

Organic Waste Diversion (Composting)

Issue:

Food waste represents approximately 16 percent of the MSW stream disposed of at the Bluff Road Landfill. Organic waste can include paper and other materials as well as food waste. Reducing the organic waste in landfills reduces air emission and can help reduce long-term liabilities associated with MSW landfilling.

Major Options:

- 1) Maintain Status Quo (limited diversion by private initiatives)
- 2) Develop/Support Programs to Reduce the Quantity of Organics, Especially Food Waste, Going to the City's MSW Disposal Site.

Implementation issues/considerations:

- 2) Develop/Support Programs to Reduce the Quantity of Organics, Especially Food Waste, Going to the City's MSW Disposal Site.
 - a. Program type/structure and strategies
 - i. Target waste streams (commercial, residential)
 - ii. Voluntary or mandatory participation (how aggressive should the diversion effort be?)
 - iii. City managed or private programs
 - iv. Disposal ban
 - b. Need for separate collection program
 - c. Markets

Other Considerations:

- 1) Conversion technology

Organic Waste Diversion (Composting) (Excerpts from Technical Paper)

- Food waste, which represents approximately 16 percent of the MSW stream, is disposed of by landfilling (principally at the Bluff Road Landfill).
- it is important to note that absent a use for the material resulting from composting operation, the costs increase significantly; lack of markets has been one of the major contributors to failed organics composting programs in the US.
- To be successful long-term financially sustainable markets will be necessary; sustainable local markets are not known to currently exist in the Planning Area and would need to be further researched or developed in conjunction with any program that added differing types of organics to the current yard waste composting operation or City biosolids production.
- Implementation of expanded organics diversion programs (e.g., food waste composting) will likely require laws/ordinances to mandate a basic program and define levels of service. While the technologies to undertake composting are well known the most significant risk may lie in long-term, viable and economically sustainable markets for the compost/digestate.
- If increased organics diversion and composting are selected as part of the strategies for inclusion in the Solid Waste Plan 2040, it may be appropriate to begin with a pilot program and target select waste streams.