

Just and Sustainable Materials Management Principles for Montgomery County

1. Follow the [Zero Waste Hierarchy](#) to seek the highest and best use of materials.
2. Maintain and expand source separation (don't mix trash, recyclables, and compostables in one bin and expect to sort it into marketable commodities). This includes maintaining the dual stream recycling system (single stream – mixing paper with bottles and cans – lowers the value of the paper).
3. Collect food scraps and yard waste curbside. For these “source separated organic” (SSO) materials, aerobic composting is preferred over anaerobic digestion.
4. Mandate deconstruction and building material reuse as an alternative to demolition. This will create jobs, recover materials, and avoid creation of construction & demolition waste (the largest waste stream).
5. Transition to a unit-based pricing (“save as you throw”) pricing structure.
6. Move to biweekly waste collection to increase waste diversion and incentivize composting once unit-based pricing and curbside collection of organics are established.
7. Decentralize the waste and recycling system to minimize impacts on Shady Grove community (see “Shady Grove Relief Plan” below).
8. Trash should be processed with a material recovery (“dirty MRF”) process to extract more recyclables, and should be done in a modular process that can be downsized and transitioned for “clean MRF” use on source separated recyclables as source separation of recycling increases.
9. Organic material discarded with trash shall not be used on the land as soil amendment or fertilizer, but should be handled with “biological treatment” (preferably using anaerobic digestion) prior to landfilling. Choice of landfill(s) should follow the “Landfill RFP” criteria outlined below.
10. No incineration, pyrolysis, gasification, or other “waste-to-energy” or waste-to-fuels schemes.

Shady Grove Relief Plan

Shady Grove currently is the processing and/or transfer point for nearly all of Montgomery County’s trash, recyclables, compost, and construction / demolition (C&D) waste. If Shady Grove is the only reasonable location to continue waste transfer operations, we propose the following to decentralize the system and minimize impacts on the Shady Grove community:

- 1) Do all the upstream activities to minimize the tonnage going through Shady Grove: unit-based pricing, deconstruction, curbside composting collection, etc. Do mattress recycling, e-waste, pharmaceutical waste, paint, and other hard-to-recycle materials at other locations. Have periodic “CHARM” (center for hard-to-recycle materials) collections, paper shredding, etc. at local high schools.
- 2) Decentralize the composting as much as possible, as recommended by ILSR’s [Food Waste Hierarchy](#). Maximize on-site and near-site “neighborhood level” options. Locate regional composting sites elsewhere. If avoiding burdening Shady Grove with source-separated composting material transfer, then it cannot be brought to the Dickerson site by rail, and the Dickerson site cannot be a centralized site for the entire county. The Dickerson site should be used for that part of the county while other areas use different regional sites.
- 3) Put the material recovery (“dirty MRF”) component at Shady Grove.
- 4) Consider distributing the clean MRF operations at a few mini-MRFs at other locations if the already-committed Shady Grove MRF upgrades aren’t a barrier to decentralizing the processing of recyclables.
- 5) Electrify trash/recycling/composting collection trucks as much as possible.

- 6) Put digestion for residual organics at Shady Grove, minimizing the volume and tonnage of this stabilized residual material that would have to leave Shady Grove by long-haul diesel trucks going north on I-270 to landfills.
- 7) Put the C&D processing at other locations than Shady Grove, which will become easier when materials flow in other directions once deconstruction becomes the norm.

Landfill RFP Criteria

- 1) No disproportionate impact on racial minorities, in order to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This shall be measured using census data for the non-Hispanic white population within a five-mile radius of the landfill, the population of which shall not be lower than the national average of 60%. [Note: DEP wanted to make this threshold stronger by raising the percentage.]
- 2) Population within 5 miles of the landfill must not exceed 20,000.
- 3) Population within 5 miles of the landfill must not have a median household income under \$35,000. [Note: DEP wanted to raise this threshold.]
- 4) No put-or-pay provision, or comparable "pay or pay" minimums payment amount.
- 5) Must have a landfill gas collection system in place. Must not be using the landfill as a bioreactor.
- 6) Must not be within 55 miles of an operating municipal waste combustor other than MCRRF.

Graded/Ranking Criteria:

- 1) Preference for landfills that flare gas and do not use them for energy production
- 2) Lower annual rainfall
- 3) Lower cost
- 4) Shorter travel distance
- 5) Privately owned
- 6) Owned or operated by smaller waste corporations
- 7) No known public opposition
- 8) Fewer environmental violations
- 9) Material recovery and biological treatment (MRBT) components in place at the landfill site (until/unless county develops its own)