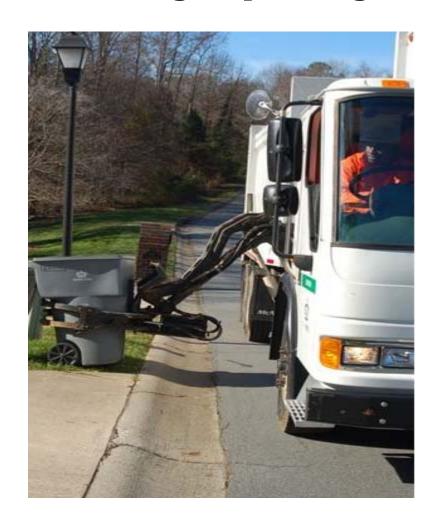


# Solid Waste Services FY11 Strategic Operating Plan



# **Solid Waste Services FY11 Strategic Operating Plan**

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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### Introduction

The City of Charlotte Solid Waste Services Key Business (SWS) makes every effort to excel in quality solid waste management. In FY2011, SWS has reorganized its business service



models to eliminate collection zones that was the structure used under the prior managed competition model. Instead of collection zones, City crews will provide weekly collection service citywide for garbage, yard waste and bulky items. Inland Service Corporation, a private sector solid waste company, will collect recyclables citywide. Garbage and yard waste are collected from the curb on the same day of the week; bulky items, white goods and tires are collected within 7 days of call-in. Recyclables are collection on the same day as the other services, but is provided on a bi-weekly basis. Disabled residents may request backyard garbage

and recyclable collection with the recommendation of a certified physician and receive the service upon verification of the need by City staff.

Recyclable collection is new and improved with a change from a dual system to a single stream program. A big advantage of the single stream program is the added convenience that separation of recyclables is no longer required before placing the items in the recycling container. Residents have been issued a green 95 gallon rollout container for recyclables. Some residents with space issues can still use the smaller 18-gallon recycling bins. The new single stream program is expected to increase residential recycling tonnage by at least 20%. In addition to residential collection service, SWS provides garbage collection for businesses that produce no more than 512 gallons of garbage weekly, collects dead animals and tires; sweeps and removes litter from streets and right-of-way areas. SWS also participates in neighborhood cleanups and other specialized cleaning programs including continual maintenance of the Central Business District.

The City currently contracts with Republic Waste Services to collect refuse and recyclables from multi-family communities having 30 or more residential units that use dumpster or compactor bulk containers. The City also contracts with Republic Waste Services to provide multifamily communities with scheduled bulky-item pickup service. In addition, the City has purchase and maintenance contracts with Otto Container Management to supply new garbage and recycling rollout containers and maintenance all rollout garbage and recyclable containers used by residents.

The Contract Services Division monitors daily contract field operations to ensure contract compliance and customer satisfaction. This area also manages the multi-family collection contracts for complexes having 30 or more residential units. In addition, SWS receives code enforcement support of applicable solid waste ordinances from a collaborative agreement with Neighborhood Development Key Business. SWS Public Service Division provides public education and awareness about community outreach, printed materials, and media-related services. In support of key business activities, SWS Administration and Technology Divisions provide the necessary and mainly behind the scenes comprehensive support that is needed to keep SWS activities running smoothly.

#### **Solid Waste Services Vision Statement**

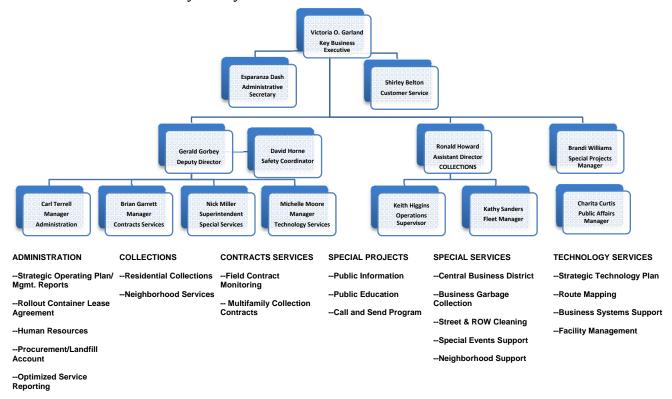
We will be a leader in the solid waste industry and the service provider of choice for the City of Charlotte.

## **Solid Waste Services Mission Statement**

We will partner with the community to deliver competitive and quality solid waste services that promote an attractive and healthy environment.

## **Organizational Structure**

Solid Waste Services Key Business places its greatest emphasis on delivering exemplary service to its customers that enhances the City of Charlotte aesthetically as well as protects public health and the environment in a safe and cost effective manner. The SWS mission is administered under the leadership of the SWS Key Business Executive (KBE) and a SWS Leadership Team that consists of a SWS Deputy Director, SWS Assistant Director, Administration Manager, Special Services Superintendent, Contract Services Manager, Technology Services Manager, Special Projects Manager and Public Service Manager, with assistance from dedicated staff. The organizational chart below lists the SWS functional structure with a summary of Key Business services and activities.



## **Some Key Issues and Challenges**

- Preparation for the **reorganization of the SWS business model** which consolidated the residential collection of garbage, yard waste, and bulky items by City crews and outsourcing recyclable collection to a private waste company was a daunting task that ended with a smooth and successful transition by operations. Preparation included collection day changes for many residents and a procurement process for development and award of a citywide residential recycling collection contract to Inland Service Corporation. Despite a hiring freeze during the preparation time that required an extended use of temporary staff, employees overall increased their per cart hourly collection standard and reduced operating expenses in all collection zones.
- Preparation for new contracts for the purchase and maintenance of rollout containers needed for a new residential single stream recycling program and garbage container replacements involved securing new contracts and coordinating the distribution of approximately 200,000 new recycling containers to residents. Securing new contracts took longer than desired and caused a delay in the preparation timeline. However, the new single stream recycling program began on schedule.
- Maintaining employee morale in an extended national economic downturn that resulted in no pay increases for City employees was also a test. Employees had to adjust to changes required by a reorganization of the SWS business model, planning for single stream recycling, new rollout containers, and the move to a new SWS facility all of which demanded an abundance of planning and execution time. Activities were scheduled to keep employees informed as much as possible of pending changes. Results showed that staff performance and commitment to doing a good job were more than adequate to meet the challenges that arose during the past fiscal year.
- Extended use of temporary staff to fill positions affected by the hiring freeze was a challenge to service delivery standards because of the necessity of having to use a higher level of inexperienced, temporary labor to staff collection routes and perform other core duties. Before the City imposed a mandatory freeze due to the economic downturn, SWS had frozen some vacancies in preparation for keeping some displaced East Zone employees if the East Collection Contract was loss. To address the problem, SWS implemented a targeted training program designed to help temporary employees get up to speed more quickly to assure a continuation of high value service delivery.
- Having only one landfill available was another challenge for SWS collection operations. Trucks working in areas other than the North Zone (which is closest to the landfill) regularly consumed greater amounts of fuel to make long trips to the landfill. Furthermore, the additional travel time reduces productivity for these trucks which had to travel large distances during peak traffic periods. Having another landfill or transfer station at another location would help alleviate this problem. The ReVenture Project may offer a workable solution.
- Effective public education and awareness communicated of a diverse population about how to properly access and use available solid waste services will be a challenge especially as citizens make the adjustment to the reorganization plan and single-stream recycling.
- The growth of residential housing and other major developments in the Center City will continue to create more and more challenges for our Center City maintenance crews. Since staffing levels have not increased, keeping pace with cleaning and maintenance demands will become increasingly difficult in the future.

#### STRATEGIC PLANNING AND BUSINESS PROCESSES

## **Recent Accomplishments**

Solid Waste Services has been successful in many quality solid waste service initiatives that contribute to a healthy and more attractive environment for the City of Charlotte and its residents. The list below highlights some of Solid Waste Services recent accomplishments.

- SWS successfully **reorganized its business model** to be able to deliver more comprehensive service with the elimination of invisible service boundaries. The change will allow SWS to allocate its resources more efficiently. The change includes SWS being the service provider for garbage, yard waste and bulky item collections and Inland Service Corporation being the service provider for recyclable collection. The reorganization is projected to save the City \$4.68 million over 10 years.
- SWS **implemented a new single stream recycling collection program** that is projected to increase recycling participation by at least 20 %. Single-stream recycling collection program is projected to produce one-year savings/cost avoidance of \$3.1 million and ten-year savings/cost avoidance of \$43.35 million. Program preparation included negotiating a rollout cart management agreement with Otto Container Management and the development of an RFP for the purchase and distribution of almost 200,000 new rollout recycling carts in time to the launch the program on July 1, 2010. The success of the project required extensive collaboration and support from Mecklenburg County Solid Waste, the City Manager's Office, Office of the City Attorney, Budget and Evaluation, Business Support Services, Internal Audit and Otto.
- SWS achieved a Citywide Litter Index rating of 1.62. This rating is awarded by Keep America Beautiful, Inc., and serves as an assessment of a city's cleanliness. The rating is awarded on a scale of 1.0 to 4.0 with 1.0 being the highest possible rating. Charlotte has a national reputation as a very clean city and the current rating shows that SWS remains a national leader in solid waste management.
- All collection zones had yearend operating savings.
- SWS for the tenth consecutive year <u>maintained collection costs less than the statewide averages</u> as reported in the Institute of Government North Carolina Performance Measurement Report.
- SWS residential refuse collection cost-per-ton collected of \$63, was lower than the statewide average of \$98;
- SWS residential recyclables collection cost-per-ton collected of \$239, was lower than the statewide average cost of \$268;
- SWS curbside yard waste collection cost-per-collection point of \$34 was lower than the statewide average of \$62;
- SWS refuse collection complaints per every 1,000 collection points were 68% lower than the statewide average;
- SWS collected 2,423 tons of refuse per full time equivalent (FTE), compared with 1,409 tons per FTE statewide.
- The installation of GPS tracking devices on all collection vehicles continued to provide enhanced performance data for management decision-making capacity that helped lead to lower operating costs. The tracking devices have the capability of capturing performance data that previously was not possible. The devices provided critical real time operating data from collection routes.

- After seven years of existence, the SWS Speakers Bureau continues to be an excellent resource to educate residents about services provided by Solid Waste. Throughout the year, SWS steadily received requests for community awareness presentations.
- As part of a comprehensive strategy to increase recycling participation, SWS expanded special event recycling initiatives. In partnership with Charlotte Center City Partners, Mecklenburg County Government, and various event sponsors, SWS regularly provided cardboard and waste cooking oil recycling services at Center City events. Recycling services at Special Events were expanded to include glass, aluminum, and plastic. Because of expanded recycling efforts, 60.49 tons of materials were recycled. This exceeded the SWS Balanced Scorecard goal of 26.5 tons by 128%. Over 19 tons of materials were recycled at this year's Speed Street Event alone.
- SWS was recognized during the 2010 Speed Street Opening Ceremony for outstanding performance in supporting the successful expansion of recycling during the 2009 Speed Street Event. The International Special Events Society Greater Charlotte Chapter selected the Division to receive an EVIE Award for "Best Green Event" because of the "environmentally friendly practices implemented" at the previous year event.
- SWS collaborated with Bojangles, the Carolina Panthers, Mecklenburg County, Charlotte Center City Partners, Coca Cola, and parking lot operators in the Stadium Tailgate Recycling Program to recycle over 30 tons of waste from tailgating activities in the vicinity of the stadium during this past football season.
- SWS continued its collaboration with the Charlotte Apartment Association and Mecklenburg County to further initiatives aimed at increasing recycling at multi-family complexes and reducing recycling contamination. The ultimate goal is to encourage multifamily managers and residents to place stronger emphasis on the value of recycling and recognize the importance of reducing litter and contamination at the collection sites. Mecklenburg County provided Solid Waste Services with 5,000 recycling "tote bags" in late FY 2009, to be used in multifamily educational initiatives. Staff distributed the bags at selected sites to encourage residents to recycle more. SWS met its Balanced Scorecard goal of conducting quarterly campaigns focusing on expanding multifamily recycling.
- SWS continue to provide outstanding cleaning services in the Central Business District, The Historic South End, and along the Historic Trolley Line that enhanced Charlotte's reputation as a clean, well-maintained city. As a measure of success, SWS achieved an outstanding score of 4.8 on the annual Center City Performance Survey. The survey has a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the best score possible.
- SWS Laborer Trevon Rhine was chosen by the Solid Waste Division of the NC Chapter of the American Public Works Association to receive the Chapter's 2010 APWA Herman Drake Award. The Herman Drake Award identifies the Solid Waste "Employee of the Year" for North Carolina and requires demonstrated achievements, accomplishments, character, self-improvement and service contributed to the best interest of the community in the field of Solid Waste.

# **Links to Corporate Strategy**

#### Serve the Customer.

Currently, SWS provides residential service to over 200,000 single-family households, over 100,000 multi-family households and approximately 4,000 businesses within the City of Charlotte. Services include the weekly collection and disposal of garbage, bulky-item collection, yard waste and the delivery and repair of rollout containers. Additionally, SWS provides street-sweeping services, special event clean ups, downtown business district maintenance and a myriad of other programs and services that serve our customers.

#### Run The Business.

SWS recognizes the need for its customers to reap the benefits of sound, effective business practices, as it develops new and ongoing programs and services. SWS anticipates that it will fulfill its service commitments as well as provide a quality level of service to its customers. Through the development of collaborative initiatives, cooperation with internal and external partners, utilization of technology tools and resources, and the streamlining of processes, SWS will be successful in providing the highest level of overall service delivery.

## Manage Resources.

SWS places a high priority on deliver the best service at the lowest possible cost to its customers. SWS continues make process improvements that have reduced operating expenses. The recent reorganization of its business model and the implementation of a single stream recycling program is expected produce significant budget savings or cost avoidance over the next ten years and continue SWS trend of making the best use of available resources. SWS is also committed to supporting the Small Business Enterprise Program that supports and encourages local business growth.

## **Develop Employees.**

SWS is keenly aware that its overall success hinges upon its ability to provide employees with the tools necessary to deliver optimum service. Therefore, SWS seeks opportunities to

groom, develop and promote employees from within the organization through a myriad of training and development programs. SWS also considers its employees overall wellness as a critical part of its ability to perform services. Therefore SWS has an active wellness program to ensure that employees are informed about the rigors of the job and how overall health decisions impact daily operational roles and responsibilities.



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| <b>Corporate Objective</b>            | KBU Initiative   | Measure   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| Environmental Focus<br>Area           | Improve neighborhood appearance and raise public awareness about solid waste services. | Conduct educational initiatives for 25% of 16 garbage routes identified as needing intervention to improve collection efficiency. |
| Develop<br>Collaborative<br>Solutions | Develop effective alliances with internal and external partners.                       | Achieve citywide litter index rating of 2.0 or less on the Keep America Beautiful annual assessment.                              |
| Optimize Business<br>Processes        | Improve operational efficiencies.  | Maintain an operator average garbage cart collection rate of 120 carts per hour for residential routes.                           |
| Wellness                              | Promote wellness in worksite environment.  | Provide annual training on specific health related issues to no less than 95% of all SWS employees.                               |



# **SERVICE DELIVERY**

# **Core Service Areas**

Solid Waste Services Key Business provides weekly collection service to over 200,000 single-family households, over 100,000 multi-family households and approximately 4,000 businesses. SWS' mission is to deliver competitive service that promotes an attractive and healthy environment.



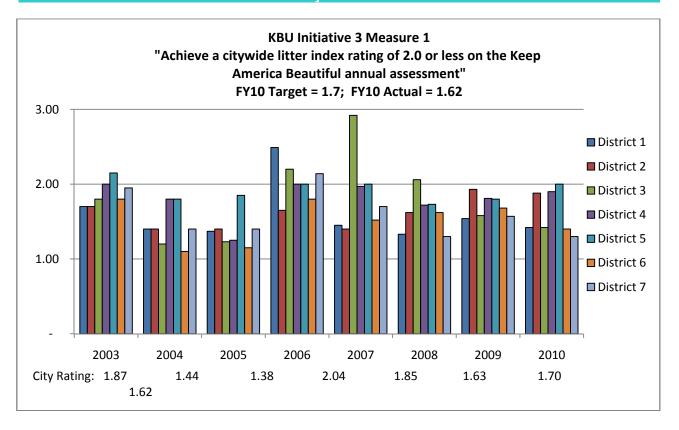






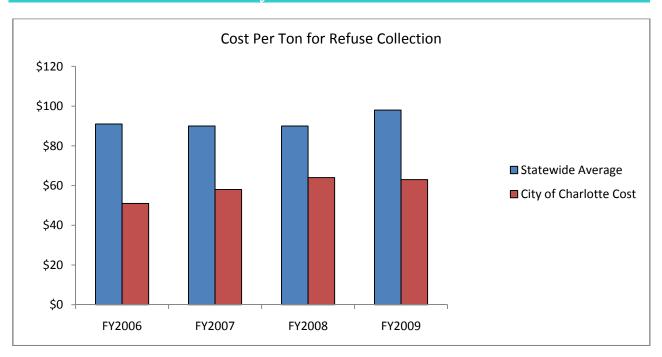
| ACTIVITY               | SERVICE RESPONSIBILITY   |  |  |
|------------------------|--|--|--|
| ADMINISTRATION         | Supports Key Business activities through coordinated strategic planning and business management of budgetary, fiscal control, optimization, contracts, landfill and human resource activities. Administers the Rollout Container purchase and maintenance contracts.   |  |  |
| COLLECTIONS            | Provides weekly collection service to residential single-family units and multi-family complexes of less than 30 units. Collection service includes pickup of residential garbage, yard waste and bulky trash items. Uses special unit to provide neighborhood services such as unscheduled bulky-item collection. |  |  |
| SPECIAL SERVICES       | Cleans city-maintained streets and right-of-ways, supports special events, manages the infrastructure and the cleanliness of the Central Business District, collects small business refuse, dead animals and provides public trash receptacles. Provides maintenance for bus stops and trolley corridor.           |  |  |
| PUBLIC SERVICE         | Supports Key Business activities through the development and implementation of public affairs programs, public education initiatives and media-related services.   |  |  |
| CONTRACT<br>SERVICES   | Monitors activities of the outsourced residential recyclables collection contract; manages multi-family collection contracts for complexes having 30 or more residential units; supports daily field operations.   |  |  |
| TECHNOLOGY<br>SERVICES | Supports Key Business activities by route development and the management, coordination and implementation of information technology based operations.  |  |  |
| SAFETY AND<br>TRAINING | Coordinates internal safety and training activities and facilitates the activities for the Accident Prevention Team.   |  |  |
| CUSTOMER SERVICE       | Handles complex solid waste service requests related to service misses, bulky item collection, new service, rollout cart maintenance and other action requests forwarded from the 311 Customer Service Call Center.  |  |  |

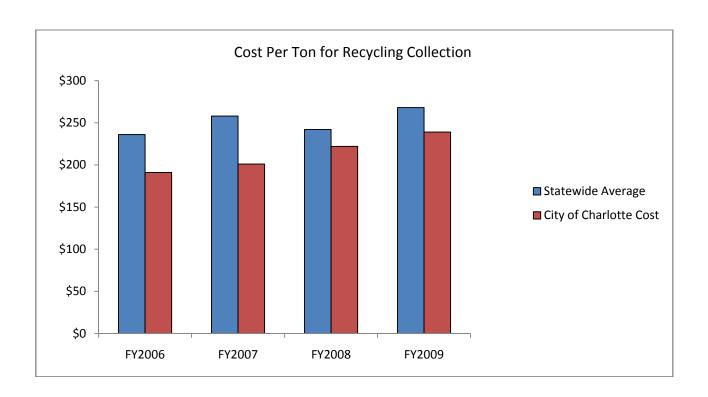
# **Selected Key Business Trends**





# **Selected Key Business Trends Continued**





City of Charlotte and Statewide average costs are from the North Carolina Local Government Performance Measurement Project managed by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Institute of Government

#### BALANCED SCORECARD AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

#### **SERVE THE CUSTOMER**

#### **KBU INITIATIVE 1**

Improve neighborhood appearance and raise public awareness about solid waste services.

Measure 1.

Conduct educational initiatives for 25% of 16 garbage routes identified as needing intervention to improve collection proficiency.

Solid Waste Services will implement educational initiatives for routes on which customers are in poor compliance with SWS item preparation procedures. Four (4) routes will be selected each fiscal year from among the 16 most challenged garbage collection routes that SWS serves. The goal of these comprehensive, educational initiatives is to improve customer adherence to SWS procedures. This will result in improved efficiency and service delivery along these routes.

CSC Linkage: Strengthen Neighborhoods

#### Measure 2.

Collect solid waste from the City's right-of-ways greater than or equal to the previous 5-year average of 5,807 tons of waste collected.

SWS will measure its performance in right-of-way collection to gauge the effectiveness of its resource allocation for right-of-way cleaning programs and to use the benchmark as a measurement tool to track month-to-month and year-to-year success. The areas to be measured will include; illegal dump cleanups (including dumped yard waste), right-of-way litter collection, street sweeping and special event cleanups.

CSC Linkage: Strengthen Neighborhoods

#### **KBU INITIATIVE 2**

Promote recycling participation.

#### Measure 1.

Increase the number of complexes on the Multifamily and Public Facilities Refuse Contract that recycle by 5 each quarter.

SWS continues to establish partnerships with multi-family properties to increase recycling participation within these communities. The work of the partnership follows a comprehensive effort that has included presentations, written materials, and other tools to encourage residents to increase their recycling participation. An increase in recycling will reduce the amount of waste disposed of in landfills.

CSC Linkage: Safeguard the Environment

### Measure 2.

Collect recyclable waste during city-supported special events held in the Center City in excess of the prior 2-year average of 43.5 tons of recyclables collected in FY09 and FY10.

SWS successfully implemented a pilot recycling program during a Center City event in FY08. Because of the success of the pilot program, this initiative is now a regular task performed during City-supported special events in the Center City.

CSC Linkage: Safeguard the Environment

#### Measure 3.

### Increase residential recycling tonnage by 20% over FY10 total.

Beginning this fiscal year 2011, SWS implemented a new single stream recycling program that is expected to increase residential recycling tonnage by at least 20%. This measure will track progress towards the achievement of that goal.

CSC Linkage: Safeguard the Environment

## **RUN THE BUSINESS**

#### **KBU INITIATIVE 3**

Develop effective alliances with internal and external partners.

#### Measure 1.

# Achieve citywide litter index rating of 2.0 or less on the Keep America Beautiful annual assessment.

One of the most obvious signs of neglect and deterioration in any given area is the presence of widespread litter. Along with detracting from aesthetic beauty, neighborhood litter contributes to diminished vitality, lower property values and the perception of higher crime. The support of Keep Charlotte Beautiful initiatives through enhanced right-of-way cleaning, street sweeping, neighborhood initiatives in collaboration with the Neighborhood and Economic Development Key Business and neighborhood organizations, and public education will enable SWS to achieve a citywide index rating of 2.0 or less.

CSC Linkage: Develop Collaborative Solutions

#### Measure 2.

# Conduct educational sessions for 50% of 20 neighborhoods participating in the Call and Send Program.

This public education initiative called, "The Call and Send Program" is designed to get neighborhood leaders to report unscheduled bulky items for collection and follow up by letter with customers who are not scheduling requests for service. SWS works with neighborhood associations in targeted communities to reduce unscheduled bulky-item setouts.

CSC Linkage: Develop Collaborative Solutions

#### **KBU INITIATIVE 4**

Improve customer satisfaction with service delivery.

#### Measure 1.

# Maintain an average number of garbage collection complaints less than or equal to the FY10 rate of 14.04 per every 1,000 units serviced.

SWS will use the monthly optimization report to monitor types of service complaints and share with operating staff in an effort to improve service delivery and enhance customer satisfaction.

CSC Linkage: Enhance Customer Service

#### Measure 2.

# Maintain an average number of yard waste collection complaints less than or equal to the FY10 rate of 64.58 per every 10,000 units serviced.

SWS will use the monthly optimization report to monitor types of service complaints and share with operating staff in an effort to improve service delivery and enhance customer satisfaction.

CSC Linkage: Enhance Customer Service

#### **KBU INITIATIVE 5**

Improve operational efficiencies.

#### Measure 1.

Maintain an operator average garbage cart collection rate of 120 carts per hour for residential routes.

SWS in FY09 benchmarked collection performance standards in each of the respective 5 service programs to ensure maximum efficiency. Evaluations led to a collection cart per hour standard for operators that would increase productivity and maximize available resources.

CSC Linkage: Optimize business Processes

#### Measure 2.

Reduce bulky item route completion hours by 5% less than in FY10 using routing technology to adjust routes for better collection efficiency.

SWS established this measure to improve performance of bulky item collection route completion.

### **MANAGE RESOURCES**

#### **KBU INITIATIVE 6**

Reduce or maintain operating costs.

#### Measure 1.

Maintain a collection cost per ton for refuse and recyclables that is less than the statewide averages.

Based on a report conducted annually by The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Institute of Government that analyzes performance and cost data for city services, SWS will maintain a cost-per-ton collected for refuse and recyclables that is less than the statewide average for municipalities in the State of North Carolina.

CSC Linkage: Deliver Competitive Services

#### Measure 2.

Maintain a landfill ticket submission rate of not less than 98%.

In order to establish data collection performance standards, SWS will complete and verify landfill data to assist in utilization analysis and improved management of landfill resources.

CSC Linkage: Deliver Competitive Services

## **DEVELOP EMPLOYEES**

#### **KBU INITIATIVE 7**

Train workforce and develop employees.

### Measure 1.

Provide an average of 8 hours of safety-based training monthly in an effort to reduce preventable vehicular accidents and personal injuries.

SWS will provide safety-based training to its field operation employees to aid in the reduction of injury and risk to SWS employees as well as citizens. This will also assist in the reduction of insurance and liability claims. Training will be implemented through the utilization of a departmental Driver Training Program and other techniques and strategies. Supervisory staff will continue to conduct monthly tailgate sessions and quarterly safety meetings to increase the focus on safety awareness and prevention.

CSC Linkage: Promote Learning and Growth

#### **KBU INITIATIVE 8**

Create a positive and productive work environment.

#### Measure 1.

Recognize one employee each quarter, selected from departmental employee nominations, who most clearly exhibited the City's Guiding Principles during the previous quarter.

SWS will recognize one (1) employee each quarter who most closely demonstrates the City's guiding principles, including: teamwork, openness, accountability, productivity, employee development, courteousness, responsiveness, accessibility and seamless quality service. Employees will be nominated by co-workers and one employee will be selected by an interdepartmental selection committee.

CSC Linkage: Achieve Positive Employee Climate

#### **KBU INITIATIVE 9**

Promote wellness in worksite environment.

#### Measure 1.

Maintain designated Wellness Works information centers each quarter in high traffic areas in the new SWS facility to update employees on various health and wellness topics.

Aligned with the goals and objectives outlined within the City's Wellness Management Plan, SWS will continue to support an annual wellness fair and quarterly wellness education seminars for high blood pressure and other life threatening illnesses. SWS encourages participants to review available literature about ways to improve overall health. Absenteeism and worker's compensation claims will be analyzed at the end of the fiscal year and compared with data from previous years to help assess the effectiveness of the wellness efforts. The consolidation of all SWS employees into one facility has reduced the number of display areas needed to reach the most employees.

CSC Linkage: Achieve Positive Employee Climate

#### Measure 2.

Provide annual training on specific health-related issues to no less than 95% of SWS employees.

This measure is also aligned with the goals and objectives outlined within the City's Wellness Management Plan, SWS will continue to support an annual wellness fair and quarterly wellness education seminars for high blood pressure and other life threatening illnesses. SWS encourages participants to review available literature about ways to improve overall health. Absenteeism and worker's compensation claims will be analyzed at the end of the fiscal year and compared with data from previous years to help assess the effectiveness of the wellness efforts.

CSC Linkage: Achieve Positive Employee Climate

#### CONCLUSION

Solid Waste Services FY10 Strategic Operating Plan builds upon past successes and lessons learned. It looks to the future and links Key Business strategic operating initiatives to City Council Focus Areas. The Plan includes special initiatives that focus on safeguarding the environmental, managing resources, optimizing business processes, and employee wellness. Solid Waste Services is committed to using business strategies that enhance customer service delivery capabilities which being efficient and economically competitive. Solid Waste Services is confident that the initiatives detailed in this plan can be accomplished. The outcome will be enhanced public health and a safer and more attractive City in which to live.