



Memorandum

TO: Kevin J. Jackson, Village Manager

FROM: Rob Sproule, Public Works Director

FOR: Village President and Board of Trustees

DATE: July 24, 2026

Two handwritten signatures in blue ink are present. The first signature is a stylized "KJ" inside a circle, and the second is "RS" with a long horizontal flourish.

SUBJECT: Fall Leaf Collection Alternative Model – Leaf Vac Program

Purpose

At its March 24, 2026 meeting, the Village Board approved a two-year renewal of the residential waste hauling contract with LRS. As part of that action, the Board directed staff to work with LRS and return with additional information regarding the potential use of leaf vacuum equipment for the Village's Fall Leaf Collection Program as an alternative to the current bagging model.

Background

On March 12, 2024, the Board and LRS amended the existing five-year hauling contract to transition the historic loose-leaf collection program to a bagging model while maintaining the established cost of service. This amendment held the program rate flat at \$199,575.60 for six weeks of collection during the 2024 and 2025 leaf seasons. The cost for an additional week of service during this period was \$39,047.40.

During the 2025 season, LRS provided extended leaf collection at no cost through March 2026 in response to extreme weather conditions that significantly affected leaf volumes and timing. Upon approval of the contract renewal earlier this year, LRS agreed to provide two additional weeks of leaf collection at no cost through the contract's expiration on March 31, 2029. As a result, the 2026 rate for the current

bagging model is \$206,161.59 for eight weeks of collection and additional yard waste collection year-round in the alley.

Alternative Model Overview

On June 10, 2026, LRS submitted the attached proposal outlining an eight-week, parkway-based Leaf Vac Collection Program. This model would require substantial additional resources to achieve service levels comparable to the bagging program, including:

- Procurement of specialized equipment – approximately seven leaf vac trucks based on historic leaf volumes.
- Expanded staffing requirements – an estimated 14 additional seasonal personnel to operate equipment and manage collection routes.
- Significantly increased diesel consumption – resulting in higher operating costs and increased greenhouse gas emissions relative to the current model.

These operational demands result in a proposed annual cost of \$720,000, more than triple the cost of the current bagging program.

Conclusion

From a service-delivery standpoint, the leaf-vac model diminishes several of the operational gains achieved under the bagging program, particularly related to parking and access constraints and the Village's efforts toward greenhouse gas mitigation. It also introduces operational risks that are largely absent from the bagging approach, including weather-related delays, equipment downtime, and the need for multiple passes to manage windblown material or late-season leaf drops.

By contrast, the bagging model provides predictable weekly collection, reduces stormwater impacts, and limits the Village's exposure to equipment-related service disruptions. It offers a more stable, reliable, and environmentally aligned method of leaf management that better supports consistent service delivery.

For questions, please contact Rob Sproule, Public Works Director, via email at rsproule@oak-park.us or by phone at 708-358-5700.

Attachments:

Leaf Vac Proposal

cc: Lisa Shelley, Deputy Village Manager
Ahmad Zayyad, Deputy Village Manager
Jack Malec, Assistant to the Village Manager
Christina M. Waters, Village Clerk
All Department Directors



LRS Leaf Vac Proposal – Village of Oak Park

June 10, 2026

- LRS will provide all equipment for leaf collection for the proposed 8 weeks
- LRS will collect at the curb 11.0 hours per day
- LRS will dispose of all leaves at Thelen's, Antioch
- Proposal price: \$720,000

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

John D. McGee
Director Operations