

Garbage Haulers for Citizen Choice
Anoka City Council Meeting
October 28, 2019

Present: Mayor Phil Rice, Councilmembers Elizabeth Barnett, Mark Freeburg, Erik Skogquist, and Brian Wesp; City Manager Greg Lee; Public Services Director Mark Anderson; Engineering Technician Ben Nelson; City Attorney Scott Baumgartner; Finance Director Brenda Smith; Electric Utility Director Greg Geiger.

Mayor Phil Rice

...single hauler garbage.

City Manager Greg Lee

Mr. Mayor, Members of city Council, we talked about this back in May at the work session, so

Mayor Phil Rice

You have six minutes to do this [inaudible].

City Manager Greg Lee

Oh, okay, I didn't realize. Well, I won't get into any of the details other than since that time, staff went back and did a survey to find out the cost differential between organized hauling and open hauling, and, surprisingly enough, and I'm shocked, there wasn't much of a difference. Four years ago, when we did this, there was a great big difference between organized hauling and open hauling. For some reason, the survey that we did this time showed that there was very little difference in cost savings.

And so the other aspect, a benefit of having organized hauling is the protection of our streets, and that may be the monumental thing, because that is a big thing. But it's harder to sell to the public, because they don't see that, they don't understand it, they don't realize that they're going to be spending more of their tax money if our streets are being degraded by having numerous heavy garbage trucks hauling on the roads.

And I do want to point out and remind the Council that garbage trucks are exempt from our spring-axle weight limit. They were successful in lobbying at the state legislature to be exempt from our spring-axle weight limit, and so they can be as heavy as they want to be in coming on our roads. So just based on that, it's probably beneficial to think about the consideration of limiting the number of trucks that are on our streets, because they are exempt, and that's when our roads are really the most vulnerable.

Mayor Phil Rice

Yeah, there have to have been studies that quantify the difference by the number of trucks that are on the streets.

City Manager Greg Lee

Yeah, and the studies aren't as clear and concise as I would like them to be.

Mayor Phil Rice

Of course, not.

City Manager Greg Lee

But some of the studies have shown that a garbage truck is equal to almost 1300 vehicles, so every truck that drives on the road, the damage it does to the road is equal to 1300 vehicles going on that road.

Four years ago, I would have told you that, in my opinion, the degradation of our roads is 50 percent weather, [unintelligible/01:53] cycle, and 50 percent loading of traffic, but now, I've really rethought that and looked at some roads that don't get a whole lot of traffic. Look at our cemetery roads as a perfect example. When we built a lot of our cemetery roads, it was 2 inches of bituminous, which on a residential street, it's 4½ inches of bituminous, and there's no gravel underneath them, and our residential streets have got 6 to 8 inches of gravel underneath them, and those roads in our cemeteries last 60, 70 years, but that's because they have virtually no loading on them. They have a heavy truck bringing in monument stones once in a while, but very little heavy loading. So I've really changed my viewpoint that it's really not the weather that's affecting the degradation of the roads; it really is the loading on the roads, and there's nothing more damaging on our roads than garbage trucks. You know, people bring up buses. Weight-wise, they're nothing compared to a garbage truck. They're big, bulky, but they don't have the weight of a garbage truck, and, plus, with their spring-axle weight limit, they comply, and they're not an issue.

And so it's really up to Council. One of the considerations you might want to have is if you decide that you want to consider organized hauling, it's a long process. I just want the Council to be very aware of that. It would take eight years by the time you said, "Yes, we want organized hauling," to when it actually gets to that point.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

No way.

City Manager Greg Lee

Yes. Again, the lobbyists — the garbage lobbyists at the State legislature have lobbied — it used to be three to five years you could switch over. Now, they've extended — as of the first of the year, they've extended it out to seven years, because these garbage haulers have realized that this period of time, they've got a really good deal. They can keep their prices up high, and then they can consolidate the areas that they collect garbage from, and instead of going over all of Anoka, they divvy up the city between all the garbage haulers, and so they only have to come into a selected area and get all the customers in that area. And they don't have to do any advertising, and so they found out that it's a really good deal for those garbage haulers to stay in this stage of in-between when you designate organized hauling and when you actually implement it. It works out very well for them financially. Again, my opinion — that's just me — thinking that it's very advantageous for them, because why else would the State legislature extend it out to seven years now?

So it is a long process. Once you say you're interested, we have to sit down with all the garbage haulers, and it's — they have 60 days to come back to us with a proposal. If it's accepted, that starts the clock for another six months that the garbage haulers have to divvy up the city, change out the cans for the different customers and get set up for that. And then from that point, it's another seven years before we can actually go out for bids and get, I'll call it, true pricing of organized hauling.

Mayor Phil Rice

I hear two analogies, just quickly. First, when we started our street renewal, we were working on streets that were 80 years old. Now, we have streets that are not 30 years old and are in desperate need of being rebuilt. And I think the big change — because the City of Anoka used to haul their garbage, so we were a single hauler.

City Manager Greg Lee

For 120 years.

Mayor Phil Rice

In the world that I grew up in, we put in a 3½-inch concrete driveway, and the garbage truck would back up halfway, because the next-door neighbor's garbage was right there, and they'd walk up our driveway and grab our garbage and throw it in and then drive away. And within just I don't know how many years, the concrete was all fractured and busted up, right to where he stopped, and the rest of it was just like it was new. So there's no question —

City Manager Greg Lee

Great analogy

Councilmember Brian Wesp

Mr. Mayor, I've got a — I [unintelligible/05:26], but I've got to go to a birthday party. That's why I'd like to [inaudible].

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

Go for it, Brian. You get that one, then.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

And I've got to buy a card. The analogy of the cemetery roads kind of hit home with me. I understand that, but what I think Anoka's gotten used to, and I think likes, is the competitiveness of the — you know, having multiple haulers, which is good, so it — but then the other thing is we're — if it's seven years before we split it off, it seems like such a long time.

City Manager Greg Lee

Well, seven years before you get competitive bids. It will get split up six months afterward.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

Right, based on percentage.

City Manager Greg Lee

Yeah.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

The other thing that I think we should look at is what do the citizens want? Because as I read through the last Council discussion, you had open houses, and I think you two were on the Council at that time. You had open houses at Greenhaven, and then there was about 430 some surveyed, and I would say, a majority of those comments that came back that I read said that simply, you know, "We like the competitiveness. We don't want government involvement." Well, they're going to pay for it one way or another, right? Higher —

Male Speaker

Let me say —

Mayor Phil Rice

— [inaudible/06:43] at that point. It is on us to educate the public —

Male Speaker

Yeah.

Mayor Phil Rice

— because they're saying, "I want to save \$8 a month," but it's going to — and I'm saying it's costing you \$100 a month.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

Right, because you're going to pay for a road restructure. So that's kind of where I'm looking at, is I would like to maybe even go out and have these open houses again and say, "Listen, we may go to a single hauler, and you may pay \$8 or \$12, or \$28 more a month —

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

You won't.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

I'm just saying, let's just say that, but we can also show them the costs of how our road reconstruction has been going up exponentially each year. We see it. I mean, Ben gave us an example on Monday of the new road costs, and they're expensive, \$3.2 million, et cetera, et cetera. So you're going to pay it one way or another, right? How do you want it, right? Divide it out? Okay, I'm going to roll. Thanks.

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

I had a question about — because I've had this kind of thing that hasn't really been explained. When you go on these flow charts, say we don't accept their proposal. Council considers the report, we either say we implement organized — decide not to or we decide to.

City Manager Greg Lee

If you don't accept their proposal, then what happens is they set — you have to develop a committee, and so there's a long, arduous process with the committee as they go through all the issues and try to work things out, and then they bring back the findings of the committee. And then after that, if the Council doesn't accept the findings —

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

Well, if we accept the findings, but we say we still think your proposal's five bucks too expensive a month, what do we do? That's what I'm getting at, is then is that the time where you can do an RFP, or can you not ever? [Inaudible/08:28] because you're precluded from seven or eight years. So what happens? It just kind of dead ends there, and flow charts —

City Attorney Scott Baumgartner

Well, it goes down [inaudible/08:36] a company [inaudible] proposal. That [inaudible], in the community, and then they have to look at it and issue a report, and then the Council maybe studies some organized hauling and [inaudible] recommendations, and the Council considers the report. And then you have to have a public notice, hold a public hearing, and that's what I'm looking at a little bit more.

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

Because that [inaudible/08:57] you're talking about in the bottom left, it says, "After six months, the city Council's decision is to implement organized hauling."

City Attorney Scott Baumgartner

And I think —

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

So we have organized hauling, but no proposal that we've accepted, so what does that mean?

City Attorney Scott Baumgartner

I think that means, then, we go out for bids to start the organized hauling. I think that is the one provision that keeps the haulers now honest, which means they have that provision that's hanging over their heads to enforce a good proposal upfront, or they can just say, "Hey, let's just all get together, and we'll just get the city and do whatever you want in this agreement." Well, if you do that and the city rejects it, you just lost your shot at it, because now the city can go out, albeit it has to go through that process, but they can go out, and now they can go out for bids. So I think that's kind of a catch —

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

Okay.

City Attorney Scott Baumgartner

— for the haulers to keep them honest in their initial proposal back to the city.

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

I'd be curious if that is the case, because, I mean, I know they obviously want to make it more painful for the city to go through it, which is why they have the process.

City Attorney Scott Baumgartner

Right.

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

But, you know, that's where I kind of want to see, because I was interested to see these rates as they came back, and they were pretty close, but all those rates aren't really real rates. You talk to the garbage companies — \$3 different than what's on this chart, and, you know, you talk to one, they'll jack it up to 28 bucks if you're not paying attention, for five years. It's just a big game, and I — getting to Brian's point too, is people do like the choice. That was the third on the list with high in cost and customer service.

But I think, honestly, a lot of people I've talked to, choice is important, but they kind of are just like it is getting so ridiculous. I mean, it's pretty hard to tell somebody that says they don't feel like they got 10 or 20 trucks going by their house in a day. So it's — I think it maybe has gotten to a tipping point as well, so I don't mind having that discussion, but that's the one thing I wanted to find out, because I think an RFP obviously makes the most sense for the city and one hauler. But, you know, I guess we'll see.

Mayor Phil Rice

I'd like to see a survey too of maybe three or four typical streets [inaudible/11:04], because I'm saying I've got three different cans out in front of my house next Monday. And there's at least six or seven companies doing business times three, because I've got three cans. Well, for sure, one for the recycling, one for my leaves, and then the seven that are doing garbage. And not only down on my street, but then back up the other side to. And so it would be interesting to see how many garbage trucks travelled on Second Avenue today and the same in some other parts of the city on Thursday, or whatever it is.

But I think that that would speak to people too, and then you multiply it times 1380 cars and say, "Well, you know, that's why we have Ferry Street built the way we have it built, because that takes that kind of load."

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

[Inaudible/12:00] at 20 or something.

Mayor Phil Rice

It is, because of the load.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

[Inaudible/12:04] buy a couple garbage trucks, you go out of business [inaudible].

City Manager Greg Lee

The city had its own hauling system for 60-year-plus. Just a statement so everybody understands the city. Anoka had a single hauler for its entire existence up until 1991. The city used to do it, and then we had Peterson Brothers companies do it up until 1991. And then after that, we opened it up to open hauling, and nine years later, our streets got so bad, that's when we started our street program.

It might have been a coincidence, but the other thing that's a factor too is garbage trucks have really changed. If you think about it from the 1970s, the garbage truck wasn't that big — single axle. You look at the big behemoths now, they're huge. They're extremely heavy, and so the garbage trucks themselves have changed over the years.

City Attorney Scott Baumgartner

I looked it up today, and they are about 33,000 pounds empty.

Mayor Phil Rice

Empty?

City Attorney Scott Baumgartner

Empty. And they're not restricted, so they always say 80,000 pounds is what they weigh, which is what a MnDOT standard is for —

City Manager Greg Lee

Forty tons.

City Attorney Scott Baumgartner

Yeah, that's per axle.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

That's huge.

City Manager Greg Lee

Forty tons per axle.

City Attorney Scott Baumgartner

Or 20 tons per axle.

City Manager Greg Lee

Yeah. And our [inaudible/13:04] axle weight limit's five.

City Attorney Scott Baumgartner

[Inaudible/13:06] 9 tons?

City Manager Greg Lee

And so they're at 20.

City Attorney Scott Baumgartner

You know what, Mr. Mayor, the people's concern about price, which was high on the list — I think what they need to understand is there will still be a bid for the single haulers, and much like when we bid street projects or anything else, the larger the project, the better the bid. Right now you've got a trash company coming in and maybe they've got six houses in this area, seven in that, they bid that in knowing that they've got this distance to travel, where they're not picking cans up, and I don't think the residents are understanding that it's still a bid process, that we're still going to have the best bid, and it's going to be more of a large-volume bid, which typically gets better prices anyways.

Mayor Phil Rice

Yes, go ahead.

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

This was just a question. Do we currently have an idea of the percentages that each hauler has? Because I feel like they're going to start knowing about this discussion within the City of Anoka, and it's going to be this low-ball offers to try to get as much percentage of the city as possible. And I'm just curious, do we measure that now so we can more equitably share it when — if this conversation does lead to that?

City Manager Greg Lee

They decide that themselves. What they do, is they sit down — all the haulers sit down together and divvy up the city. They figure, you know, whatever market share that they have, that's how they divide the city. That's their proposal, then, that comes back to the city. If Ace has 80 percent of the city, they'll remain 80 percent of the city, but they'll take a geographic portion of the city and say, "This is 80 percent of our customers. We're going to put them all right here," and then they just divvy up the city geographically based on their current market share. But we don't get involved in that at all.

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

Right, but what I'm saying is if I'm Ace, and I start to hear a smaller whiff of Anoka, you know, going to unified garbage hauling, I'm going to go out and hit the streets and be like, "You're paying \$30, I'm going to give you \$20, because I want that percentage going forward." So I'm just trying to think of what keeps them honest at this point, if anything.

City Manager Greg Lee

They might do that. Yeah.

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

My other comment is — I know that Westwood brought it up to you. Can we measure something with the HOAs having, you know, similar street volumes versus — I mean, obviously the HOAs have to have a unified hauling system. Can we measure something that, with our HOA versus a regular city street with similar volumes and kind of how that holds up? I think that that would be impactful to share with our [inaudible/15:9].

City Manager Greg Lee

Yeah, just like the cemetery roads, I've thought about that. The problem with the HOA areas is most of them are built on private streets, and we have no idea how they were built. I know Rum River Shores is a good example. Those were built to city standards, so they do have an HOA, and there's the same hauler. That would be a great case study in 20 years or 10 years from now.

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

Sure.

City Manager Greg Lee

But I don't think we have many of those in the city, where we know how those roads were built, because we do have townhome areas that have a single hauler, but we have no idea how those roads were built. So it's hard to compare our standard city street sections, because those private streets, nine times out of ten, or 99 out of 100, are always built less than the city standard.

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

Sure. Well, I would assume that someone out there — maybe not the City of Anoka, but maybe some city out there has similar — and cemeteries, for me, don't speak to an equivalent to a resident road, because they don't get the traffic that an average road does, certainly not at the size, and I don't think in the volume either. So, for me, as a consumer, that would be difficult to [inaudible/16:20].

City Manager Greg Lee

That was just in fair weather versus loading, yeah.

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

Sure. Sure.

Mayor Phil Rice

Do you guys have comments you want to —

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

No, I'm [inaudible/16:26].

Mayor Phil Rice

Okay.

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

All right. Oh, she's still going. Sorry.

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

Oh, sorry. The only other point I'd like to add is I do believe that we should have these conversations with our residents beforehand. I also want to make sure that they understand that while we're doing this contract — and City Attorney, you can correct me if I'm wrong, but there are so many questions out there that we can kind of take the stands of, you know. What size — you know, what path the truck travels as it gets heavier, what area they travel — vacations, customer service — giving them the understanding that they have the power to negotiate and it won't just be, "Here are your sizes and here's your cost," but, you know, "Are there specifics with the garbage hauler that are important to you, that you would want to make sure that that customer service, that level of service is still there?" So I think that giving them those options at those initial meetings and saying, "We can negotiate these as part of our contract with them," that would be helpful as well. I'm done.

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

I was just going to point out if you're curious, another one that's not cemetery — it has to deal with traffic, but whatever. When I was door knocking before, you go up on Quarry and Tower Pond Drive, kind of that back entrance to George Enloe Park, the four-way intersection where there's like 150, 200 feet going into the park, and you can see it's three of the roads and three of the roads are awful and the one going into the park is just fine. I mean, that's 30-year-old road, where you can see. The roads were built in the same quality, same level, and it's just one of them is falling apart and the other little leg's fine, so —

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

[Inaudible/17:55] and the weight is destructive, it is that simple.

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

Yeah. So anyway, that's all. I was just pointing that one out.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

We need a decision,

Male Speaker

I would also like to —

Mayor Phil Rice

[Unintelligible/18:04], but we need to at least pursue this idea?

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

I have a — let's get — my opinion is let's get the clock rolling. That's where I'm at, at this point, because we've already killed ten months, and this process takes forever.

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

Can I just ask a question?

Mayor Phil Rice

Sure.

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

This doesn't start this process. This starts the conversation at the city level process, where we would have some open houses. Is that accurate to say?

City Manager Greg Lee

Well, yeah, we're still considering it, but once you declare that you want to proceed with developing organized hauling, that's what starts the clock ticking. That's when we have to sit down with the haulers and let them know that the City Council wants to move towards organized hauling, and that starts the clock, and then you have 60 days then to put together a proposal.

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

But we're not starting that?

City Manager Greg Lee

No. That's what I'm hearing from the Council at this point, that we —

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

All right. Then I'm in favor of that.

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

Is that just like a resolution, or what is that when we do that?

City Attorney Scott Baumgartner

You've got to have public notices and there's certain statutory requirements that we have to go through as far as public notices, publications, things like that. That starts the clock running.

Now, something else to keep in mind. As you know, it used to be three to five years. Now it's seven years. That just changed back in January of 2019. Lord knows what the next change could be, so we kind of missed that for consideration. I just want the Council to be aware that the strength of their bargaining power, they've gone from three to seven, so that's something to keep in mind if you're considering it, because I don't know what other changes they might come down with.

City Manager Greg Lee

They've got lobbyists at the capital.

City Attorney Scott Baumgartner

They have great lobbyists.

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

Just the last point that I would add is —

Male Speaker

[Inaudible/19:39] for the garbage haulers.

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

[Unintelligible/19:40], I know that we pride ourselves on visibility at all times and making sure that everyone has their opinions, and I think this is just a piece of that. Let's open it up, let's have the conversations, and then let's it to the next step from there.

City Manager Greg Lee

So the direction from Council would be should we have like an open house, should we send out a survey, you know, what are your thoughts to get more public involvement, public input?

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

Well, an open house is good, but you'd better have some ammunition. I mean, have some statistics.

Mayor Phil Rice

Have a presentation that addresses —

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

Educates them.

Mayor Phil Rice

The issue of — well, we saw several years ago what — they ranked them in order, so we can just rank them in that order and address each issue to say how these will be — what the benefits and losses will be in those areas.

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

And I would —

Male Speaker

I think we can predict that.

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

I would say, have that prior to — or have some learnings or educational opportunities out there in Facebook and different media before we send out the survey that says, "Do you want this hauling or not?" Because without the education, people will just vote [unintelligible/20:50] for voting.

Mayor Phil Rice

And so there has to be a piece. I don't — I think a written survey is a fine idea, but there has to be an educational piece [inaudible/20:59].

City Manager Greg Lee

An educational piece.

Mayor Phil Rice

We have to encourage people, both that are opposed and want the freedom to choose and those that believe that this is the right thing to do and go to single hauler. You kind of have to encourage both of them to respond to the survey. It's so — you know, you send out a survey, you get 8 percent back. It's not — it's hard to argue that that's a reasonable sample.

Female Speaker

If you go to organized hauling, is everything going to be equal, that if I live on the west end of town or east end of town, you'd be paying the same?

City Manager Greg Lee

Yes.

Female Speaker

I mean, are you getting the same service?

City Manager Greg Lee

Yes.

Female Speaker

Okay.

Mayor Phil Rice

I have another idea about that, though, because I think that as it is now, the city hauls garbage Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Friday there are no garbage trucks unless there's a holiday or something. And it would seem reasonable to me to divide the city into four pieces and have each company on Monday's business and then bid on Tuesday's business, and then bid on Wednesday's business, and then bid on Thursday's business, because there may be companies that that's very appealing to them, and we might get a better bid on Thursday than we get on Monday. So I don't know how people feel about that, but that was one of my ideas, like, well, we may not have one hauler doing the whole city all week long. It could be four different haulers, one hauler on Monday, one hauler on Tuesday, another hauler on Wednesday, and another hauler on Thursday, depending on how they bid. It seems likely that one hauler would do the whole city, but if you divided it like I'm saying, I think it's possible to have different rates with different haulers.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

Sometimes you have different haulers for different sections.

City Manager Greg Lee

That's going to cause issues, I think.

Female Speaker

Yeah.

City Manager Greg Lee

It's like saying your street project is going to cost you different in this area than this area. People don't like that.

Mayor Phil Rice

[Inaudible/22:57] if I did, and I don't think there's a loser in it. I think there's a winner in it, because there may be some reason that Wednesday's business is very attractive to a company and they bid it competitively for that reason. I don't know.

Female Speaker

Is that how it goes out to bid, or is it they all come together and kind of negotiate their space and then come back to us with a proposal, or is this where we can delineate the days or we can make other delineations [inaudible/23:24]?

City Attorney Scott Baumgartner

Well, the initial, when the current haulers get together, they come back with a proposal, and that could be Ace is going to take this rea on Wednesdays and then Walter's going to be over here on Tuesdays, or something like that. Once it gets even close to the organized bidding, where you have five companies making one proposal for the entire city, then that's where I think they're going to say, "Hey, we're proposing to come in and do it," and I think it's going to be one company, and they're going to figure out what days they're going to hit that area.

Now, Mr. Mayor, I don't think they're going to say, "Okay, we can't service the entire with one hauler to service the entire Anoka in one day, so on Mondays, we're going to get this quadrant, so we're not driving from one end to the other," and I think it serves your point, that you're just going to have one area over here, maybe another quadrant on Tuesday here, but it might be the same hauler once you get to the organized vehicle through the organized hauling process. But as far as when they come together initially and put together a proposal for that seven-year stretch, they may very well do that, figure out, "Hey, look, it's easier for us to do it on Wednesdays. ACE, why don't you take Mondays. Walter, you take Tuesdays."

Mayor Phil Rice

So I have seven years to convince people that this cutting up into four makes sense.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

There you go.

Male Speaker

That's what I heard.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

You won't be here.

Mayor Phil Rice

Probably, yeah. Probably not.

City Manager Greg Lee

The other thing to keep in mind too is that this is a contentious issue, and we know that, and people could start a petition to put it to referendum. So keep that in mind. And I think they would only need 300 signatures. I think the last time we checked it was about 300 signatures to start a referendum, so it could happen that way, where it gets put onto a ballot in the fall of 2020.

Mayor Phil Rice

How's that working in St. Paul?

City Manager Greg Lee

What they did is halfway through their seven-year period, or five-year period for them, they decided, no, we're just going to go to organized hauling, and that's what they started doing. They broke the rules; that's why they're in trouble.

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

Just so I have clarification on the time line, so if this is — should we try to set a window or something, or I don't know how much time you guys need. I know you've got a lot of background, but there's still some more of this. I just don't want to leave this open ended and then all of a sudden we're in next May and we're talking about this again, because [inaudible/25:34].

Male Speaker

We've got to have meetings. We've got to —

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

Well, no, I didn't — before we even talk about — you know, before an open house is what I'm getting at, you know, when — what's our game plan for this?

City Manager Greg Lee

I think maybe a January open house. I'm looking at —

Female Speaker

Sure.

Male Speaker

[Inaudible/25:49]

City Manager Greg Lee

Yeah, I mean, after the holidays, after Christmas. January's a good month when people are around.

Mayor Phil Rice

Oh, yeah. Well, I think the challenge is to put together a concise piece that builds an effective argument.

City Manager Greg Lee

We kind of have that from the previous —

Male Speaker

[Inaudible/26:09]

Male Speaker

From the previous — yeah.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

[Inaudible/26:11] that deals with this on my desk, and I'll get it to you.

City Manager Greg Lee

Uh-huh. Because in 2014, we just — we tried to be very objective. We didn't try — we just tried to put together the facts and lay them out there, and we'll do the same and then have the counselor review that, and maybe we'll put together kind of a written document that has all the facts as we know them, put them all in there, and then have people —

Mayor Phil Rice

The unfortunate part of this, I think, is that you could do that with sidewalks, and, if you did, we'd never get a sidewalk in town, but those people who have sidewalks in front of their houses —

City Manager Greg Lee

They won't give them up.

Mayor Phil Rice

There has to be some wisdom in what other people have and they like. I don't know how to get that through a single hauler, but maybe we share some studies.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

Cities are going to single haulers.

Mayor Phil Rice

Yes, it's not even a question of whether you're going to have a single hauler. It's just when are we going to have a single hauler, you know.

City Manager Greg Lee

Like I say, we've had it for 120 years. We deviated for the last 25 year, and we've got single hauler for recycling, and that wasn't an issue.

Elizabeth Barnett

And simple testimonials too from other residents and other cities.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

You've got an hour; make it quick.

[Laughter]

Female Speaker

It's not about the [unintelligible/27:29] so —

[END OF DISCUSISON]