


FROM	NAME & TITLE	Rudolph S. Chow, P.E., Director	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Public Works 600 Abel Wolman Municipal Building		
	SUBJECT	City Council Resolution 19-0139R		

DATE: May 2, 2019

TO

TO Judiciary and Legislative Investigations Committee

INTRODUCTION

I am herein reporting on City Council Resolution 19-0139R introduced by Council Members Henry, Bullock, Burnett, Cohen, Pinkett, President Young, and Council Members Scott, Reisinger, Clarke, Stokes, Sneed, and Middleton.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Resolution is to invite the Director of the Department of Public Works (DPW), the Head of the Bureau of Solid Waste, the Director of the Office of Sustainability, the Coordinator of the Office of Sustainability, and the City Arborist to update the City Council on the City’s progress toward creating a municipal composting program, to provide a fiscal impact statement on creating the program, and to estimate a timeline for Citywide implementation of municipal composting.

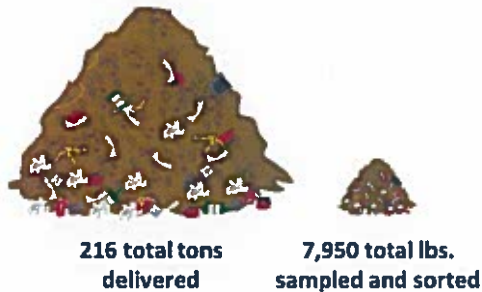
BRIEF HISTORY

Waste diversion is the sum total of the recycled, composted, and donated or reused materials that are removed from a defined waste stream. Organics recycling is defined in State law as the process by which organic materials are collected, separated, or processed and returned to the marketplace in the form of raw materials or products. Yard and food waste tend to be the focus of composting programs. Organics recycling includes anaerobic digestion and composting. City Council Resolution 19-0139R states the interest in having a municipal composting program and an understanding of the costs and implementation timeline for such a program. While grass root efforts are expanding through the good work of the Office of Sustainability and many nonprofit, community garden, and institutional initiatives, a larger municipal program has yet to be initiated for municipal waste collected curbside, including yard waste. The purpose of the Department’s Solid Waste Master Plan (“Less Waste – Better Baltimore”) is to assess current solid waste management processes and to analyze and provide a roadmap for a reimagined solid waste management program. One of the work products of the Master Plan is performing two waste sorts, one which took place in the winter, and one which will take place in June. These waste sorts provide a sampling of waste profiles from around the City that will help inform the availability of certain waste materials that could be diverted, converted, or reused if managed differently. The first waste sort analyzed the constituents of waste from curbside collected municipal waste. The waste sort in June will analyze both the municipally-collected waste and a sampling of commercial haulers’ waste. A pie chart is shown in this bill response demonstrating the results of the first waste sort.

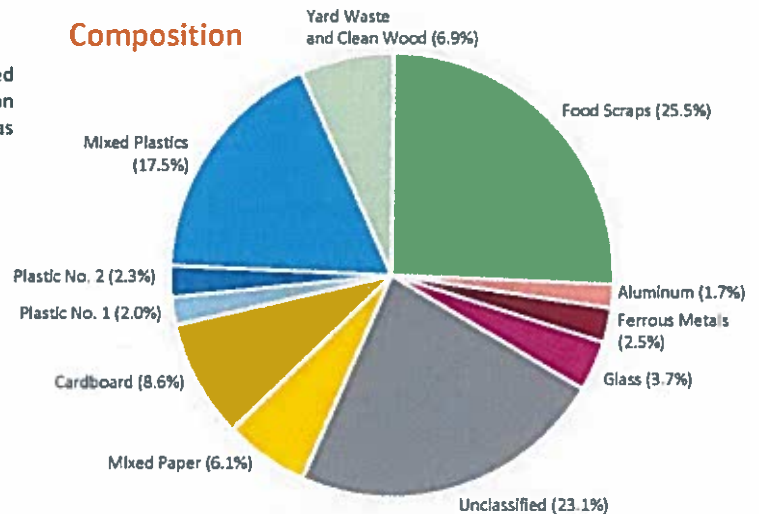
Interim Report on Task 0 | Results from First Seasonal Waste Sort (Winter 2019)

Number and Size of Samples

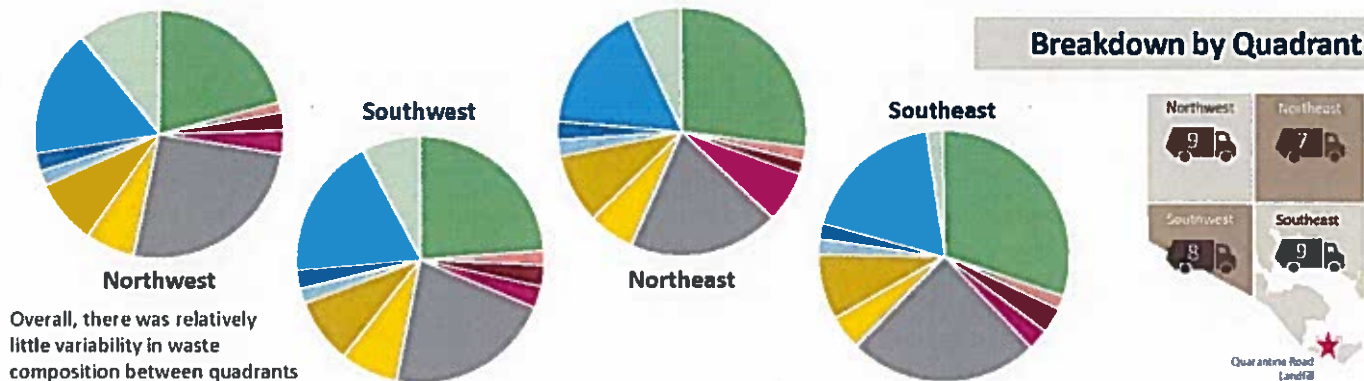
In total, 33 trash loads were sampled over six days. A combined total weight of 216 tons was delivered to the sorting area, an average of about 6.5 tons per truck. From this, about 7,950 lbs. was selected for sorting, an average of about 240 lbs. per sample.



Composition



Breakdown by Quadrant



The Master Plan consultant has held community outreach meetings to gather public input, provided a survey for respondents to express their knowledge and level of interest in new or expanded waste diversion opportunities, and is building its foundational information on current waste collection and disposal programs. The entire study will not be concluded until the end of this calendar year. In addition, several advocacy groups are sponsoring the work of a zero waste consultant (through a grant) and offered to collaborate and share their findings with DPW’s Master Plan consultant. DPW appreciates the offer and has agreed to have the zero waste consultant work directly with the DPW’s Master Plan consultant, thus providing additional input into the Master Plan’s eventual recommendations.

The 2017 Maryland General Assembly passed legislation to study organic waste diversion. As a result, the MDE is performing and nearing completion of a study on how best to divert yard waste and food residuals from refuse disposal facilities and is to report their findings and recommendations to the Legislature by July 1, 2019. Based on the MDE 2018 Interim Report, these recommendations are to include any improvements to the current State permitting processes for anaerobic digesters; programmatic, legislative, or regulatory measures that may promote diversion of organics from waste streams; and a pilot program for the Elkridge and Jessup region to prioritize infrastructure development and food waste recovery from large food waste generators. This report may also provide information that will be of use in the Master Plan analyses and recommendations.

The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council

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FISCAL IMPACT

The Bureau of Solid Waste accepts unlimited amounts of yard waste if contained or bundled separately from mixed refuse. Bagged leaves are collected curbside (up to 10 bags per address) during the fall or may be dropped off at certain collection points. It is estimated that DPW crews collect, on average, 10,000 tons of yard waste and 1,200 tons of leaves in any one year. Currently, separate collection of yard waste and leaves allows for residents to set out unlimited quantities for collection, the preponderance of which is incinerated or landfilled. Future solid waste management programs could allow for diverting this separate collection program toward composting or other waste diversion efforts. The Department does send a portion of its biosolids produced at its wastewater treatment plants to the Baltimore City Composting Facility located at Quarantine Road landfill, where the mature compost product is used on golf courses, athletic fields, and lawns. Approximately 70% of the remaining biosolids are heat dried into a pelletized product used as a fertilizer and soil amendment. A Biosolids study, which is still underway, did examine the potential for the wastewater treatment plant anaerobic digesters accept and process organic waste (primarily food waste in a slurry form) that would be diverted from the normal waste stream. This process could have the potential to accept high-strength industrial wastes, fats, oils and grease from food processing, grease-trap cleanouts, and food wastes.

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT POSITION

The Department of Public Works will attend the scheduled hearing on City Council Resolution 19-0139R to discuss municipal composting with the Council, present information on the current status of the Solid Waste Master Plan, and to assist with any questions the Committee and Council members may have on the Resolution.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Marcia Collins at 410-396-1960 (Marcia.Collins@baltimorecity.gov).

Sincerely,



Rudolph S. Chow, P.E.
Director

RSC:MMC