
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION WORK SESSION

August 23, 2018



PROJECT BACKGROUND

Future information to be delivered to Environmental Commission:

- Cost of service analysis
- Peer community benchmarking
 - Costs
 - Programs & performance
- Scientific public survey results
- Draft and final options and recommendations



STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Completed July & August 2018 (except as noted)

18 separate interview groups:

- A2Y Chamber
- Advanced Disposal
- City of Ann Arbor (Alley Work Group, Customer Service, Operations, Planning, Sustainability)
- Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
- Ecology Center
- Midwestern Consulting, LLC
- Recycle Ann Arbor
- University of Michigan
- Washtenaw Area Apartment Assoc.
- Washtenaw County
- Waste Management
- Zingerman's
- Ann Arbor Public Schools (upcoming)
- WeCare / Denali (upcoming)

GUIDING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Tell us about your organization and how you interact with the City of Ann Arbor on solid waste-related issues - including trash, recycling, organic waste (for example, food waste), fats/oils/grease (FOG), and downtown alleys.
2. What are the strengths that you see in Ann Arbor's current programs and services? What are the areas that could use improvement?
3. What topic areas, programs, services, or policies do you think should be addressed through the Solid Waste Resources Management Plan? How would those items impact your business and/or your interaction with the City? How would they impact your perception / others' perception of the City?
4. What are your three primary priorities related to solid waste resource management (for example, protect public health, environmental-consciousness, cost-effectiveness, convenience, sustainability, quality service, waste reduction, simplicity, aesthetics/cleanliness, alley improvements, business growth, etc.)?
5. Do you believe there are opportunities for your organization to take a role in advancing solid waste resource management in the City? If so, what role may you have? What resources are available to you currently, or what resources would you require?

SUMMARY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW FINDINGS

- 1. Ann Arbor set the pace in environmental leadership** with recycling, composting, and its Zero Waste vision – build on those successes!
- 2. Sustain the vision by expanding services** – including year-round and business composting, weekend collection service downtown, expanded program to support student move-outs, etc.
- 3. Modernize and staff operations to meet needs** – including route optimization software, new trucks, consolidated and enhanced customer service, centralization of responsibility/accountability, enforcement of requirements, etc.
- 4. Educate, educate, educate** – the City used to provide it, bring it back in force.

STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS / FEEDBACK

STRENGTHS

<p>Residential Composting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Food waste inclusion makes Ann Arbor a leader * Compost cart pilot is increasing awareness 	<p>Zero Waste Vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Powerful, part of culture
<p>Recycling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Opportunities are robust * Many materials are accepted * Service is universally available to residents and businesses 	<p>Contracts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Newer transfer and disposal and composting contracts are streamlined / easier to manage
<p>Consistency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * City establishes and maintains programs - hasn't cut anything * A lot of public goodwill / support of programs * Valuable to develop and update / maintain solid waste plans 	<p>Customer Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * See / Click / Fix app is much appreciated

WEAKNESSES

<p>Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ann Arbor no longer a national leader in programs / diversion 	<p>Contracts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Services overlap * Older contracts are difficult to manage, need to be updated and streamlined
<p>Apartment Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Lost higher level of service during peak move-out periods * Tenants use any available dumpster at expense of owners ("trash wilding") or dump illegally 	<p>Customer Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Difficult to know where to go to get answers * City culture is not service-oriented, departments are like silos (pervasive - not just in solid waste) * Service exceptions / special services for individual customers make service inconsistent - standardize services * City Solid Resource function not structured for high performance * Loss of China market causing significant disruption in recycling business
<p>Downtown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Residents are second class compared to those in neighborhoods * Trash / recycling pickups are irregular or missed * Overflow and illegal dumping difficult to get collected 	

OPPORTUNITIES

<p>Zero Waste</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Strengthen commitment to goal * Incentivize behavior * Plan / conduct Zero Waste events * U of M / City partnership * More emphasis on waste reduction before reuse and recycling 	<p>Downtown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Earlier collection * Saturday cardboard collection * Sunday pickups * Snow removal coordination * Add service and small fee to clean the alleys after collection
<p>Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * City / U of M programs standardization and shared promotion / education * Washtenaw County Plan implementation * Encourage areas outside City limits to have same level of service as in the City (e.g. business recycling lacking in Pittsfield Twp.) 	<p>Composting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Multi-family service * Year-round service * Commercial service
<p>Move-Out Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Reuse collections / swap shop option * Higher service levels to rentals during peak 	<p>Communication and Outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Open houses about plan / programs / services * Clearer documentation on standards, policies, and ordinances
<p>Regionalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Partner in Washtenaw County Regionalization initiative 	

NEEDS

<p>Infrastructure / Equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * MRF, local recycling processing * New collection trucks * Route optimization * Incorporate in-cab GPS routing and collection issue recording / photographing tools 	<p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Better "do this / do that" direction on website * Staff to provide outreach / outward-facing staff lost through restructurings and retirements
<p>Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Convenient drop-offs * E-waste * Bulky waste collection 	<p>Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * A clear strategy to implement this plan * Commercial recycling ordinance not enforced * Strategy / metrics to get higher diversion (like San Francisco's 70-80%)
<p>Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * What is the fund balance? * Projections of future program costs and funding sustainability * Price services consistently 	<p>Strategic Focus / Expertise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Perception that City could use more Solid Resource staffing/expertise * Solid Waste Commission went away, would be a benefit to revive it
<p>Customer Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Implement across the board customer service process improvement focused on communication / customer satisfaction * Simplify service delivery / have one provider for a particular service type (e.g. recycling) throughout City so customers' issues are properly routed for remedy 	

PERCEIVED STRENGTHS

Residential Composting

- * Food waste inclusion makes Ann Arbor a leader
- * Compost cart pilot is increasing awareness

Recycling

- * Opportunities are robust
- * Many materials are accepted
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Consistency

- * City establishes and maintains programs - hasn't cut anything
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Zero Waste Vision

- * Powerful, part of culture

Contracts

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Customer Service

- * See / Click / Fix app is much appreciated

PERCEIVED OPPORTUNITIES

Zero Waste

- * Strengthen commitment to goal
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- * Plan / conduct Zero Waste events
- * U of M / City partnership
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Downtown

- * Earlier collection
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- * Sunday pickups
- * Snow removal coordination
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Collaboration

- * City / U of M programs standardization and shared promotion / education
- * Washtenaw County Plan implementation
- * Encourage areas outside City limits to have same level of service as in the City (e.g. business recycling lacking in Pittsfield Twp.)

Composting

- * Multi-family service
- * Year-round service
- * Commercial service

Move-Out Services

- * Reuse collections / swap shop option
- * Higher service levels to rentals during peak

Communication and Outreach

- * Open houses about plan / programs / services
- * Clearer documentation on standards, policies, and ordinances

Regionalization

- * Partner in Washtenaw County Regionalization initiative

PERCEIVED WEAKNESSES

Leadership

- * Ann Arbor no longer a national leader in programs / diversion

Apartment Services

- * Lost higher level of service during peak move-out periods
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Downtown

- * Residents are second class compared to those in neighborhoods
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Contracts

- * Services overlap
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Customer Service

- * Difficult to know where to go to get answers
- * City culture is not service-oriented, departments are like silos (pervasive - not just in solid waste)
- * Service exceptions / special services for individual customers make service inconsistent - standardize services
- * City Solid Resource function not structured for high performance
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PERCEIVED NEEDS

Infrastructure / Equipment

- * MRF, local recycling processing
- * New collection trucks
- * Route optimization
- * Incorporate in-cab GPS routing and collection issue recording / photographing tools

Education

- * Better “do this / do that” direction on website
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Programs

- * Convenient drop-offs
- * E-waste
- * Bulky waste collection

Implementation

- * A clear strategy to implement this plan
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Funding

- * What is the fund balance?
- * Projections of future program costs and funding sustainability
- * Price services consistently

Strategic Focus / Expertise

- * Perception that City could use more Solid Resource staffing/expertise
- * Solid Waste Commission went away, would be a benefit to revive it

Customer Service

- * Implement across the board customer service process improvement focused on communication / customer satisfaction
- * Simplify service delivery / have one provider for a particular service type (e.g. recycling) throughout City so customers’ issues are properly routed for remedy

COMMISSION INPUT - GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What are your three **primary priorities related to solid waste resource management** (for example, protect public health, environmental-consciousness, cost-effectiveness, convenience, sustainability, quality service, waste reduction, simplicity, aesthetics/cleanliness, alley improvements, business growth, etc.)?
2. What are the **strengths** that you see in Ann Arbor's current programs and services? What are the areas that could use **improvement**?
3. Based on your knowledge of solid waste resource management, and considering the Stakeholder Perceptions/Feedback contained in the interview summary (provided in the pre-meeting package), **what topic areas, programs, services, or policies do you think should be addressed** through the Solid Waste Resources Management Plan?
4. How do you perceive **future opportunities and conditions** (e.g., regionalization, recycling market volatility) may **impact decisions about the programs** that may be pursued by the City during the planning period?