

ITEM #:	30
DATE:	07-08-25
DEPT:	PW

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL AGREEMENT WITH CARROLL COUNTY

BACKGROUND:

The City is pursuing a new approach for the disposal of solid waste. This approach involves establishing a new Resource Recovery and Recycling Campus (R3C) to receive solid waste, recyclables, and yard waste. Under this new approach, the solid waste would be consolidated and transported to a landfill for disposal; recyclable materials would be forwarded to recyclers; yard waste material would be either composted on site or hauled off-site for disposal.

A key component of this new approach is the final disposition of municipal solid waste (MSW) in a landfill. **The City currently utilizes Boone County Landfill as the site for final disposition of the City's solid waste. However, the capacity of that landfill is limited, and it is necessary to secure disposal rights in an alternate facility. The City has negotiated an extension of rights to the Boone County Landfill through June 2027, while the City identifies a new permanent site and transitions away from waste-to-energy.**

Staff explored a variety of options for alternate partnerships. **On December 10, 2024, City Council authorized staff to submit an Intent to Negotiate letter to the Carroll County Solid Waste Commission and to develop terms for a long-term agreement for the disposal of MSW.** Carroll County Landfill contains ample future space, is within a reasonable driving distance, and importantly, shares the City's interest in mutual partnerships, waste reduction, and landfill diversion.

Staff prepared and presented an agreement to Carroll County that includes the following highlights:

- **The agreement term extends through June 30, 2047. Since there is a period in which the City will remain in Boone County's planning area for waste disposal, most of the disposal provisions of the agreement with Carroll County will only be in effect once the City's agreement with Boone County terminates.**
- **Tipping fees for MSW are \$32.00 per ton through June 30, 2028 , with a 2% annual escalation.**
- **The City is responsible for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Solid Waste Tonnage Fee payable to the State of Iowa. This fee is variable based upon the amount waste that is diverted from landfilling through actions such as recycling and metal recovery. The fee is currently set at \$2.60 per ton.**
- **The Carroll County Solid Waste Management Commission may elect to accept MSW from the R3C prior to July 1, 2027, if the expansion of a new landfill cell is ready to accept waste.**

- **The agreement provides a method to further collaborate for mutual benefit including backhauling of recyclable materials from Carroll County to the R3C for greater collating of materials and maximizing the marketing of recyclable commodities.**

The Carroll County Solid Waste Management Commission voted on June 17, 2025, to negotiate an agreement with the City of Ames. Staff from both the City of Ames and the Carroll County Solid Waste Management Commission have worked to prepare an agreement that is acceptable for the final disposition of MSW from the R3C. This agreement is now being presented to City Council for approval.

The Carroll County Solid Waste Management Commission is planning to have a special meeting on July 15 to approve the agreement as presented to City Council. This step is necessary to ensure that the agreement is fully executed prior the City of Ames closing on the properties along Freel Drive on July 18, 2025. Unless the City Council directs staff otherwise, the closing for the Freel Drive property transactions will take place as scheduled on July 17.

With this agreement in place, the disposal cost portion of the operating expenses for the R3C is now settled. As staff reported to the City Council on June 24, 2025, it is estimated that the agreement with the Carroll County Solid Waste Management Commission, along with the anticipated operating and capital costs of the R3C, result in an FY 2027/28 tipping fee of \$95.11 at the R3C.

The next step is for staff to finalize the terms for new agreements with each of the partnering communities and agencies that make up the Resource Recovery System. Historically, Ames has served as the entity responsible for the disposal of solid waste for each of these partners. As the City transitions away from the existing Resource Recovery System, revised agreements with these partners will be necessary. These revisions will address the new model of waste disposal, and importantly would extend the duration of the agreements, allowing for the City to plan for the amounts to be disposed of and the repayment of the debt obligations.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the Solid Waste Disposal Agreement with Carroll County, Iowa Solid Waste Management Commission.

It should be noted that the agreement will not be finalized until the Carroll County Solid Waste Management Commission approves the document which is scheduled to occur at its special meeting on July 15.

2. Direct staff to make changes to the agreement.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The agreement for landfilling of MSW is a critical component of the R3C operations. A long-term agreement with the Carroll County Solid Waste Management Commission has been negotiated, securing the future of the final disposition of MSW from Ames and its partner communities. This agreement represents a vital step in the development of the R3C project. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, as noted above.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Final Agreement - COA and Carroll County for waste disposal July 8, 2025.pdf](#)