



FEATURE - PRESS RELEASE

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City of Brenham's Proposed Change in Sanitation and Recycling Operations

Brenham's continued growth has led to significant changes in the needs of the City's sanitation, recycling, collection, and disposal operations and; therefore, evaluation was needed of the current structure. Over the last 3 years, Frontier Waste has serviced the City of Brenham and *commercial* customers with dumpsters and 96-gallon cart services. City staff has serviced *residential* bag pickup for 50+ years.

The reasons for the initial evaluation include the following:

- The safety and risk of collections increase each year. Rearload collection is one of the most dangerous occupations in the U.S. from distracted driving, to heat and weather-related incidents. The City's intent is to take a proactive approach to not only protect employees engaging in these activities, but lead the change in moving towards safer operations
- The lack of personnel willing to ride on the back of the refuse truck and pick up bagged garbage is a significant challenge, even with competitive compensation. Many times, the City is forced to borrow staff from other departments to meet the needs of twice per week pickup service, which then leads to deficits in other departments
- With the substantial and proposed growth of Brenham, the routes are getting longer and larger, requiring the purchase of a third truck. The City currently runs a two-truck system with two riders on each truck, staffing a third truck is, unfortunately, not feasible
- Over the last 5 years, the City has been operating a labor-intensive recycle center at an unprofitable level due to the downturn in the recycling market

The evaluation covered both internal and external (outsourcing) options for sanitation operations. During the extensive research and evaluation of the residential cart option, it made sense to offer the curbside recycling option too. This would provide greater convenience to residents as well as increase the recycling tonnages for the City. As research progressed, and with two operations potentially outsourced, the Transfer/Collection Station was added as another outsourced option.

In October 2019, the City solicited a Request for Proposals (RFP) to potentially outsource Sanitation Operations (Commercial, Residential, Recycle Center, and Transfer/Collection Station). Four companies submitted proposals. After evaluating all proposals and taking into consideration all sanitation operations, it was evident the Brannon Industrial Group/BVR Waste and Recycling provided the “best value” to the City of Brenham. And at the December 9, 2019 regular session, City Council authorized city staff to begin formal contract negotiations with Brannon Industrial Group/BVR Waste and Recycling. As with any major change, whether it be within city government or a corporate business, adjustments and tweaks are required along the way. City Council and city management are aware of this and prepared to make modifications, accordingly, that are in the best interest of Brenham and its residents.

Dane Rau, Director of Public Works states, “This proposed change in services was not decided overnight or without researching and evaluating all options. It was also well thought-out how changing services would affect residents with the least financial impact.”

At present, the Brenham City Council is considering a 5-year contract with the Brannon Industrial Group/BVR Waste and Recycling to provide services for residential, commercial, recycling, and disposal operations for Brenham. Commercial services are proposed to transition from Frontier Waste in March 2020 to Brannon Industrial Group/BVR Waste and Recycling and residential services and recycling are proposed for May 2020. Rates are not yet finalized.

Blake Brannon from the Brannon Industrial Group/BVR Waste and Recycling says, “We are a local business ready and willing to **partner** with the City and its residents to reach a **common** goal. We acknowledge and respect what the City has worked so hard to build. We intend to help the City refine an already excellent service in a way to ensure residents don’t see costly increases down the road.”

The following information provides a quick glimpse into some of the *most common concerns and questions*:

Did you know?

- The garbage and recycling carts weigh just a bit more than a gallon of milk and are on wheels
- The 96-gallon cart holds approximately 6-7 of the 13-gallon trash bags
- The Collection Station will remain available to all residents for brush disposal and heavy debris
- There is an option of a smaller, 65-gallon cart that may be available for senior or disabled citizens

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How often will trash and recycling be picked up?

Curbside cart trash pickup — once a week

Curbside cart recyclables pickup — every other week

With carts being 96-gallons, this allows for 6-7 of the 13-gallon trash bags. Residents will also have a 96-gallon cart for recyclables. In the evaluation and proposals, twice per week service was an option but the findings did not provide reasonable rates for residents. Research also concluded that when curbside cart recycling is added to the sanitation service, once per week residential trash collection, utilizing 96-gallon carts, is the most efficient and cost-effective service for residents.

2. Is the Recycle Center closing?

Yes. City residents will no longer have to transport and sort recyclables. They will now be able to place recyclables in their personal curbside cart.

County residents will be able to use the Collection Station at 2009 Old Chappell Hill Rd. for their recycling needs. An annual fee is proposed for this type of service but not yet finalized.

3. What items are eligible for the residential curbside recycling cart?

Eligible recyclables include:

- Aluminum, Tin, and Steel Cans
- Glass (Clear and Brown only)
- #1 & #2 Plastic Bottles and Containers (*no* plastic bags)
- Mixed & White Paper
- Magazines
- Junk Mail
- Newspapers with inserts
- Brown Paper Bags
- Phone Books
- Flattened Cardboard
- Shredded Paper (*must* be bagged in clear plastic bags to prevent windblown litter)
- Paperboard (cereal, shoe, frozen food boxes, etc.)
- Wax Coated Drink Cartons

4. Are employees losing their jobs?

No. All employees from the Sanitation Department/Recycle Center, who chose to interview with BVR Waste and Recycling, will be offered a new position (and may accept or decline at their choosing). City employees and their extensive experience and knowledge in sanitation operations in Brenham are recognized and appreciated by Brannon Industrial Group/BVR Waste and Recycling. Those who chose not to interview will be able to apply for open positions within other City departments.

5. Will the City still be providing trash bags?

The City will provide each resident two 96-gallon carts, one for sanitation and one for recyclables; therefore, the City will no longer provide trash bags which have been a part of the current sanitation fee. Residents can now purchase whatever size bag they prefer and place them in a secured container until the weekly collection. Storing garbage in the personal container will help reduce smell, windblown litter, animals, and bugs.

Residents may purchase the City trash bags, available at City Hall-Utility Billing for \$12.00 per roll, while supplies last.

6. What if I physically can't roll my cart to the curb?

The carts are light weight, even when filled with trash; however, if residents are unable to roll either the 96 gallon- or 65 gallon- cart to the curb, eligible citizens will be offered specialty services when: no caregiver or attendant, no capable person in the household, etc. is available.

7. Will anything change with holiday pickup or my current trash pickup day?

There will be more collection days with Brannon Industrial Group/BVR Waste and Recycling as they have only three holidays when collection does not occur: Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. If your pickup falls on a holiday, then it will be picked up the following day.

Pickup days and zoning are not yet finalized.

Residents are encouraged to contact the City of Brenham (979-337-7200) with any questions or concerns.

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Links:

Attachments:

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