

# CITY OF BOSTON



## **DIVERT ORGANICS FROM BOSTON'S RESIDENTIAL WASTE STREAM**

*Request for Information*

### **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORTATION**

**MARTIN J. WALSH, MAYOR**

**CHRIS OSGOOD, CHIEF OF STREETS, TRANSPORTATION AND SANITATION**

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION:**

**RESPONSE DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 29, 2019 @ 5 PM BOSTON LOCAL TIME**

# CONTENTS

- 1. INTRODUCTION** **2**
  - I. WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR 2
  - II. BACKGROUND 2
- 2. RESPONSES** **4**
  - I. COMPOSTING / ANAEROBIC DIGESTION 4
  - II. GARBAGE DISPOSALS 4
  - III. COMMUNICATIONS PLAN - INFORM THE PUBLIC 5
  - IV. ADDITIONAL OPTIONS OR RECOMMENDATIONS 5
- 3. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION OVERVIEW** **5**
  - I. RFI CONTACT 5
  - II. TIMELINE 6
  - III. RESPONSES 6
  - IV. CONFIDENTIALITY 6
- 4. Appendix** **7**
  - I. Exhibit 1 - Map of trash collection schedule 7
  - II. Exhibit 2 - Map of DPW Districts 8



# 1. INTRODUCTION

## I. WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

The City of Boston is seeking information from interested parties for a potential large-scale program that would reduce the amount of food and yard waste that residents currently dispose of with their trash for weekly curbside collection. Respondents should focus on how their recommendations would decrease food waste, create cost savings for the City, decrease environmental impacts and support the City's goals to go carbon neutral by 2050.

The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to narrow respondents' scope by asking them to focus on how the City can reduce the amount of organics (food and yard waste) that is disposed of through weekly curbside trash collection. This RFI is looking for respondents to consider short term (2019-2024) solutions to this problem while considering the effectiveness of increasing the City's composting services, increasing the usage of garbage disposals and rolling out a large scale communications plan to educate residents how to better utilize these systems and how they can contribute to improving the environmental health of the City. We are also asking respondents to look at this problem and provide recommended solutions through a financial perspective in addition to environmental impacts.

While specific contracts are outside the scope of this solicitation, the City of Boston hopes to gain a comprehensive understanding of options currently available to reduce food and yard waste from ending up in incinerators. From this information, the City of Boston expects to confirm and narrow its interest in such an arrangement before proceeding with a full Request for Proposals (RFP) which respondents to this RFI can help shape, and therefore be in a stronger position when an RFP is published. Respondents are encouraged to provide creative solutions that maximize potential benefits and minimize financial risks to the City.

## II. BACKGROUND

The City of Boston collects about 190,000 tons of waste per year through its weekly curbside trash collection service for residents. The 10 Districts that make up Boston are organized into five contract bid books with two specific districts in each contract. Currently, trash collection for Districts 1 & 10 cost \$80 per ton, and Districts 2-9 cost \$95 per ton. Of the 190,000 tons of waste that the City removes, it is estimated that 23% (43,700 tons) of that waste is food waste, and an overall total of compostable items (food waste + yard waste) equals about 29% (54,700 tons). Information on the Public Works Districts can be found in Exhibit 2 or [here](#), the District contracts with their corresponding neighborhood are detailed below and a map with trash collection days is located in Exhibit 1:

- District - 1A, 1B and 10: Charlestown, Downtown Boston, and Roxbury
- District - 2 & 4: Jamaica Plain and Brighton
- District - 3 & 7: North and South Dorchester



- District - 5 & 9: East and South Boston
- District - 6 & 8: West Roxbury and Hyde Park

Additionally, hauling contractors conduct yard waste curbside collection service 20 weeks a year on assigned trash days (plus 2 additional weeks of Christmas tree collection). Currently, this program costs \$138 per ton of yard waste removed, and the City collects 11,000 tons of yard waste per year. About 75% of that tonnage is composted at the City's compost site on American Legion Highway. Boston also initiated a 24-hour community compost pilot program in September of 2014, named Project Oscar. Project Oscar has expanded over the years and is operating five community compost bins throughout different neighborhoods in the City. The bins are emptied by a food compost hauler at a cost of \$14,000 per year. The Oscar Pilot generates about 40 tons of food waste per year.

Please look at the following City websites to gather additional background information:

- [Greenovate Boston](#)
- [Zero Waste Boston](#)
- [Imagine Boston 2030](#)
- [Carbon Free Boston 2050](#)
- [Leaf and Yard Waste](#)
- [Project Oscar](#)
- [Boston Zero Waste Advisory Committee Meeting, December 17, 2018](#)

The following data is designed to provide uniformity across respondents' environmental and financial calculations and projections. If you find more relevant data please feel free to use it and cite it appropriately. According to the 2013 US Census, Boston-Cambridge-Quincy had a total of 1,109,700 full kitchens with sinks, and 671,900 (60.5%) of those sinks had garbage disposals resulting in 437,800 sinks without garbage disposals. Boston specifically has an estimated population of 671,900 (US Census 2017), and 259,324 households (US Census 2016).



## 2. RESPONSES

When formulating your responses please consider the following process and questions:



1. What neighborhood or neighborhoods would you focus on first and why?
2. What would you need from the City?
3. What would be the cost?

Also, please consider one or multiple of the following topics to focus your response on.

### I. COMPOSTING / ANAEROBIC DIGESTION

Please provide ideas and recommendations of how the City of Boston can expand and improve the collection and processing of food waste and leaf and yard waste to serve a larger percentage of the population. Processing includes composting and/or anaerobic digestion into marketable end products such as compost, mulch and biogas for energy generation or fuel. Collection may include curbside collection, a subscription service or other ideas you recommend. Please consider and discuss the current infrastructure locally and across the State to support an increase in composting/anaerobic digestion services, and include how the recommended services will spur job creation and economic growth locally. Also detail the upfront costs the City would need to incur, long-term estimated costs on an annual basis, environmental benefits and impacts, number of households served over a period of time, potential savings, and problems you predict that could negatively impact the implementation of your recommendations.

### II. GARBAGE DISPOSALS

Please provide ideas and recommendations of how the City of Boston could encourage or incentivize its citizens to install, adopt, or increase usage of garbage disposals as a form of organic food waste removal. Also detail the upfront costs the City would need to incur, long-term estimated costs on an annual basis, impacts to the current sewer and wastewater treatment infrastructure, environmental benefits and impacts, potential savings, and problems you predict that could negatively impact the implementation of your recommendation.

### III. COMMUNICATIONS PLAN - EDUCATE THE PUBLIC

Please detail a communications plan with a budget that the City of Boston could implement to inform residents how to properly maximize a compost service and responsibly use a garbage disposal. This can be a multi-phase and a multi-platform program, and feel free to discuss how other cities have approached these types of initiatives whether they were successful or not. When formulating your plan please consider that [Mayor Walsh signed a City ordinance in 2016](#) to make Boston more accessible for people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) or disabilities.

### IV. ADDITIONAL OPTIONS OR RECOMMENDATIONS

This is your opportunity to expand the scope of this RFI and provide other options or ideas of how the City of Boston could reduce the amount of organics from its waste stream.

## 3. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION OVERVIEW

Please note that this RFI is for informational purposes only, and respondents may help shape a future RFP, but they are not guaranteed a contract or award in the future. A vendor's response to the RFI -- or lack thereof -- will have no impact on the evaluation of responses to any subsequent RFP.

Please Note that all responses will be public record. **Do not submit confidential information in your response.**

### I. RFI CONTACT

Susan Cascino  
Environment Department, City Hall 7th Floor  
1 City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201  
Email: [susan.cascino@boston.gov](mailto:susan.cascino@boston.gov)

All project correspondence will be posted on the DPW website. It is the responsibility of Vendors to check regularly for updates and any RFI addenda.



## II. TIMELINE

The table below includes relevant events and deadlines for this RFI:

Event	Date and Time
RFI Release Date	07/08/19 10:00 am EDT
Teleconference for Interested Parties	07/30/19 at 2:00 pm EDT
Respondent Information Due Date	08/29/19 by 5:00 pm EDT

The City of Boston may change these dates at its sole discretion.

The Teleconference is not mandatory for respondents, but will serve as an opportunity to walk through the RFI document and answer any questions. Please use the call-in information below to join the Teleconference at the specified time.

City of Boston Divert Organics from Residential Waste Stream RFI

Thursday, July 30, 2019 2:00 - 3:00 pm EDT

The Teleconference dial in number:

United States: 605-472-5372

Access Code: 664140

## III. RESPONSES

Please submit your response to this RFI via email to [susan.cascino@boston.gov](mailto:susan.cascino@boston.gov) by **5pm Boston local time on Thursday, August 29, 2019**. Within the email please use the following format in the subject line: **“(Respondent Organization’s Name) - Response to Divert Organics from Residential Waste Stream RFI.”** Responses can be in any format that the respondent believes best captures their ideas, plans or other information they believe is important. If the response is too large to be sent in a single email, please send separate emails indicating how many total emails comprise your response (e.g., “Response to Divert Organics from Residential Waste Stream RFI Part 1 of 3”).

## IV. CONFIDENTIALITY

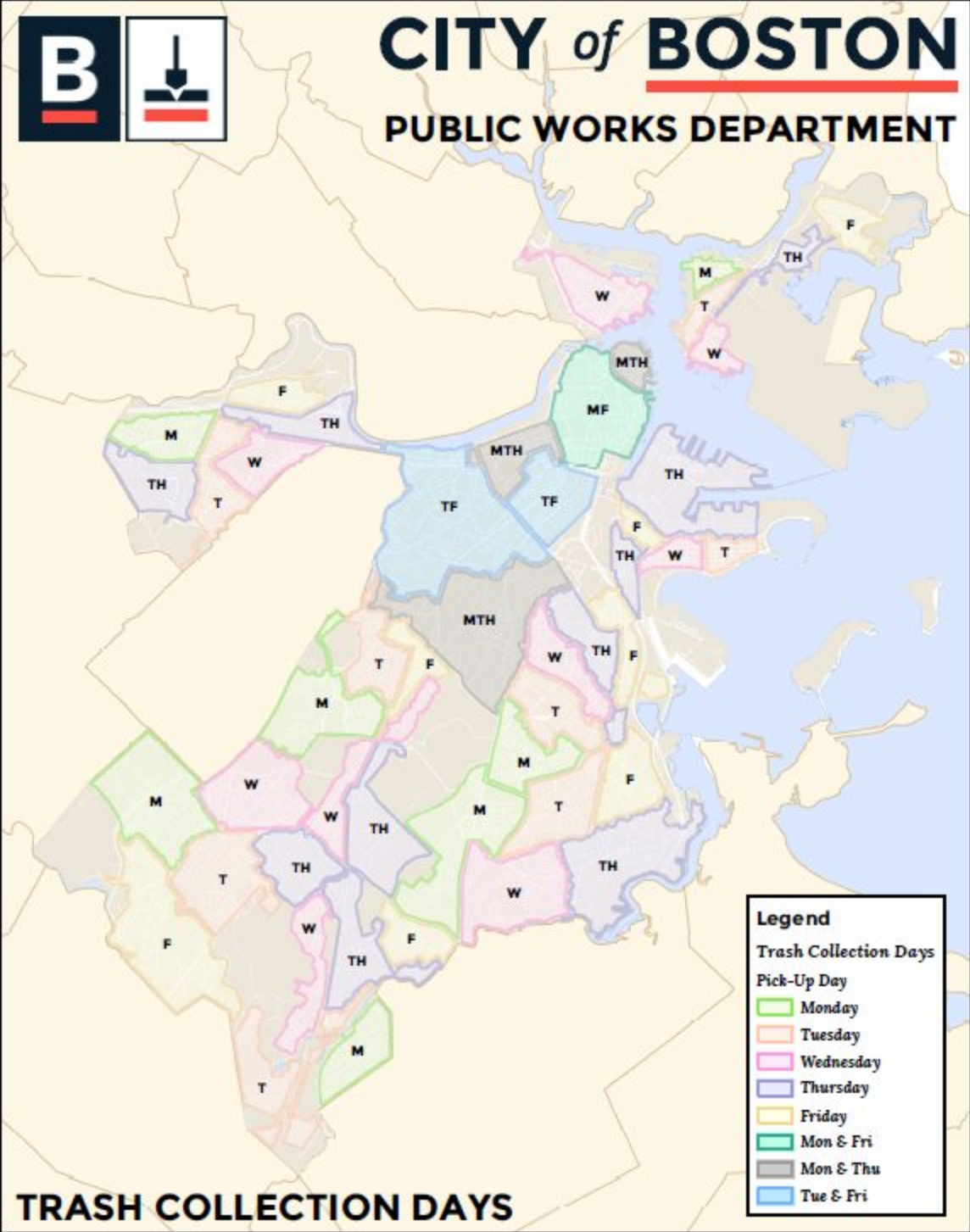
The City of Boston is subject to public records laws and it must comply with associated obligations. [A Guide to the Massachusetts Public Records Law is available here](#). Your response will be public record.

If respondents do not wish to provide certain components of the requested information, please share as much information as can be provided.



# 4. APPENDIX

## I. EXHIBIT 1





II. EXHIBIT 2

