

FROM

NAME & TITLE  
AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS  
SUBJECT

THOMAS J. STOSUR, DIRECTOR  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING  
417 EAST FAYETTE STREET, 8<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR  
CCB #12-0049R Investigative Hearing – Municipal Composting

CITY of  
BALTIMORE  
MEMO



TO The Honorable President and Members of the City Council  
City Hall, Room 400  
100 N. Holliday Street  
DATE: June 26, 2012

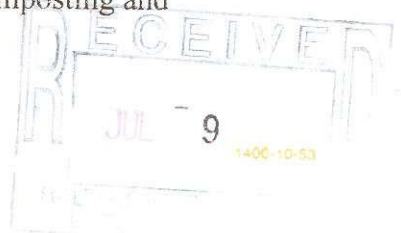
The Department of Planning has received City Council Bill #12-0049 for review. This legislation is “For the purpose of requesting the Director of Public Works, and the Chief, Bureau of Solid Waste to report to the Council on the Department’s progress toward creating a comprehensive Municipal Composting Program....”

Composting is an important Solid Waste Management strategy for Baltimore. It will reduce our waste and provide Baltimore’s farmers, gardeners and residents with rich, fertile soil that is badly needed in the City. A steady supply of high quality compost is imperative for the success of Baltimore City farms and gardens because the existing soil is, in many cases, not usable.

The Baltimore Sustainability Plan, in its Resource Conservation Chapter, states the goal: “Expand Baltimore’s composting program and opportunities. Create public/private partnerships to locate new composting facilities and expand existing operations to compost residential yard and food waste and commercial food waste to the greatest extent practical.” To this end, in the last year the Department of Planning has:

- Convened an Urban Agriculture Sub-Committee of the Baltimore Food Action Policy Committee, which includes a Soils and Composting working group which has met once in person and has been corresponding via email about how best to support urban agriculture in the city as relates to these issues.
- Researched which types of bins are best suited for use in the urban environment, and drafted an RFP to solicit bids from qualified vendors to conduct a sale of bins for composting residential yard waste.
- Met with aspiring local composting entrepreneurs, City Council members, and the Maryland Department of the Environment, to support the adoption of changes to the city’s Solid Waste plan that would allow for the opening of new, larger-scale composting facilities in the city.
- Started a school composting pilot with Waste Neutral Group, the Baltimore City Public School System, and the Baltimore Community Foundation. Identified and trained participants at seven schools, six of which participated from winter 2011 through spring 2012. Applied for and received additional funding for the program from Constellation Energy, and oversaw an intern who is creating a report on the successes and challenges of the pilot.
- Reached out to other potential partners in composting, such as Social Ecologies in Chicago and Compost Cab in DC.
- Added definitions to TransForm Baltimore that will facilitate composting and other forms of recycling.

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The Planning Department supports the creation of a city-wide or even regional composting facility that includes both food waste and yard waste. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Beth Strommen in the Office of Sustainability at [Beth.Strommen@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:Beth.Strommen@baltimorecity.gov) or 410-396-8360.

cc: Ms. Angela Gibson, Mayor's Office  
Mr. Al Foxx, Director, DPW  
Ms. Marcia Collins, DPW  
Mr. Theodore Atwood, Director, DGS  
Ms. Anne Draddy, DGS  
Ms. Karen Randle