

# Tri-Community Recycling Committee

## Final Recommendations

### I. Immediate Steps

#### A. Develop a plan to critically review current Single Hauler contract.

Single Hauler Agreements need not be thought of as “one size fits all;” the respective municipalities have an opportunity to craft a waste service agreement that meets the specific needs of their community. It should also be noted that no contract is perfect and there will be a need to periodically revise a waste service agreement to address any challenges that arise.

The TCRC **recommends** that the constituent municipalities develop a plan to critically review their current waste hauling agreements and provide for periodic revisions.

In accomplishing the above goals, the constituent municipalities should consider establishing an ad hoc committee to complete this work. The ad hoc committee could review available materials on best practices for single hauler agreements, conduct surveys of the public, and consult with community partners such as the City of Holland and the Michigan Recycling Coalition.

### II. Future Considerations

#### A. Constituent Municipalities Develop an Interlocal Agreement for Waste and Recycling Services

The TCRC **recommends** that the Tri-Community consider taking a regional approach to waste management by having all three municipalities enter into a local agreement for waste and recycling services with one another.

With an interlocal agreement, the constituent municipalities will have greater leverage in securing competitive rates and desired services for residents. An interlocal agreement also enables the sharing of limited municipal resources to support the development and periodic review of a waste service agreement.

**To prepare for an interlocal agreement,** each municipality should

1. Include in any future waste service agreement a provision that allows the municipality to amend its contract in the case that the municipality would like to enter an interlocal agreement with one or more municipalities.
2. Review their respective zoning ordinances to determine whether a zoning amendment is necessary to allow for the municipality to enter an interlocal agreement for waste collection services.

### III. Long-Term Considerations

#### A. Municipality-Managed Billing

As a means of lowering cost of service, the constituent municipalities could consider managing waste service billing. With the cities' current waste service agreements, the hauler is responsible for billing individual residents. This practice is time consuming and costly for the hauler, a cost that is passed along to the individual resident.

The TCRC **recommends** that the municipalities manage the billing and collection of payment for waste services as a means of reducing service costs for residents.

In managing billing, constituent municipalities have a few options to consider. Cost for service can be added to a property owner's tax bill and/or the municipality could consider a millage for waste collection. In pursuing this option, the municipalities should consult with other communities that handle waste service billing for their residents.

#### B. Establishment of Waste Service Authority

Single hauler agreements pose on-going challenges for municipalities including the following: developing favorable agreement terms, periodic review of agreement, holding hauler accountable for satisfying terms of agreement, managing billing, monitoring community needs, modifying/expanding waste management program to meet changing needs and expectations of community.

The TCRC strongly **recommends** that the constituent municipalities consider establishing a Tri-Community Waste Service Authority with Authority Director to successfully operate and manage a tri-community waste management program.

Having an Authority ensures there is a dedicated team overseeing the waste management program that is accountable to the constituent municipalities. It also provides a mechanism to support the continued improvement, development, and expansion of a tri-community waste management program.