



Water and Waste Department • Service des eaux et des déchets

Organics Workshop - Summary

Date: Thursday, September 10, 2015, 3:45 – 7:00 pm

Location: Millennium Library, 251 Donald Street, Buchwald Room, 2nd Floor

Attendees:

Brandy Bobier	Citizen Representative, Waste and Diversion Advisory Committee (WDAC)
Greg Cherwonick	Manitoba Housing and Community Development, WDAC
William Dowie	Green Action Centre, WDAC
Melissa Dupuis	Citizen Representative, WDAC
Jim Ferguson	Green Manitoba, WDAC
Laurie Fisher	City of Winnipeg
Sylvie Hébert	Green Action Centre, WDAC (alternate)
Ian Hall	University of Manitoba
Vinh Huynh	Winnipeg School Division, WDAC
Justin Lee	City of Winnipeg
Randy Park	City of Winnipeg
Talatu Shokpeka	Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM), WDAC
Irv Slike	City of Winnipeg
Darcy Strandberg	City of Winnipeg
Tanya Suderman	Spence Neighbourhood Association, WDAC
Lindsay Storie	Citizen Representative, WDAC
Charles Thrift	Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)
Michelle Kuly Holland	First Person Strategies, Facilitator/Notetaker
Christina Blouw	InterGroup Consultants, Notetaker

Regrets:

Lindsay Mierau	City of Winnipeg
Tiffany Skomro	City of Winnipeg
Dwayne Capon	Citizen Representative
Mario Lopes	Professional Property Managers Association
Richard Sawchuk	Citizen Representative

Agenda:

1. Session Opening, Welcome & Introductions
2. Presentation & Questions
 - a. *Overview of organics diversion options*
 - b. *Identify evaluation criteria*
3. Breakout Sessions & Debrief: Evaluation Criteria
4. Breakout session & Debrief: Evaluating Options
5. Session Wrap-up & Questions

Summary of Meeting

The City of Winnipeg held an Organics Workshop on Thursday, September 10, 2015. The workshop was part of broader efforts to inform and engage stakeholders as part of public engagement for the City of Winnipeg's Organics Strategy. The purpose of this meeting was:

- To provide and discuss organics options; and
- To identify and discuss scope of evaluation criteria and options.

The meeting began by welcoming the group, reviewing the agenda for the evening, and round-table introductions highlighting personal objectives for the workshop. The results of these discussions are recorded in Appendix A.

Following the open discussion, a presentation was made on developing an organics system for Winnipeg – outlining key considerations, program options and identifying the scope of evaluation criteria. Open participant dialogue throughout the presentation allowed for greater understanding of the potential for program design and evaluation criteria. The results of these discussions are recorded in Appendix B.

Following the presentation, participants formed two breakout groups for further discussion focused on evaluating criteria for a Winnipeg system, including environmental, social, economic, and technical criteria. A second discussion session followed which focused on reviewing and evaluating the range of options presented, including materials, collection, processing, and end products. In both breakout discussions, participants were asked if any criteria or options should be added or removed. The results of these discussions are recorded in Appendix C and D.

The workshop concluded by thanking everyone for their participation and confirmation that a draft program would be developed based on the core values that emerged from the workshop discussion and other public engagement efforts to-date.

Key themes

The following themes emerged from the workshop discussions:

- **Timeline for implementation:** There was an overall concern for implementation timeline, and a suggestion that phasing in implementation would be beneficial.
- **Communication and education:** Effective front-end communication to engage and educate council, citizens and generators as a whole was seen as crucial to the success of the program.

- **Broad user base:** There was a strong desire to develop a program that is inclusive and accessible to all Winnipeggers. This should include single family as well as multifamily residential generators.
- **Simplicity:** There was support for a system with a lower complexity of organics streams (i.e. leaf and yard waste, food waste and paper fibre). There was also recognition with fewer streams, less complex processing methods, which could be less expensive, might be possible. There was a desire to understand what the implications of including more complex material to compost (i.e. pet waste) were, and whether that material could be phased in later.
- **Promotion/Reward:** Several committee members indicated that a reward for increased waste diversion (and disincentives/penalties for non-diversion) would encourage higher rates of participation in the program.

Appendix A – Personal Objectives for the Workshop

The following section is a list of comments and concerns highlighting personal objectives for the workshop.

- How do we ensure neighbourhood scale composting does not go obsolete because of funding decrease?
- Ensure the solution is not more costly to the environment than the problem.
- Better understanding of organic waste system from pick-up to finished product.
- Learn more in-depth what all the options are and which ones the City prefers.
- How and when organics collection can begin and remain economically efficient
- Group has understanding of system complexity and how decisions are made.
- Learn about options being considered; contribute to evaluation criteria.
- Are there any regulatory/provincial policy tools needed to support City implementation of organics system?
- Maximize social transformational potential of this change.
- Better understand best options available to the City around organics.
- Use/borrow strategies from other cities.
- What are the defining next steps for us to take in preparing for a division-wide approach to organic composting?

Appendix B – Questions/Responses on the Winnipeg Organics Presentation

The following section is a list of questions and comments discussed by the group during the Winnipeg Organics presentation.

- Define anaerobic and aerobic composting.
- What is included in “sanitary waste”?
- Does having waste (pet, sanitary) affect the product you can produce and sell?
- What type of processing do you need for pet waste?
- Have communities processed pet waste with windrows?
- Does the size of the bin (garbage, compost) affect psychology or user costs?
- What incentives have been offered to multi-family housing in other jurisdictions? Financial incentives? Other?
- What options and complexities are involved with servicing multi-family condos?
- Why are non-compostable plastic liner bags for collection containers not carried forward as an option for the assessment? Won't they be included in the stream anyways?
- What is the approximate cost to a homeowner to purchase compostable bags?
- What is the regional capacity to sell the end product?
- What typically drives decisions about system options? What factors are most important?
- What is the energy profile of:
 - Windrows
 - Covered windrows
 - Digestion

And how do the Green House Gas (GHG) emissions differ for all three processes?

- Consider the option/importance of compost in soil. As soil fertility decreases over time the addition of compost to soil will increase in importance.
- What is the offset potential defined as? Credits?
- What is the present range of dollar/cubic yard across Canada for the final product?
- There is a large social and environmental benefit beyond the purview of the City that will not be displayed in the cost analysis. It is important that the Provincial Government be part of this discussion.

Appendix C – Breakout session: Evaluation Criteria

The following section is a list of comments and concerns discussed throughout the breakout session focused on evaluating criteria for a Winnipeg system, including environmental, social, economic, and technical criteria.

1. Which of these do you think are very important to consider for a Winnipeg system?

- Promotion and education will dictate effectiveness of the program.
- User equity in access to service, even if it's harder to do (i.e. multi-family too, not just single family):
 - o Many people would like to have access to this type of program (retiring boomers, professionals, etc)
 - o Consider various sizes of multi-family residential units - 300 units vs. 6 units and how that changes opportunities with the program.
- Multi-family residential generators should be a priority.
- Consider the odour of the windrows in comparison to Brady Road Resource Management Facility.
 - o Will an organics facility located at the Brady Road Resource Management Facility add to the odour or will the odour not change significantly?
 - o Should odour even be a criterion?
 - o Should we consider potential odour on pick-up day?
 - o Discussion determined that odour should be classified under social criteria.
 - Emphasizes how stakeholder acceptance is very important
- Peer pressure could also influence public support of program.
- Operational and maintenance costs are the most important evaluation criteria.
- Location of the composting facility and climate are important – no odour!
- The ecological benefit of organic waste diversion (GHGs and recycling of nutrients) should trump all other benefits and drawbacks of the program, including cost (admittedly this criteria doesn't hold the weight it should).
 - o Considering the ecological benefits, cost should not be a factor for consideration. Additionally if this program is properly planned it should be more cost effective to compost correctly.
- Communication of the Organics Program objective will be important.
 - o It should focus on communicating that the program is looking to improve quality of life through environmental, social and economic streams.

2. Which criteria do you feel are least important for a Winnipeg system?

- Revenue generating benefits of the program are less important as compared to social benefits.
- GHGs are not important enough to citizens such that it doesn't hold enough weight to be a high level priority.

3. Are there any criteria that should be added (or removed)?

- Has the council progressed with discussions on cost? This will affect the options and how they are assessed.
- The cost impact on the existing landfill should be added to the criteria. Specifics include leachate and generation management.
- Considering a GHG strategy is developing, how does the offset potential of organics processing fit in with the Brady Road Resource Management Facility? Evaluating larger environmental impacts.
- Are there any current organic collection programs experiencing an increase in (worse) environmental impact as opposed to not running the program?
- Economic stimulus/job creation should be added.
- Benefit to soil health/biology should be included.
- Waste reduction potential should be added to evaluation criteria:
 - o The changes to size and frequency of collection would decrease waste generation leading to conscious consumerism (e.g. buy less veggies at one time so they get used before they go bad).
- Equitable access to the program should be added.
- Consider adding a participation goal to the evaluation criteria including targets and outline benefits for single family homes.
- Determine what the ultimate goal for the program.
 - o Maximize diversion rates along with ease of use for:
 - Households?
 - Citizens?
 - Brady Road Resource Management Facility?
 - o Reduce waste levels within financial limits and within a sustainable system:
 - Current system is borrowing from the future. There needs to be a realistic assessment of the current system to justify organic waste diversion
- Technical evaluation criteria are missing from this assessment. These include:
 - o Climate sustainability
 - o Climate change
 - o Climate vulnerability
 - o Winnipeg's frozen winter environment

Appendix D – Breakout session: Evaluating Options

The following section is a list of comments and concerns discussed throughout the breakout session focused on the range of options presented, including materials, collection, processing, and end products.

1. Materials: Which options for which materials make the most sense for Winnipeg? Why?

- Materials most important for collection include leaf & yard waste, all food waste and paper fibres.
- Pet waste and diapers need to be considered for collection. Are there any other options for pet waste? Can this material stream be phased in later, possibly at drop off locations in public spaces/parks?
- The ability for multifamily residential generators to participate is more important than processing pet waste.
- The cost benefit for sanitary materials doesn't seem to make sense – you need a market. This comes down to education focused on how recycling/composting is based on need.
- Could there be an option for phasing in the variety of materials collected? This would allow the program to leap forward.
- As a baseline all food waste accepted in bins would initiate decomposition in the collection bin itself (mini compost bin).
- Could there be incentives for backyard composting? Would be important to maintain the backyard composting and curbside pickup combination.
- Eliminate plastic bags from collection; however note that this may initially cause confusion. If plastic bags are accepted it will create confusion due to the current recycling program not accepting plastic bags. There must be clear communication strategy around accepted material.

2. Collection: Which options for collection make the most sense for Winnipeg? Why?

- Would biweekly collections create a system that was cost neutral?
- A separate collection bin is preferred as it will provide a visual cue and promote increased participation.
- Maintain current leaf & yard waste pick up.
- Options for various bin sizes tied to cost savings (i.e. rebates/discounts for greatest diversion) would be preferred.
- Concern regarding organics bin material freezing in the bin throughout winter. This could be avoided through education however organics program must work in all seasons in our climate.
- Open to changes in pickup schedule of garbage. Recycling bins fill up more quickly and shifting to a bi-weekly pick up of recycling may be more difficult.
 - o Assume citizen push back on pick up schedule change however bi-weekly pickup would still be supported (slowly).
 - o Early program communication will decrease citizen push back.

- City should pull together performance numbers and decrease in truck passes (decrease on infrastructure wear and tear) to justify schedule change.
- As long as there is weekly pick up (any type) citizens will be accepting – psychology of waste collection.
- Worst case scenario is missed green bin pick up on a 30+C summer day.
- In home container options were discussed: Steel Lee Valley container, plastic with holes to aerate (Victoria, B.C. example), but ultimately standard plastic bin would be fine.
- Consider options for transient areas where people may take the in-home bins with them when they move. How would the program go about replacing them?
- Timeline for implementation would be best in fall or winter due to cooler weather.

3. Processing: Which options for processing make the most sense for Winnipeg? Why?

- Would like more information on processing.
- Priorities for processing include:
 - Highest environmental benefit
 - Best revenue potential/lowest cost (best bottom line)
- Interest in methane gas capture if there is a viable market.
 - Possibly more work to market this type of end product as compressed natural gas is already being used for vehicle fuel – electricity generation

4. End products: Which options for use of the end product(s) of organics processing make sense for Winnipeg?

- Priorities for end products include:
 - Target product where there is an established market with demand
 - Winnipeggers should get first priority to access compost – possibly access for free, based on need.
 - Reasonable cost/benefit for resource transport to the product market
 - Establish effective education/communication to promote awareness of compost benefits
- Interest in economic impact of end product (various products) .
- Interest in social (benefit) impact of end product (various products).

5. Are there any options that should be added? Are there any options that should be removed from consideration?

- Interest in potential reward for backyard composters. Options may include rebate program or simply recognition of added value. Concern that reward for backyard composting may reduce the efficiency of the new collection system.
- Interest in the ability for citizens to “opt out” of the collection program. The assumption is that this “opt out” option will not create a significant economic effect on the program.
- Interest in identifying metrics or goals of the program. These may include:
 - Decrease in transportation infrastructure demand.
 - Reduced vehicle emissions.

- Decreased infrastructure wear and tear due to decrease number of truck passes.
 - Currently there are 3 truck passes (garbage, recycling and leaf & yard waste).
 - Co-collection trucks would decrease the truck passes required.

Appendix E – Parking Lot Items for follow up with the City of Winnipeg Waste and Diversion Advisory Committee

- Interest in the ability of Winnipeg City Council to be briefed well in advance of the program submission. Early communication of the organics program details will avoid and reduce pushback.
- Current City of Winnipeg waste collection contract ends September 2017.
- Interest in the environmental impacts, including leachate, GHG emissions, waste vs. resource and landfill impacts, being included in the analysis.
- Interest in a site tour or visit to Brady Road Resource Management Facility.