



MEMORANDUM

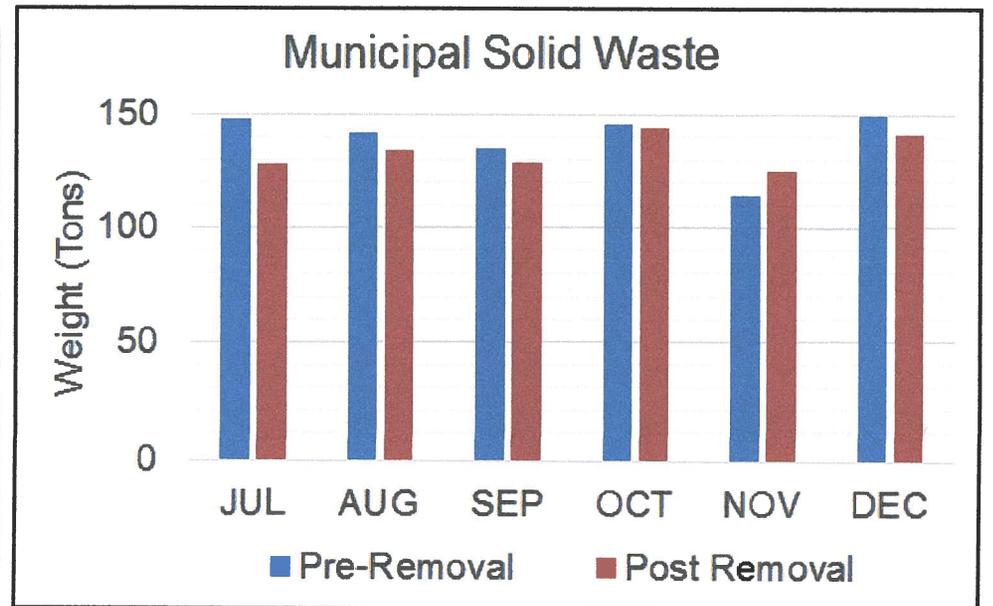
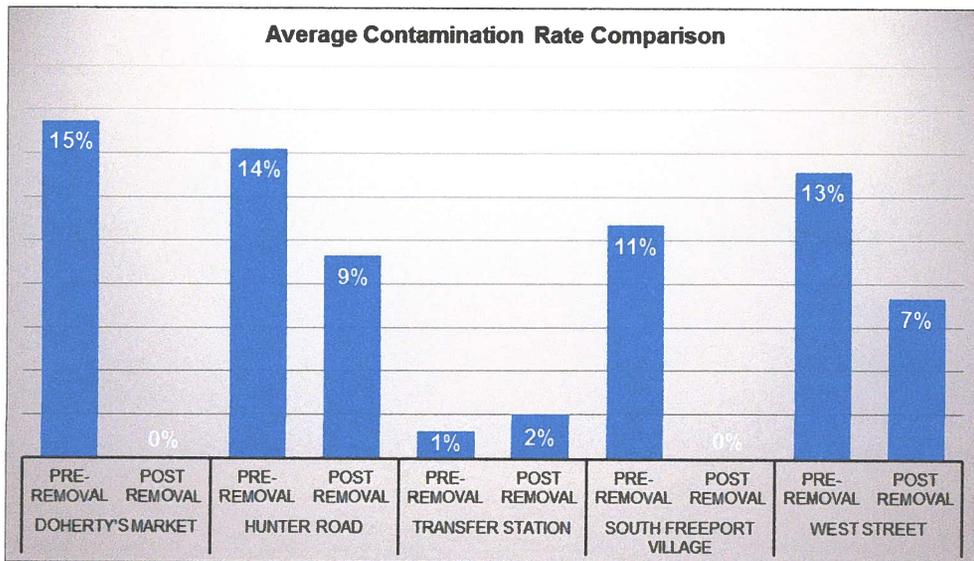
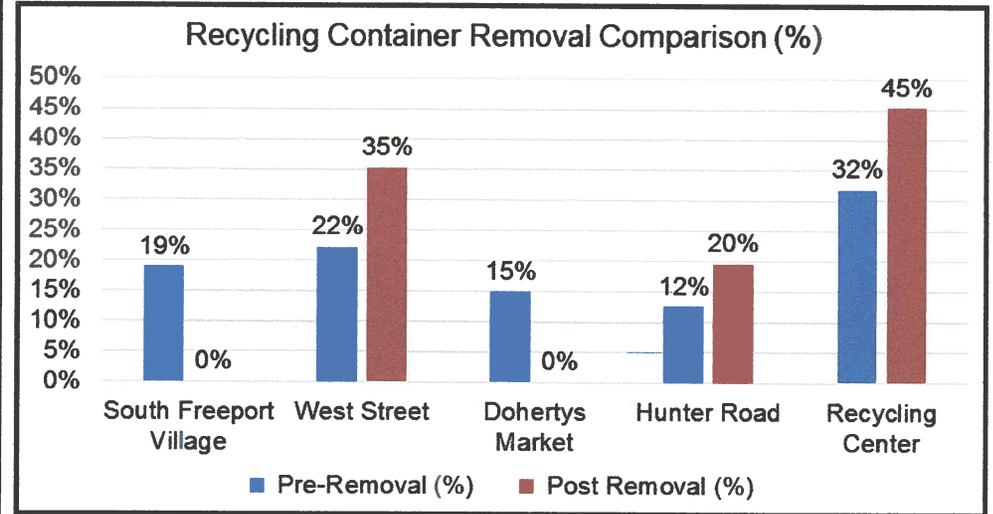
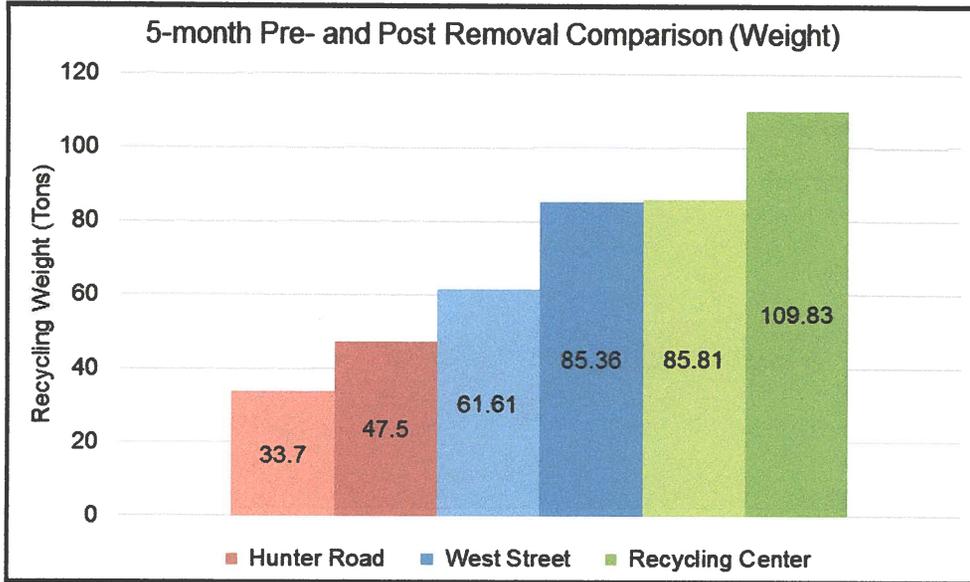
TO: Peter Joseph, Town Manager
FROM: Adam S. Bliss, P.E., Town Engineer
DATE: January 16, 2020
SUBJECT: Recycling Update and Waste/ Recycling Collection

This memorandum presents two topics of discussion for the Town Council meeting on January 21, 2020. The first discussion item provides an update on collection of recyclables since removal of the two recycling containers from South Freeport Village and Dougherty's Market. The second discussion item requests feedback and direction from the Town Council on whether Town staff should continue to explore curbside collection.

Recycling Update

Two of the Town's four satellite recycling containers (also known as Silver Bullets) were removed on August 1, 2019. The Council evaluated the removal decision over several meetings viewed through the lenses of transport efficiency, economics, contamination levels, illegal dumping, and environmental sustainability. The Town Council also decided to remove the remaining two recycling containers within one-year's time but requested a six-month update on contaminations levels. The graphs below support the preliminary findings itemized below.

- The five options for disposal of recyclables are now redistributed to three options: Transfer Station Compactor, West Street Container, and Hunter Road Container. The increase in traffic for these locations were 13%, 13%, and 8%, respectively.
- Contamination rates either decreased or remained the same at the three locations. Higher visibility and monitoring do lead to reduced contamination rates. One could also conclude the Town is receiving less non-resident material at the Container sites resulting in lower contamination rates and fines.
- Municipal Solid Waste disposal, i.e. non-recyclable rubbish, decreased for five of the six months of available data. One can conclude that people are not throwing their recyclables away as was feared.
- The haul frequency for the Recycling Container locations, i.e. West Street and Hunter Road, was increased from 3 trips to 4 trips per week to account for additional traffic. This information is important because each trip costs in excess of \$100 regardless of weight.
- The haul trips did not double at each Container location to account for the redistribution. If the haul frequencies had doubled, then the cost savings would be negated but this is not the case.
- South Freeport Village and Doherty's Market redistributed their 34 percent share to the three remaining locations (13%, 13%, and 8%). Any difference between pre- and post removal rates can be attributed to less illegal dumping, fewer out-of-town users, and fewer rejected loads.



Curbside Collection Discussion

Town staff evaluated collection methods for solid waste and recyclables over the past several months. The purpose for this evaluation was to determine if curbside collection was economically viable compared with the Transfer Station model given this dynamic process and inherent issues such as recycling contamination and transport and disposal costs. The following information was collected through consultation with municipalities which currently provide curbside collection and through an internal macroeconomic financial analysis.

- There are currently three options for disposal of solid waste: two private haulers and the Transfer Station.
- The Recycling Center operating budget currently contains a line item for ecomaine tipping fees for disposal of privately hauled waste and the Transfer Station solid waste. Therefore, there would not be a tipping fee budget increase since we already account for all generated waste.
- Residents who contract with private haulers pay out-of-pocket costs between \$180 and \$600 per year. Transfer Station users pay on average \$71 per year for their \$6 Transfer Station sticker and \$65 in punch cards (6 bags per month x 12 months x \$0.90 per bag).
- Town staff conservatively estimated the cost to contract with a private hauler. The cost was developed from surrounding communities of similar population and geographic size. The estimated annual collection cost of \$450,000 would potentially be funded through an increase in the tax mil rate. The mil rate could increase by \$0.23 per \$1,000 of house valuation. Alternatively stated, the annual tax bill increase would be \$72 for the current median household valuation of \$312,000. Homes assessed at values lower than the median would pay less than those with homes assessed at higher values.
- The potential tax bill increase compares favorably with the current least expensive disposal option of \$70 per year at the Transfer Station. Residents who currently contract with private haulers would experience an out-of-pocket savings.
- This conservative and high-level analysis does not consider a Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) system. The PAYT system would require several months to a year to amend to the Town Charter and implement.
- Curbside collection would require current Transfer Station users to reallocate their time by bringing bins to the street rather than driving to the Transfer Station. This change has real benefits and savings in terms of fuel costs, the money value of time, and environmental sustainability.
- Curbside collection has the potential to raise contamination levels without an in-place monitoring program.
- Staff will still be required to operate the Transfer Station for bulky waste drop off, recycling program monitoring, maintenance of the closed landfills according to our Solid Waste licenses, curbside program implementation and monitoring, among many other required tasks.
- We support the Transfer Station to remain open but with reduced hours of operation since solid waste and recyclables aren't expected to be collected at this location.
- Some residents enjoy their regular trips to the Transfer Station and staff enjoy their pleasantries. Change will be hard for some users, but visits will still be possible.