



Water and Waste Department • Service des eaux et des déchets

**Waste and Diversion Advisory Committee (WDAC)
Meeting #3 Notes**

Date: Monday, November 16, 2015, 5:00 – 7:15 pm

Location: St. Boniface Library, 100-131 Provencher Blvd, 2nd Floor

Attendees:

William Dowie	Green Action Centre
Tanya Suderman	Spence Neighbourhood Association
Greg Cherwonick	Manitoba Housing and Community Development
Vinh Huynh	Winnipeg School Division
Brandy Bobier	Citizen Representative
Melissa Dupuis	Citizen Representative
Lindsay Storie	Citizen Representative
Dwayne Capon	Citizen Representative
Richard Sawchuk	Citizen Representative
Randy Park	City of Winnipeg
Tiffany Skomro	City of Winnipeg
Justin Lee	City of Winnipeg
Darcy Strandberg	City of Winnipeg
Lisa Marquardson	City of Winnipeg
Janine Ralph	HDR
Michelle Kuly Holland	Facilitator, First Person Strategies
Sarah Piercy	Note taker, First Person Strategies

Regrets:

Mario Lopes	Professional Property Managers Association
Talatu Shokpeka	Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba
Jim Ferguson	Green Manitoba
Kristine Koster	City of Winnipeg

Agenda:

1. Session opening and welcome
2. Update, ideas and learning from committee members
 - a. *Share new updates or experiences to help enrich the learning, discussion and recommendations of the committee*
3. Organics (composting) Diversion Study
 - a. How WDAC and public feedback was used
 - b. Presentation on potential options for Phase 2 of public engagement
 - c. Facilitated discussion and feedback
4. Overview of waste & diversion public education
 - a. *In response to an action item noted in April 21 WDAC meeting notes and ongoing interest from the committee, the City will present and overview of current education and promotion practices for waste and diversion for the committee's information*
 - b. *Facilitated discussion and feedback*
5. New business
6. Session closing, next steps

Summary:

The third meeting of the Waste Diversion Advisory Committee (WDAC) was held on Monday, November 16, 2015. The purpose of the meeting was:

- To share new updates, ideas or experiences from committee members to enrich the recommendations of the committee;
- To hear how WDAC and public feedback was included within the new Organics Diversion Study and provide feedback on study components developed to-date; and
- To receive information and generate ideas related to the City's current waste & diversion education and promotion practices.

The meeting began with a round-robin type discussion in which committee members were invited to share updates, ideas or recent learnings. The results of these discussions are recorded in **Appendix A**.

Following this open discussion, a presentation was made on how WDAC and public feedback was used in the Organics Diversion Study and on system options that will be brought forward for public feedback in "Phase 2" of public engagement. A summary of WDAC questions in response to this presentation is noted in **Appendix B**.

The meeting followed with facilitated discussion and feedback on the potential for phased introduction of organics collection and on the next phase of public engagement. The documentation from these discussions is recorded in **Appendix C & D**. The meeting followed with presentation by the City on its current education and promotion practices for waste and diversion, for committee information and feedback. Documentation of feedback received is included in **Appendix E**.

Several themes emerged from WDAC discussions.

Key themes - phasing:

- **Enforcement, reward:** Consider the learning curve involved, and provide positive reinforcement and reward when done well. Consider phasing in enforcement to discourage improper system use or "bad behavior". The approach of stickering/tagging bins on collection day is viewed as effective – consider how a similar approach could assist with the organics program as a communications/behavior modification tool.
- **Start with food waste:** It was noted that starting with all food waste seemed to "make sense". However, it was also noted that public education measures would need to be taken to avoid user confusion if other organic materials were phased into the system later.
- **Each phase should be inclusive:** All phases should be inclusive of all housing types (i.e. some element of multi-family collection should be included at each phase).
- **Pilot in a neighbourhood:** There could be an opportunity to phase in the program geographically (e.g. pilot it in northwest Winnipeg, similar to cart collection implementation) to help work out any "kinks" in the system before full-scale roll out.

Key themes – public engagement & education:

- **Communicate the rationale, benefits, and cost of not doing it:** A clear articulation of the rationale behind, and benefits of, organic curbside collection is required to advance public engagement. For example:
 - The City should clearly state the role of organic waste collection in achieving 50% waste diversion by 2020.
 - Why it is important to divert waste from landfills now?
 - What is the impact at Brady? The answer needs to demonstrate why residents would choose to divert material from a landfill.

- **Make costs clear and “real”:** Make clear what the costs for residents will be, and include information on the current levy, how it is used and how it would relate to the addition of organic waste diversion.
- **Recognize this will be a big change for many Winnipeggers; in addition to “why” focus on “how to”:** Consider this lens when making decisions about:
 - What language used (e.g. do Winnipeggers know what organic waste diversion is, or is “curbside composting” more suitable language).
 - How information is shared (e.g. experiential, visual or graphic examples to make it “real”).
 - What this means in terms of changes within households (e.g. what is collected, what happens under your sink, with liner bags, etc.)
- **Best performance:** Information should communicate the analysis of options – where is the best performance, where benefits are maximized for cost?
- **Frequency and the mechanics of collection:** Provide information and engage on what collection looks like, bin size, frequency, placement, and related changes.
- **Address fears and misconceptions head on:** Will it stink? What about pests? These are questions that Winnipeggers will have, and all materials should address these clearly.
- **Different approaches for different audiences:** Different dwellings and audiences will require tailored communications and approaches and the medium can assist in sharing the impact of the message. Suggestions include focusing on visuals, offering up multiple translation options, promote interaction between groups, and show why the city supports organic composting and waste reduction. Examples include:
 - **Apartments:** Apartments may need larger posters for common areas; transient populations will require different messages that more permanent population groups.
 - **Languages:** What languages will messaging be shared in? Content should not come only in English and French and should be reflected through the city website.
 - **Champions:** The city should consider empowering waste reduction / organic curbside champions – well-known City (e.g. Ace Burpee) and community-based (e.g. WDAC members); this approach could allow for a collective response to waste reduction by working with local resources and shared speaking points.
 - **Strategy for community-based marketing and engagement:** Work with a goal in mind to maximize partnerships across the entire city with community, environmental, resident and cultural groups; consider what resources could be allocated for third party support. Community groups and organizations currently perceive a barrier in connecting with the city; 311 makes connecting harder, not easier. A strategy for liaising with community groups and a clear outline of what is expected of community groups could provide an opportunity for program change.
 - **Schools:** Consider working with school divisions sustainability committees (meetings coming up in January and April 2016) to impress importance of message and easy steps. This communication strategy could mimic what MPI does each spring in sharing their ‘bicycle safely’ program with schools. A portable ‘hands on, how composting works’ booth that accompanies the educational component could grab the attention of school children in Winnipeg.
 - **Councillors:** Continue to ensure councillors are informed, and utilize their networks.
 - **Updates:** Promote sign up for e-newsletters for updates, education.
- **Shift messaging to individual responsibility:** The communications approach needs to change over time, from ‘city waste collection’ to ‘my waste management’.
- **Online prominence:** Consider adjust City of Winnipeg Google search strategy related to waste diversion (the city does not currently come up first)

The meeting concluded at 7:30 p.m.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS:

1. **City of Winnipeg:** At the next WDAC meeting, Committee Members requested information about diverting waste at the source (“reverse triangle” concept) as this practice remains an important area to focus on and learn more about – to achieve the goal of 50% waste reduction by 2020 in Winnipeg. Follow up with committee member Jim Ferguson (source reduction) was suggested.
2. **City of Winnipeg:** A final set of questions was shared at the end of the meeting, for discussion/response:
 - If there is a 100+ year lifetime of Brady and other regional zones, why are we worried about waste diversion?
 - If people are paying \$55/year as a waste management levy, how much of the levy will be going to recycling and organics diversion?
 - Can organics collection work with the city’s union, or will it be sub-contracted out? How will the garbage collection tendering process impact waste diversion strategies and composting curbside?
 - The theme was lower/moderate/higher categories for various aspects; what are the triple bottom line optimizations?
3. **Facilitator:** Share the next meeting dates with WDAC Committee members.
 - Expected date: Early 2016 TBD

Appendix A – Updates, ideas and learning results:

- Perception in the general community is that collected organic materials (for compost) will stink.
- Winnipeg residents are still sweeping leaves onto city streets, rather than collecting them for organic collection.
- The logistics of collecting curb-side pickup need to be crystalized, including properly coloured waste bins (at current, garbage is collected from black bins, and recycling material is collected from blue; green was the suggested colour for organic material collection bins).
- Residents are looking forward to the 4R Winnipeg Depots with “baited breath”.
- One committee member recently took a tour of the Brady Landfill and took a ‘selfie’ with collected bio-solids to share with her network. The member also noted that public education remains a critical piece in successfully promoting organic compost collection, and that the key message of “it does not stink” must be loudly shared.
- Questions about diverting waste at the source remains an important area to focus on and learn more about.
- One committee member has successfully persuaded his colleagues to become actively involved in battery recycling at his place of employment.
- Another committee member remarked at how convenient the leaf/yard waste pickup was this year.
- A committee member has just returned from Europe and noted that we in North America are “fussier and spoiled” when it comes to garbage and recycling; garbage disposal bins were not easy to find in Venice, Italy and the committee member observed many Venetians simply dropping garbage onto sidewalks. No one appeared worried about the smell, and garbage was collected daily by city sanitation workers.
- An update about the progress of Halifax, NS curbside organic compost collection was shared; it was noted that the program was about to enter into another phase with stricter measures of enforcement, as uptake and participation numbers were not as high as desired.
- A new kitchen organics container, used in Cambridge, MA, is on the market; the new container allows for additional moisture to be removed from collected organic material, thus significantly reducing potential smell.

Appendix B – Questions and feedback in response to the Organics Diversion Study presentation

- Question: What are the percentages of food and other waste collected?
- Question: What is dimensional lumber?
- Question: Can you define IC&I?
- The consultant shared an observation that in most communities pet waste accounts for more waste than diapers. In Winnipeg, it appears that diaper waste makes up for more waste than pet waste. As a result, if diapers are included in the organics collection waste stream, it will impact the entire stream.
- It was suggested that hosting a green bin in a workplace washroom is a way to get even more paper waste diverted (paper towels).
- Question: What is expanded food waste?
- Question: Within the home, are we proposing two containers: one household 'organics' container AND a garbage can? This is a lot of space to take up under the sink, and does this increase fruit flies or exposure to rodents?
- Question: What is the cost of compostable liners, when the program is in place and manufacturers are producing large quantities?
- Question: Will it be mandatory to use compostable liners for organic food waste collection?

Appendix C – Feedback on phasing for the Organics Diversion program

- Consider changing the by-law once the program is implemented (2-5 years).
- Residents should be positively encouraged and rewarded for waste diversion once they have started to practice positive behavior (i.e. more organic waste diverted from landfill).
- Start with one community and target only food waste initially; phase in further changes.
- The city needs to be very aware of the pressure on educational changes that will be required to modify behavior of residents.
- A clear definition of the goal of the Organics and Waste Diversion strategy is required - what is the goal? Is it 50%, of only residential waste? Is the short term goal 30%, and the long term goal 50% by 2020?
 - The City confirmed that the goal is 50% residential waste reduction by 2020.
 - The City also shared that the waste diversion rate will “stall” around 30% unless organic waste collection is incorporated.
- The goal needs to be understood and clearly communicated to ensure it is practiced; charts, timelines and infographics could be of assistance in sharing the message.
- The parameters of phasing curbside organic waste collection needs to be inclusive, and include multi-family dwellings right from the start. The multi-family dwelling is a different audience due to dwelling construction; we need to understand a different approach may be required for success. Something should be offered for multi-family waste diversion at each phase of organics collection implementation.
- Advantages of phasing could include that the “kinks” will be worked out in the program before a full investment is made; all users will be allowed to get used to the practice slowly. Phasing also offers minimized challenges and fosters trust with residents and reduced embarrassment for early program “hiccups”.
- The disadvantages of phasing could include having to potentially re-educate residents if things change.
- One option for phasing in Winnipeg’s organic waste collection could look like this: residential collection to begin in the North West corner of Winnipeg; after one section of the city has begun organic waste collection, identify areas and expand after lesson are learned.

Appendix D – Feedback on public engagement and education for the Organics Diversion program

- Need to clearly identify why we don't want organics in landfill, what pressures are put on City (i.e. creating CO₂) and costing our city money.
- Gardeners are obsessed with their dirt and people have been doing this for a long time – we know how to do this.
- Need to make sure tags identifying when waste CANNOT be collected.
- We should be advocates and champions.
- Struggled with phasing – one community, vegetative first; puts a lot of pressure on early communications – should include this in By-Laws, make it mandatory.
- Phasing – regardless of how it is phased, needs to address single and multi-family homes.
- Frequency of pickup and what are the responsibilities of the resident needs to be clearly outlined.
- If commercial sources are considered, we will need to identify some business organizations to help share word.
- We will need to be careful of changing learnings too much.
- If an unforeseen error emerges, we should ensure that city is portrayed as trusted partner and is making the best possible options for residents.
- Content:
 - What will organic curbside compost collection cost?
 - What is the impact at Brady road?
 - Where do we get best performance?
 - What is the current levy?
 - Bring our collective and individual perspectives
 - Stage events and identify potential partnership with business associations (restaurant / hotel)
- Who it is important to reach:
 - Individuals aged 25 and under – who will provide the biggest commitment and receive the longest benefit.
 - First Nations communities.
- Create a “How to Compost” guide that comes with an initial Welcome to Curbside Composting, sharing the benefits of composting; this document could also assist residents who are composting incorrectly.
- Messaging needs to address: smell (lack of it), pests, methane (that it is bad).
- Channels for communications and public engagement:
 - City councilors
 - School newsletters
 - Pet owners
- Communications need to clearly identify:
 - What can go into compost, for curbside pick-up? The specifics will be illustrated if we go with expanded food waste.
 - The frequency of pick-ups.
 - Does this service cost anything?
 - Are liner bags required? Do liner bags cost anything?
 - How does composting fit into my life? Will it create more work?
 - Emphasize that the city understands that this is a new practice / habit for people – so how can we model behavior?
- Audiences:
 - Homeowners / Single Family Dwellings
 - Different communication(s) for multi-family units, businesses, etc.
 - Restaurants / grocery stores – target their food waste.

- The bins / carts:
 - Carts should be specific to amount of waste collected
- If residents see no pressing need for composting / organic waste diversion, the city needs to identify the benefits of composting and waste diversion – and sell the service as a benefit to residents.
- Goal to have all messaging: Early 2016

Appendix E – Feedback on City education and promotion practices for waste and diversion

- Question: Will the city put out an RFQ or Tender for organics collection? An RFQ suggests ‘request for qualifications’, not just a proposal.
- Question: What is the Winnipeg Minute?
- Question: Does the city change their communications over time, reflecting a change in the audience?
- Suggestion: the city should consider adding Organics Waste and Diversion messaging to the subscription email service offered by the city (via www.citywinnipeg.ca homepage).
- Question: What would the city like to see in public education, types, frequency, partnerships, user groups (residential, multi-family, schools)?
- Question: How much communication is done in other languages?
- Suggestion: strike partnerships with cultural groups to help them share the resource with their cultural audiences – in multiple languages.
- Question: Is mailing the best way to get the message about waste diversion out to residents? Direct mail is a good idea to regularly target home owners.
- Many schools offer translation at events, reflecting the diversity of students attending. Perhaps the city could consider a “hands on” touring booth, showing waste diversion – in different languages. For information, every school in Manitoba has to have an Educational Sustainability Development plan, and each division has to have a Committee to address those issues. For example, in the Winnipeg School Division, there are 79 schools and over 33,000 students. If the city worked with the school division’s Sustainability Committees, it could be an opportunity to share message broadly to young people. Introducing new curriculum is an option, but it depends on teacher interest and how/when it is introduced.
- Suggestion: in apartments, a poster in the lobby or mailbox rooms work very well to share message.
- Question: Would the city consider working with and compensating the Green Action Centre as a telephone resource to answer inquiries. This could take pressure off of 311, as Green Action Centre has enthusiastic ambassadors ready to answer questions about composting.
- Question: There seems to be no clear way for community groups to contact the City about organic waste diversion; 311 is a barrier to easy communication. What then becomes the expectation for Community groups (Like Spence Neighbourhood Association, Green Action Centre, etc.?) to help educate their stakeholders? And, info and education are different outputs; the message of WHY residents need to divert organic waste is missing.
- Suggestion: A committee member noted that they would be willing to speak to other groups as a ‘trained organic waste diversion champion’, and answer FAQ on behalf of WDAC.