



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 20-1905, **Version:** 1

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### **Subject:**

Leaf Collection Program Evaluation

### **BACKGROUND SUMMARY :**

The Town of Vienna (Town) operates a Leaf Collection Program that begins on October 1<sup>st</sup> each year and concludes on March 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year. The program is managed within the Public Works Department utilizing the Town's Street Maintenance workforce under the direction of the Operations Superintendent, the Deputy Director of Public Works, and ultimately the Director of Public Works. The program provides leaf collection service to all residents within the Town's corporate limits, the processing of leaves into mulch, and delivery of the mulch to both residents and businesses within the Town on an as requested basis. Any mulch left over is currently hauled to businesses that will accept the material for free before March 31<sup>st</sup> each year, which is the date the Town's operating permit expires. The program is funded by general tax revenues and there is no cost to the residents or businesses at the time of collection or delivery.

### **OVERVIEW :**

The Town engaged NewGen Strategies and Solutions, LLC (NewGen) to evaluate the Town's Leaf Collection Program and answer several specific questions:

- How much does it cost the Town to operate its current Program?
- What are the policies, methodologies, and costs of similar programs in the surrounding area?
- How much would it cost to conduct leaf operations elsewhere, such as at another site in or out of town?
- How much would it cost the Town to run a marketing program to encourage residents to mulch leaves on their own property?
- Is there an environmental benefit to mulching on a resident's own property?
- Would having residents mulch on their own property result in cost reductions, such as reductions in labor and equipment costs to collect and process leaves?
- Would there be a cost and operational benefit to limit collection to three passes rather than the current four to six?
- Is there a more cost-effective way to run the program while maintaining the current level of service?
- Should the Town divert a certain amount of leaves to landscape companies when picked up, instead of after being stockpiled and ground?
- If the Town stopped leaf collection and or delivery what would the cost (if any) to the Town be?

The attached report details NewGen's evaluation and our findings, conclusions, and recommendations related to the questions above.

### **SUMMARY/STAFF IMPRESSIONS :**

With recent news that our primary leaf disposal site is closing effective Nov 1, 2020, the Town must be prepared to incur additional costs for disposal for leaves. Staff is seeking alternative disposal

options, including nearby nurseries or composting facilities that will accept leaf mulch for free or minimal cost. Staff seeks Council's guidance on future changes to the much program.

**RECOMMENDATION :**

Staff recommends continuing the leaf collection and mulching program and either repairing the existing tub grinder or contracting out the mulching process.