

DCS528 BULK VERGE SIDE COLLECTION

AGENDA REFERENCE:	D-22-056027
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EXECUTIVE:	P Melling, Director Development Services
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FILE REFERENCE:	WM/9/0004
ATTACHMENTS:	Yes (x1) Confidential Confidential - Service Estimation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The purpose of this report is to seek a Council resolution on whether or not to re-instate bulk verge side collection service, and if so, in what format. There is no perfect solution. Council will need to consider the environmental, social, financial implications and the *State Waste Avoidance & Resource Recovery Strategy 2030* for each option in making its decision.

The Executive recommendation is for Council to approve Option 2 in this report – Bulk Verge Side Collection program to be undertaken in the second half of 2022-23 budget year and to approve the continuation of the program every two years.

EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATION:

That Council by Simple Majority pursuant to Section 5.20 of the *Local Government Act 1995* RESOLVES to:

1. APPROVE Option 2 – Bulk Verge Side Collection for all residents with a regular kerbside bin service;
2. LIST for Budget and Long Term Financial Plan consideration the estimated amount of \$325,000 to be implemented for the Budget Year 2022-23 to be undertaken in the first half of 2023; and \$325,000 for Budget Year 2023-24 to be undertaken in the first half of 2024; and
3. CONTINUE the Bulk Verge Side Collection program every two (2) years.

PROPONENT:

The proponent is the City of Greater Geraldton.

BACKGROUND:

Bulk Side Verge Collection was undertaken by the City of Greater Geraldton up to and including 2014/15. The volumes of waste collected were as follows:

	13/14 (tonnes)	14/15 (tonnes)
Scrap Metal	66	95
Green waste	609	454
E-waste	16	N/A
Builders rubbish	752	802
Total Diverted	1,443	1,351
Disposed of to Landfill	367	484
Total Collected	1,810 tonnes	1,835 tonnes

In an effort to reduce costs, keep rate increases lower and not have untidy verges for one month a year, the Bulk Verge Side collection ceased. It was subsequently replaced with a skip bin system. The skip bin program involved residents contacting the City and booking a skip which was delivered to the property and collected one week later.

In 2016/17, the City issued 600 bins for the program. The bins were utilised within the Geraldton area over a 12 month period. Although the program was undertaken with minimal advertising it became popular and developed a five (5) months availability wait time. The cost of this service was \$75,000 (not including landfill disposal charges) and resulted in 387 tonnes of waste being collected and placed in the landfill.

In 2017/18, the decision was made to increase the number of bins to 800. The additional bins were quickly absorbed and the waiting time subsequently did not reduce. Because of the low percentage of residents obtaining a benefit (less than 10 percent), the rising cost of this service and the inability to segregate the waste, this program ceased while a review was undertaken. The cost of this service was \$102,000 (not including landfill disposal charges) and resulted in 778 tonnes of waste being placed in the landfill.

In 2020, Officers worked with a waste consultant to survey the community and develop the City of Greater Geraldton's Strategic Waste Management and Recycling Action Plan 2020-2030 which is available on the City's website. This Strategy was unanimously endorsed by Council at its 4 November 2020 Ordinary meeting as Item No. DCS479 - City of Greater Geraldton – Strategic Waste Management and Recycling Action Plan 2020-2030. The purpose of the City of Greater Geraldton Strategic Waste Management and Recycling Action Plan is to provide a framework for effective, efficient and sustainable management of waste within the City from 2020-2030 that aligns the City's objectives and activities with the State Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030. This will be achieved by:

- Increased community wide awareness and education.
- Maximising the cost effective recovery of resources from waste.
- Providing better infrastructure.
- Protecting human health and the environment.
- Maximise economies of scale.

The strategy includes an action to undertake a review of the verge side skip bin service (Action 6.2.4) as follows:

- *Review the bulk waste kerbside service options and community preferences.*
- *Determine preference for service.*
- *Present to Council for adoption.*
- *Implement Council recommendations.*

Council at its meeting of the 25 May 2021 - Item No. NM20 - Consideration of Reinstatement of Kerbside Collections, resolved the following:

1. *GIVE consideration to restoring verge side collection to residences in the second half of next financial year; and*
2. *REQUEST staff to prepare a report for final consideration of a verge side pickup model for deliberation prior to the midyear budget review in 2022 where any adjustments to costs can be considered.*

In response, the City's Waste team investigated various verge side collection options and presented these to Council at their February 2022 Concept Forum: The following information summarises options the Council could consider.

1. Undertake a traditional bulk verge side collection every year.

The Bulk Verge Side program involves residents placing their waste on the verge for City contractors to collect. Historically, the collection period is four (4) weeks. The City's waste collection contractor starts at one end of the city and work its way across the city picking up the different waste streams.

Adding 20 percent to the waste volumes collected in 2014-15 and using the figures provided in the Confidential Attachment No. DCS528, the cost to run this program in 2022-23 is estimated at \$650,000. The traditional Bulk Verge Side program strengths and weaknesses are outlined below:

Strengths

- Bulk verge side collection allows separation of waste types at the source. This is an important consideration in Council's efforts to increase waste segregation.
- The bulk verge side collection has the potential to reduce the fire risk associated with fuel loading at residential properties.
- The bulk verge side program provides a service to the majority of the community.

Weaknesses

- The City will become unsightly during the collection period and the City will receive complaints.
- Residents will miss the timeframes and want their waste picked up at a later time.
- The program is expensive. It is estimated to cost \$650,000 per annum to run. In addition, increased volume of green waste added to the annual green waste mulching program will increase mulching costs. As this program has not been run for several years, the costs may be even higher.
- There is potential for contractors to damage City road and verge infrastructure during service.
- Scavenging will occur.

- It would be seen as an encouragement for residents to generate waste due to the perception that Council will take care of it annually for free.

Note: Should it be Council's preferred option to continue to offer free tipping for all residents at Meru on consideration and adoption of the City of Greater Geraldton – Schedule of Fees & Charges at its Budget meeting, then this would support the option not to offer an annual verge side collection.

2. Undertake a traditional bulk verge side collection every second year.

This option is the same as option one, except the program is run every second year. This would reduce the average annual expenditure to approximately \$325,000. Council would have the option to run the program across the end of the financial year. The first two weeks would be completed in the last week of June then the next two weeks completed in the first week of July. The City would request the awarded contractor to provide progressive invoices for the works.

3. Skip Bin Verge Side Program

The previous skip bin program could be reintroduced with a higher number of skip bins being made available. There is a capital cost to purchase the skip bin and then an annual servicing fee. If the City was to provide approximately 2,000 bins, the estimated annual operating cost would be \$300,000 (not including landfill charges). This volume of bins would allow the City to service approximately 20% of the community.

Strengths

- The skip bin program reduces the safety concerns regarding manual handling by contractors picking up the waste and for any of the community members accessing verge sides.
- It eliminates the need for a further clean-up of the verge sides compared to bulk verge side collection.
- It ensures the residential streets are kept clean and free of large amounts of visible waste for extended periods of time.

Weaknesses

- A major issue with the skip bin program is that all mixed waste is being put into the skip bins and due to cross-contamination, all of the waste is disposed to landfill. The *State Waste Avoidance & Resource Recovery Strategy 2030* requires all waste to be managed or disposed using better practice approaches.
- Only a small percentage of the community could avail themselves of the service on a first in first served basis.
- The waiting period will still be long and the City will receive complaints.
- There were some occasions when the bins were overfilled and unauthorised hazardous materials such as asbestos was disposed of into the skip bin.

4. Verge Valet Service

This option is very similar to option 3. To obtain the required level of service however would be very expensive. Verge Valet is utilised by several metropolitan local governments (Mosman Park, Cottesloe and Cambridge). There is an online portal that the resident can book a collection date for bulk household waste and/or green

waste that allows a 3m³ amount of waste to be placed on the verge for the weekend prior the collection date. The strengths and weakness of the Verge Valet type program are the same as those outline for option 3.

5. Verge Side Green Waste Only Pick Up

A Green Waste Program would operate along the same guidelines as a traditional Bulk Verge side Program allocating four (4) weeks across the year where residents with a regular kerbside collection can place green waste for disposal on the verge in piles. The City's waste collection contractors would start at one end of the City and work its way across the City to pick up the green waste for disposal to the green waste area at Meru landfill for a later mulching program. The Cities of Fremantle and Albany provide this service to their residents.

Adding 20 percent to the green waste volumes collected in 2014-15 and using the figures provided in the Confidential Attachment No. DCS528 the cost to run this program in 2022-23 is estimated at \$260,000. Strengths and weaknesses are outlined below:

Strengths

- This program has the potential to reduce the fire risk associated with fuel loading at residential properties. The program allows for residents to prune trees and remove vegetation that can pose a risk to properties and structures.
- This program will service the majority of the community.
- There is potential for the program to divert 100% of the non-contaminated Green Waste material from landfill.

Weaknesses

- The City will become unsightly during the collection period.
- Safety concerns with manual handling for large tree trunks. Machinery is required such as a bob cat which increases the cost.
- There is potential for contractors to damage City infrastructure.

6. Verge Side Bulk Waste Only Pick Up (Hard Waste)

A Bulk Waste Only Program would operate along the same guidelines as a traditional Verge Side Program previously described. Hard Waste (bulky waste) are items that cannot fit in a regular bin and are usually quite large such as fridges, washing machines, couches, cupboards, wardrobes, televisions, furniture, and similar items. However this program only collects bulk waste. Adding 20 percent to the bulk waste volumes collected in 2014-15 and using the figures provided in the Confidential Attachment No. DCS528, the cost to run this program in 2022-23 is estimated at \$360,000. Strengths and weaknesses are outlined below:

Strengths

- This program has the potential to reduce waste that is difficult for residents to dispose of unless they have access to a trailer or a truck or can afford to pay a private contractor.
- This program will service the majority of the community.
- There is potential for the program to divert a high percentage of the waste collected.

Weaknesses

- The City will become unsightly during the collection period.
- Safety concerns with manual handling for large objects. Machinery is required such as a bob cat which increases the cost.
- There is potential for contractors to damage City infrastructure.

COMMUNITY, ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND LEADERSHIP ISSUES:

Community:

The Community Survey undertaken in August 2020 revealed that of the 750 respondents, 93% advised that waste issues should be a priority for the City and that in the comments there was strong support for the return of yearly verge side collection. Keeping the city tidy and clear of waste improves the city's liveability. Adoption of a verge collection scheme allows residents who do not have access to trailers, trucks and contractors to dispose of bulky items that otherwise would be difficult to dispose of.

Economy:

There are no adverse economic impacts.

Environment:

In making this decision, the Council should consider the environmental benefits of each option as outlined within the body of this report.

The *State Waste Avoidance & Resource Recovery Strategy 2030* has a material recovery target of 55% for major Regional Centres by 2025.

The City's adopted *Strategic Waste Management & Recycling Action Plan 2020-2030* has recommended this review be undertaken.

Leadership:

The Council will need to demonstrate leadership in making its decision, balancing environmental and social requirements in a tight fiscal period.

Disclosure of Interest:

No Officer involved in the preparation of this report has a declarable interest in this matter.

RELEVANT PRECEDENTS:

As detailed within the body of this report, the City has previously undertaken bulk verge side programs and skip bin programs.

COMMUNITY/COUNCILLOR CONSULTATION:

The City undertook a Community survey in 2020. The results of this survey informed the development of the City of Greater Geraldton Strategic Waste Management and Recycling Action Plan which has been adopted by Council.

Officers have discussed this topic with Councillors at Concept Forums (February 2022) and the Council considered this issue at its meeting on the 25 May 2021 - Item No. NM20 - Consideration of Reinstatement of Kerbside Collections.

LEGISLATIVE/POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

Relevant legislation and policy in regard to this matter are:

Section 5.20 of the *Local Government Act 1995* – Decisions of Councils or Committees.

State Waste Avoidance & Resource Recovery Strategy 2030.

City of Greater Geraldton Strategic Waste Management & Recycling Action Plan 2020-2030.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

Comparison Table

	Option	Annual Estimate per annum (\$)	Percentage of eligible properties serviced Annually
1.	Traditional Bulk Verge Side Collection every year	\$650,000	100%
2.	Traditional Bulk Verge Side Collection every second year	\$325,000	50%
3.	Skip Bin Verge Side Collection using 2,000 skip bins	\$300,000	20%
4.	Verge Valet Program	\$300,000	20%
5.	Green Waste Only Verge Side Collection	\$260,000	100%
6.	Bulk Waste Only Verge Side Collection	\$360,000	100%

Note: The estimates do not include landfill disposal charges.

In regard to financial implications, it is also worth noting that the new regional waste collection tender allows for tenderers to provide a cost to undertake a verge side collection as a discretionary item, this cost being per tonne rather than per property, as per the previous collection contract.

INTEGRATED PLANNING LINKS:

Strategic Direction: Economy	Aspiration: A healthy thriving and resilient economy that provides opportunities for all whilst protecting the environment and enhancing our social and cultural fabric.
Outcome 2.4	A desirable place to live, work, play, study, invest and visit
Strategic Direction: Environment	Aspiration: Our natural environment has a voice at the table in all our decisions. We are a leader in environmental sustainability.
Outcome 3.1	A City that is planned, managed and maintained to provide for environmental and community wellbeing.
Outcome 3.2	Regional leader in adapting to climate change.
Outcome 3.3	A well-maintained, SMART, sustainable, liveable City valued by the community.
Strategic Direction: Leadership	Aspiration: A strong local democracy with an engaged community, effective partnerships, visionary leadership and well informed decision-making.
Outcome 4.1	Meaningful customer experiences created for the people we serve.

REGIONAL OUTCOMES:

The City has been working with our neighbouring Shires and WALGA to develop the Regional Collection Contract for the Mid West which includes provisions for Bulk Verge Side.

RISK MANAGEMENT:

There are various risks associated with an undertaking of this size and nature. Some of the risks would include:

- Reputational damage from residents who do not agree with the adopted scheme, who do not like waste on the verges, who are not satisfied with the service provided.
- There is a reputational risk to the City should the community expectation of delivering on its adopted *Strategic Waste Management & Recycling Action Plan 2020-2030* not be met, including the requirements of the *State Waste Avoidance & Resource Recovery Strategy 2030*.
- Financial risk if the program is more expensive than estimated.
- Occupational Health and Safety risks to motorists, pedestrians and contractors.
- Environmental risks such as hazardous waste being placed on verges.

As required by safety legislation, a detailed risk assessment would be undertaken on the adopted scheme with mitigation measures put in place.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED BY CITY OFFICERS:

Options considered by Officers are outlined within the body of this report.

1. Council could decide to conduct a Bulk Verge Side Collection program each year for all residents at a cost of \$650,000. This option is not supported as it does not align with the objectives of the State Waste Avoidance & Resource Recovery Strategy 2030, a key focus of the strategy is to generate less waste, recover more value and resources from waste and to protect the environment by managing waste responsibly. An annual collection would be seen as an encouragement for residents to generate waste due to the perception that Council will take care of it annually for free and as a result the City could be seen to not be managing waste responsibly by reducing municipal solid waste to achieve the State target of 10% reduction by the year 2025.
2. Council could decide due to financial constraints not to reintroduce any form of a verge side collection in the 2022-23 financial year and to reconsider this matter at a later time.
3. Council could decide to conduct more than one of these programs. For instance, it could elect to run a bulk waste only program one year and a green waste only verge side collection program the following year.

The Mayor moved a motion different from the Executive Recommendation to approve an annual bulk verge side collection.

During the debate the Cr Raymond foreshadowed an alternative motion should the motion be lost, to approve Option 5 - Verge Side Green Waste Only Pick Up in June of every second year and Option 6 - Verge Side Bulk Waste Only Pick Up (Hard Waste) every second year.

COUNCIL DECISION

MOVED MAYOR, SECONDED CR HALL

That Council by Simple Majority pursuant to Section 5.20 of the Local Government Act 1995 RESOLVES to:

1. **APPROVE** the reintroduction of Annual Bulk Verge Side Collection for all residents with a regular kerbside bin service; and
2. **LIST** for Budget and Long Term Financial Plan consideration, the estimated amount of \$650,000 per annum.

CARRIED 8/4

Time: 6:05 PM

Not Voted: 0

No Votes: 4

Yes Votes: 8

Name	Vote
Mayor Van Styn	YES
Cr. Clune	NO
Cr. Colliver	YES
Cr. Cooper	YES
Cr. Critch	YES

Cr. Hall	YES
Cr. Keemink	NO
Cr. Librizzi	NO
Cr. Parker	YES
Cr. Reymond	NO
Cr. Tanti	YES
Cr. Thomas	YES

REASON FOR VARIATION TO EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATION: Annual Verge Side collection will boost fire and vermin mitigation preparations.