

## Public Comments

The Advisory Committee Charge Statement indicated that the committee is to evaluate community inputs; reflect input from the community and stakeholders on topics; and, ensure transparent decision making. This document summarizes comments received to date and is intended to assist the committee in carrying out this charge.

From the beginning of the Solid Waste Plan 2040 planning process the public has been invited to participate and provide comments. All Advisory Committee meetings have been open to the public and all documents distributed to the Advisory Committee have been made available to the public/community. All meetings of the Advisory Committee have allotted time for the public to comment and those comments were documented in the meeting notes. At key milestone in the planning process Open House meetings have been held to provide further opportunities for the public/community to obtain information and provide comments.

The following are the means by which the public/community could submit comment during the planning process:

- Via the project website: <http://lincoln.ne.gov> keyword: solid waste plan. This would lead them to a Contact tab that provided a means of submitting comments and listed other means by which comments could be submitted.
- Via email at [email@solidwasteplan.com](mailto:email@solidwasteplan.com)
- Via a project phone line: (402) 441-7738
- Via mail: Solid Waste Plan 2040  
2400 Theresa Street  
Lincoln, NE 68521
- By attending an Advisory Committee meeting (there have been thirteen meetings since June of 2012)
- By participation in the Open House or Virtual Town Hall meetings. There have been two such Open House meetings (November 13, 2012 and August 13, 2013) and two Virtual Town Hall meetings (November 6 to 20, 2012 and August 6 to 20, 2013)

This document contains a summary of comments received via all of the various means listed above. Comments received via the website, email, mail and as a result of the November 6 to 20, 2012 Town Hall meeting have been regularly posted in a chronological manner on the [project website](#) under the [Comments tab](#). Copies of those comments (through August 20th) are included as Attachment 1. For the August 13, 2013 Open House and the August 6 to 20, 2013 Virtual Town Hall meeting the comments are included in Attachment 2. The August 2013 Open House and Virtual Town Hall meetings included a series of Topics with survey style questions, space where participants could share ideas on specific topics, and space to create additional topics for others to comment upon. There was also space provide where participants could simply add comments or exchange comments in a dialog fashion. The survey results reflect the input of those who chose to participate; it is considered non-scientific because it reflects only those who chose to access the website and provide their input. Tracking data suggests that many more people accessed the Virtual Town Hall meeting than actually participated in the survey and comment process. Comments provided at Advisory Committee meetings are included in the meeting notes, available via the [Committee tab](#) on the project website; these have not been summarized in this document.

Attachment 2 combines information provided at the August Open House and Virtual Town Hall meetings. Within this attachment are the results of polling on various topics and a summary of the number of individuals who participated. Each participant in the on-line meeting was required to register with the website in order to participate in the polling and comment process; this was intended to prevent one individual from responding multiple times.

Members of the public who attended the August 13, 2013 Open House were invited to participate in the Virtual Town Hall meeting, provide comments and respond to survey questions. Those who attended could log-in to the Virtual Town Hall meeting via computers present at the Open House or if they preferred were provided a paper survey and comment form that they could submit either at the meeting or via mail. The paper survey/comment form results are included with the on-line results in Attachment 2.

## Attachment 1 Summary of Public Comments, via Various Sources

The following comments were received between July 10, 2012 and August 20, 2013. Comments were submitted by various means including: via the project website, the project phone line, and direct mail, as described above. All comments are presented as submitted; no effort was made to change or alter the grammar. This summary is identical to the content contained in the Comments tab on the Solid Waste Plan 2040 project website. Participants are listed by first name only and the date the comment was submitted.

*On August 20, 2013, **Judy** wrote:*

I am hopeful you won't make mandatory recycling for those of us who recycle everything we can. Many of my neighbors, including myself, have been recyclers for many years. I do agree there are some who don't recycle anything, and for those it would be a good idea, but please keep in mind that many of us do recycle and have for years and it would be unfair to mandate we pay for recycling services.

*On August 19, 2013, **John** wrote:*

Since I was raised in Southern California, where land is premium and waste is plentiful, we recycled everything which could be. And each household was limited to 2 waste barrels of certain dimensions. Probably the biggest action for recycling to date was we were paid for the labor, low as it may be today, but per ton, pound everything has a price to it.

*On August 15, 2013, **Anonymous** wrote:*

Hi, my husband and I attended the open house and he walked out with a lovely glass of ice tea. However I went to dispose of it and noticed that it is a #7 plastic which the City of Lincoln does not recycle. This is ridiculous! It's not responsible as far as I'm concerned to hold a meeting with these products, unless there has been a change and the City does recycle them now and have poorly put out the information. You should be ashamed of yourself to hold a meeting and do this.

*On August 13, 2013, **Lynn** wrote:*

In San Diego they have a recycling program for composting and yard waste where they grind up boxes, paper, anything that will disintegrate and charge for it; it pays for the program plus some. I saw on public television, it was very thorough. For things that don't disintegrate, you should get a city incinerator.

Educate, educate, educate the public (for instance, show pictures of things that will never decompose). The City needs to take a stand and say everything must disintegrate if you send it to the landfill.

Research communities in Europe, like Germany, that do not allow plastic bottles, only glass bottles. In Oklahoma City, they have a program in different sections of town on certain weekends where it is "free put your stuff out on the curb", people go around and get free stuff, and then anything left over the garbage takes.

Need to do something about the toxic liquids going down the drain, how do you govern? Again, educate people on dangers.

Have information on the computer and in the newspaper, conduct contests with neighborhood associations on how well they have cleaned up their neighborhood - celebrate neighborhoods working together and really get the picture.

We need to do something with metals; someplace we need regional meltdown companies, need to start doing that.

*On August 11, 2013, Dave wrote:*

I am not in favor of mandatory recycling, especially if it is going to cost more money. I have been recycling for over 10 years now. Our garbage collector collects twice a week. If I am lucky I'll have one bag of trash every week. I have contacted them several times on only picking up once a week and they told me it would still cost the same. If the garbage collector will start picking up trash once a week and recyclable once a week for the same price than I am fine with that.

As for your percentages in the newspaper of how much recycling would reduce a household amount, it is way off base. My reduction in waste the last 10 years has been at least 50%. Sure hope you didn't pay those consultants that came up with the numbers in the newspaper too much. If so the taxpayer just recycled more of their money to them.

*On August 11, 2013, Greg and Martha wrote:*

I have been a tax-paying resident of Lincoln for the past 25 years. My wife has been a life-long, tax-paying resident, so we both have a vested interest in Lincoln and its long-term future.

Here are our thoughts about solid waste recycling, and how it might impact our garbage service:

1. Currently, there are several options for solid waste recycling. We happen to use the (firm name omitted) service, which we only pay about \$5/month. It is an awesome service; every week they come to pick it up, and, unlike some other recycling services, they DO take glass, tin, aluminum, mixed paper, and cardboard. We have used & paid for this service since its inception (3?) years ago.
2. I believe firmly that you should encourage those who are NOT recycling to recycle, by promoting those firms who recycle the materials you as city managers want recycled. I.E., if city residents currently have a monthly contract with a service, and that service can verify that the customer is regularly using this service, then that resident shall be deemed as meeting your requirements of solid waste management, and no further action OR taxation will be required of this resident.
3. Conversely, if a resident refuses to even attempt to use a recycling service after a period of time (say 6 months?), then force them into paying more for a city-imposed service (to be carried out by their current refuse service provider) with a hefty additional billing attached. But to make this effective, you should email, mail, advertise, etc., all the available options, along with the current billing costs, so that they can see with their own eyes how much cheaper it would be to act on their own behalf and be pro-active, before being forced to pay the much-higher, city-imposed costs.
4. Maybe on the education front, you should show some graphic photos of our current dump sites: the boundaries, the lack of expansion, and what the costs per taxpayer would be if the city were forced to build yet another dump.

I hope that this provides a little help. Thanks for letting me give my opinion on the matter.

*On August 10, 2013, anonymous wrote:*

There are other states that require residents to recycle or they are fined. I believe it is time for Lincoln to start working towards the requirement of recycling. I currently pay for mine to be picked up and I realize not everyone is in a position to do that, however, if more recycled the price may be able to go down, or possibly be included in ones garbage pick up bill. Until we got our recycling tote I did not realize how many items we used could be recycled. On a weekly basis our recycling tote is full, where our garbage tote is barely half full. Thank you for all your work to keep Lincoln/Lancaster County the great place to live that it is.

*On August 8, 2013, Russ wrote:*

I just returned from visiting brother around Sedalia, MO.

He raises a large garden and uses a lot of compost from the town of Sedalia, so I got interested in the towns operation. Due to the fact that I retired from a water and sanitation district in Colo.

They really have working:

Using solid waste, tree slash all sizes, stumps and logs 8 ft lg. not over 18" in dia.

The compost looks and feels (no smell) like potting soil.

They are selling this for \$10.00 per yard to residents, landscapers, farmers.

I believe they received a federal grant to get started.

Sedalia's town ph. is 816-827-3000.

P.S. I will bring a sample of the compost at your meeting. 8/13

THANKS

*On August 8, 2013, Art wrote:*

I think curb side pick should be mandatory. My garbage hauler benefits by my recycling My garbage is reduced by at least half yet I get no reduction in garbage hauler fees. Garbage haulers should pick up recycling for no extra charge.

*On August 6, 2013, Terri wrote:*

To Whom It May Concern:

I have been recycling for years and will continue to do so. I recycle everything possible and have a recycling "center" set up in my garage and take my bins to one of the recycling centers in town as needed. Because of this, I don't generate a large amount of trash. I do support a city-wide recycling effort, not only to lengthen the life of the landfill but because I believe this is the right thing to do.

I am a single woman in my mid-50's. As stated, I routinely recycle and therefore have minimal trash. However, I am still required to pay for weekly trash pickup even though I put my trash out only every 2-3 weeks. As the city begins to discuss mandatory recycling, keep in mind those of us that do routinely recycle without paying any additional fee. I don't want to be forced to pay for recycling when I have been taking my recycling in myself for many years. I also don't want to pay more for trash pickup just because it includes recycling.

In summary, I am all for recycling and will continue to do so; however, I do not want to have to pay more for something I currently do at no additional cost. Keep us singles in mind when discussing this topic. We just do not generate the trash that families do but are required to pay the same amount.

*On August 5, 2013, **anonymous** wrote:*

To Whom It May Concern:

I am an elderly widow and am concerned about the curbside recycling that is being considered.

I take one medium sized can to the curb for pickup about once every three weeks. I recycle everything else and take it to the drop off-site near my home. However, I still have to pay the full price for garbage pickup and then extra for lawn pickup while a household next door with four children and two large garbage cans at the curb for pickup every week is paying the same as I do. This is very costly for me on my limited income.

My son lives in Portland which is huge on recycling. They have several different sized containers available at different prices according to the size of the household. They have a separate recycle pickup day and if a household uses the recycling service \$2.50 is deducted from their garbage bill. This seems fairer to everyone and more affordable to small households.

JUST A THOUGHT!

*On August 5, 2013, **Sandy** wrote:*

We have recycled for yrs. We take our recyclables to East High drop-off or to Union College where they have bins.

My question: will the people who recycle their items at a designed spot be required to pay a fee for curbside pickup? I feel it would be very unfair to be forced to pay a fee when we don't need curbside pickup!

*On August 4, 2013, **Jeff** wrote:*

I have two suggestions: Enter into a contract with Waste Management to cover the whole city no more independent refuse haulers. Reason it would save a lot of fighting among companies which has happened here in Lincoln. It would also put a company that is in all services refuse.recycling misc heavy hauling, sewage recycling you name it and they have been around for a long time. It is there business and they run it like a business. Second: We recycle all of our waste and I take it over to the recycle center at East High located on A Street. What I don't like is that the refuse company has supplied a a dumpster that lets all people who don't pay for the refuse to drop off all of there junk there. I hauled three bikes and to go karts out of there they other day and to them to Mad Dad's to use for parts if nothing else. It is dumped all over the ground there and next we are going to have rats/coons and who else knows what will be going through the junk I think it should stopped and used for a recycle location only not both.

*On August 3, 2013, **Jaclyn** wrote:*

The City wants your opinion on how to make Lincoln more green and less wasteful: Dear Sirs and Madams, We recycle. But do not pay for the service. I can't afford to add another utility to our household budget. We collect our items in our garage and take it to the R street recycling site behind Best Buy. I would pay for recycling at my home as an additional service if you could get our garbage collector, (firm name omitted) to only do once a month pickup or bi-weekly for a lesser charge. We are paying \$20 for a months service which is once a week. We barely have half a barrel full each week as

most of our items are taken to recycling. If you could get (firm name omitted) to lessen their charges and the options for trash pick up. I would love to pay for someone to come and get our recycling curbside ! Thank you.

*On August 3, 2013, Paul wrote:*

Forcing waste haulers to provide recycling services would only drive up their costs and increase their fees. Perhaps the city could provide a curbside service once or twice a month for pickup of recyclables.

If recycling services become mandatory, maybe you could provide a discount to help offset the cost on a temporary basis. We recycle, I don't think it is inconvenient for me to drop off my recyclables once a month. This is for a family of four.

*On August 2, 2013, Nick wrote:*

Recycling should be mandatory for all residents and business by 2016. \$5.00 for residents is more than affordable as I pay \$20 a month right now. I started recycling with recycle link in 2010 and to date I have recycled 2,195 pounds. Each week the recycle container is full and my waste container is less than half full. I see places that convert the waste into methane gas and the buy product that's leftover is used in jewelry. I think it's New York City that does this. If we focus on the long term benefits we can take a problem and turn it into a solution. You now that someday you won't be able to keep putting it into the ground.

*On August 2, 2013, Morgan wrote:*

Hello, I wanted to send my feedback on the Solid Waste Plan 2040. I think providing curbside recycling to every household in Lincoln would be amazing. I really hope this goal can be achieved!! It is time for Lincoln residents to be responsible and implement sustainable solutions. Thank you for your hard work.

*On August 1, 2013, Logan wrote:*

Keep the fees low and make it convenient, all in one recycling.

*On August 1, 2013, Larry wrote:*

We have been recycling for several years and use a company called Recycle Bank. They charge a small fee and provide a container. The company pickup on every Wednesday and all recycle materials go into the container. They provide a sack the goes in the container when it get full.

We do not separate recyclable waste items, all of it goes into the container. This is the best system I have heard about. We have reduce our land fill garbage to about a grocery sack full a week.

I would recommend this company be contacted for more details if the committee is interested in recycling at minimum cost.

*On August 1, 2013, April wrote:*

Saw the news about recycling, and my suggestion for recycling is to NOT raise a curb-side fee to \$5.00, but to lower a residents garbage fee by \$5.00 if they actually take the time to take the recyclables to a recycling bin. I use a very inexpensive 3 section mesh clothes sorter to throw my recycles in-sorted by plastic, cardboard, aluminum/tin, and my glass is separate. The mesh bags are supported by a PVC frame, and are very easy to remove and take to the bins. Bought it @ WalMart for under \$10.00.

In order for this to work, there has to be MORE bins EVERYWHERE, so that it is easier for people to drop off the recyclables. If there are not enough bins and they become full quickly, I feel people will become frustrated and just not want to do it. Wouldn't it be cheaper for the garbage companies to go to pick up locations, then to start and stop the big trucks at each residential driveway?

Also, there needs to be a saturation of public awareness of the need to recycle. Perhaps commercials, newspapers ads, and billboard signs. I remember a TV ad about an Indian standing and looking at the road ways littered with plastic bottles and paper trash and he had a tear running down his face. Maybe we need to dig up that commercial from the archives and run it constantly.

Also there is a company in Lincoln that will shred papers for I believe about 25cents a pound. All my junk mail, envelopes from businesses, statements, bills, etc go there for shredding. My identity is shredded, and you can actually watch them do it. I go maybe once a month is all. Newspapers and magazines can go there to, but I drop them off in the big bins instead.

Recycling is not hard-people are just LAZY! Maybe by getting off the couch to take care of the recycling, perhaps the obesity rate will go down just a little also.

Thanks for letting me share my thoughts.

*On July 17, 2013, Ursula wrote:*

When you have a recycling program you don't create much Garbage. So the hauler would provide you with 2 full size containers 1 labeled Garbage and 1 Recycables, then pick up 1 week Garbage, 1 week Recycables , that way you don't create more fees for the households. The City can then separate the Glass, Paper etc. Coming from Germany (Country that recycles the most in the world), i know first hand how it works. Cities have Containers on Street Corners etc. were you can drop off Glass, Paper etc. Good example is the UNL Campus (Jazz in June), they have containers labeled recycables or trash.

I wish you would Google Germany, 1 good website is [earth911.com/general/trash-planet-germany](http://earth911.com/general/trash-planet-germany).

One final note Germany has twice a year a pickup for lge items like Vaccums or items they don't use anymore, you see people driving around picking up what they like. Thank you

*On June 13, 2013, Jim wrote:*

I use Lingro, and I love it. It makes my soil rich, and my garden plants respond very well to it. Please keep making it. It enriches any soil it is mixed into.

*On June 5, 2013, Kristen wrote:*

Good Morning,

I read in the LJS this morning citizens were encouraged to send in suggestions for the solid waste planning group regarding recycling ideas. I would suggest you reach out to some rural towns in Nebraska who have faced this same issue. Most of the small towns in Nebraska either struggle to get access to a landfill or it "filled" many years ago.

In the rural Nebraska town where I grew up, Laurel, there is a wonderful recycling center that is heavily used by the community and they do this voluntarily! Now, in all honesty they accomplished this by charging, in addition to a trash pick up fee, a "bag" fee a few years ago. Community members were required to purchase special trash bags, which were smaller too, and there may have been a bag limit per week. Opting not to use those bags or go over the limit increased their trash costs. In a matter of months most of the community was down to one trash bag per week and the rest went to the recycling

center. I am not sure if this would be feasible in Lincoln since the trash pick up is done by private companies, but it worked for Laurel.

I will also mention there was not a lot of public information about this policy change beforehand in Laurel and as such the public backlash was able to get the city to abandon the harsh penalties over time. Now, I believe trash costs are just high for everyone, but habits were certainly changed for the year or two the bag rules were in place. Contact information for the town can be found here: <http://www.laurelne.com/gov.asp>.

I might also mention that you reach out to Gill Hauling of Jackson, Nebraska. They provide service to many small towns in Northeast Nebraska and although I am not familiar with their policy, I know they offer a curbside recycling service that has been widely taken advantage of. There are very few small towns where everyone doesn't have their "two" trash cans out for every trash pickup. Their number is: (402) 632-9273.

*On May 13, 2013, Richard wrote:*

Recycling, while necessary, is hardly the best approach to waste management. Recycling can increase the amount of waste generated and certainly does little better than landfilling with regards to GHG generation. PREVENTION is the best approach. I suggest rather than looking at the issue as waste management, you look at materials management overall or a consumption based approach to problem definition prior to devising actions. <http://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/consumptionbasedghg.htm> After all, if you are asking the wrong questions, the answers don't really matter.

*On February 11, 2013, Harold wrote:*

I just became aware of Bio Char's potential value and lack of public awareness. Biochar has untapped benefits for horticulture as a soil additive, as well as a carbon sequestration method. Carbon does not decompose. LOOK IT UP!

*On November 19, 2012, Susan wrote:*

Within the Five Guiding Principals, the "overarching goal" of promoting waste PREVENTION is very important to me. We have many opportunities for recycling in Lincoln, but this needs to be coupled with incentives to reduce and reuse materials.

*On November 16, 2012, Tim wrote:*

As long as people have few financial incentives to cut back on their solid waste we will continue to have more problems on this issue than we need to. It seems with other states/cities charging per container/pound and their statistics, issues, comments and participation we could ease into this kind of program over the next year or two. Also, and we could begin this right away. We tried this once where the day before trash day we had recycling day with everything by the curb could be taken away and used by someone else. More and better pr in advance will help and after a few months it will continue to catch on.

*On November 16, 2012, Rebecca wrote:*

Mandatory recycling!! includes dividing waste for garbage pickup at all residences and businesses into glass, plastics, cans, newspapers, cardboard, and finally garbage, and then paying a substantial penalty fee for failure to divide recyclables from garbage as directed.

*On November 15, 2012, **anonymous** wrote:*

Hi. I'm just wondering if we could rethink trash collection requirements for the elderly in particular or for any of the single person households – we have many of those in Lincoln these days. In my jobs both in retail sales and in healthcare I do hear that that is a hardship especially for the older and elderly who live at home alone and rarely generate any trash. I know a long time ago, 25 years ago, I asked my trash haulers if we could stop my elderly neighbor's, and consolidate her trash with ours. She had one small lunch-sack size trash once every two weeks and yet had to pay for the full service and the trash hauler told us very soundly that if we did that they would sue us for theft of service, or sue her. That doesn't seem right; it seems irrational, it seems very harsh. It seems like with the change in living situations that we're having and more people staying at home in their elder years we should be able to accommodate that.

Also I would think that it would be nice to have some mandatory recycling; I'm seeing lots of furniture, lots of TVs, computer equipment, all going out to the curb. I recycle my things like that and there are plenty of people around Lincoln who will take them; some for free, some for a fee. And I think that rather than just every time we get new furniture or something, that we throw things out at the curb, is inappropriate. So perhaps we just need to start imposing a fee at the time of service or having people have to mandatorily dispose of those in a better fashion than just throwing everything just to the dump. We have eco-stores and places like that. So anyway, that's my concern. Thank you.

*On November 15, 2012, **Kendall** wrote:*

I feel that Lincoln has two great opportunities to reduce waste and make collection much more efficient. First, I suggest we adopt some method of "Pay-As-You-Throw", where collection fees are based on the amount of trash generated (volume or weight). This encourages waste reduction and recycling, and makes a fairer system than the one we currently have, where those who have a smaller waste stream are subsidizing those who make no effort to reduce. Second, I suggest we eliminate overlapping routes. My neighborhood sees an endless parade of trucks from different companies covering the same routes. One company/truck per area would be more efficient, as well as reduce noise, traffic and wear & tear on streets. I realize these suggestions go against the status quo, but the bottom line is their efficiency, fairness and results, beneficial to the majority of the public. Seems worth ruffling a few feathers to make this positive change.

*On November 14, 2012, **Richard** wrote:*

For reviewing the HDR Report it is obvious that Lincoln and its citizens MUST do a better job of reducing solid waste. Tipping fees need to increase substantially. Mandatory recycling of fiber and plastics must be instituted. The large amount of food waste must be composted with yard waste. More C & D waste must be diverted and recycled. With an increase in revenue from tipping fees. a concrete and masonry rubble processing plant should be investigated. Require all city paving projects to use a certain percentage of recycled C&D waste for paving. The primary goal of the SW plan should be to REDUCE the volume of solid waste entering the landfill, not just maintain a steady state.

*On November 13, 2012, **Karla L.** wrote:*

I would like to see data from other communities that have city recycling services. Their of recycling may be similar to current Lincoln rates due to a threshold of those who do recycle per their own initiative and those who just will not recycle because it is not of personal value to them. Also would be supportive of housing a site for household hazardous wastes. The said waste schedules are confusing though I realize this is our private company.

*On November 13, 2012, **Bradi** wrote:*

Recycling with garbage- incentives to waste companies that offer recycling with garbage pick up. One day a week pick up garbage, another for recycling. City contract with recycling companies. Partnership of garbage and recycling companies.

*On September 10, 2012, **Carrie** wrote:*

WasteCap Nebraska hosts bi-monthly Green Team Roundtable in Lincoln. Each Roundtable begins with a Circle question designed to generate conversation. As part of the August meeting the question posed to the team was "If there were one thing you could recommend be included, what would that be?" There were a number of different responses with the most prominent responses being: education, awareness, convenience, landfill bans on plastic bags and packaging, and incentives for recycling. A more detailed list can be found on <http://www.wastecapne.org/greenteams/>.

*On August 8, 2012, **Mary Anne** wrote:*

I think it is important to have curbside recycling at every home, this will make it easier for people to recycle. The city could be divided into areas for each of the existing recycling companies to service, similar to refuse service.

*On July 10, 2012, **Kurt** wrote:*

Hi, as the city plans forward, I would encourage the planning committee to engage in a deep conversation about the recycling program in Lincoln. What we have is a good start but the content and quantity of material going to the landfill is a shame. We need a curbside option with all trash carriers and we need a single stream recycling center. A town of well over 250,000 will absolutely need a better recycling program. I currently live in a large apartment complex..the residence throw EVERYTHING away because there are NO handy options. Recycling is best when it is convenient to do the process. Save tax dollars and the landfill by improving the recycling process in Lincoln. Please visit Omaha and see what

## Attachment 2

### Public Comment - August 13, 2013 Open House and August 6 to 20, 2013 Virtual Town Hall Meetings

The Open House (August 13, 2013) and Virtual Town Hall (August 6 to August 20, 2013) meetings was designed to encourage the public to “share your ideas about the future of solid waste management in Lincoln and Lancaster County” and included information presented in the solid waste [System Definition](#) document as well as summaries related to the following topics:

- Residential Recycling
- Commercial Recycling (apartments, businesses, industries and institutions)
- Toxics Reduction
- Source Waste Reduction
- Organic (Food) Waste Composting

Participants were invited to respond to short survey questions, share ideas on certain topics, provide general comments or create additional ideas for public discussion. The structure of the site allowed for comments on virtually any solid waste related topic the participant wished to address. In addition to the five topics listed above, in the “Share Your Ideas” category, participants added nine categories with associated comments. The following is a summary of information by topic and includes information on the following:

- Topic (Title)
- Copy of the narrative provided
- Copy of survey and open ended questions asked
- Results of each survey question in graphic format, including how many people responded to each question
- Results of open ended questions
- Results of open ended comments provided

Results of the surveys were not available for other on-line participants to view; this information was not shared so that participants would not be influenced by the ongoing survey results. For the questions that asked for ideas on a specific topic the ideas offered were not available for other on-line participants to view; for questions that asked for comments, all responses could be viewed on the website and registered participants could add unique comments or comment on ideas provided by others. For open ended comment category, participants are listed by the first name of the identity assigned to them when they registered with the website. Those who chose not to register could see all of the information and questions, as well as the open ended comments, but could not participate via the survey or comment tools. Significantly more people viewed the topics than participated in the surveys or provided comments.

## Topic: Residential Recycling

### Narrative:

Nationally, about 34% of waste is recycled. Lincoln currently recycles about 18% of its waste, or a little more than half the national average. Increasing the recycling rate can help extend the life of our landfill, avoid future landfill cost, and conserves natural resources.

A strategy many communities use to encourage greater recycling is the provision of curbside recycling service to all households. It is estimated that this could reduce the amount of waste entering Lincoln’s landfill by an additional 5 to 10 percent or 20,600 to 41,200 tons each year.

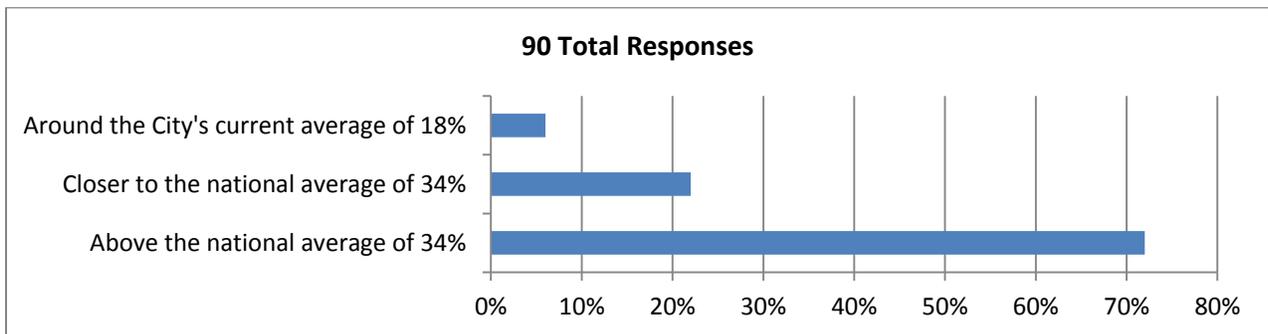
Curbside recycling can be accomplished in two ways:

1. Require trash haulers to also provide curbside recycling, OR
2. The City of Lincoln would contract with a recycling provider.

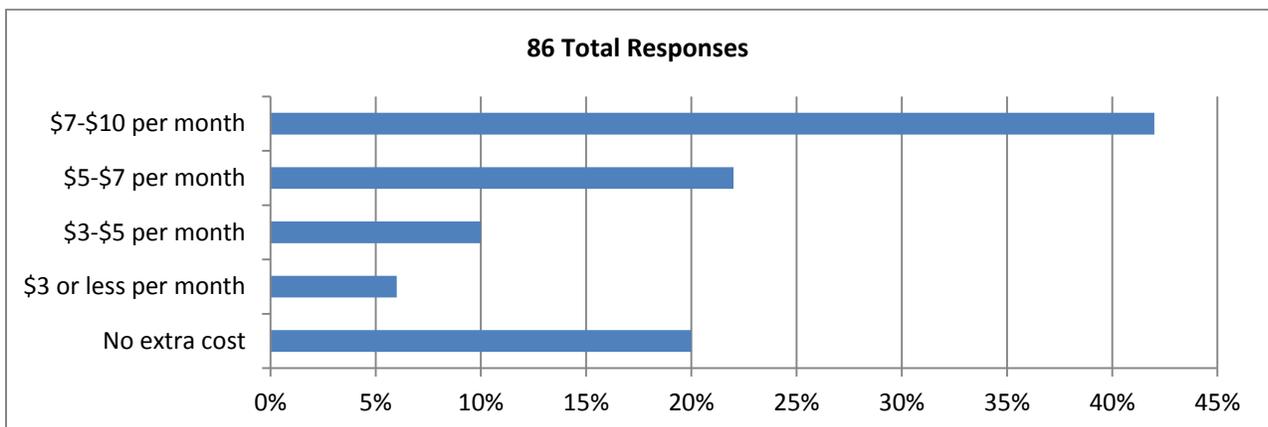
Under either scenario, all Lincoln households would have curbside recycling service and pay a monthly fee for that service.

### Survey Questions and Results:

**Lincoln currently recycles about 18% of its residential waste; the national average is around 34%.  
Where do you think Lincoln should rank?**



**Assuming you do not have recyclables picked up at your home now, how much would you be willing to pay for having recyclables picked up at home in the future?**



## Open Ended Question and Results:

**What are your ideas about increasing residential recycling? -- 65 comments provided on website, 10 from paper forms**

- As in England, make it mandatory.
- ban recycleable materials from the landfills
- Charge a per volume or weight fee, which will reward those who reduce/reuse/recycle and add incentive for those who don't. Emphasize reduction and reuse as much, or more, than recycling. Also, reduce or eliminate overlapping routes. Currently our neighborhood is served by numerous haulers--very inefficient, adds traffic and increases wear/tear on streets.
- Curbside recycling is critical to success in increasing recycling.
- Curbside service at every household and locations for recycling at apartments. Education is also very important.
- Encourage recyclers to work together to share costs and revenue to save on fuel. Or allow entire neighborhoods to pay a bulk fee at a single collection site.
- Garbage service should be billed based on the amount of volume or weight one throws away (a "Pay As You Throw" system) which would also push people to recycle more, assuming the recycling service wasn't too high and a flat fee.
- Good info on what can be recycled. ?Is it economical to not require sorting?
- I already recycle so much that I only put garbage out every 3 weeks or so. I would think that there could be a way to charge the same and pick up either garbage or recycling every 1 or 2 weeks for people like me.
- I believe that the City should require garbage haulers to pick up recyclable materials as part of their routes. Many of them have twice a week pick up. Rather than picking up garbage twice a week they could pick up recycling one of the days instead and not increase their costs.
- I currently don't have a garbage service because it was too expensive. I have recycling only at \$11.00 a month and call for a one-time pick-up every other month. I was paying \$24.00 for a garbage service that I didn't use. I have been living this way for approximately five years now.
- I currently use Star City Recycling. I favor residential recycling, but do it in a way that does not penalize the current recycling businesses. I lived from 2007-2009 in Lafayette, Colo., which had residential recycling (I believe it was mandatory). The city contracted with a local garbage business . All acceptable recycled items could be tossed into the recycling dumpsters, no sorting was necessary. The recycling dumpsters were clearly different in their markings from the garbage dumpsters.
- I do my own recycling about once a month and wish everyone would recycle more.
- I have been reading the articles concerning recycling. To charge for it through our waste service or a dedicated recycling company is not the way. We feel that there are enough recycling points already available across the city. We have one at East HS parking lot that is very convenient. Our daughter has one very close to her in University Place. I have used the one by the VA offices at 11th. and South. We recycle all plastic, glass, cardboard, paper, etc. We don't want to pay!!!!
- I love the idea of having curbside recycling like other cities do. It's frustrating how Lincoln is so behind in this area.
- I pay \$11 per month to have a huge, unsorted bin of recyclables hauled, sorted and recycled each week. In contrast, I pay \$20 per month to have one or two kitchen garbage bags taken and dumped each week. My neighbors put anything and everything, including huge amounts of cardboard, aluminum, glass, and steel on the curb. They pay the same for trash as I do and save

\$11 per month in the bargain. We really can't allow this to continue. It is unjust, economically twisted, and unsustainable.

- I think changes should be made to make the current waste management system more efficient. If that means moving towards a franchise system (and away from a free market system) of trash hauling, then I am all for it. As we've seen in the past few decades, recycling rates have been fairly steady. Convenience and rewards are important motivators, so I am absolutely in support of mandated curbside recycling along with trash pick up charged by volume.
- I think everybody needs to be offered residential recycling. The fact that some of the conventional garbage haulers have added a recycling service suggests to me they all can.
- I think recycling should be mandated for all homeowners, but I realize that it must come gradually. If recycling were part of garbage removal, people might be more likely to do it. My family has recycled for over 10 years and our garbage has shrunk to a fraction of the size of our recycling. This is a serious issue that really needs to be brought to people's attention!
- I think the best way to increase recycling is to establish policies. We should be required to recycle cardboard, plastics, glass, etc. We are required to separate yard waste in the summer; why not separate everything all year round?
- I think we should incorporate volume based rates and charge for trash collection and not for recycling collection
- I use the free city drop off sites
- I used to live in Portsmouth, New Hampshire ~ curbside recycling pickup was free. Garbage pickup was more expensive than it is here, and if something was recyclable, than it could not be put in the garbage. A much smarter system for dealing with waste, though I still would be willing to pay for recycling pickup.
- I want to pay less for garbage service as a reward for recycling more of my waste. Where is the incentive? Why do we pay so much in Lincoln???
- I would happily participate in recycling but am not willing to pay extra for the service. Due to job transfers, I have lived in 8 different states over the last 30 years. None of those states charged extra for recycling. In CT we were even paid for some of our recycling. Recycling businesses make money and I am providing them with their raw material. I pay and am taxed when I buy a product and then am asked to pay to get rid of it. No thanks!
- I would like to see recycling lumped with garbage collection. Several other states make recycling a financial incentive--garbage collection is more expensive if you choose to opt out of recycling. I would like to Lincoln vastly reduce it's waste for many reasons. I think it is important to not waste--why throw something away when it can be used again? I also do not want to build another landfill so soon...I'd sooner push building one back until 2050.
- I'd like to see better access to recycling for those living in apartments who cannot utilize a recycling pick-up service.
- Ideally, those of us who recycle should get a price break on garbage rates. Is it be possible, for example, to get garbage pick-up twice a month vs. once a week? Also, recycling in our schools needs to be emphasized to a greater extent. Educating our youth about the importance of good stewardship is the key to long-term success..
- Important that we do all we can to increase recycling. Please work carefully with the existing recycling providers who led the way. Without their leadership, it would be worse than it is now.
- In Seattle, recycling is free and part of refuse services controlled by the City. Recycling is also the law there. I think offering a discount here would be a huge incentive for people to recycle. I pay Midwest Refuse \$14 per month for garbage/recycling which is what non-recyclers pay. If you want people to recycle either make it a law or change the way garbage service operates here.

- Incentivize the haulers to develop their own plan for how they would go about creating more recycling opportunities.
- Increase involvement of neighborhood organizations
- Instead of city-owned recycling centers, it would be nice to instead see neighborhood recycling centers... a space dedicated to recycling in neighborhoods like neighborhood mailboxes. It may be an increased burden on the city (the city could contract it) but would better encourage people to recycle (instead of requiring a fee to be provided at the curbside).
- It would be nice to see how the monies from reductions in landfill use stack up against the costs of this project.
- It's pathetic seeing what people throw in the trash. We need to make it easy and get everyone recycling.
- Lincoln needs more public recycling drop off sites. Incentives should be provided to current refuse companies to include recycling services.
- -make it easy (e.g., single stream, large containers) -make curbside pick-up a mandatory option and easy to sign-up. -charge more for trash pick-up (e.g., increase fees on monthly rates dumping charges or charge for bags used for trash pick-up)
- make it easy to recycle. Provide receptacles for recyclable items. Make it mandatory that every one must recycle (this is done successfully in Minnesota). Garbage haulers can make money on selling recycled items, which could help cover costs associated with recycling. Make sure the garbage haulers actually make sure recyclable items are recycled (give garbage haulers a break to motivate).
- Make it easy: no sort, same day as garbage, rates depending on volume.
- Make it mandatory by implementing a pay as you throw system for collecting waste
- Make it mandatory. Have convicted criminals/prisoners sort all trash before landfill. Pay companies SMALL amount for additional responsibility. They don't need much because they will quickly make profits from these efforts.
- Make it required, when we lived in Atlanta Georgia it was part of your property tax bill . Whom ever owns the property is required to recycle then, even if they lease it out.
- Make the process consistent, affordable, and easy for participants.
- Making the drop off sites more accessible and complete. Many times I have gone to the East High drop off site only to find it id full. Many parts of Lincoln do not appear to have drop off sites for a comprehensive delivery.
- More recycling centers to make it convenient and EMPTY the ones that exist so people don't have to come back. Numerous times at the East High center - bins are overflowing so you can't unload your car. If people go and can't get rid of things they'll quit trying.
- offer "reward-based" recycling -- the more you recycle, the more you receive local gift certificates (provided through sponsorship)
- People aren't going to want to keep paying high fees for trash removal when they are throwing less out in the trash. And they don't want to pay much at all to recycle. It has to be about making it economical and convenient for the customer. Then they will be more willing to recycle.
- Provide some sort of educational campaign on the effects of not recycling in Lancaster county. A mailer with images of our landfill and how much tonnage of waste could be prevented by not sending it there
- Recycle bank concept
- Recycling should be dramatically increased. There is no reason to take perfectly reusable items and bury them. Saying that, are citizens made aware of the stream of recycling...where items go,

how they are used, and what they become? Knowing this it might be much easier to say..."I'll recycle".

- Recycling, both residential and commercial, should be mandatory. We should be working towards a zero waste city...
- Require recycling to be offered by all trash haulers. The current drop offs are excellent however.
- Require refuse haulers to offer recycling or to contract with a current recycling firm(s) to increase the number of households that have access to it. Another idea would be to encourage firms to charge per "tip", such that it would ultimately be cheaper to recycle and compost than to toss items in the trash.
- Reward people for recycling more materials (charge a flat monthly collection fee) by changing the current fee structure for refuse disposal (charge by volume - the more you dispose as trash, the more you pay)
- Should be doing this years ago.
- The city should provide FREE recycling.
- The government should offer a recycling program that can engaged companies doing daily waste pickups. Give them tax discount or something...
- This is a change that needs to happen! I have for many years wished this would be possible. It makes perfect sense! This should of happened a long time ago!
- To have the most uniform recycling rate for customers, using a recycling provider could provide the same rate for everyone. Haulers could charge what ever they want, which could hinder customers from being willing to pay a higher recycling rate.
- Unfortunately you have to make it simple for people to recycle or many of them just won't do it. Curbside pick-up seems like a good idea outside of the city separating recyclables out of the trash when it reaches the landfill. I strongly support curbside pick-up. Also, need to provide recycling receptacles around the city at parks, downtown, etc. I don't know how this works currently but a coordinated effort with UNL would also be a good idea.
- Use weigh system that some private recyclers use. Reward customers who have best trash to recycle ratios-commercial & residential Education push about effects of recycling on enviroment /cost expanding dump Bins in public for recycle with info printed on side Awards /public praise - commercial clients w best recycle/trash ratios Foolish having multiple haulers in the same areas Billing rewards for low volume trash at all customers Green business awards if offer discounts to homes that recyclers.
- Ways to reduce costs: discounts for apartment dwellers; neighborhood/block pick up
- We already have a recycling service and have had for several years. I would hate to see this put them out of business.
- We have been using curbside recycling for a good 10 years. After using several other companies, we are currently using Star City Recycling because we believe this family operated business is in the recycling business for the right reasons. I'm all for citywide recycling but I am concerned about losing businesses like Star City Recycling who I know actually recycles every single item they take from us. Another concern is the cost of our garbage service (\$20.50/mo)when we recycle far more.
- We lived in Tempe, AZ for 14 years. Early on, the city collected trash two times a week. Later on, the plan changed. The city picked up trash once a week. And they picked up recycled materials once a week. The cost remained the same. The plan worked very well.
- You're only slowing down the flow. You'll have to build a new dump at some point anyway. I would likely keep throwing my trash away and risk getting fined.
- Have garbage & recycling collected same day

- Have only one carrier per area
- Set prices to make it fair
- Make it required
- Make it available at every home
- Massive education component
- Increase fees for paper trash
- Encourage residential composting – educate with Extension & Garden Club
- Shoot for 100%
- \$7-\$10 per month – I do and this is what I pay.

## **Results of Open Ended Comments -- 12 comments provided**

### ***Corey wrote:***

I strongly support curbside recycling services. Unfortunately you have to make recycling easy and convenient for people and this would be one way to do that. I would be happy to pay up to 10 dollars a month for this service.

### ***Stephen wrote:***

I definitely don't think we need to charge for recycling. It would just be another tax/fee that we don't need. We have plenty of recycling points around the city for people to take there recyclables to...IF they WANT to. I find all of the sites around town very convenient. We use the one at East High probably on average once a week. They have plenty of room at all of the sites. They don't usually get full. Do they.. Yes, but the trash company responsible for the emptying of the dumpsters takes them away very regularly. We have plenty of ads around town to remind people to recycle (Dr. Re Cylce). Our citizens of Lincoln will step up without having to get charges for it. If you do start charging, people will start dumping elsewhere. Thank you.

### ***Mary wrote:***

Recycling is important and I have friends that just don't do it. I recycle at the office and bring home my waste so it can be added to our weekly curbside recycling. I also encourage friends to save some of their recycling for me since they don't do recycling. It makes more work for me, but at least I save some from the landfill. Having curbside has certainly increased what we recycle vs. when I was hauling it to the city sites, so I think the move to that direction would be a good move.

### ***Rich wrote:***

I would recommend the City of Lincoln contract with a recycling provider. The rates would be uniform for all customers. If haulers are required to provide curbside recycling, and many are reluctant to do so, they may charge a high rate, deterring customers from using their recycling service.

### ***Dana wrote:***

Is recycling really as beneficial as we think it is? Does it really help the environment? Listen for the quote from the New York Times. -<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wS1dv3iat8>

### ***Dan wrote:***

Beware the youtube video includes offensive language by two comedians.

### ***Eric wrote:***

Instead of city-owned recycling centers, it would be nice to instead see neighborhood recycling centers... a space dedicated to recycling in neighborhoods like neighborhood mailboxes. It may be an

increased burden on the city (the city could contract it) but would better encourage people to recycle (instead of requiring a fee to be provided at the curbside).

When I lived in China, the recycler would pay you for your recyclables. Go figure!

***Paul wrote:***

I don't know how the other recycling companies work, but I use Recycling Enterprises to pick up my recycling. Before hiring them I took it to the Drop-off areas. The company takes more types of material, I don't have to sort it out & store it (more room in my garage) & the convenience makes it worth the monthly fee.

***Patte wrote:***

Since any hauler can serve any area, some neighborhoods have 3 services trolling the streets on different days. There should be one hauler on one day with possible yard waste pickup on another day. Yard waste shouldn't cost extra and if haulers are tossing it in with normal waste it defeats the purpose.

***Ken wrote:***

How does Omaha do curbside? Lincoln trash haulers won't like being "required" to do anything. Have the city get bids and anyone who wants to do business, can submit a bid.

And if we pay for recycling, trash haulers should be able to save weight fees, pick up less often and charge less.

This is change, but it shouldn't be hard. San Francisco recycles almost 80% of its waste.

***Elizabeth wrote:***

I am 100% for including recycling in our monthly garbage bill! This is a change that needs to happen! It would encourage many to recycle who normally wouldn't or couldn't.

***Marti wrote:***

I would gladly pay \$10 or more per month for recycling collection if I could pay less for the small amount of trash I place at the curb each week..... 2 bags or less per week as we recycle everything possible and compost kitchen scraps/yard waste.

## Topic: Commercial Recycling (apartments, businesses, industries and institutions)

### Narrative:

Nationally, about 34% of waste is recycled. Lincoln currently recycles about 18% of its waste, or a little more than half the national average. Increasing the recycling rate can help extend the life of our landfill, avoid future landfill cost, and conserves natural resources.

A strategy many communities use to encourage greater recycling is the provision of commercial recycling service to multi-family dwellings (apartments), businesses, industries and institutions. Approximately half of the waste disposed of in Lincoln’s landfill comes from commercial businesses. It is estimated that this strategy could reduce the amount of waste entering Lincoln’s landfill an additional 6 to 12 percent or 24,700 to 49,400 tons each year.

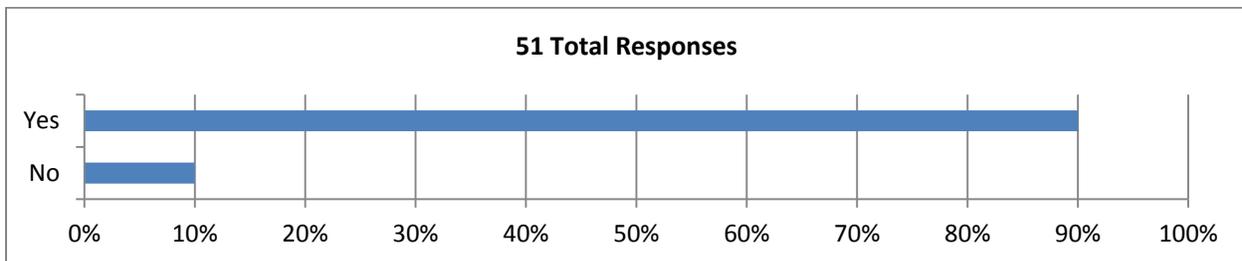
Providing commercial recycling can be accomplished in two ways:

1. Require trash haulers to provide recycling, OR
2. The City of Lincoln would contract with a commercial recycling service provider.

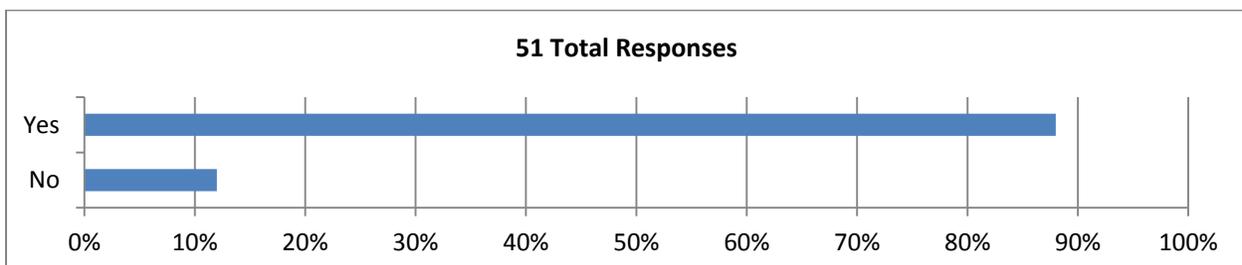
Under either scenario, all Lincoln commercial businesses would have recycling service and pay a monthly fee for that service that would vary greatly depending upon the needs of the business and the level of service. For some businesses, the cost increase would be very minor. For others, the proposal might require increased capital investment and/or operating expense.

### Survey Questions and Results:

**Should apartments, businesses, industries and institutions in Lincoln recycle materials like cardboard and office paper even though it could potentially increase costs for businesses?**



**Should Lincoln require space be dedicated for recycling containers in commercial establishments and developments constructed in the future?**



## Open Ended Question and Results:

### What are your ideas about increasing commercial recycling? -- 26 comments provided

- Add 50 cents to the landfill tip fee to create a Resource Management Revolving Loan Program. Allow businesses and apartment owners to apply for funds either as no or low interest loans or partial grants, determined by the level of waste reduction they can achieve. Require that to be eligible to apply for these funds at any time in the next five years, the business will have had write and submit a recycling plan within the next year. Many businesses will discover they don't need the city fund.
- ban recyclable materials from the landfill
- Businesses want to do the right thing but it must be economically feasible and make good business sense. I believe that banning targeted materials from the landfill (rather than mandating recycling services) may be the best approach to increasing commercial recycling. Businesses also need increased education and assistance to make their programs thrive.
- Charge per volume or weight fee. Educate, encourage reuse, especially items like pallets and large containers. Create city-wide food waste to energy system.
- Commercial recycling is one of the largest creators of waste. It is important that we get EVERYONE on board with this idea, not just the citizens. Everyone needs to be head accountable for the waste they create.
- discounted fees for apartment dwellers and businesses located in multi-business buildings
- encouraging companies by having more facilities to drop them off. Since there is compensation involved with the companies who process the recyclables why not have this pay for the service.
- I definitely think that commercial establishments, apts, and retirement communities should have required recycling, This is a large segment of the Lincoln community producing solid waste. I am curious to know the % of these establishments and retirement homes that now recycle.
- I used to work at Midland Recycling and have seen first hand that it is possible for any business large or small to recycle. They just have to set it up specific to their needs and uses
- Increase the costs for garbage pickup ~ make it more cost-effective to recycle, or even more cost-effective to waste less!
- It just makes sense to provide recycling containers in business establishments and requiring it will make sure it gets done. You have to make recycling easy and convenient for people.
- It should be a mandatory practice in businesses.
- It would be really nice if it could somehow not be mandated. Like maybe there is an incentive for adding recycling rather than a penalty for not.
- LPS sites/schools have been recycling since 1998 - they annually recycle over 1.2 million pounds of materials. Students have learned the benefits of recycling; environmental and economical. Staff and students basically have 'curbside' service at schools - they put materials in containers placed outside the buildings, and a contracted recycling vender picks it up! This leads to an often asked question by students...."If we can get recycling picked up at school, why isn't it picked up at home?"
- Make businesses aware of tools that would help them reduce waste and increase recycling. Waste assessments and waste audits can shed a light on opportunities for easy to make changes that can save money and reduce the overall amount of materials consumption. It's a win-win.
- Make it mandatory.
- Many apartment renters would recycle if they had extra room to store the material in their apartments. If there was a container near the building trash container, it would be much easier. Businesses have the same space problem have more clean paper & cardboard that is more

useful to recycling companies. If their waste makes up 1/2 of the landfill waste, then a small reduction in landfill waste can make a big improvement in recycling.

- Publicize efforts of those doing well, encourage raising by percentage each year
- Require commercial recycling of certain items like cardboard, office paper, etc. These items have a good market, so tweak the system to make it happen.
- Some of the biggest recycling efforts are through commercialized businesses/apartments. These folks should be at the forefront of recycling, setting the example for residential recycling.
- Specific materials that are readily recyclable should be targeted first, such as cardboard and office paper.
- There has been talk about recycling at construction sites. I think many are doing this now, but requiring it may cause problems at small sites that can't hold multiple dumpsters for separate items (cardboard, metals, wood, etc.). Plus we don't want to see more fees and paperwork in the permit process. Maybe better information for the construction industry would reduce a lot of waste. Inform builders that clean wood recycling is free (at Hofeling) and cardboard recycling actually pays back.
- This is Nebraska where no one wants to be required to do anything, even if it IS good for children. Businesses need to see recycling as "enlightened self-interest." It's good PR and the costs are nominal. We need a few business leaders to implement and show the rest of Lincoln that it is good business.
- Leave containers available
- Massive education to separate paper from other trash
- Increase fees for paper trash

## **Results of Open Ended Comments -- 2 comments provided**

### ***Corey wrote:***

Businesses, institutions, apartment complexes, etc. should be required to provide recycling services and receptacles. You have to make recycling easy and convenient for people and this is one way to do that. I know some people will complain about the costs involved but they do not realize the cost savings it would have in the long run.

### ***Paul wrote:***

Many apartment renters would recycle, but don't have space to store it before taking it to the Drop-off areas. If there was a recycling container next to the trash that would be easy & convenient.

Businesses also have the same space problem. They have more clean recyclable waste that is more useful to recycling companies. Since business waste makes up 1/2 of the landfill waste, then a small reduction in material going to the landfill will make a larger increase in the city recycling record.

## Topic: Toxics Reduction

### Narrative:

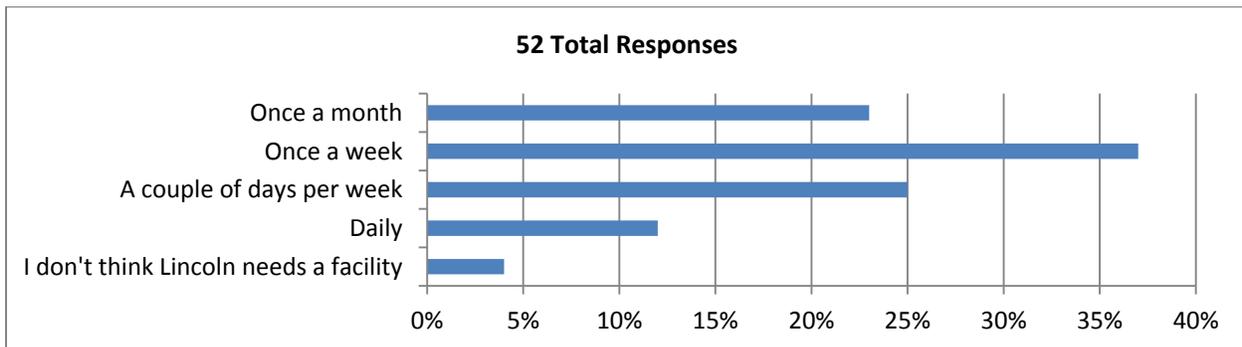
Many common household products are toxic and, if not managed and disposed of properly, pose health and environmental risks. Lincoln’s current toxics reduction program offers five to eight mobile collection events for the public and two small business hazardous waste collections per year. This approach does not offer year-round access to proper toxics disposal.

A strategy many communities use to manage toxics from homes and small businesses is to create a strong toxic-reduction program that combines education with the safe and convenient collection at a toxic waste collection facility with year around access. It is estimated that Lincoln could divert 1% or less and prevent more than 100,000 pounds of hazardous waste from entering the landfill each year. The program would offer the added benefit of better protecting public health and the environment.

Under this scenario, each household would pay 8 cents to 29 cents per month as part of their garbage bill depending on how often the toxic waste facility would be open to the public.

### Survey Questions and Results:

**If Lincoln created a place to provide year-round household hazardous waste collection, how often should it be open?**



### Results of Open Ended Comments -- 8 comments provided

**Corey wrote:**

It would be great to have year-round toxic and hazardous waste disposal available. I always seem to miss the few days it is available now. I also think this would make it easier for people to dispose of hazardous products which is always a good thing. I just picked up a full container of oil out by Jamaica North Trail where it looked like somebody changed their oil at a trailhead. Now it is sitting in my garage and I don't know what to do with it!

**Susan wrote:**

Some kind of year round facility sounds like a good plan.

**Carrie wrote:**

Lincoln is the only major city in Nebraska that does not have a permanent collection site either planned or in operation.

***Eric wrote:***

HHW collection here in Lincoln is pathetic! You have to wait a few weeks to a few months before one happens (store your HHW somewhere in the mean time), drive across town to get to the collection site and make sure you get there during the operating hours on the day it's open or else you have to wait until the next one. Wonder why you hear about people pouring stuff down the sink every so often and then having to call LFR because of the fumes (not me). There has to be a better way!

***Paul wrote:***

A year-round place would be good. Mobile collections are OK, but you have to remember when & where they are taking place, store the HHW until the event & it probably will cross town anyway.

HHW thrown into the trash is dangerous to trash workers & to everyone especially if the HHW is liquid & is spilled or leaks on to the ground.

Demand should determine its days & hours. Omaha started with appointments only & worked up to a regular schedule.

***Ron wrote:***

I will not drive all the way across town to visit a facility at the transfer station. I will place my limited hhw in the trash as the landfill is designed to contain those types of wastes. Mobile collections are the only way to go. A fixed facility is not cost effective.

***Dan wrote:***

While you do bring up a good point, not ALL HHW can go into the trash and much of it can be managed in better ways than just burying it. This is why it seems to make sense to combine periodic, mobile collection days with additional options that allow for year round access, etc. The City's transfer station is a multipurpose site that already works for many Lincolnites. I like the idea of a location I can utilize when needed and appropriate. I'm willing to pay for that. I also like the idea of a place where you can swap good useable items like stains and fertilizers. Why throw those in the trash if someone else can use them. Lincoln needs to innovate not put more stuff in the trash!

***Michael wrote:***

I think you are in the slim minority of people that wouldn't drive across town maybe twice a year to dump off HHW. Omaha has a recycle store where those materials are put on a self and anyone can come down and pick out what they want for free. Its a real community asset there. Free paint and cleaning supplies are great and it keeps chemicals out of the groundwater. I think if we don't raise the standard a little, we're left with a second rate city, created by a second rate culture of "I just don't give a damn".

## Topic: Source Waste Reduction

### Narrative:

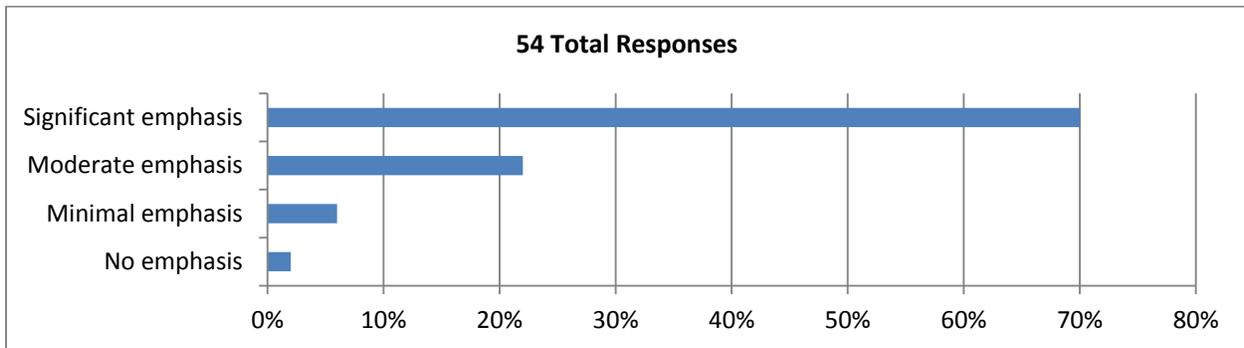
Nationally, about 34% of waste is recycled. Lincoln currently recycles about 18% of its waste, or a little more than half the national average. Increasing the recycling rate can help extend the life of our landfill, avoid future landfill cost, and conserves natural resources.

A strategy many communities use to diminish the amount of waste entering the landfill is to reduce the amount of waste created. By increasing education, supporting manufacturer and retail take-back and producer responsibility programs, and increasing support of reuse and waste exchange programs, it is estimated that Lincoln could reduce its waste by an additional 1 to 6 percent and prevent 4,100 to 24,600 tons per of waste from entering the landfill each year.

Under this scenario, each household would pay 21 cents to 63 cents per month on their garbage bill depending on how extensive the program is.

### Survey Questions and Results:

**What level of emphasis should Lincoln place on promoting waste reduction?**



### Open Ended Question and Results:

**What ideas do you have for promoting waste reduction? – 18 comments provided**

- ban plastic bags; give some type of tax incentive for businesses/stores that limit their packaging/waste; Encourage people to use their own bags and containers; city government contracts that specify less packaging and waste;
- Charge per volume or weight fee.
- Communicate the economics of waste reduction.
- Creating a volunteer program with block leaders that take information door to door to their neighbors and provide education as well as community building.
- Education on ways to decrease waste: packaging, buy things as needed not everything we want, monitor food to minimize waste, reuse, repurpose items that we have.
- Encourage and educate about materials exchange program of Keep NE beautiful. Green awards for businesses that participate and public recognition.

- -I'm not sure promotion or education is necessary beyond when initially rolling out the recycling program (after first few months). People will either recycle or they won't. Making recycling as easy-as-possible and trash disposal as difficult and expensive as feasible is the key to increasing recycling rates.
- Increase the cost to throw things in the landfill.
- Offer pick up programs. Goodwill won't pickup damaged furniture (even if it is only slightly damaged), so things that could be reused get put to the curb.
- parents of grade school students touring the Bluff's Rd. landfill need to go along.
- Pay as you throw concept could be implemented if proposed to Lincoln trash haulers in a concerted manner.
- Promote 'Free-cycle' locations that will allow citizens to drop off unwanted, usable materials and pick up items they can use.....
- Promote recycling by making it easier and cheaper (or mandatory). If possible, promote programs that use food/lawn/garden waste for composting.
- source reduction and recycling
- Step up role of. Eco stores
- The city will need to spend a significant amount to educate the community about the impacts of our waste habits, and about the innovations mentioned above that can reduce waste and provide a different perspective on materials consumption. If our inefficient private system of waste and recycling collection were streamlined, and if producers were forced to take some responsibility for the life-cycle of their products it might offset the cost of these programs.
- We need to go beyond education and incorporate research models that have been shown to be effective in causing people to take action and act differently.
- Education is key = public service announcements, bill Boards – contests between neighborhoods. Service group projects – ongoing for years & years

## **Results of Open Ended Comments -- 0 comments provided**

## Topic: Organic (Food) Waste Composting

### Narrative:

Nationally, about 34% of waste is recycled. Lincoln currently recycles about 18% of its waste, or a little more than half the national average. Increasing the recycling rate can help extend the life of our landfill, avoid future landfill cost, and conserves natural resources.

A strategy some communities use to reduce the amount of waste entering the landfill is to divert commercially produced (restaurants, grocery stores, etc) organic or food waste. In Lincoln, food waste makes up 16% of the waste that enters the landfill. It is estimated that this strategy could reduce the amount of commercial waste entering Lincoln's landfill by 5 to 10 percent or 10,000 to 20,000 tons each year.

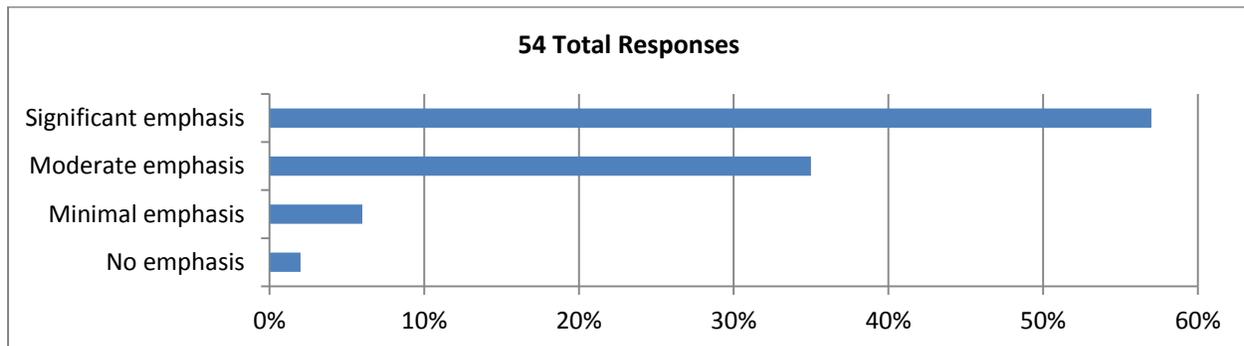
Commercial food waste composting options include:

1. Identify opportunities for public-private partnerships to increase commercial food waste diversion and use, AND
2. Support a pilot food waste diversion program for commercial businesses

The cost of organic (food) waste composting programs varies greatly depending upon the type of program developed. Large scale programs will charge trash haulers delivering food waste to their facility a fee ranging from \$25 to \$100 per ton. This fee would be passed on to the businesses generating the food waste.

### Survey Questions and Results:

What level of emphasis should be placed on separating commercial food waste for composting?



### Results of Open Ended Comments -- 8 comments provided

#### **Corey wrote:**

It just makes sense to compost material. We have to start thinking about sustainability and composting is one of the primary ways to be sustainable.

#### **Mary wrote:**

I would like to see more education for individual home owners on how to start & do in their backyards, but I think a program for business is VERY important as we move forward as a community.

***Carrie wrote:***

Food waste in landfills is a large contributor to landfill gas emissions, primarily methane, which is 20-72 times the potency of carbon dioxide. In an aerobic composting program, methane is not generated as part of the process, reducing our GHG impact significantly. As an agricultural state, we should put more emphasis on reclaiming these materials and creating a value-added soil amendment and natural fertilizer.

***Eric wrote:***

Like community gardens throughout Lincoln, there should also be community composting piles. Do the community gardens here compost?... and if not, can they?

***Julie wrote:***

Removing food waste from our landfill will extend its life and reduce carbon emissions substantially. What's not to like?

***Kevin wrote:***

In Portland, we had public composting at community gardens all around the city. Even if I lived in an apartment, I could still compost, and then I'd see the results of that composting when I got bags of free tomatoes and cucumbers at the end of summer. I think making these programs and their benefits visible will increase their uptake.

***Chris wrote:***

Incentives for businesses to use Food Net-Green awards. Education about food net. Compost available for public use like LinGro.

***Roxanne wrote:***

Significant emphasis – this would appear to be easy – food waste in one bin – everything else in other

## Topic: Share Your Ideas:

# Please share your ideas regarding the future of solid waste management in Lincoln-Lancaster County.

Results of Open Ended request for ideas -- 9 Ideas provided on website, 2 on paper forms

### Idea: City wide ban on plastic shopping bags - 4 Comments to Idea

*Lilly wrote the following Idea:*

For all businesses, not just grocery stores, big box discount stores, i.e. Wal Mart, Target, Shopko, restaurants, fast food, drive thrus. While we're at it ban Styrofoam to go food containers & drink containers.

*Dana commented:*

What's the real impact on plastic bags? How harmful are they to the environment? And what are these businesses supposed to replace these bags with? If that increases the costs to the business, they will pass that onto the consumer. It's just not that easy to ban things... especially things that people like and are affordable.

*Eric commented:*

We use our plastic bags in place of trash bags. A nice reuse and cheaper, too... so I'd hate to see them banned while plastic trash bags are still allowed.....

*Eric commented:*

I agree with Kevin. I'd like to see stores phase out plastic bags (though they can be recycled or re-used easily) but banning them wouldn't go over well.

*Kevin commented:*

I don't like it. It seems like a top down solution. We should, whenever possible, reduce usage through incentives, not mandates.

### Idea: Limit specific garbage haulers to specific neighborhoods - 3 Comments to Idea

*Patte wrote the following Idea:*

Haulers used to self regulate what areas they would serve. Having three different haulers drive the same streets is not cost effective for them or customers. Having trash on the streets every day does not make neighborhoods inviting and attractive.

*Dana commented:*

To do this, areas would have to be put up for bid. That's the only feasible way this idea would work. You can't just pick and choose who gets what. This is a business, an enterprise, and businesses should be able to compete for customers.

*Nathan commented:*

Agree. Trash/recycling haulers should be limited to zones. There are too many different haulers zooming through the neighborhoods at all hours of the day. It is not only costly on the haulers but it creates unnecessary wear and tear on the city streets/alleys, is a waste of fuel, and increases emissions.

***Marc commented:***

Require haulers to be more specific in their locations of pickups. On my street they pickup three days a week from different customers who are right next door. It's hard on the street to have heavy trucks there several times more than they need to be.

**Idea: Volume Based Pricing - 6 Comments to Idea**

***Steve wrote the following Idea:***

The city should enact a volume based pricing strategy to promote waste reduction and recycling. In summary, consumers should pay more for producing more waste and not pay or pay significantly less for waste that they recycle.

Personally, if I had to pay more for each bag of trash I put out to be placed in the landfill, I would definitely make every effort to minimize this through recycling or limiting the packaging materials I accumulate on consumer items that I purchase.

***Patte commented:***

Every regulation has a tradeoff. Dumping in rural ditches, sneaking garbage into neighbors/apartment dumpsters/public bins and other "creative" disposal will increase.

If this becomes policy, be prepared for negative impacts of this type of "solution".

***Eric commented:***

This would be a nice idea for commercial trash pickups. For residential, it would almost be like a double whammy if someone has to pay for recycling... and for those people who have mom and dad living with them (more waste produced, no choice on that), they would have to pay more again... so it might be a counter productive. We should encourage recycling but not encourage it by penalizing what you have to throw away.

***Dana commented:***

This is a good idea, but not economically feasible. There's no timely way to weigh everything thrown away and adding a scale to each truck cost thousands of dollars. A way to do it might be by offering different sized receptacles to customers and a bundle price to those that recycle. Seniors should definitely get a discount because they don't produce as much garbage as a typical household. And as far as couches and furniture go haulers would just charge a bulk fee for those items.

***Marti commented:***

The idea is to pay by volume, not weight, therefore a truck scale is not necessary. Cities that utilize a 'Pay-as You-Throw' structure generally see a dramatic increase in recycling and reduction in trash. The amount of solid waste headed for the curb may very well

***Eric commented:***

Perhaps we could work toward volume based pricing over 3-5 years. In the meantime, I like the idea of bundled pricing.

stay the same - it's just sorted more judiciously as 'trash' or 'recycling' and the resident will learn that the more they recycle, the more \$\$ saved. Recycling is not mandatory, it's just economically smart!

***Marc commented:***

I would install weigh scales on the loading rack of each hauler and measure trash thrown away by each customer. Then the hauler could charge appropriate to the weight. Those choosing to throw away a couch would pay accordingly.

### **Idea: Rename Solid Waste Plan - 0 Comments to Idea**

**Kevin** wrote the following Idea:

I think if this were titled "Recycling and Conservation Plan" or some other euphemism, we could get more input and buy-in from the community. "Solid Waste Plan" may be the insider term, but it doesn't exactly explain what that means. Sounds more like it's talking about sewage rather than environmental strategies.

### **Idea: Harness more energy from the landfill... - 1 Comment to Idea**

**Eric** wrote the following Idea:

...a little bit on the same subject as recycling, going green to save the landfill and the landfill itself. I know that the city and LES are beginning to harness the power of the landfill with methane gas. Is it possible to expand this type of power generation at our landfill or use a different type of generation with the landfill... possibly one to reduce the amount of trash that is at or going into the landfill? Just a thought :) .....

**Russell** commented:

I was partially involved in the locating of the current landfill (Bluff Road.) I remember some very ugly meetings about site location because NO ONE wanted it even remotely close to their homes. At that time I was opposed to a "burn plant" (waste to energy) like the one in operation at Ames, IA. 40 years later I am favor of a burn plant simply so Lincoln will not have to experience the agony of siting a new landfill. The Ames's plant is still working and they advertise that they are recycling plus making electrical power. russell miller

### **Idea: Inform Lincoln about recyclable waste & let solution evolve - 1 Comment to Idea**

**Bob** wrote the following Idea:

The imposition of mandatory recycling regulations seems premature to a program that could offer solutions that will significantly allow for a voluntary change in the handling of solid waste. Private business has come a long way in reducing the volume of solid waste being hauled to our landfills now.

Most businesses already recycle paper, bottles and metal waste. The companies that provide these services should not be run out of business by government mandate. Any connection between building permits and a recycling permit may very well slow down an already slow process and the recycling plan may not apply to the potential tenants that each has their own recycling issues. A retail clothing store is not like retail used computer store. Now that the arena project is nearing completion, leave it up to the city to come forward with new regulations about on-site separation of construction waste for the next project. The city hauled anything and everything to the landfill this time.

**Susan** commented:

This is not a good idea. It should be mandatory or at least offered at the curb to make it convenient.

**Idea: Haulers pick up trash 1 day per week and recycling another day - 0 Comments to Idea**

**Marti** wrote the following Idea:

Most trash haulers provide collection service 2 days per week. Most residents could get by with only one day of trash pick up if they were encouraged to recycle and offered curbside service as part of their trash hauling service.

Day 1 would be designated as 'trash' collection and Day 2 as 'recycling' collection. Each hauler would use their current equipment, drive the same number of miles as they currently do, employ the same staff, and billing structure stays the same. The only thing that changes is that haulers go to the landfill with Day 1 loads and to a recycling processor with Day 2 loads.

**Idea: Let's put yard waste back in the landfill with the trash - 1 Comment to Idea**

**Dana** wrote the following Idea:

Putting grass in with the trash is actually beneficial to landfills and more economical. It accelerates the breaking down of the trash and it creates more methane gas, an energy gas. Several landfills around the country do this and use the methane to power homes in their community. The majority, if not all, of the methane coming out of the Lincoln landfill is just being burned off.

Since energy prices keep increasing, it's pretty ridiculous that we're not capitalizing on this source and producing as much as we can.

**Neil** commented:

If we're at all worried about environmental impact I don't think this is the route to go, as even the methane that is captured to be burned or rerouted to the Terry Bundy Plant to be burned is only recaptured at about a 50% rate to my knowledge. Additionally this is more of a mitigation to a problem solution, whereas adding more organics would only exacerbate this problem and recoup some of the byproducts from an inefficient system.

Source separation would still be my preferable choice as it is a reasonable approach that asks little of many and prevents delaying larger problems, if that means more space for composting operations, all the better.

**Idea: Fluidized Bed Waste Combustion Boilers - 0 Comments to Idea**

**Bill** wrote the following Idea:

This process is used in Florida, many eastern European countries, and around the world to dramatically reduce garbage tonnage.

**Idea: Education is key - Submitted on a paper form**

**Roxanne** wrote the following Idea:

Education is key - willingness to spend \$ to make an impact. Increase taxes to fund. Look for opportunities to promote low cost. Lincoln-Lancaster Co. should seek to have 100% waste reduction – educate and appeal to our pride of place – younger audience is willing to move in that direction – make [indecipherable] more HIP with more recycling and every conservation emphasis – the ideal accomplished with city, trash as a utility like water & electric

**Idea: Litter Reduction component - *Submitted on a paper form***

***Roxanne*** wrote the following *Idea*:

There also needs to be a litter reduction component – education on trash movement into waterways and on into ocean. Non-point source pollution reduction as part of waste mgmt.