

## Orange County Commissioners Are Poised To Waste Millions On Waste Transfer Station

Last month, the community group Orange County Voice presented a cost analysis to the county commissioners which clearly demonstrated that the county can save \$750,000 to \$1.5 million a year if we outsource our trash to vendors - at least until we find a sustainable solution for managing our trash after the landfill is closed. We now have better information and believe that using vendors will save taxpayers even more!

Vendors effectively handle roughly half of the curbside waste collection for Orange County. They handle all the waste collection for UNC - including disposing it into a vendor transfer station in Durham.

It's hard to determine exactly how much taxpayers will save using vendors because the county has yet to provide estimates to build and operate a waste transfer station in the rural county. The facility is certain to need expensive, custom features because there's no water, sewer or road infrastructure nearby. Plus, in addition to hauling our trash to a far away landfill, we'll have to haul wastewater in and out on a regular basis.

As concerns about taxes grow throughout the county, residents are beginning to question whether a role exists for the county at all - especially after the landfill is closed. Can the towns get better deals on their own? Is the best vendor for Chapel Hill also the best vendor for Hillsborough? Of course there are complexities, but certainly these questions should be answered before the county spends any more tax money on an unnecessary project which will cause irreparable damage to the rural character of the area and the surrounding community.

Orange County citizens are committed to environmentally, socially and fiscally responsible waste management. An unsustainable waste transfer station in the rural county doesn't support our vision. Let's use vendors to handle our trash until we find a solution that fits our values and our budget!

Bonnie Hauser, for  
Orange County Voice

### *At a glance - Estimated Costs for Vendor versus County-operated Waste Transfer Station*

Cost Item	Vendor	County Operated	Comments
<b>Estimated Annual Cost to Taxpayers</b>			
<b>Option 1 - WTS operated for 10 years (through 2021)</b>			
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$2.5-\$3.6 million per year</i>	<i>\$5.0- \$6.1 million per year</i>	
<i>per ton</i>	<i>\$40 - \$58 per ton</i>	<i>\$80 - \$98 per ton</i>	200 tons per day/312 days per year
<b>Option 2 - WTS operated for 20 years (through 2031)</b>			
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$2.5-\$3.6 million per year</i>	<i>\$4.4- \$5.4 million per year</i>	
<i>per ton</i>	<i>\$40 - \$58 per ton</i>	<i>\$71 - \$87 per ton</i>	200 tons per day/312 days per year
<b>Cost Breakdown</b>			
<i>Cost to build a WTS</i>	n/a	\$9.5 to \$14 million	one time cost
<i>Cost to operate a WTS</i>	\$2.5 - \$3.1 million per year	\$3.5 - \$3.8 million per year	includes hauling and landfill
<i>per ton</i>	\$40 - \$50 per ton	\$56- \$60 per ton	

<b>Cost to towns</b>	\$0 - \$500,000 per year	\$500,000 - \$1 million per year	cost to haul trash to WTS
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**Vendor Vs County Operated Waste Transfer Station  
Detail Cost Analysis and Assumptions**

Cost item	Vendor	County Operated	Comments/assumptions
<b>Twenty year view</b>			
Estimated annual cost	\$2.5 - \$3.6 million per year	\$4.4 - \$5.4 million per year	assumes 20 year life of WTS
Per ton rate	\$40-\$58 per ton	\$71 - \$87 per ton	assumes 20 year life of WTS
<b>Ten year view</b>			
Estimated annual cost	same	\$5.0 - \$6.1 million per year	assumes 10 year life of WTS
Per ton rate (if 10 years)	same	\$80 - \$98 per ton	assumes 10 year life of WTS
<b>Build a WTS - one time costs</b>			
Cost to site and plan	none	Unknown	
Land	none	\$2 million to \$3 million	
Building	none	\$7 million to \$10 million	
Road Improvements (NC 54)	none	\$250,000-\$500,000	
Other (professional fees, miscellaneous)	negligible	\$250,000- \$500,000	
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>included in rate</b>	<b>9.5 million to \$14 million</b>	costs for vendor facilities included
<b>Per ton</b>	included in rate	\$7.50 to \$11 per ton	assumes 20 year life of facility
<b>Per ton (interim)</b>	n/a	\$15.00 to \$22 per ton	assumes 10 year life of facility
<b>Operate a waste transfer station - annual costs</b>			
Cost to operate	included in rate	\$1 million per year	includes staff, maintenance, amortized equipment
Haul trash long distance and dispose at landfill	included in rate	\$2.5 to \$2.8 million per year (\$40-\$45 per ton)	Hauling fees: \$0.10 per mile per ton, 150 miles (\$15 per ton) Landfill fees: \$25-\$30 per ton
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$2.5 million to \$3.1 million</b>	<b>\$3.5 million to \$3.8 million</b>	
<b>Per Ton</b>	<b>\$40-\$50 per ton</b>	<b>\$56- \$60 per ton</b>	
<b>Cost to towns</b>			
	0 - \$500,000 per year (\$0 - \$8 per ton)	\$500,000 to \$1,000,000 per year (\$8-16 per ton)	Towns already use vendors to collect half of their trash. Assumes no additional cost for vendors to haul to their own WTSs
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$0 - \$500,000</b>	<b>\$500,000 - \$1,000,000</b>	
<b>Per ton</b>	<b>\$0 - \$8 per ton</b>	<b>\$8-\$16 per ton</b>	
<b>tons/day</b>	200	200	
<b>tons/year</b>	62,400	62,400	