



COMMERCIAL ORGANICS RECOMMENDATION

City of Ann Arbor Commercial Recycling Committee of the Environmental Commission

Program Description

The City would offer vegetative food waste collection services up to six days per week to businesses. Participation would be voluntary for DDA businesses, as well as for those participants, downtown or elsewhere, willing to pay a fee for collection and/or self-haul to the City's compost center.

User Details

- Outreach materials (hard copy, email pdfs and online) will provide information on how to sign up for the service and set up the in-building bag and outdoor container system. Requirements will include assigning a single point of contact composting champion, provision of required bags and containers and use of instructional signage and standard operating procedures for staff.
- Acceptable materials would initially include:
 - coffee grounds and filters
 - paper bags and newspapers, waxed boxes and waxed-lined paper bags
 - pre-approved biodegradable plastic bags
 - uncooked produce scraps (fruit & vegetable peels, apple cores, corncobs, husks, salad greens)
 - other non-animal or dairy based food wastes such as bread, bagels, muffins, donuts
- Unacceptable material would include:
 - plate scrapings, meat, fish, bones, oils, milk, cheese, yogurt and sauces
- Materials to test and/or gather more information:
 - pesticide residue on organics from florists, egg shells and their potential for contamination
 - animal bedding would require a pilot and MDEQ's approval

User Experience of Program Costs

- Program participants are offered the service under the following conditions: 1) they must generate a minimum of two tons per month of food waste (may eventually be reduced to 1 ton per month); 2) they must have adequate space for the collection containers; 3) they must be serviceable by the collection vehicle; and 4) they must wash their own containers if City's truck does not include cart wash capability.

How Program Could Actually Be Paid For

- Some of costs covered through City millage.
- Some of costs covered from sales of finished compost, bulk and bagged.
- Some of costs covered through collection fees (outside of DDA)
- Some of costs covered through self-haul tip-fees at Compost Site (\$17.50-\$25 per ton)

Proposed Phasing

- 2007-08 Fiscal Year: Program design/procurement begins with solicitation of proposals from potential partners (e.g. Food Gatherers, large grocery chains, etc.) and Phase I implementation.
- 2008-09 Fiscal Year: Collection systems are updated (potential new specialized vehicle) and long term Phase II service provision initiated. Additional accounts added.
- 2009-10 Fiscal Year: Demonstrate on-site processing pilot (e.g. w/UM) while adding accounts to collection program. Long term expansion evaluated in context of Solid Waste Plan Update.



How Recommendations Fit to Overall Goals

- Improve overall waste handling services – assuring a "clean community": Removing large quantities of commercial organics from regular waste dumpsters greatly improves the overall sanitation of the waste handling system, especially in alleys and behind strip malls.
- Expand recycling and landfill diversion: The recommended program would help divert as much as 3,000 additional tons of organic material from landfill disposal.
- Lower overall costs for the community: Composting of organics creates a marketable organic soil amendment and a variety of other marketable products that the city is already well equipped to sell – and also captures savings from avoiding waste transfer and disposal.
- Enhance quality of life and business opportunities for our community: Composting results in more jobs than sending the same amount of material as waste to the landfill, with those jobs being created by companies that have responded to these new business opportunities. As shown in some of the best practice profiles, composting also supports small scale food production, creating further local job opportunities.