



Data Analysis: Solid Waste Service Usage

Background

The City of Gainesville provides three solid waste services:

1. Garbage
2. Recycling
3. Yard Waste

Currently, the fee structure for these services provides a fixed fee for unlimited recycling (\$2.86/month) and yard waste (\$4.22/month), and a variable fee for garbage ranging from \$18.50-\$37 depending on the size of the cart (See Appendix A). Homeowners who generate more garbage than their cart can contain are cited twice and then automatically upsized to a larger cart. Some residents require 2 carts, which results in doubling the flat rates for recycling and yard waste.

In year 1994, this fee structure was implemented to encourage recycling, and to date has not achieved a measurable impact on recycling behavior.

The data analysis below examines if the current fee structure is equitable to communities relative to their usage of solid waste services.

Data

Data analyzed included the garbage and recycling production of communities along 14 pickup routes. Data included:

- Total households of each route
- Just value (average home value on the route)
- Total Garbage (Tons)
- Total Recycling (Tons)

- Yard waste (Tons)
- Racial demographics of each route

This data is visualized in graphs and a GIS map, which can be found here:

<https://gainesvillefl.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/caa8e70914f9418d8cc499bb71e399a8>

Analysis

Conclusions from data analysis:

1. Neighborhoods with higher average home values recycle more, generate more yard waste and generate less garbage than neighborhoods with lower home values.
2. Lower income neighborhoods have a higher predominance of Black people and people of color
3. Higher income neighborhoods have a higher predominance of White people
4. By providing a fixed fee for recycling and yard waste, and a variable fee for garbage, the city is overcharging communities that generate more trash and use the recycling and yard waste services less. Since these communities tend to be lower income, and more likely to be Black and people of color, the current fee structure is racially inequitable.

Recommended Next Steps

To create a racially equitable fee structure, the City of Gainesville should create a single fixed fee for all solid waste (garbage, recycling, and yard waste). This can be accomplished by including the following text into the upcoming ITB for a 10 year Solid Waste Service Contract:

- (a) The Contractor shall provide one (1) Garbage Cart to each Customer.
 - (1) The Garbage Cart shall remain the property of Contractor, and shall be used by Customers only to dispose of Solid Waste in City's Curbside Collection program.
 - (2) Should a Customer move from their Residential Property, the Garbage Cart shall be left at the Residential Property, and the Customer shall secure the Garbage Carts so that the New Customer will be able to use the Garbage and Recycling Carts. New Customers can upsize or downsize the cart size at no charge within 30 days of move-in.
- (b) The Contractor shall make Garbage Carts available for Customers in three (3) approximate sizes: thirty-five (35), sixty-four (64) and ninety-six (96) gallons. The monthly collection cost shall be the same for any size cart.
 - (1) The City Manager or designee will determine the size of the Garbage Carts that will initially be distributed to each Customer.
 - (2) Customers shall be allowed to exchange their Garbage Cart for a different size. Customers may make one (1) such exchange on or before April 1, 2022 with no fee for exchange or delivery. After that date, there will be a fee to exchange a Garbage Cart, and a fee for delivery, as determined by resolution of the City Commissioners.

Appendix A: Current City of Gainesville Solid Waste Fee Structure

City of Gainesville, FL Ordinance

APPENDIX A - SCHEDULE OF FEES, RATES AND CHARGES^[1]

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Rates: (i)

Uniform curbside service for each single family residence or dwelling unit or living unit, or multifamily unit (any building containing two but not more than four permanent living units) or mobile home unit, per month:

18 gallon cart18.50

35 gallon cart24.00

64 gallon cart29.75

95 gallon cart37.00

(ii)

Other charges:

Account set up charge12.08

Pre-paid approved bag, each, not to exceed2.89

Exchange of cart for larger size13.50

Exchange of cart for smaller size13.50

Fixed cost of service per month (for computing vacation credit)6.04