

# **WHERE ARE WE WITH SOLID WASTE?**

The public meeting was great– I am so glad we held the meeting, and I know you agree.

We have received citizen input regarding multiple issues in our Solid Waste plan.

We have determined that we want a Green Ribbon Committee to collect citizen input on Solid Waste and other Green initiatives.

I believe we need to do more.

# Green for Green



**GREEN DOLLAR SAVINGS  
FOR CHARLESTON COUNTY  
GOING GREENER**

*presented by Colleen Condon*

**HOW MUCH DO WE SPEND ON  
TRASH  
IN CHARLESTON COUNTY?**

**\$41 MILLION IS BUDGETED BY CHARLESTON COUNTY IN THE NEW FISCAL YEAR. THAT'S A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT, BUT THAT IS NOT EVEN THE WHOLE COST.**

**THEN, WE ADD OUR CAPITAL COSTS, AND THE COSTS BY MUNICIPALITIES TO COLLECT THE TRASH.**

# THE REAL COST OF **TRASH** IN CHARLESTON COUNTY

<b>SOLID WASTE OPERATING ANNUAL BUDGETS</b>	
<b>GOVT</b>	<b>FY 2008</b>
Charleston County	\$41,591,340.00
City of Charleston	\$5,373,686.00
City of North Charleston	\$5,188,669.00
Isle of Palms	\$1,168,551.00*
James Island PSD	\$1,673,096.00
St. Andrews PSD	\$0.00
Town of Folly Beach	\$461,254.00
Town of Kiawah Island	\$730,067.00*
Town of McClellanville	\$25,769.44*
Town of Mt. Pleasant	\$5,031,868.00
Town of Sullivan's Island	\$151,349.64*
	<b>\$59,319,913.00</b>

*presented by Colleen Condon*

# *Why is the cost so expensive?*

Our Solid Waste system is based on each household throwing away 3,000 pounds of garbage each year.

HOWEVER, other counties receive much less waste from their citizens after implementing 21<sup>st</sup> Century recycling:

- In Fayetteville, Arkansas, their average is **544** pounds per person.
- In Middletown, Rhode Island, it is just **357**.

# What results have other communities achieved?

- With a new approach and a mixed use MRF (recycling, processing, and composting), Sumter County, FL diverts 60% of its waste stream from becoming trash.
- El Paso, Texas hired a consult to do an operational review of the entire solid waste system. After implementing the recommendations, the City realized a benefit of \$9M the first year.
- Nashville and Davidson County replaced an incinerator with a District Energy system where the energy was used to power government office buildings
- Arlington, TX privatized their landfill, receiving up-front payments of \$21M

# *Am I a good recycler?*

- If you had asked me that question last week, I would have answered yes. We fill two bins every two weeks and do our part.

## **I CONFESS HOWEVER:**

- Sometimes I have thrown out the spaghetti sauce jar because I don't want to take the time to rinse it out.
- Sometimes I have cleaned out my car at the gas station, and throw out Vitamin water bottles since there's not a recycling bin handy.
- My guys and I have used disposable cups on a regular basis because it's easier.

# SO, THE ANSWER IS NO. I HAVE BEEN A MINIMAL RECYCLER.

- I believe that if my husband, son, and I change my mindset about trash, we could reduce our waste by 70% over what we throw out today.
- I think there are **MANY** people in Charleston who would do the same if it were made a little easier and had incentives.
- I am not proposing mandatory recycling, but instead making sure we take advantage of **EVERY** opportunity to voluntarily keep another Vitamin Water bottle out of the landfill or incinerator.

# What kind of improvements can we make?

- Anywhere there is a trashcan, there's a recycling bin. For example apartment complexes and gas stations.
- Giving people a refund of half their solid waste user fee if they are "caught" recycling.
- Encouraging businesses to recycle and lower their fees, because they pay per volume of trash. The Burger King on Hwy 7 and 61 pays \$2900! If they put half of their volume in a recycling bin instead, their solid waste fee would be half.

THERE ARE LOTS OF GREAT IDEAS OUT THERE.  
LET'S GET THE BEST IDEAS AND HARNESS THEM.

So, to recap, the goals of

# Green for Green

are **at least three-fold**

- Do the right thing by giving people every opportunity to recycle and reduce the amount of trash they produce
- The Landfill won't grow as fast
- **SAVE** money doing it!



# Green for Green

We want to move nimbly, so a consultant should be brought on board as soon as feasible to do a study and help us achieve a Comprehensive Solid Waste Strategy

*presented by Colleen Condon*

- I move that Council establish ***Green for Green***: Charleston County's Comprehensive Solid Waste Strategy
- I move that Charleston County proceed with deliberate speed to hire a consultant to perform the following work, with the consideration that time is of the essence

# Scope of Services for Consultant

1. Help Charleston County prepare our Green for Green Plan: Charleston County's Comprehensive Solid Waste Strategy
2. Provide an independent analysis and process audit of our entire Solid Waste Department
3. Study issues at the landfill to include C&D height, MSW height and visibility, and impact on its residents. Recommend ways to minimize the effect of the landfill on its neighbors.
4. Develop a 21st Century Recycling Plan for households and businesses
5. Evaluate all options for minimizing our overall amount of trash, reducing costs, and environmental impacts of these options.
6. Provide cost-benefit analyses of options.
7. Study our municipal waste delivery systems and how to help the municipalities save costs while reducing our overall waste stream
8. Collect input from stakeholders, including municipalities and our citizens
9. Prepare a proposed **Green for Green** Plan: Charleston County's Comprehensive Solid Waste Strategy for consideration

**Green for Green**

*presented by Colleen Condor.*

