

**SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN  
PUBLIC/TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
WORKING GROUP**

Food Waste and Organics Management Working Group – Fourth Meeting

**Tuesday, July 9, 2024**

**9:00 am – 10:00 am**

Online meeting

**MEETING NOTES**

**Attendees:** Ben Liegey, Louise Schwarz, Sue Maxwell, Doug Schell

**Staff:** Terry Fulton, Stephanie Liu, Chris Underwood

In addition: Chris Allan, Paul Henderson (in attendance to discuss specific question about procurement)

**ITEMS**

**Update on Procurement and Capital Plan (additional agenda item)**

- Paul Henderson provided an update to address a working group member’s question about Metro Vancouver’s capital planning processes related to organics capacity.
- Organics received at Metro Vancouver solid waste facilities are processed at facilities outside of the region
- Metro Vancouver is developing a procurement process with the goal of entering into a long-term contract for a portion of organics to be managed within a specified radius of United Boulevard Recycling and Waste Centre. Metro Vancouver would commit to delivering a portion of organics (primarily yard trimmings) to the proponent through a long-term contract, to provide confidence for private industry investment in development of new processing capacity.
- Expect several years before new capacity can be established
- Current Metro Vancouver capital plan does not include development of organics processing infrastructure.
- In parallel, other work is underway to improve recycling and prevent food waste.

**Discussion:**

- Member commented on importance to move up the waste hierarchy.
- Member asked about proportion of organics that is composted v.s. animal feed v.s. biogas to be aligned with the Food Loss and Waste Standard. Staff will review options with respect to waste composition data with will report back to the Working Group.



- Metro Vancouver to look into possibility of receiving this information from licensed facilities. Potential item for group to recommend for the solid waste management plan update, to add this type of reporting as a requirement.
- SDG 12.3 is not a metric followed by Metro Vancouver (in kg of food waste generated per capita)
  - Other compostable organics = green waste + clean wood
  - Member questioned why Metro Vancouver is not developing its own organics processing infrastructure. Metro Vancouver commented that there is existing private infrastructure, as well as infrastructure developed in partnership with municipalities (Surrey). In 2011 the Board made the decision to not pursue development of organics infrastructure.
  - Member asked about the ability for District Energy to reduce GHG, and whether that is sustainable if waste-to-energy is not a long term solution. Member also commented on high cost of waste-to-energy compared to other disposal methods.
    - Metro Vancouver commented that there are 1 million tonnes of garbage per year, and a quarter goes to the Waste-to-Energy Facility; as a result, even after further waste reduction and recycling efforts, there is confidence that there will still be remaining waste that needs to be handled at the Waste-to-Energy Facility.
    - District Energy will provide huge benefits by offsetting natural gas use.
    - In September, Metro Vancouver plans to report to the Zero Waste Committee on comparative costs of the Waste-to-Energy Facility, Vancouver Landfill, and contingency disposal.
  - Member commented on the importance to find options for keeping material such as food waste and processing in the region to produce compost for top soil and to benefit local growers.

## 1. MEETING NOTES - [June 10, 2024](#)

### 2. Discussion on Existing Metro Vancouver Waste Data

- Metro Vancouver provided a presentation to address several questions from working group members at the last meeting.
  - Information on the Waste-to-Energy Facility (WTEF) waste composition vs. overall composition (2022).
  - Impact of decreasing organics to WTEF. Decreasing organics increases energy value of waste stream, which decreases throughout as facility is limited by the energy capacity
  - Disposal ban information – summary of inspections, percentage containing banned materials, and loads that are actually surcharged (as inspectors work on education, re-loads, etc.)
  - Break-down of organics avoidable vs. unavoidable, and recycled vs. disposed



- Members asked if Metro Vancouver reports on the total amount of food wasted, or food waste per capita. Metro Vancouver confirmed that they do not; however, it could become a recommendation coming out of this working group.
- Members requested information on food loss at different steps along the value chain.
- Members requested more information on the definition of avoidable vs. unavoidable food waste
- Members requested 2015 disposal ban information to serve as a baseline.
- Metro Vancouver will share the slides from this presentation.
- Metro Vancouver to follow up with National Zero Waste Council staff on ongoing work related to food loss and waste. Potential to invite staff to present at a future working group meeting.
- Metro Vancouver to provide data/survey information from the Love Food Hate Waste campaign.

### **3. Feedback on Actions in Miro Related to Organics and Food Waste Recycling**

- Members discussed the Miro board, reorganized by the Chair.
- Will discuss compostable plastics in our next meeting.
- Comment that the hierarchy should prioritize Earth (returning materials to earth) before anaerobic digestion.
- If members have more notes or questions, please add to the board based on the new reorganization, and we can discuss at the next meeting.
- May want to add a note about garburators. Vancouver has banned them. We don't want organics down the drain. Metro Vancouver also has campaign discouraging fats, oils and grease and other materials from being put down the drain.

### **4. Suggestion for External Speakers for August Meeting**

- Members discussed possibility of inviting a speaker based on what information they may be missing.
- Topics suggested included compostable plastics, and food donation.
- It was identified that Louise has a lot of knowledge on compostable plastics. She will work with Ese to bring a presentation to the next meeting.

### **5. Discussion on the Agenda/Structure for the November Presentation**

- Presentation from Louise about compostable plastics
- Further comments on how Ben has reorganized the hierarchy
- Start to think about the message/recommendations the working group will share with PTAC in November

### **6. Next Meeting Date and Action Items**

- The Chair will send a follow up doodle in next few days, for August meeting