

## Misuse continues at city compost site



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Trouble still grows for the city council related to unauthorized dumping at Hastings compost location off West State Road. Cameras are in place and have been useful in tracking down non-resident users, requiring them to remove their debris from the site. However, more needs to be done before added costs to city taxpayers will force the closing of the service to city residents.

"We continue to see a large volume of both compostable and non-compostable material being deposited both by city and non-city residents," city manager Jeff Mansfield said.

Though the site is for compostable material, giant tree trunks and other material will take decades to degrade unless the city brings in special machinery to grind them down. He said the cost of renting equipment for this purpose is very high.

Lee Hays, director of public services, presented five options and their estimated annual costs as possible solutions.

The first option would be biweekly pickup, every other Monday, at residents' homes. The estimated cost for two DPS staff and two trucks is \$17,920.

A second option would be monthly residential pickup for seven months. The estimated costs for four staff members and two trucks is \$14,560.

A third option is resident drop-off behind the department of public services garage. The estimated cost of one staff member, one loader and one truck is \$18,480.

A fourth option is additional gates and secure gate access with a weekly code provided to residents. Construction materials, getting power to the site and staff hours are estimated at \$7,200, with no additional expenses in following years other than the cost of electricity.

The fifth option is to continue operating as is but to staff the compost site Saturdays. The cost of one DPS staff member, one loader and other equipment is \$7,560 annually.

No action was taken by the city council, pending further information on secure access options and refinement of costs.

Planning commission chair Dave Hatfield attended the city council meeting to discuss what he and other planning commission members believe is a misunderstanding of a draft ordinance regarding the location of new churches.

The ordinance outlined the allowance of a special-use permit for churches in certain districts, including the downtown business district. The draft was forwarded by the planning commission to the city council for review early May and was sent back to the planning commission listing several areas of concern.

After a lengthy discussion, the planning commission chose to send it back to the city council without changes.

“Actually, we don't have a recommendation on the ordinance, per se, today,” Hatfield told the council. “Rather, following further discussion with Jeff Mansfield, it's our thought that we would like to proceed with a special session to talk about special uses.”

Hatfield said a special-use permit provides a great deal of control regarding where a church would be allowed.

No action was taken on the draft ordinance. A final decision is pending a special session of the planning commission and the city council, with consultant Rebecca Harvey available to answer questions.

A Hastings Dog Park focus committee will begin discussions related to dog park rules and operation and establishing a permanent committee to oversee the park. The dog park has remained open following the dissolution of the contract agreement between the city and the Dog Park Companions. The city has continued to provide maintenance and will remain in control of the site.