

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA  
Office of Clean & Green Initiatives, Sanitation Department, and Office of  
Sustainability  
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION on SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT  
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

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## I. RESPONSE CALENDAR

Post Request for Information	Thursday, June 26, 2025
Deadline for questions, requests for clarification, or requests for additional information ( <a href="mailto:Scott.mcgrath@phila.gov">Scott.mcgrath@phila.gov</a> and <a href="mailto:Sustainability@phila.gov">Sustainability@phila.gov</a> )	Monday, July 7, 2025, before 5:00 PM local time
City Responds to Questions <a href="https://www.phila.gov/rfp/additional_opportunities">https://www.phila.gov/rfp/additional opportunities</a> )	July 11, 2025
Responses to RFI due ( <a href="mailto:Scott.mcgrath@phila.gov">Scott.mcgrath@phila.gov</a> and <a href="mailto:Sustainability@phila.gov">Sustainability@phila.gov</a> )	July 21, 2025, before 5:00 PM (Local Philadelphia Time)

## II. PURPOSE OF REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

The City of Philadelphia (City) has issued this Notice of Request for Information (RFI) to solicit information on residential solid waste best management practices regarding materials management and infrastructure and associated environmental and public health considerations and metrics. The City seeks information on disposal, recycling, composting, and diversion infrastructure and methods to meet the goals detailed in its state-mandated [Municipal Waste Management Plan 2019-2028](#) (p. 1-1), and in particular to:

- “Ensure a full, fair and open discussion of alternative methods of municipal waste processing or disposal;”
- “Conserve resources and protect public health, safety and welfare from the short and long-term dangers of transportation, processing, treatment, storage and disposal of municipal solid waste.” and
- “Ensure maximum feasible waste reduction and recycling of municipal waste reduction and recycling of municipal waste or source separated recyclable material;”

This RFI is designed to assist the City in the development of future Requests for Proposals (RFP) for solid waste management and other services, which will expire on or shortly after June 30, 2026. The City’s Solid Waste Management contracts include recycling, landfill, and incineration services.

In addition, the RFI will be used to assist the City in gauging capacity of providers to address its future waste reduction and diversion goals and collect feedback on how the City can support the development of nascent providers.

### III. BACKGROUND:

The City's Sanitation Department ("the Department") operates one of the largest solid waste collection systems in the United States. The Department provides weekly, and in some locations twice weekly, trash and recyclables collection to over 510,000 households (residential structures of six dwelling units or fewer), offers seasonal leaf waste collection services, and operates multi-material recyclables drop-off centers at six (6) Sanitation Convenience Centers.

The City has budgeted \$55.3 million for waste disposal and recycling for fiscal year 2026.

The Department has set a goal for a 15 percent recycling rate in FY26, an increase of one percentage point (1%) over the FY25 year-end projection. The Department plans to implement a small-scale pilot organics collection and recycling initiative to evaluate the long-term feasibility of a citywide organics program and demonstrate its benefits for the City's ambitious Clean and Green initiatives.

Since coming into office, the Parker Administration has worked to improve the quality of life across the City by making all Philadelphia neighborhoods clean, green, and vibrant. The Office of Clean and Green Initiatives and the Clean and Green Cabinet, established by [Executive Order 11-24](#), were established to organize government, community, and business collaboratively to reduce waste, increase recycling, and continue to work towards a more sustainable future—all with an eye towards environmental justice for underserved and under-resourced communities.

To further the Administration's pursuit of this mission, the City seeks to ensure that its selection of solid waste disposal methods is based on sound methodologies to evaluate and minimize health, safety and environmental impacts, both within the borders of Philadelphia and beyond. Sanitation will advance effective strategies for resource deployment based upon objective, data-driven metrics that consider not only operational concerns, but the health and environmental impacts associated with its solid waste disposal methods.

In addition, this RFI seeks information that will aid the City in evaluating alternative methods and technologies to stay on target with its goal of 90% waste diversion by 2045. The City will evaluate waste reduction, reuse and recycling strategies to reach this diversion percentage without compromising residential service collection levels.

#### **About the Office of Clean and Green Initiatives**

The Office of Clean and Green Initiatives was created to solve persistent quality of life problems and help build a safer, cleaner, and greener City using a data-driven action plan to guide the work and proactively address litter, illegal dumping, graffiti, abandoned automobiles, vacant lots and nuisance properties.

The Office of Clean and Green Initiatives oversees [The Department of Sanitation](#), [The Community Life Improvement Program \(CLIP\)](#) and [The PHL Taking Care of Business Clean Corridors Program](#).

#### **About the Department of Sanitation**

The Department operates the City's solid waste management system. The system includes trash and recycling collection and waste disposal. The Department operates 6 Drop-off locations that

accept residential trash & recycling, electronics, yard waste, metals, appliances, rechargeable batteries, and florescent lightbulbs for recycling, and tires and bulk waste for disposal.

It also cleans illegal dumping sites and disposes of abandoned tires, bulk items, and household hazardous waste. Every year, the Department collects over 610,000 tons of trash and 80,000 tons of recycling, mechanically cleans 410,000 miles of streets, and services more than 510,000 households.

### **About the Office of Sustainability**

The Office of Sustainability works with partners around the City to improve the quality of life in all Philadelphia neighborhoods to advance environmental justice, reduce carbon emissions, and prepare the City for a hotter and wetter future.

## **IV. INFORMATION REQUESTED**

The Office of Clean and Green Initiatives, in conjunction with the Department and with support from the Office of Sustainability, seeks information to inform the development of an upcoming RFP to be issued for new contracts for solid waste removal, recycling services, and other diversion approaches. Importantly, the Department seeks information about public health considerations and metrics associated with various waste disposal practices.

More specifically, the City seeks information around the following three (3) categories. Specific questions related to these categories are in [Appendix A: RFI Response Template](#).

1. Methodologies, measurement tools, and best practices to evaluate the comparative health and environmental impacts of residential waste management practices.
2. Information about the capacity and availability of large-scale residential waste disposal providers to meet the City's ongoing residential waste management needs without compromising high service levels, including potential opportunities and challenges to expand and diversify service delivery.
3. Recommendations for solutions that will assist the Department in developing new approaches, innovations, and initiatives to minimize the City's waste streams, including practices that will help the City advance its Safe, Clean & Green mission and Zero Waste goals.

## **V. QUESTIONS FOR RESPONDENTS:**

See **Appendix A: RFI Response Template** for specific questions to guide information provided by respondents.

**NOTE:** Responding to this RFI will have no bearing on any future contract awards pursuant to future Requests for Proposals. Respondents who plan to participate in future Requests for Proposals may choose whether to respond to all or part of this RFI; a lack of response will have no bearing on future participation in later RFPs. Respondents can provide information for any of the questions and are not required to respond to all questions.

All questions and requests for clarification concerning this RFI should be directed to Scott.mcgrath@phila.gov@phila.gov and Sustainability@phila.gov)

## VI. WHO SHOULD RESPOND

The City is interested in hearing from all stakeholders about the efficacy and feasibility of achieving comprehensive waste management and alternative approaches that could achieve greater waste diversion and reduction with an emphasis on solutions aligned with the City's public health and sustainability goals

**Respondents who provide services or have background/experience in any of the following are encouraged to provide information:**

- Measurement tools, models and/or technology for calculating environmental and health impacts;
- Solid waste management providers (with Appendix Body Section 2 targeted to high volume established providers and Appendix Body Section 3 focused on nascent providers) who have submitted, or plan to submit, proposals to the City to provide waste management services;
- Providers who have considered submitting proposals to the City in the past but have not done so because of constraints that could be addressed by the City;
- Organizations, including those involved in advocacy related to environmental and health issues associated with waste management;
- Educational outreach and engagement for waste diversion; and/or
- Organizations that encourage job creation, entrepreneurship, and/or economic development associated with waste management, with a particular focus on the reuse and repurposing of waste materials.

## VII. SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

One (1) electronic copy in machine-readable format (PDF preferred, MS Word format also accepted) should be sent via email to: *Scott.mcgrath@phila.gov@phila.gov* and *Sustainability@phila.gov* with the subject line: **"RFI Submission: [FirmName (or IndividualName)] – Solid Waste Management."**

## VIII. RIGHTS AND OPTIONS RESERVED

In addition to the rights reserved elsewhere in this RFI, the City reserves and may, in its sole discretion, exercise any or more of the following rights and options with respect to this RFI if the City determines that doing so is in the best interest of the City:

1. Decline to consider any response to this RFI ("response"); cancel the RFI at any time; elect to proceed or not to proceed with discussions or presentations regarding its subject matter with any Respondent and with firms that do not respond to the RFI; to reissue the RFI or to issue a new RFI (with the same, similar, or different terms);
2. Select a package from a vendor that does not respond to this RFI, or elect not to proceed with any procurement;

3. Waive, for any response, any defect, deficiency, or failure to comply with the RFI if, in the City's sole judgment, such defect is not material to the response;
4. Extend the Submission Date/Time and/or to supplement, amend, substitute, or otherwise modify the RFI at any time prior to the Submission Date/Time, by posting notice thereof on the City web page(s) where the RFI is posted;
5. Require, permit, or reject amendments (including, without limitation, submitting information omitted), modifications, clarifying information, and/or corrections to responses by some or all Respondents at any time before or after the Submission Date/Time;
6. Require, request or permit, in discussion with any Respondent, any information relating to the subject matter of this RFI that the City deems appropriate, whether it was described in the response to this RFI;
7. Discontinue, at any time determined by the City, discussions with any Respondent or all Respondents regarding the subject matter of this RFI, and/or initiate discussions with any other Respondent or with vendors that did not respond to the RFI;
8. To conduct such investigations with respect to the financial, technical, and other qualifications of the Respondent as the City, in its sole discretion, deems necessary or appropriate;
9. Do any of the foregoing without notice to Respondents or others, except such notice as the City, in its sole discretion, may elect to post on the City web page(s) where this RFI is posted. This RFI and the process described are proprietary to the City and are for exclusive benefit of the City. Upon submission, responses to this RFI shall become the property of the City, which shall have unrestricted use thereof.

## IX. PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

By submitting a response to this RFI, Respondent acknowledges and agrees i) that the City is a "local agency" under and subject to the Pennsylvania Right-to-Know Law (the "Act"), 65 P.S. §§ 67.101-67.3104, as the Act may be amended from time to time; and ii) responses may be subject to public disclosure under the Act. In the event the City receives a request under the Act for information that a Respondent has marked as confidential, the City will use reasonable efforts to consult with Respondent regarding the response and, to the extent reasonably practicable, will give Respondent the opportunity to identify information that Respondent believes to be confidential proprietary information, a trade secret, or otherwise exempt from access under Section 708 of the Act. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this RFI, nothing in this RFI shall supersede, modify, or diminish in any respect whatsoever any of the City's rights, obligations, and defenses under the Act, nor will the City be held liable for any disclosure of records, including information that the City determines in its sole discretion is a public record and/or information required to be disclosed under the Act.

## X. APPENDIX A: RFI RESPONSE TEMPLATE

1. GENERAL INFORMATION		
1.1	Organization/Respondent Name*:	
1.2	Street Address:	
1.3	City, State, Zip:	
1.4	Primary Business:	
1.5	Point of Contact Name*:	
1.6	Title:	
1.7	Phone*:	
1.8	Email*:	
1.9	Organization Web Address:	

\*= Required

## 2. PROPOSAL INTRODUCTION

**2.1** Provide a profile of your company/organization's operations, including the number of years the company/organization has been in business; number of full-time employees; and brief description of the services or products offered. If your response represents collaboration, please describe the type of subcontractors or partners with whom you are responding. If you are an individual respondent with background or experience in any of the areas covered by this RFI, please summarize your relevant personal and professional experience. Resumes need not be included.

**2.2** Describe your company/organization's relevant experience (and that of partners, when applicable) in Philadelphia and/or elsewhere.

## 3. PROPOSAL BODY

*Respondents may reply to any or all questions listed in the Proposal Body section.*

**Section 1: Methodologies, measurement tools, and best practices to evaluate the comparative health and environmental impacts of residential waste management practices.**

**3.1.1 Methodology recommendations for the City’s upcoming residential RFP.** What tools, measurement systems, or best practices could be employed in the City’s forthcoming RFP to ensure that the City collects sufficient data and information to form a comprehensive picture of the associated health and environmental impacts of submitted proposals, incorporating this data into the decision-making process? Responses to this question should be based on the City’s stated procurement timeline. For example:

- a. Methodologies for the City to employ side-by-side comparisons of waste treatment and waste transport based on considerations including market assessment to facilitate decision-making informed not only by operational metrics, but also by data-driven insights around the short and long-term health and environmental impacts the proposed solutions would generate in Philadelphia, neighboring communities, and beyond. Please include any considerations and limitations related to the proposed approaches.
- b. Propose methodologies for creating standardized scoring systems that allow objective comparison between different waste management proposals.
- c. Sample questions or criteria to include in the City’s waste management RFPs to collect the necessary information to compare the health and environmental impacts of the proposed services.

**3.1.2 Methodology recommendations for ongoing waste management planning.** How should the City evaluate the use of assessment methodologies and frameworks to inform decision making around waste management on an ongoing basis? For example:

- a. How should the City incorporate life cycle assessment tools and models, and any standardized frameworks into waste management planning?
- b. What are the minimum data requirements the City should consider to enable the use of the recommended methodologies and frameworks?
- c. What technological tools could the City employ to improve the health and environmental impacts of waste management practices and inform future planning, including any considerations or limitations related to those tools.

**3.1.3 Operational health and safety recommendations.** Information on best practices and safety/back-up controls for waste management methods to ensure the performance of environmental health and safety control systems. What procedures and protections should be in place to ensure:

- a. Maximum compliance with all City and State environmental health and safety regulations;

- b. Minimizing the health and environmental impacts of disposal operations including the criteria air pollutants, air toxins, greenhouse gas emissions and soil and water pollutants.

**Section 2: Information about the capacity and availability of large-scale residential waste management providers to meet the City’s ongoing residential waste management needs without compromising high service levels, including potential opportunities and challenges to expand and diversify service delivery.**

**3.2.1 Large provider capacity:** Please provide information about your existing capacity as a large-scale waste disposal or recycling provider and your readiness to provide services to the City consistent with the Parker administration’s Safe, Clean and Green goals.

**3.2.2 Environmental and health impacts:** Beyond meeting baseline permitting requirements, please describe how your company addresses the environmental and health impacts of your operations and seeks to reduce these impacts over time (e.g., air quality, water quality, etc.).

**3.2.3**

**Data collection methods and reporting capabilities:** Please provide information around your firm’s current data collection. The City is interested in learning what data potential respondents to future RFPs collect currently.

***Operational and Service Metrics***

- *Frequency and volume of different waste stream collections (residential, commercial, recyclables, organics), and*
- *Equipment failure rates and replacement schedules.*

***Waste Volume and Composition***

- *Total tonnage collected by waste type and geographic area,*
- *Contamination rates in recycling streams,*
- *Diversion rates from landfills and incineration (recycling, organics), and*
- *Seasonal variation patterns in waste generation.*

***Environmental and Compliance***

- *Greenhouse gas emissions from collection vehicles and fuel consumption per ton collection,*
- *Distance traveled for ton of waste,*
- *Water usage in processing facilities,*
- *Recycling processing efficiency rates, and*
- *Regulatory compliance tracking and violation records.*

**3.2.4 Diversion methods:** Please describe your approach to maximize waste diversion including the necessary infrastructure for implementation. Please note if you have engaged in partnerships to improve diversion rates.

**3.2.5 Recycling recommendations:** The Department's residential recycling goal for FY26 is 15%. What approaches or initiatives could be implemented to substantially improve this percentage and stay on target with the goal of 90% waste diversion by 2045?

**3.2.6 Barriers to increased capacity, service delivery, data collection and partnership development.** Please share feedback on roadblocks and barriers to expanded service delivery that the City could address as it develops its municipal waste plans. For example:

- i. Limits in capacity (e.g., known limitations within the City and/or region, recommendations for locations to create new waste management facilities in the City or region, opportunities to maximize operations at existing facilities, etc.);
- ii. Roadblocks and barriers to improved data collection; and
- iii. Roadblocks and barriers to expanded or enhanced service delivery (e.g., space constraints, limited budget, workforce limitations, etc.); and
- iv. Barriers to partnerships with smaller providers (e.g., types of smaller providers a company may work with, what would incentivize developing these relationships, what prevents initiating or expanding these types of relationships).

**Section 3: Recommendations for solutions that will assist the Department in developing new approaches, innovations, and initiatives to minimize the City's waste streams, including practices that will help the City advance its Safe, Clean & Green mission and Zero Waste goals.**

**3.3.1 Nascent Provider Capacity:** To assist the City in gauging capacity of providers to address its future waste reduction and diversion goals and inform planning, the City seeks the following information from small providers:

- i. Current daily/weekly tonnage processing capacity;
- ii. Fleet size, composition, and service area coverage;
- iii. Current waste diversion rate from landfills (percentage and tonnage by material type);
- iv. Contamination rates in recycling streams;
- v. Processing facility capacity and capabilities (Materials Recovery Facility, composting, specialty streams);
- vi. Storage capacity for different waste streams;
- vii. Key partnerships with downstream processors and end markets;
- viii. Projected capacity increases over 1, 3, and 5 years (percentage and tonnage);

- ix. Access to financing for expansion (credit facilities, investor backing);
- x. Bonding capacity and insurance coverage levels;
- xi. Data collection and reporting capabilities; and
- xii. Customer education and community engagement capabilities.

**3.3.2. Roadblocks and Barriers to Nascent Provider Capacity:** Describe your experience with roadblocks and barriers to expanded service delivery for smaller/nascent providers. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- i. Infrastructure constraints, inability to expand, and/or collection reforms;
- ii. Needed inter-departmental and/or inter-governmental collaborations; and/or
- iii. Programs, incentives, and policies to encourage the development of smaller and non-traditional providers.

**3.3.3 General Information on Zero Waste Strategies:** Please share information and long-term strategies and/or holistic approaches for the City to nearly eliminate waste sent to landfills and incinerators. Sharing knowledge of practices or programs in other jurisdictions is also encouraged. Please cite resources and studies where possible. Strategies of interest include:

- i. Residential curbside compost pick-up;
- ii. Pay-to-throw programming;
- iii. Materials re-use;
- iv. Infrastructure needs to support innovation;
- v. Public/private partnerships;
- vi. Workforce development opportunities;
- vii. Financing mechanisms, within disposal contracts or otherwise, to incentivize waste diversion;
- viii. Local policies to incentivize waste reduction;
- ix. Nascent technologies; and/or
- x. Other innovative methods.

## **Section 4: Other**

**3.4.1** Please use this section to include information or recommendations that have not been addressed elsewhere in your response. Respondents are also encouraged to present any options or approaches that may not have been prompted by the questions proposed in this RFI.