

I'm writing this email in lieu of my attendance at the public hearing addressing the coordinated collection of trash in St. Paul. Unfortunately I, as well as many of your constituents did not learn of the hearing in time to adjust our schedules to accommodate attendance.

According to the Coordinated Collection Update posted to stpaul.gov on July 11, it seems the council "may adopt the recommendation to accept the hauler proposal, which will kick off the transition and implementation process." I find it disheartening and suspicious that the Council would provide but a single public hearing on this issue, and schedule it concurrent with a potential vote on accepting the proposal! In doing so, you've succeeded in quashing public discussion on the matter - a matter that affects every single household in the City of St. Paul. It's also noteworthy that the Update stated "We reached out to residents seeking their input on garbage collection. Thousands of residents responded...". I looked over the survey. There were 1983 responses. Calling 1983 responses "thousands" is disingenuous if not an outright lie. Additionally, given this appears to have been a purely a web-based survey, your sample set is unrepresentative from the onset. Those with no or limited web access were unlikely to respond, or even be aware of the existence of the survey. Sadly, those are likely the same people who will suffer the most financially if they are required to pay substantially more for trash collection—those on fixed or poverty level incomes.

The proposed fees published in the article written by Frederick Melo cites a cost of \$31.55 per month for a large container. In addition, a \$52 (estimated) annual "administrative fee" will be charged to each household. It's unclear whether this fee will be paid to the City, or to the individual haulers. Based on these prices, my own trash collection costs will increase by 65% based on what I currently pay my hauler. An increase of this magnitude is unacceptable.

My unofficial (and also unrepresentative) survey based on responses on a Hamline Midway Neighbors Facebook page post makes it clear that I'm not the only one who will see a substantial increase. Out of the 15 residents that posted responses regarding costs, 12 will see an increase in their collection costs. Apparently 3 are just poor shoppers.

The Update indicates that illegal dumping costs the City over \$300,000 per year to clean up. That amounts to just over \$1 per resident. Is the "administrative fee" being paid to the City? If so, the City stands to rake in over 5.8 MILLION dollars per year providing this "service" to its residents (based upon 112,988 households according to the US Census Bureau). We can all agree that illegal dumping is a nuisance and costly, but even at a cost of \$2/year per resident, it's far more affordable than the increased fees proposed that include 3 large/bulk items per year and Christmas trees. I have no need to dispose of a Christmas tree, and my need to dispose of large items is limited to possibly 1 per year, if even that. Many view this as benefit, but it's only beneficial if you need it. Why should I be required to begin paying for services I do not require?

Certainly there are many other issues I could address, such as those residents who have adopted zero waste lifestyles, or the potential church-state separation issue that might be created through included Christmas tree removal, but our mutual time is limited.

I agree that there would be benefits to organized trash collection as cited in the "Priorities and benefits" section of the Update, but it's apparent that the Council wants to enact this with minimal input from their constituents. I urge the Council to delay the hasty adoption of this proposal that will likely have a negative net impact on the households of St. Paul. It's clear that additional public input is needed before committing us to legislation that will impact every resident in the City.

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