

# **City of Columbia Heights Compost Services, i.e. yard waste and compost, Request for Proposals (5 year contract)**

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### 1. **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

- 1.1. The City provides citywide yard waste collection services to over 6,300 residential households. The City also offers compost services (comingled yard waste & organic carts) to all residential properties. There are 5 City buildings and several city events that may need organics services as well.
- 1.2. Please review the City ordinance pertaining to refuse services in the CITY OF COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, MINNESOTA CODE OF ORDINANCES ([https://www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/government/city\\_code.php](https://www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/government/city_code.php)), CHAPTER 4: MUNICIPAL SERVICES, ARTICLE VII: GARBAGE AND RECYCLING SERVICES.
- 1.3. In addition, review the City Solid Waste Operating Policy (on our Refuse & Recycling webpage ([www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/refuse](http://www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/refuse))). Section 2. Goals and Plans is how the City Council desires we handle solid waste. The remaining sections describe how refuse is handled currently and will be updated as alternative procedures are implemented to accomplish city goals.
- 1.4. Also review our Refuse and Recycling webpages ([https://www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/departments/public\\_works/refuse\\_and\\_recycling/index.php](https://www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/departments/public_works/refuse_and_recycling/index.php)) for information we provide to the public about the services. You will also find the collection schedule on this page as well.
- 1.5. Contact for this RFP is the City of Columbia Heights Public Works Department 637 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue, zip 55421 or email [Publicworks@columbiaheightsmn.gov](mailto:Publicworks@columbiaheightsmn.gov). Email Public Works to receive updates and/or changes to RFP.

### 2. **SCOPE OF WORK:**

- 2.1. **Citywide yard waste service:** Seasonal (spring, summer, and fall) curbside collection and hauling of yard waste for composting. Residents are told to use proper bags for yard waste and to bundle brush and to always place it on the street curb.
  - 2.1.1. Collect bags and bundles of yard waste off the street curb citywide during the yard waste season (first full week in April to the week after Thanksgiving). The period is further

defined as a “green” season (April-September) and a “brown” leaf drop season (October & November). Exact start and end dates may be changed based on snow cover.

2.1.1.1. FYI, not every property has yard waste out every week especially during the green season. In 2019 the following weights were reported by month (shown only for estimate not guaranteed):

MONTH	TONS	MONTH	TONS	MONTH	TONS	MONTH	TONS
APRIL	94	JUNE	178	AUGUST	134	OCTOBER	278
MAY	231	JULY	160	SEPTEMBER	164	NOVEMBER	332

2.1.2. Typically yard waste is not collected from townhomes and large multifamily properties as they have their own lawncare services.

2.1.3. A yard waste cart will be offered if the compost cart service is cancelled by the city, see paragraph 2.3 Properties will not be required to utilize a yard waste cart.

2.2. Offer curbside Christmas tree collection in January. Residents are told to schedule the pickup. There are typically 100 trees collected and residents must schedule the pickup. Include the cost of disposal with the Christmas pickup fee.

2.3. **Subscription compost cart service:** NOTE: please read paragraph 4.1 about the future of compost carts. The city uses a compost (mixed food organics and yard waste) cart primarily to collect organics curbside, but users of the cart have the added benefit to also throw yard waste into the cart as well. This service is optional for our households. Currently there are over 1,600 carts in the field our goal is to be over 3,200 by the end of this contract if we can continue to utilize a compost cart. In addition to collecting more organics to meet SWOP goals, more compost carts means less bags and bundles of yard waste to pick as well.

2.3.1. Year-round curbside collection, hauling, of comingled organics and yard waste materials. Empty the carts weekly during the yard waste season and every-other-week during the winter.

2.3.2. There are two sizes of carts in use a ~90 gallon size and a ~30 gallon size.

2.3.3. Residents are told to put the carts in the alley if that is where their trash and recycling is picked. Provide “walkup” service to the elderly and disabled. Multifamily buildings are allowed to subscribe as well and the carts will need to be emptied from the refuse spot onsite i.e. requires “walkup” service.

2.3.4. Specialized Environmental Technologies (SET) (the composter) requires we only empty the contents of the compost cart on a single load and do not mix extra bags or bundles of yard waste on the same truck load.

2.4. Additional information about the Scope of Work.

2.4.1. The yard waste and compost will be collected following the city’s compost/yard waste daily schedule see map on the [www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/refuse](http://www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/refuse) webpage. Daily zones can be adjusted by the contractor but must be approved by the city.

- 2.4.2. Bidders do not need to consider the cost of carts or handling of the residential carts as the City owns all the household carts currently in use for trash, recycling, and compost. The City will purchase carts and make arrangements for cart handling services separately.
- 2.4.3. Compost carts are emptied in the alley if that is the only driveway a property has on the lot. Over 40% of the properties have their service in an alley. Some of the more challenging locations to service are: The alley east of the 37-3800 block of Polk St, the alley west of the 4300 block of 4th St, the 625+ dead end block of 47th Avenue, the alley west of the 4000 block of Reservoir Blvd, and the alley east of the 46-4700 block of Upland Crest. The City does maintain the alleys including snow removal and ice control.
- 2.4.4. The City will pay the processing fees (tipping fee) by the ton for yard waste and compost. This is best done as a pass through charge on the hauling bill. Currently all material is delivered to the Malcolm transfer station for SET.
- 2.4.5. The City charges the residential properties for refuse services on the city utility bill, so the contractor only needs to send one bill for citywide services to Public Works.
- 2.4.6. Contractors will need to provide basic customer service i.e. communicate to residents when issues arise. Haulers are expected to utilize the City's service management software. Hauler must notify the City if unable to provide service on scheduled day.

### 3. PROPOSAL EVALUATION:

- 3.1. Bids must be received at Public Works Office either hard copy or electronically: *to be determined*. Please email [Publicworks@columbiaheightsmn.gov](mailto:Publicworks@columbiaheightsmn.gov) to let us know you are interested in making a proposal and to ask questions. Responses to questions will be shared with all interested parties.
- 3.2. Several factors will be considered in evaluating the proposals for service: cost, staff recommendation, survey of references, and whether a business is locally owned and operated. We are very interested in keeping our *comingled* (yard waste & organics) compost cart system.
- 3.3. Please provide a detailed description of how you plan to accomplish the yard waste collection service especially during the busy brown season (fall leaves).
- 3.4. Staff is authorized to reduce the total number of proposals based on price only (low bidders) to make the award process more manageable.
- 3.5. The City Council will decide contract awards after reviewing all factors of the remaining respondents.
- 3.6. Proposals will be treated in accordance with MN Statutes concerning data practices.

### 4. FINAL CONTRACT CONSIDERATIONS:

- 4.1. We are awaiting a decision from Specialized Environmental Technologies about the continued use of the compost carts. If no composters in the area can be found to accept compost cart materials (mixed food organics with yard waste), the compost cart service will be cancelled. We expect to hear from SET after the 2023 yard waste season. The city will offer "yard waste only" carts to properties if this happens, of course all properties will still have bagged and bundled yard waste collection.

- 4.2. The length of this contract will be from April 2024 through March of 2029. A negotiated one year extension may be granted by the City.
  - 4.3. Proposers must be licensed by Anoka County and the State of MN before award of contract.
  - 4.4. Subcontracting is generally not allowed (anyone submitting a proposal must identify this) and it must be approved by the City.
  - 4.5. Contractor's insurance must indemnify the City from accidents or problems caused by contractor operations.
  - 4.6. Contractor must file a performance bond with the City prior to contract award.
  - 4.7. A "liquidated damage" (financial penalties) scheme will be included in the final contract for poor performance issues and for damage/loss to City owned carts.
  - 4.8. The City will only pay the service, fees, and processing charges (as quoted in the proposal) plus any fuel surcharges, and will not pay any other fees or charges.
5. **BID FORM:** Please use the attached Bid form with your proposal.
6. **LIMITATIONS, TERMS AND CONDITIONS:** This Request for Proposal does not commit the City of Columbia Heights to award a contract, pay costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal or to procure a contract for services or supplies. The City of Columbia Heights reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of the request, to negotiate with any qualified source, or to cancel in part or entirety the RFP if it is in the best interest of the City of Columbia Heights to do so. If, for any reason, the firm selected is not able to commence services under its proposal within 90 days after its award, the City reserves the right to award the contract to the next most qualified firm. The City will retain ownership of all submittals prepared under the proposal. Interviews are not proposed as a selection criterion. The firm that the City believes to be the best qualified based on the criteria above will be invited to enter into a contract to perform the service. If you have any questions, please contact Jesse Davies at 763.706.3706 or me at 763.706.3721.

Yours truly,



David Cullen

**Interim Public Works Director,**



Jesse Davies

**Refuse Coordinator**

**City of Columbia Heights | Public Works  
637-38th AVE NE | Columbia Heights, MN 55421**

**Quotes for 2024 bagged/bundled yard waste and compost cart collection:**

Yard Waste bags/bundles collection Weekly charge during the “green season” April-September  
\$\_\_\_\_\_.

Yard Waste bags/bundles collection Weekly charge during fall leaf drop “brown season” October &  
November \$\_\_\_\_\_.

Monthly yard waste “only” cart service fee \$\_\_\_\_\_/cart during the yard waste season. Will only be  
utilized if compost carts are cancelled by the City and will be optional for households to order.

Bagged and bundled yard waste tipping/processing fees \$\_\_\_\_\_/compacted ton. Please  
annotate pricing method and cost if loads are not compacted.

January Christmas trees pickup fee \$\_\_\_\_\_/tree.

Monthly compost cart service fee: Yard Waste season (weekly service) \$\_\_\_\_\_/cart. Winter  
(every-other-week service) \$\_\_\_\_\_/cart.

Compost cart material (comingled food organics with yard waste) tipping/processing fee \$\_\_\_\_\_/ton.

Starting for 2025 yard waste season an annual 3% increase will be added to the charges year over year.  
Additional increases can be requested, but work must continue to meet contract standards during  
negotiations.

\*Does not apply to tipping/material processing fees.

The City will not pay a mileage fee, but a fuel surcharge scheme can be included with your proposal.

Respondents can submit a fuel surcharge scheme subject to approval. Fuel surcharges may be added to  
the cost to determine total bid price. See below example

**Fuel/Energy Surcharge Table**

Price of Diesel Fuel Per Gallon Exceeds	\$5.50	\$6.00	\$6.50	\$7.00	\$7.50
Surcharge % Applied to hauling Invoice not tipping fees	1%	2%	3%	4%	5%