

# HOW THE CITY OF LAKELAND, FL STREAMLINED THEIR BUSINESS PROCESSES WITH ROUTESMART



➔ The City of Lakeland, FL transformed its solid waste fleet from rear loading vehicles to automated side loaders with EZCans, and used RouteSmart to revamp their routes and gain efficiencies.



**“RouteSmart has changed our business processes significantly. You get the majority of your routes very simply then you just run minor tweaks throughout.”**



## THE ORGANIZATION

The City of Lakeland is located in Polk County, Florida. Its Public Works Department oversees a budget of approximately \$53 million and employs 265 people that span seven divisions, including Fleet Management and Solid Waste.

Lakeland’s Solid Waste Management Division has 65 employees and 41 trucks working five days a week. The division provides solid waste services to over 42,000 households in the city, twice a week. They also handle all commercial waste collection, yard trash and curbside recycling, as well as bulk pickup for yard trash, junk, and appliances.

## THE CHALLENGE

Lakeland had been managing much of their routing in antiquated ways. With this volume of work, the Solid Waste Division’s use of Excel spreadsheets to track and manage hundreds of weekly routes was just not up to the task.

Lisa McCall, Systems and Applications Manager for Lakeland, describes their routing system before RouteSmart as highly inefficient. “For our Solid Waste Division, we needed a more efficient way to accomplish more routes other than through spreadsheets that would take countless hours and months to compile. We didn’t really have a routing department but it would’ve involved a lot of resources — all of the supervisors and some of the drivers would have needed to participate in rerouting.” And, with Excel, there were items falling through the cracks. Because they couldn’t visualize their route data on a map, there was no way to verify that the addresses were being pulled correctly from the billing system.

## THE SOLUTION

McCall was looking for an answer. She met with the RouteSmart sales and technical teams to analyze the city’s needs, and recognized how easily the software could be integrated with their existing Esri® ArcGIS platform. It became clear that McCall should advocate for this solution.

In February of 2008, the city began to implement RouteSmart. McCall and five other members of her Public Works team took advantage of RouteSmart training.



**“It became clear that the scales had tipped. The drivers now like getting the RouteSmart routed bulk sheets so they know the order they’re running the route.”**



**“RouteSmart was the catalyst, and once everybody saw it, they said, ‘Wow! What can we do with RouteSmart?’ Then all of these other technologies came into play and we were more willing to move towards the newer technologies since we saw the great benefits of RouteSmart.”**

### THE SOLUTION (CONTINUED)

“We did a very detailed training. By the time the training was done, we could replicate what we had done. We were able to create real routes and say ‘What do you think?’ and ‘What does this look like?’ It went very well.” She was able to affect positive change almost immediately with a series of reroutes.

McCall started with the residential solid waste collections routes. During this period, she committed to working on site at the Solid Waste offices for several months in order to optimize and review RouteSmart, and give the new routes to the drivers to test.

The goal for the drivers was to detail what made a RouteSmart route work, and what made it not work, so McCall could perform adjustments in RouteSmart and give them a new iteration the next day. McCall received solid, valuable feedback. Some drivers gave her very positive reports and others provided specific instances where she could improve the routes.

For example, McCall used the zone priority functionality to divert a route around a school zone until later in the day. RouteSmart also helped with safety goals set by the drivers, eliminating unnecessary U-turns and maximizing the number of right turns.

In September 2011, two years after that major rerouting, the Solid Waste Division decided to automate their vehicles and use EZCans. A reroute was required to account for the increased speed and productivity. Since the new trucks with automated side-loading arms and EZCans were unfamiliar to the drivers, they did not have time to concentrate on routing. They embraced the routes developed using RouteSmart even more quickly than they had with the first rerouting project.

### THE RESULTS

#### Achieving the best return on investment

Based on fuel and maintenance savings, the Solid Waste Division has achieved a significant return on their RouteSmart investment. Their time-savings have also been significant.

#### Simplifying the routing process

Much has changed throughout the Public Works Division. “RouteSmart has changed our business processes significantly. Given how easy it now is to get all the addresses in there and separate routes out based on whatever criteria you want to—and then run the sequence button—it’s very, very simple to do.”

#### Making the routes more efficient

When they were first considering the new RouteSmart routes, they realized immediately that it would provide greater efficiencies. The drivers were surprised that they could increase productivity as much as RouteSmart projected, but it quickly became obvious that it could be done.

#### Building safer routes

By eliminating dangerous and unnecessary U-turns, shifting the route paths to make more right turns, and helping to avoid active school zones, RouteSmart was a key component in minimizing the city’s safety risks. Additionally, RouteSmart is helping the City of Lakeland achieve their accreditation through the American Public Works Association, a prestigious recognition that considers their use of best practices throughout the division.

As the overall Public Works Department refines the routes they have optimized in RouteSmart, starts new routing projects, and integrates the software into additional divisions, RouteSmart will continue to help the City of Lakeland realize significant savings.

**Get more out of your routes.**

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