City of Austin – Organics Diversion

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Using Compostable Plastic to Enhance Food Scrap Collection Webinar

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Overview

- Austin's Zero Waste Goal
- Residential Curbside Organics Collection Pilot
- Universal Recycling Ordinance – Organics
  - Downtown Composting Pilot
  - Incentive Options

Austin Zero Waste

Span of Influence

Residential Tonnages

	2014 ACTUAL	2020 PROJECTED
LANDFILL	137,258 TONS	60,000 TONS
RECYCLING	55,966 TONS	101,000 TONS
COMPOSTING	34,049 TONS	79,000 TONS
= TOTAL	227,273 TONS	240,000 TONS

Diversion Rate	39.6%	75%
Landfilled per household	27.9 lbs/week	11.0 lbs/week
Diversion per household	18.3 lbs/week	33.0 lbs/week

Residential Waste Characterization

Source: CB&I, City-Serviced Residential Waste Characterization Study, March 2015.

Residential Curbside Organics Pilot

- Began January 2013
- 14,000 Households
- Ten geographic areas
- Green 96 gallon carts provided to customers
- Expansion of weekly yard trimmings collection to include food scraps

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Residential Curbside Organics Pilot

- Third Party Processor
- Extensive Public Education/Engagement

Organics Pilot: Lessons Learned

Yuck Factor

Recycling versus Composting

Processor challenges

Universal Recycling Ordinance

Food Service Permit Holders will be required to divert **pre-consumer** organic waste:

Oct. 1, 2016: > 15,000 sf
Oct. 1, 2017: > 5,000 sf
Oct. 1, 2018: All permitees

Compostable Plastics: He Said, She Said

- Food Service Establishment:
  - Interested in using compostable plastics
  - Seeking recommendations from city staff
  - Service provider says all kinds of compostable plastics are okay

- Service Provider:
  - Don't like taking compostable plastics due to processing time
  - Too much overall confusion (recycle vs. compost)
  - Leads to contamination

Downtown Composting Pilot

- Central Business District – contract service managed by City of Austin
- Starting with 1 block radius, anchored by the Driskill Hotel
- Replacing 2 landfill trash dumpsters with 2 compost dumpsters
- Expected start date: early November

Diversion Incentives

- Up to $1,800 in rebates
- Open to businesses or properties expanding or improving diversion programs
- Eligible expense examples:
  - Reusable serviceware
  - Compostable take-out containers
  - Compostable bags

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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