

ITEM #: 18
DATE: 02-11-25
DEPT: PW

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: **RESOURCE RECOVERY SYSTEM 2024 ANNUAL REPORT**

BACKGROUND:

The Resource Recovery System (RRS) is on the brink of a significant change in our solid waste management model, which will take place over the next three years. Since 1975, garbage collected in Story County has been received and processed at the Resource Recovery Plant (RRP), where some recyclable materials have been removed. Much of the remaining materials have been converted into refuse-derived fuel (RDF) for use as a supplemental fuel source in the Power Plant.

Changes in federal regulations will make burning RDF in the Power Plant infeasible after 2030. The regulation changes along with the combination of aging equipment and the harsh boiler conditions resulting from burning RDF have caused staff to propose an alternative waste disposal strategy. Staff is developing a concept for a Resource Recovery and Recycling Campus (Campus). This new transfer facility would receive solid waste and recyclables separately. The solid waste would be minimally processed to remove additional recyclable materials before being transported in consolidated loads to a landfill. Combined with recycling from across the community, these recyclable materials would be transported to recyclers based on the best available market prices. Provisions are also being considered for yard waste collection and processing, including composting at some point in the future.

Additionally, the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan between Boone County Landfill (BCL), RRS, and the respective member agencies will expire in June 2025. Staff continues in discussion with Carroll County for a new landfill partnership agreement. BCL staff have expressed a willingness to extend our existing agreement up to two years while the new Campus facilities are being developed.

In looking for ways to expand landfill diversion, the new recycling drop-off center at RRP has been operational for just over one year in providing a “one-stop shop” for recycling drop-off. This allows residents to bring in cardboard, mixed paper, plastic bottles with twist off lids, metals, clothes/shoes, glass, and organics at no charge. New cardboard containers are being implemented at satellite locations in Ames and a traveling recycling container is being considered for member communities.

2024 STATISTICS:

The partner communities and agencies generated 53,652 tons of municipal solid waste (MSW) during 2024 with approximately 42,583 tons received at the plant and processed to create 26,095 tons of refuse derived fuel (RDF). An estimated 1,343 tons of metal and 269 tons of glass were recovered for recycling. Additional items diverted from the landfill included 16 tons of Household Hazardous Materials, 45 tons of organics, 644 appliances, and 917 tires. Rummage RAMPage was held once again in 2024, finding new uses and homes for approximately 66 tons of household items that would have otherwise been destined for the landfill.

RATES AND FEES FOR FY 2025/26:

The per capita rate charged to member agencies will remain at \$10.50 and will be billed according to the results of the 2020 census. Based on projected financial needs, the tipping fee was raised to \$75.00/ton beginning July 1, 2024. There is no increase in tipping fee for the coming fiscal year. However, as plans for the new Resource Recovery and Recycling Campus continue to develop, financial projections for construction and operational expenses may likely necessitate an increase in tipping and/or per capita rates in the future.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Accept the Resource Recovery System 2024 Annual Report.
2. Request further information from staff.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

While there were a number of challenges during 2024 and still remaining ahead, the Resource Recovery System continues to be a responsible, sustainable, local solid waste solution for our partner agencies. Plans continue to move forward in implementing a new solid waste management model with development of the Resource Recovery and Recycling Campus and a new partnership with Carroll County Solid Waste Management Commission. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, as noted above.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[RRP Annual Report_2024 .pdf](#)