



City of Tualatin

## CITY OF TUALATIN Staff Report

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
**THROUGH:** Sherilyn Lombos, City Manager  
**FROM:** Lindsay Marshall, Management Analyst II, Public Works  
**DATE:** December 11, 2023

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### **SUBJECT:**

Recycle+ Expanded Recycling Service, Provided by Republic Services

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends Council direction to return with a resolution to adopt Recycle+ beginning in 2024.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Recycling is the process of collecting and processing materials that would otherwise be thrown away as trash and making them suitable for reuse. Recycling services are provided to all customers in Tualatin (residential and business) and includes items such as paper, cardboard, tin, aluminum, and other small metal scraps, glass, and some plastics. However, many items are considered “hard to recycle” and are not accepted in the standard recycling stream. These items include plastic bags and clamshells (such as fruit cartons and takeout containers), stretchy plastic film, textiles (fabrics), and compact florescent light bulbs.

In order to address this recycling gap, the Washington County Board of County Commissioners approved “Recycle+” in April of 2022 as a new addition to curbside recycling. Recycle+ is an optional, opt-in service residents can sign up for that includes curbside pickup of hard to recycle items. The program is currently available to single family homes through four-plexes in urban unincorporated Washington County and the cities of King City, Durham, Beaverton, Sherwood, Tigard, and North Plains. This service will be provided by the City’s franchised waste hauler, Republic Services.

City Staff will continue to explore other opportunities for expanded recycling service in Tualatin. One example is the use of specialty companies like Ridwell. That is being handled as a separate effort and will be brought forward in a future meeting.

### **Recycle + Program Details**

**Optional Service** - Recycle+ is an *optional, opt-in service* that would provide an opportunity for all residential customers in single family homes up to four-plexes to recycle materials not included in standard recycling.

- Customers can cancel Recycle+ service at any time; no continuing subscription is required. For customers who do not want to subscribe to Recycle+, dropping materials off at a recycling depot remains a no-cost recycling option for all community members.

- Staff, Republic Services, and other local governments are continuing discussions for future expansion of Recycle+ service to multifamily/apartment residents.

**Process** – Interested customers will sign up for expanded recycling collection service through Republic Services.

- Republic Services would deliver an 18-gallon purple, lidded Recycle+ bin to the customer. Customers would be responsible for sorting all accepted materials by type, putting Recycle+ materials in the 5-gallon bags provided, placing them in the purple bin, and setting their bin out for collection. All items must fit into the bin and be kept clean and dry, as required by the recycling processors.
- Pick up is as needed and must be scheduled in advance. Customers must notify Republic Services at least two-business days in advance of their collection day to schedule their Recycle+ pickup. Without notification, items in the Recycle+ bin would not be collected.
- It is expected that most customers would utilize the service every 4-6 weeks, but pickups can be more or less frequent as needed/desired by the individual customer.

**Cost** – Only participating customers would be charged associated fees. Recycle+ has a two-part fee structure: a monthly base participation fee and a per-pickup fee.

1. Base charge (billed monthly to subscribers): \$2.50
2. Collection charge (billed only when a pickup is requested by customers).
  - Customers can set out Recycle+ bins on the “curbside” (defined as within five feet of a public or private road) or at another “non-curbside” location on a customer's property, such as at the doorstep or porch.
    - Curbside pickup (each pickup): \$9.25
    - Non-curbside pickup 5-150 feet from curbside (each pickup): \$11.70
    - Non-curbside pickup over 150 feet from curbside (each pickup): \$13.02
  - If customers qualify as a person with a disability as identified by Oregon state law and does not share a household with an individual capable of placing the container curbside, they can request non-curbside pickup at no extra charge.

**Materials Collected** – Currently, accepted materials include:

Stretchy plastic film/bags

- Plastic bags, produce bags, dry cleaning bags, plastic padded envelopes (no padded manila envelopes), plastic overwrap for paper towels, paper plates, napkins, etc.

Clear plastic #1 clamshell containers

- Egg cartons, fruit containers, bakery containers, take-out containers

Textiles

- Bed linens, clothing, towels/rags

Compact fluorescent light bulbs

- Long fluorescent tubes used in commercial lighting are not accepted.
- Bulbs must be contained in a zip-sealed bag.

Special Collections

- The Recycle+ service includes special collections a few times each year of specific items or materials for recycling or donation. Customers can set out designated specialty items on with their scheduled Recycle+ collection during the special collection month. For example,

November 2023 collected clean and ready-to-use kitchen items for Community Warehouse. January 2024 will see collection of string (holiday) lights.

### **Where do the materials go?**

Recycle+ materials are handled by local, private facilities that work with a variety of end markets. These markets, like most markets for recyclable scrap commodities, are variable and may change over time. Currently, Recycle+ materials collected by Republic Services goes to Far West Recycling, a local company with locations in Tualatin, Portland, and Hillsboro.

### **Other Questions about Recycle+ Service**

For answers to other frequently asked questions, please see attachment “Recycle+ Frequently Asked Questions Washington County.”

**Reasoning** – Considerations for offering Recycle+ as an optional expanded recycling collection service to Tualatin Residents at this time include:

- Some materials not accepted in standard mixed recycling have an environmental benefit if they can be recycled or reused in other ways.
- Some community members are willing and able to pay more for the convenience of expanded recycling. Recycle+ service can be shared amongst family, friends, and neighbors. Offering this service as an option enables customers to subscribe only if it meets their needs and budget.
- Providing an optional subscription service provides more recycling opportunities while avoiding significant impacts to service costs across all customers.
- Expanded recycling is a component of the City of Tualatin’s drafted Climate Action Plan under Strategy 7.5: Responsible Waste Management and supports Council’s 2030 Vision of being an environmentally active, sustainable, and forward-thinking community
- Recycle+ is already a functioning program in Washington County and neighboring cities. Therefore, service can begin in Tualatin immediately after Council adoption. This also helps align educational materials and creates consistency across the county for recycling services.

### **OUTCOMES OF DECISION:**

Staff are looking to Council for guidance about bringing back a resolution to adopt Recycle + as optional residential service for hard-to-recycle items in the City of Tualatin.

### **ALTERNATIVES TO RECOMMENDATION:**

Decline the program at this time.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

As Recycle + is an optional service, there would be no economic impact to Tualatin customers who do not sign up. For those who wish to participate, services could be added for an additional cost.

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### **ATTACHMENTS:**

- Presentation Recycle+ Expanded Recycling Service
- Recycle + Frequently Asked Questions Washington County