

MAYOR LEVAR M. STONEY'S PROPOSAL FOR CLEANING UP RVA AND IMPROVING PUBLIC TRASH AND LEAF COLLECTION SERVICES / FAQs

Richmond Mayor Levar M. Stoney has submitted his FY 2018 budget proposal to City Council, which includes a new initiative to help keep our city clean and improve public trash and leaf collection services. This proposal is as follows:

Right now, your everyday trash (“solid waste”) is picked up weekly. Recycling is picked up every other week. Citizens pay \$20 a month for these services. Unfortunately, the two systems in place now to collect bulk and brush refuse (by request) and to operate the vacuum leaf collection service are overtasked and under-funded.

FIXING WHAT DOESN'T WORK. To help pay for long overdue and desperately needed improvements to the bulk and brush refuse service, as well as for leaf collection — *and to lessen the associated cost to fix what isn't working* — the City of Richmond would implement a two part solution to make collection of bulk, brush and leaf collection *reliable, consistent and efficient*:

- 1) The monthly service charge would be increased by \$2.50 a month citywide.
- 2) Citizens would be required to bag their leaves, and encouraged to do so in an environmentally responsible way.

Weekly solid waste pickup and recycling schedules would remain the same; however, the current bulk and brush refuse ticket system would end; it currently generates over 18,000 ticket requests a year, can take up to 8 weeks or more to be completed during the peak season and is managed by an outdated methodology.

The Stoney administration and city professionals have engaged homeowners and city residents to come up with a solution that follows best practices and is equitable, affordable and most likely to succeed. No longer would fallen leaves clutter city streets for months on end and contribute to clogging city sewer and drainage systems. Nor would the accumulation of bulk trash be visible within our communities for long periods of time.

Bulk and brush trash and *bagged* leaves would be picked up consistently and reliably, collected every other week *year-round* on the same rotation with city recycling.

FAQs:

Q: Does the city expect elderly residents and citizens with disabilities to bag their leaves?

A: No. With the expectation everyone will bag their leaves, residents who are physically unable to do so would be able to contact the city's Neighbor-to-Neighbor team to see if assistance is available.

Q: How can leaves be bagged in an environmentally responsible way?

A: If passed, the City of Richmond will hold special events to inform the public of environmentally safe ways to dispose of their leaves. The city would also provide, on a first-come first-served basis, paper lawn and leaf bags to promote environmentally responsible leaf disposal. Distribution locations will be forthcoming.

Q: Will leaves in plastic bags still be picked up?

A: Yes. All bagged leaves would still be picked up on the city recycling day scheduled for every other week.

Q: Is the additional \$2.50 per month charge fair for lower income citizens?

A: Yes. Maintaining the broken system will eventually cost even more, due to serious lacks in efficiency and increasing backlogs.

Q: Will the current \$50 charge to pick-up and dispose of appliances be increased?

A: No. The incurred cost to the city for appliance disposal and the associated process would not change.

Q: How will the bulk and brush program be enforced?

A: Making this new program work will require citizens to actively participate. Bulk and brush enforcement would remain the same; non-compliance would continue to result in a code violation based on city ordinance Sec. 11-103 – Unlawful Accumulation.

Q: Will leaves also be picked up in alleys for those with alley collection service?

A: Yes. Bagged leaves would be collected within alleyways.

Q: What if the number of leaf bags or refuse is so much it blocks the alley?

A: Citizens must be responsible for the amount of refuse or leaf bags left for collection, as it is unlawful to block any city sidewalk, alley or thoroughfare.

Q: Can residents continue disposing of leaves themselves at the East Richmond Road Convenience Center and Maury Street Landfill?

A: Only loose leaves, or leaves within biodegradable bags (such as paper), are accepted at Maury Street or E. Richmond Road. All bagged leaves are accepted at the 3506 N. Hopkins Road Transfer Station.

Q: How much does it currently cost annually for the city to collect leaves?

A: The city has spent between \$1.7M and \$2.2M annually over the past decade on leaf collection.

Q: How much will the city save by making these changes?

A: This initiative would result in the city being able to spend \$1.05M to \$1.55M annually towards other city services.

Q What is the maximum number of bags the city will collect per residence each week?

A: There would be no maximum.

Q: Will residents be able to request/pay for a special bagged leaf pick-up outside of the weekly scheduled collection?

A: No.