

Phase II of the City of Valdez Solid Waste Management Plan, as originally discussed in 2019, was designed to reduce the dumpster inventory by approximately 30 dumpsters, allowing the overall program to break even at a certain point. The plan calls for public dumpsters in residential areas to be removed and consolidated into three dumpster pods - two located in town and the other outside the gate at the Baler facility.

Information regarding the implementation of both Phase I and Phase II was communicated by a variety of methods and permanently housed on the City of Valdez Website [\[City of Valdez Solid Waste Management Plan\]](#) beginning in March of 2020.

Included on that webpage are maps depicting locations of the current dumpsters identified to be removed as well as the locations of the proposed dumpster pods. Those maps are attached to this agenda statement as well and labeled: COV Public Use Dumpster Locations - Downtown, COV Public Use Dumpster Locations - Richardson Hwy., COV Public Use Dumpster Locations - Corbin Creek and Robe River Subdivisions, Dumpster Pod Locations - Downtown, and Dumpster Pod Locations - Baler.

The remaining attachment is a copy of the original presentation during a Council work session on 4.16.19.

During the 4.19.22 Council meeting it was requested that Staff consider additional options as to how (or if) to proceed with Phase II of the City of Valdez Solid Waste Management Plan and bring it back to Council on 5.4.22 for official action.

In doing so, Staff identified the following options for Phase II of the City of Valdez Solid Waste Management Plan:

- OPTION A:
 - Continue Phase I efforts; suspend Phase II for future consideration and implementation
- OPTION B:
 - Continue with Phase II implementation as initially proposed
- OPTION C:
 - Implement Phase II as initially proposed; explore operational impacts of increasing curbside pickup to twice weekly
- OPTION D:
 - Implement Phase II in the downtown area of Valdez; status quo with outlying residential neighborhoods; evaluate the effectiveness of Dumpster Pods in downtown area; monitor and document dumpster activity in outlying neighborhoods
- OPTION E:
 - Implement Phase II, with an additional dumpster pod in Robe River Subdivision

In evaluating each option, Staff weighed the merits of the option and considered five (5) impact areas: Financial, Wildlife Issues, Nuisance Mitigation, Operational Impacts, and “Other”.

Financial: The financial/budgetary impact associated with that option

Wildlife Issues: Impacts to wildlife interactions and encounters (primarily bear and bird issues)

Nuisance Mitigation: Ability to monitor or mitigate potential nuisance issues, such as litter surrounding dumpsters or illegally dumped items in or around the dumpsters

Operational Impacts: Impact to operations (primarily Solid Waste) going forward

Other: Includes such things as how the community or individual neighborhoods are likely to react, current issues residents are facing, and safety concerns.

OPTION A:

Continue Phase I efforts; suspend Phase II for future consideration and implementation

This option would essentially result in “status quo” solid waste management for the time being, thereby eliminating the “cost recovery” portion of the initial 2019 proposal, effectively delaying – or eliminating – the forecasted break-even point for the overall program cost.

Financial: Phase I consisted of the costs associated with the program (purchase of WRC’s, upfitting an existing trash truck, purchasing a side-pick trash truck). Phase II was designed to recover the costs by reducing the dumpster inventory. Status quo operations do not allow for meaningful dumpster reduction. Additionally, Public Works traditionally replaces 10 dumpsters a year (inventory is approximately 300 dumpsters, each with an estimated life cycle of 10 years). The 2022 Public Works budget does not include monies to purchase 10 new dumpsters, so they would be maintaining existing inventory and then budgeting for new dumpsters for 2023. The most recent cost estimate of a dumpster is \$8,200. Using historical purchase practices that equates to ~\$ 82,000/year to maintain the status quo.

Wildlife Issues: Phase I of the program was wildly (see what I did there) successful in addressing the animal/garbage relationship with curbside garbage. While bears were the most reported issue, the birds were equally destructive and prevalent in gaining access to garbage left at the curb under the previous solid waste collection process. Reductions in dumpsters continue to reduce potential for habituated bears (fewer locations overall, and easier to monitor and maintain in pods), but the decline in bear/garbage calls – particularly in the downtown area of Valdez - is encouraging and manageable under the current system.

Nuisance Mitigation: Fewer dumpster locations are expected to result in less nuisance issues, such as littering and illegal dumping of items other than household garbage.

Operational Impacts: Nothing would change operationally.

Other: Safety issues surrounding trash trucks going down residential streets would still exist and not be reduced. Citizen outcry for the suspension of Phase II is likely not to happen – perhaps a positive thing in a time when tax assessments community wide is a sensitive subject and cost of living has recently spiked. Additionally, the high snow accumulation this year would likely delay the May 18 implementation date anyhow, as prep work is required at the dumpster pod locations - which are still under snow.

OPTION B:

Continue with Phase II implementation as proposed

This option was the initial plan in 2019, and still has merit today – particularly if the desire is to have the program pay for itself. The plan has some other benefits as well, but the primary reason for Staff continuing to pursue the planned implementation is that it was relayed to Council in 2019 that we would do so - with the idea and intention that the plan would then eventually pay for itself. Some of the recent, more vocal, community input has indicated that those citizens are less concerned with the overall program paying for itself than they are with the thought of losing dumpsters within their neighborhood.

Financial: With the establishment of the dumpster pods, the reduction in dumpster inventory, and the rising costs of steel it is anticipated that employing the initial plan will result in the overall program breaking even in the Fall of 2024.

Wildlife Issues: Reduction in overall dumpsters, and individual dumpster locations, is expected to further reduce the wildlife/garbage encounters and will be easier to monitor and patrol.

Nuisance Mitigation: Reduction in overall dumpsters, and establishment of dumpster pods is expected to reduce the overall nuisance issues. Dumpster pods will be passively monitored with security cameras similar to those around town at the Harbors and Kelsey Dock.

Operational Impacts: Ability to go to Dumpster Pods for trash collection as opposed to two-dozen individual locations have operational efficiencies (less fuel, less wear and tear on trucks, quicker collection times, etc.)

Other: Indications are that individual neighborhoods may be displeased with the removal of dumpsters in their neighborhood. Less heavy truck traffic in cul-de-sac downtown streets represent a decreased liability exposure of encountering kids or animals in the street. Implementing on the heels of increased tax assessments and rising cost of living may result in negative opinions of “The City”. The high snow accumulation this year will likely delay the May 18 implementation date, as prep work is required at the dumpster pod locations - which are still under snow.

OPTION C:

Implement Phase II as initially proposed; explore operational impacts of increasing curbside pickup to twice weekly

The option of increasing curbside pickup to twice weekly was initially included as an option in the 2019 proposal. It would be a viable option and compromise **if** the complaint received from the community was that the WRC's were too small and once a week curbside pickup was insufficient. However, that has not been the case.

The opposite has actually been true – as some people maintain the current WRC's are too big and have requested smaller ones. Input from the community has been focused on the convenience of dumpster proximity, not tied to capacity or curbside containers. Implementing this option would not appear to address the community concerns and would also largely negate the operational efficiencies achieved by deploying Phase I.

Financial: Increasing curbside collection to twice a week would strain the personnel budget of Solid Waste and require more maintenance costs and quicker replacement cycle for equipment. Dumpster reduction would still occur, but the break-even point would be extended beyond 2024.

Wildlife Issues: Reduction in overall dumpsters, and individual dumpster locations, is expected to further reduce the wildlife/garbage encounters and will be easier to monitor and patrol.

Nuisance Mitigation: Reduction in overall dumpsters, and establishment of dumpster pods is expected to reduce the overall nuisance issues. Dumpster pods will be passively monitored with security cameras similar to those around town at the Harbors and Kelsey Dock.

Operational Impacts: Efficiencies gained by Phase I would be largely negated, as staff time for curbside collection would essentially double at what it currently is. Overtime would likely be necessary, causing potential for staff burnout eventually. Maintenance on machinery expected to increase.

Other: Does not appear to address any of the known community concerns with the proposed plan. Increases liability exposure as it requires heavy truck traffic in residential streets at twice the current rate. The high snow accumulation this year will likely delay the May 18 implementation date, as prep work is required at the dumpster pod locations - which are still under snow.

OPTION D:

Implement Phase II in the downtown area of Valdez; status quo with outlying residential neighborhoods; evaluate the effectiveness of Dumpster Pods in downtown area; monitor and document dumpster activity in outlying neighborhoods

This option essentially creates a multi-phased Phase II of the City of Valdez Solid Waste Management Plan. Phase IIA would see the dumpsters in downtown Valdez (identified in the

Attachment) removed, and the two downtown dumpster pods created at the previously identified locations. Utilizing this approach would still allow for a dumpster reduction, thus allowing the cost recovery portion of the plan to occur - just at a slower rate than projected or if the initially proposed Phase II were to be implemented.

The dumpsters along the Richardson Highway and in the outlying subdivisions of Corbin Creek and Robe River would remain as they are, as residents in those locations are required to utilize the Highway to access the Baler dumpster pod under Phase II, whereas residents residing in town can access either of the downtown dumpster pods on foot, ATV/UTV, or in a vehicle traveling at a rate much slower than highway speeds.

Utilizing this approach allows for some cost recovery while also allowing Solid Waste to evaluate the effectiveness of the dumpster pods that were deployed. Phase IIB would consist of removing the dumpsters from the outlying neighborhoods and creating a dumpster pod outside the Baler facility. Depending on analysis and success of Phase IIA, Phase IIB could be deployed in upcoming years or not at all.

Financial: With the establishment of the dumpster pods downtown and the reduction in dumpster inventory, the overall program would eventually reach a break-even point - at this point forecasted to be sometime in late 2026.

Wildlife Issues: Reduction in overall dumpsters, and individual dumpster locations, is expected to further reduce the wildlife/garbage encounters and will be easier to monitor and patrol.

Nuisance Mitigation: Reduction in overall dumpsters, and establishment of dumpster pods downtown is expected to reduce the overall nuisance issues. Dumpster pods will be passively monitored with security cameras similar to those around town at the Harbors and Kelsey Dock.

Solid Waste personnel, as well as Animal Control Officers, and the Code Enforcement Officer will be tasked with monitoring and documenting the dumpster use/abuse in the outlying neighborhoods.

Operational Impacts: Ability to go to Dumpster Pods in downtown for trash collection as opposed to approximately 18 different locations have operational efficiencies (less fuel, less wear and tear on trucks, quicker collection times, etc.).

Other: Indications are that individual neighborhoods may be displeased with the removal of dumpsters in their neighborhood. With partial implementation, it can be expected that those residents downtown voice similar objections to those that have already been heard by outlying neighborhoods. Eliminating heavy truck traffic in cul-de-sac downtown streets for trash collection represents a decreased liability exposure of encountering kids or animals in the street. Implementing on the heels of increased tax assessments and rising cost of living may result in negative opinions of "The City". The high snow accumulation this year will likely delay the May 18 implementation date, as prep work is required at the dumpster pod locations - which are still under snow.

OPTION E:

Implement Phase II, with an additional dumpster pod in Robe River Subdivision

Implementation of this option would allow for a significant reduction in dumpster inventory - merely departing from the original Phase II by creating an additional dumpster pod in Robe River Subdivision. This would theoretically be a compromise with many of the vocal residents in that neighborhood, whose correspondence has gone to both Council and City Administration. Additionally, this option also acknowledges that many residents within that subdivision feel aggrieved or singled out due to communication in November/December of 2021 that informed them their neighborhood dumpsters were being removed as punishment for repeated dumpster misuse. Although that communication was separate from the overall City of Valdez Solid Waste Management Plan, the two have become incapable of being viewed separately.

When evaluating and establishing the locations for the dumpster pods, City of Valdez personnel considered a number of things - the ability to adequately monitor the dumpster pods being one. That is to be accomplished by passive monitoring over surveillance cameras (similar to those at the Kelsey Dock and the Harbors). In order to do so, the pods are required to be near City infrastructure that has proper power, lighting, and network capabilities. Robe River does not have existing infrastructure that meets the minimum requirements to monitor the dumpster pod in the same manner as those located downtown or outside the Baler.

Financial: With the establishment of the dumpster pods downtown and the reduction in dumpster inventory, the overall program would eventually reach a break-even point - at this point forecasted to be sometime in late 2025/early 2026.

Wildlife Issues: Reduction in overall dumpsters, and individual dumpster locations, is expected to further reduce the wildlife/garbage encounters and will be easier to monitor and patrol.

Nuisance Mitigation: Reduction in overall dumpsters, and establishment of dumpster pods downtown is expected to reduce the overall nuisance issues. Dumpster pods will be passively monitored with security cameras similar to those around town at the Harbors and Kelsey Dock. The Robe River dumpster pod would not be able to be monitored in the same manner.

Operational Impacts: Ability to go to Dumpster Pods for trash collection as opposed to approximately 20 + different individual locations have operational efficiencies (less fuel, less wear and tear on trucks, quicker collection times, etc.).

Other: Residents of nearby Corbin Creek subdivision could be expected to question why Robe River is granted a dumpster pod while their neighborhood dumpsters are removed. Eliminating heavy truck traffic in cul-de-sac downtown streets for trash collection represents a decreased liability exposure of encountering kids or animals in the street. Implementing on the heels of increased tax assessments and rising cost of living may result in negative opinions of "The City". The high snow accumulation this year will likely delay the May 18 implementation date, as prep work is required at the dumpster pod locations - which are still under snow.