste took 60 30-yard dumpsters of recycled materials from Moab's recycling center to the landfill in 2018 because it was not marketable. The glass at the recycling center is not currently being recycled, it's being used as landfill cover. The best case for glass is reuse as many times as possible.

**In source-separated recycling**, the consumer separates materials by type at the point of discard so they can be recycled. Source-separated recycling requires more effort by the consumer to either

leave sorted items at their curb or take them to a drop-off site. In an area with a low recycling rate, this can negatively influence participation in recycling, making collection volumes low.

**Both programs require education to help consumers recycle correctly.** Placing the wrong items in the recycling stream makes the materials less desirable, less valuable, and more difficult to manufacture into new products.

Cost is another important factor in analyzing different types of recycling programs. The cost of a program is heavily dependent upon existing infrastructure, local markets for materials, and community goals. Monument Waste has already invested in the infrastructure. We do not have local markets such as a glass facility here. In Grand Junction, the source-separated material is being shipped to Salt Lake City or Denver, so in reality the single-stream and source-separated materials end up in the same places. Domestic markets are being used for the time being.

Source-separated recycling is typically subsidized. The Grand County Solid Waste Special Service District subsidizes the Recycling Center with \$200,000 per year in TRT funds.

### **Why Does the Proposed Contract Go with the Single-Stream Approach?**

- Gets glass and other commodities to places where they will be actually recycled
- Safer for workers
- Makes recycling easier for customers and is less expensive to administer

### **How Much Will Residential Service Cost?**

- Residential rates: \$28 to \$30 per month, depending on size of garbage bin.
- Residential customers can choose a 65-gallon or a 95-gallon bin for garbage.
- A 95-gallon bin will be provided for recycling.

### **Comparison with Current Rates:**

- Current residential customers who do not pay for private recycling: \$17/month
- Current residential customers who do pay for private recycling: \$29/month
- Cost for mandatory recycling (65-gallon trash bin/95-gallon recycling): \$28/month
- Cost for mandatory recycling (95-gallon trash bin/95-gallon recycling): \$30/month

### **Which Materials Will Be Recyclable?**

- Newspaper - including all inserts
- Cardboard
- Chipboard Boxes - Cereal & Tissue type
- Magazines and Glossy Print
- Junk Mail/Bulk Mixed paper
- Office Paper - White & Colored
- Tin cans
- Aluminum beverage containers
- Glass bottles and jars
- Plastic bottles & tubs (#1 and #2 only)
- Aseptic Containers (milk, juice, broth, etc.)
- Styrofoam "packing blocks" only - No packing peanuts, cups or plates
- Hot beverage cups