Baltimore City is currently conducting a master planning effort to identify options for improving solid waste diversion, recycling, and disposal in the City.

And we need your help.

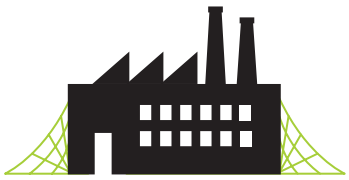
Fast Facts: What's at Stake

The City's Department of Public Works provides solid waste and recycling services to City residents, businesses, schools, and other entities. The City directly manages over 200,000 tons of waste annually, most of which goes to waste-to-energy or landfill disposal. However:



Landfill

The City-owned Quarantine Road Landfill–the only solid waste landfill in Baltimore City–is rapidly reaching its permitted capacity, with **approximately seven years remaining** at the current rate of disposal.



Waste-to-energy

The privately-owned Baltimore Refuse Energy Systems Co. (BRESCO) waste-to-energy (WTE) plant, where about 75% of the City's waste is currently handled, is aging and **may not be a viable long-term option**.



Recycling

While the City does provide a variety of recycling options, the City's **recycling rates are among the lowest in Maryland**.

The **time is now** for Baltimore to consider its long-term strategy for reducing solid waste generation, offering more options for reusing or repurposing waste materials, increasing recycling rates, and disposing of what's left in the most economic and sustainable manner. Doing so will not only benefit residents, homeowners, and businesses, but will also help support economic growth and prosperity in the City.

The Plan for Tomorrow, Today



We are committed to developing a master plan (the "Less Waste, Better Baltimore" Plan) that outlines a clear and realistic future vision for improving the City's solid waste recycling program and operations, over both the near- and long-term, with the goal of maximizing waste reduction, reuse/repair, recycling, and sustainable management of materials through 2040 and beyond.

The master planning effort consists of a three-step process:



For more information, visit publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/lesswaste

Step 1: Information Gathering Activities

Waste and recycling characterization studies: Establish reliable and up-to-date data on waste characteristics and quantities currently generated within the City by conducting a planned, coordinated, and supervised study of the materials typically collected or received at the City's drop-off locations.

Comprehensive evaluation of the existing system: Gain an understanding of the existing waste and recycling streams in the City and the systems for processing and managing these streams by reviewing the City's existing system coupled with a review of private infrastructure and facilities in the local region.

Benchmarking: Evaluate the City's current programs against other jurisdictions with comparable demographics.

Research: Investigate US and international best practices and successes for reducing waste generation and increasing diversion and recycling rates.

Stakeholder engagement: Solicit input (preferences, priorities, challenges, etc.) from key stakeholders through in-person community meetings, an online survey, and feedback provided through a dedicated email.

Step 2: Analysis

Analyze the stakeholder inputs together with the waste sort data, existing system evaluation, and benchmarking data to develop a set of options for the City to consider for improving and increasing waste diversion and recycling, as well as managing what's left in a sustainable and cost-conscious manner.

Step 3: Plan Development

From the presented options, we will develop a set of recommendations and present it for public review at a "town hall" style meeting. The public review feedback will be evaluated and incorporated into the Less Waste, Better Baltimore Plan, which will be finalized and presented to the Mayor City Council and the public.

To create the best plan for the City's future, we need your input:



Attend a Community Meeting
At this series of community meetings, you will have the opportunity to tell us what matters to you and hear what other stakeholders think. Visit publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/lesswaste for information.



Monitor Progress
Progress updates for each step of the Less Waste, Better Baltimore planning process will be posted periodically at publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/lesswaste.



Send Us Your Feedback
Email us directly with any questions and feedback: lesswaste@baltimorecity.gov.

For more information, visit publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/lesswaste