



Office of the Town Manager
Frank Cassidy

Warrenton Town Council

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STAFF REPORT

Council Meeting Date:	November 12 th , 2025
Agenda Title:	Refuse Update – Historic District Refuse
Requested Action:	Receive the Information
Department / Agency Lead:	Public Works & Town Managers Office
Staff Lead:	John Ward, Public Works Director Stephanie Miller, Deputy Town Manager Johnny Switzer, Fleet & Facilities Manager

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Businesses in the historic district, particularly restaurants, face significant difficulty in managing high-volume waste without adequate, centralized storage, which negatively impacts public space and district aesthetics. Town Code (Sec. 8-21) prohibits the Town from providing collection services to these commercial properties.

The proposed solution is a public-private partnership wherein the Town provides a small, designated parcel of Town-owned land. EOTW will, in turn, manage, fund, and assume all liability for a shared, aesthetically pleasing dumpster enclosure for use by participating Main Street businesses. EOTW will recoup its operational costs directly from the businesses using the service.

This approach provides a practical solution that supports the vitality and appearance of Main Street without violating Town Code or incurring a fiscal impact on the Town. Staff met with EOTW board representatives on October 30, 2025, who agreed that this is a positive path forward. Staff have also temporarily delayed the November 1, 2025, deadline for the removal of a dumpster from Town property to allow time for this permanent solution to be finalized.

BACKGROUND

The management of commercial refuse in Old Town has been a persistent challenge. The historic nature of the buildings and the limited space behind them provide few options for businesses to store large-volume dumpsters. This has led to ad-hoc solutions, including the placement of dumpsters in public view or on Town property, which is not sustainable and detracts from the district's appearance.

The primary constraint on Town involvement is Town Code Section 8-21, which states: "Apartment houses, restaurants, hotels, commercial houses and other places where human beings may dwell or assemble are classified as commercial properties outside the scope of regular trash collection."

While the Town is fully committed to operating within this code, staff are equally committed to finding a solution that supports the business community. An issue involving a dumpster placed on Town property, which had a removal deadline of November 1, 2025, highlighted the urgent need for a workable, long-term solution.

To that end, Town staff met with EOTW board members Matt Carson and Casey Ward on October 30, 2025, to discuss this partnership concept. EOTW's leadership was receptive and agreed that this proposal is a good direction forward to definitively solve the historic district's refuse issue for the benefit of all Main Street merchants.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Town Council authorize the Town Manager to finalize and execute an Addendum to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Experience Old Town Warrenton (EOTW), based on the attached draft.

This Addendum will formally designate a Town-owned parcel for EOTW to manage and operate a central refuse enclosure, with EOTW assuming all financial, operational, and liability responsibilities.

Staff informed EOTW that the November 1, 2025, deadline for the removal of the existing dumpster has been delayed allowing for the review and execution of this MOU Addendum by all parties, preventing a gap in service for the affected business.

Service Level/Collaborative Impact

This proposal does not create a new municipal service; rather, it provides the necessary foundation for a private, shared service to be managed by the Town's Main Street partner, EOTW.

- **Service Level Impact:** This solution provides a significant visual and sanitary improvement to the historic district, removing unsightly dumpsters from public view. It provides businesses with a viable, code-compliant, and aesthetically appropriate option for refuse disposal.
- **Collaborative Impact:** This action strongly reinforces the Town's partnership with EOTW, leveraging EOTW's mission to support the economic vitality of Old Town. It empowers EOTW to act as the managing entity for its constituent businesses, solving a collective problem that individual merchants may have challenges with on their own.

Policy Direction/Warrenton Plan 2040

- **Policy Direction:** This establishes a policy of creative public-private partnerships. It demonstrates the Town's ability to be a flexible and supportive partner to the business community while remaining a firm steward of the Town Code and public funds.
- **Linkage to Warrenton Plan 2040:** This initiative directly supports key goals of the Warrenton Plan 2040 by:

- **Enhancing the Vitality of Old Town:** A clean, well-maintained streetscape is essential for a successful historic downtown, encouraging tourism and commerce.
- **Preserving Historic Character:** Removing modern, unsightly dumpsters from the historic streetscape is a direct act of aesthetic preservation.
- **Fostering Public-Private Partnerships:** This solution serves as a model for leveraging Town assets (land) and partner organizations (EOTW) to achieve public good without expanding government services.

Legal & Fiscal Impact

Fiscal Impact

- There is **no continued fiscal impact** to the Town. No Town funds will be used for the operation or maintenance of the enclosure.
- The Town's contribution is in-kind, through the provision of a small parcel of land and an enclosure on a concrete pad.
- All costs for the dumpster rental, hauling contracts, and maintenance will be borne by EOTW, which will recoup those costs from the participating businesses.
- If an additional enclosure is requested by EOTW for the opposing side of Main Street, the public works budget will need an appropriation from Council in the amount of \$15,000.

Legal Impact

The proposed action is structured to comply with Town Code 8-21, as the Town is not providing collection or hauling. The attached draft MOU Addendum is the legal instrument that formally transfers all management, operational, and liability responsibilities for the enclosure to Experience Old Town Warrenton, Inc. EOTW will be solely responsible for the enclosure's compliance with all health and safety regulations.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. EOTW MOU Dated February 28, 2025
- B. Draft Addendum to the EOTW MOU