

CHICAGO WASTE PROGRESS UPDATE: SHORT-TERM PRIORITIES

NOVEMBER 2021

As the City of Chicago moves forward with specific actions to advance the Materials Management Strategy, updates will be issued on a regular basis to inform stakeholders and interested parties of measurable progress made toward the short-term priorities described in this document. These short-term priorities are targeted for completion by the end of 2022.

POLICY REVIEW AND EXPLORATION

The City of Chicago seeks to review existing materials management ordinances to identify opportunities to increase impact and conduct initial research for new potential legislation.



In Progress

Researching potential for implementing waste hauling zones for commercial waste

The Department of Streets and Sanitation (DSS) has conducted interviews with other cities that use commercial waste zones using franchise agreements. DSS staff is currently evaluating the benefits, costs, and potential barriers to implementing waste hauling zones.



In Progress

Supporting ambitious statewide extended producer responsibility (EPR) legislation

A statewide EPR group is currently being created to inform potential EPR legislation in Illinois. The City of Chicago will be participating in these discussions when the group is officially formed. That group began convening on October 14, 2021.



On Hold

Assessing Construction & Demolition Debris (C&D) Recycling Ordinance compliance and identifying opportunities for increased contractor education

The City of Chicago anticipates that a review of the Ordinance will occur in 2022.



On Hold

Adjusting the C&D Recycling Ordinance to specify targeted material types and parameters for reuse

The City of Chicago anticipates that a review of the Ordinance will occur in 2022.

INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY INTERVENTIONS

The City of Chicago seeks to provide new programs and educational opportunities for Chicago's residents to engage with the materials management system and improve residential diversion.



In Progress

Leveraging the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) Food Matters Great Lakes Regional Cohort participation to pilot food waste prevention and composting programs.

Both CDPH and DSS are collaborating with other midwestern cities to expand food waste prevention and increase small scale composting. The NRDC has provided funding and training needed for the infrastructure, supplies, and training needed to sustain the drop-off locations. DSS has partnered with Neighborspace to pilot residential composting at five neighborhood gardens throughout Chicago. The five gardens will act as hub locations to accept some organic waste materials and compost materials on site. Additionally, the City of Chicago is working to develop a systems approach to addressing food rescue as part of its growing food equity and climate resilience plans, with a goal of identifying high level solutions addressing food insecurity and environmental sustainability. The Food Rescue Assessment (FRA) will seek to map Chicago's current food rescue infrastructure and identify opportunities to increase its responsiveness to community needs, prioritizing inclusivity, it will engage stakeholders at various levels in the food supply chain, recognizing the critical role each plays in the food system. This assessment has the potential to provide positive outcomes for producers and community members alike by identifying gaps and pathways to a more connected and resilient local food system, while preparing for deeper analysis and recommendations.



In Progress

Maintaining clear and consistent messaging around recycling contamination

DSS has submitted a budget request for staff to support an education campaign in 2022. The City of Chicago is also exploring opportunities to partner with Recycle by City to support this effort. DSS and the Mayor's Office are also conducting additional outreach with interested organizations that are willing to assist in education and awareness.



In Progress

Introducing organics drop off locations through seasonal "pumpkin smash" events

To divert pumpkins from landfills, The City of Chicago- Department of Streets and Sanitation is happy to promote this year's Pumpkin Smash Event, sponsored by University of Illinois Extension, Scarce, Chicago Public Schools and Edgewater Environmental Coalition. The event took place on November 6, 2021.



In Progress

Establishing a revenue-sharing partnership with a textile recycling company for collection of clothes, shoes, and other textiles otherwise ending up in landfills

DSS staff are conducting outreach to several potential vendors and Park District with a focus on implementation scenarios and associated barriers. DSS is also exploring opportunities to strengthen promotional efforts to increase awareness of existing collection locations.

STRENGTHENING INTERNAL OPERATIONS

The City of Chicago seeks to improve internal operations related to materials management to increase efficiency across departments and improve waste diversion in the city.



On Hold

Identifying appropriate Blue Cart to black cart distribution and bin size options

DSS anticipates that work will begin in 2022.



In Progress

Improving high density residential recycling ordinance compliance based on 2020 Chicago Office of the Inspector General report findings

Several steps have been taken to improve the DSS enforcement of the recycling ordinance including: 1) Reconfiguring electronic ticketing, 2) Improved tracking of inspections and private hauler reporting, 3) Exploring a software solution to improve the reporting requirements for haulers and buildings to ensure compliance.



On Hold

Improving Chicago's existing yard waste collection program and incorporating potential food scrap "ride along" options

DSS anticipates a small pilot to provide residential collections in 2022.

To read the complete *2021 City of Chicago Waste Strategy* visit <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/progs/env/2021-waste-strategy.html>