

Schaller conducts his own curbside recycling 'analysis'

Written by By Joe Schaller Guest Columnist
Friday, 15 May 2015 07:36

PART 2

Program efficiency is meaningless unless taken in context of costs, as many communities have learned. Section 5.2 is titled 'Benefits of curbside programs' yet there is no section or mention in the report of drawbacks or historical unintended consequences.

It is a report I would expect of a used car or solar panel salesman avoiding any harsh realities which may scare off the customer. My own condensed feasibility report which drew upon international scientific studies was offered at the first curbside meeting last summer, and then ignored - no intellectual curiosity by the Recycling Council nor City Council, no interest in investigation, no phone calls from Mr. O'Hara or Mr. Bright.

Up until now there has been mostly a one sided positive portrayal of curbside by CDM, MCRC and SGB. The SGB openly stated in March that they seek a "recycling victory" as an initial step in their green crusade, but this shouldn't be about chalking up victories by moral busybodies for elitist political causes, it should be about doing what's right for the commoners of Gallup, here in one of the most impoverished regions in the nation.

What I have primarily heard in numerous city meetings is misinformation by omission and a stunning lack of knowledge from CDM and green activists topped off with willful ignorance.

A city councilor even conceded that we'll give it a try for a few years and see if it works. Isn't that the purpose of a feasibility study? Where's the SGB on this? They appear to be avoiding a dialogue, conversation or debate with any who may disagree with their green political agenda.

There is so much more that needs to be said and if no one else possesses the time, knowledge and determination than I will take it upon myself to hopefully save the citizen taxpayers millions of dollars rather than the current 'try it and see what happens' approach.

***Credibility issues. For instance CDM spokesman Thomas Parker was not aware of the 1.2

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million dollars the city of Albuquerque was annually subsidizing for the processing of recyclables, according to Albuquerque director of waste management Jill Holbert. Those subsidies were not included in waste disposal bills nor were the quota penalty subsidies paid to Friedman Recycling. This is a major problem with most green projects as well as many government projects, the hidden costs which are never reported to taxpayers.

The heavily subsidized solar panel industry's checkered history of fraud and corruption is a good example. How many unintended costs of curbside recycling will Gallup encounter, particularly when Friedman Recycling experiences revenue problems? CDM and the Recycling Council were also not aware of the decline of curbside recycling programs nationally from 9,700 in 2001 to over a thousand less in 2011 due to unsustainability. The lack of diversity and knowledge displayed by the Recycling Council and Sustainable Gallup Board is a credibility concern.

***Mr. Parker often cited Seattle's 27 year curbside recycling program as the national model of efficiency. It is so efficient their disposal rates have doubled over the past decade. That was after curbside went from voluntary to mandatory due to the decrease in recycling participation, which commonly occurs with curbside programs. In 1991 Seattle's cost per household per month for curbside was \$1.71 and their monthly garbage rate \$10.60. Today Seattle's average residential solid waste bill for a family of four has risen to \$43.00 a month for a recycling bin plus a small waste bin and locked in to rise another \$10.00 over the next 5 years to \$53.00. That's way above the \$15.00 national average. Efficiency means little unless in context of costs and Seattle's lofty status in the green culture becomes a study in blind faith.

Part 2 in a 3 part series. Continued next week.