

Anacostia Riverkeeper • Anacostia Watershed Society
Building Materials Reuse Association • Clean Water Action
DC Environmental Network • Earthjustice • Energy Justice
Network • Global Green USA • Green Cross International
Institute for Local Self Reliance • Natural Resources Defense
Council • Potomac Riverkeeper Network • Rock Creek
Conservancy • Sierra Club, Washington DC Chapter
Wentworth Green Strategies



January 16, 2017

Via email to christopher.shorter@dc.gov

Christopher Shorter, Director
DC Department of Public Works
Frank D. Reeves Municipal Center
2000 14th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009

Re: Request DC Department of Public Works Issue an RFP to Hire a Consultant to Develop and Implement a Save As You Throw Pilot in the District.

Dear Director Shorter:

The District of Columbia zero waste organizations and advocates want to express our appreciation for the openness and transparency that have been demonstrated by you and your agency's Office of Waste Diversion. Through this new office, you have assembled a team that cumulatively has the knowledge and know-how to both transport the District's waste management programs into this century and transform the District into a national zero waste leader.

It's hard to believe that we have already had our fifth Department of Public Works' zero waste stakeholders meeting. Between these scheduled check-ins and numerous other more focused discussions and communications with you and your staff, we have started laying the groundwork necessary for historic and meaningful collaboration and change.

Background:

In April of last year, we all came together to learn about Save As You Throw (SAYT), a usage pricing model for disposing of municipal solid waste, and how it could help District ratepayers save money, reduce the District's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and water pollution, and increase DC per capita recycling rates.

We also learned how thousands of communities in CA, MA, MN, OR, RI, VT, WA, and many municipalities in Europe, South Korea, Japan and Taiwan are already reaping the benefits of a SAYT system. We believe it's time for the District to join the over 7,000 U.S. cities that have adopted SAYT.

Our request:

We support DPW's commitment to developing a SAYT pilot. We ask that DPW issue an RFP to hire a consultant to develop and implement a Save As You Throw pilot in the District. We believe a SAYT pilot will demonstrate to District residents and local decision-makers that this policy is a good fit for our city. The pilot process could also produce the feasibility study that is statutorily required to initiate a SAYT program in the District.

We believe much of the work to develop the pilot could be implemented in 2017. Some possible highlights of this process might include:

- ✓ **Phase 1: Situation Analysis and SAYT Method Comparison** – During this phase, DPW would establish objectives, conduct a waste situation analysis, and develop a comparative analysis of the different types of SAYT that might be feasible for Washington, DC. This would provide objective, data-driven guidance regarding the most appropriate SAYT model for the District.
- ✓ **Phase 2: Program Design** – During this phase, DPW would determine the most appropriate SAYT model for the District and design it to ensure the District's needs, goals, preferences, and concerns are addressed. In this phase, the details of the recommended program would be worked out.
- ✓ **Phase 3: Pilot Development** – During this phase, DPW would adapt the recommended program to a pilot scale so that it could be tested. All key elements of the pilot program would be outlined and documented, including pilot variations, performance metrics, sample development method, baseline data collection method, pilot data collection method, and final reporting formats. A high-level implementation plan and timeline would also be included.

- ✓ **Phase 4: Stakeholder Engagement** – During this phase, the District would meet with key decision-makers and other stakeholders within the District to educate them about the proposed program, explain how the pilot would work, and collect their feedback. These stakeholders would include the Interagency Waste Reduction Working Group, DC Council, City Administrator, groups advocating for underserved populations, environmental organizations, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs), waste management haulers, and other business stakeholders. (partial)

- ✓ **Phase 5: Pilot Implementation and Evaluation** – During this phase (assuming the District decides to move forward with a pilot), the District would roll out the pilot to target areas, run the pilot, collect data, and then evaluate and report on the results.

We feel that this pilot would complement other initiatives and conversations that DPW and the Office of Waste Diversion are currently engaged in. It might even be possible to add elements to the pilot to help inform these other conversations.

We would love to be enthusiastic stakeholders in this SAYT pilot process. We look forward to continued collaboration and the beginnings of concrete action toward making DC a true zero waste city.

Sincerely,

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Cc: DPW Office of Waste Diversion, Cm. Cheh