

WASTE & RECYCLING ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY MEASURES

Bedford Waste & Recycling Study

There is currently no organized town wide trash collection in the Town of Bedford. Bedford residents contract directly with the carter of their choice and each picks up and hauls to various landfills or other disposal centers. Under this current system, multiple carters may take the same route on the same day to collect residential and commercial waste, adding to our transportation emissions and creating basic inefficiencies. The haulers have no reporting requirements to the town, making accurate data collection difficult.

The Town of Bedford, working with the Bedford 2020 Coalition and its partners, should conduct a comprehensive study of waste and recycling in the Town of Bedford. Such a study should determine: the composition of our waste stream, the amount of waste generated, and the location and method of disposal. Best practices should be examined and evaluated to determine feasibility for Bedford, including: Pay As You Throw programs, Zero Waste programs, curbside collection of food waste and other compostable materials, deconstruction and reuse facilities, and the feasibility of an organic waste composting facility.

Develop Reporting Requirements for Carters

The Town should use its permitting process to create an efficient and environmentally responsible waste and recycling system. Under Bedford's current multiple carter system, haulers must be permitted to operate in the town, but they have no reporting requirements. Detailed information from carters can help the Town and the Bedford 2020 Coalition make informed decisions about how to allocate resources and target education toward source reduction, recycling and composting, thereby creating an environmentally friendly and efficient waste and recycling system and become better stewards of the environment

The Town of Bedford, working with the Bedford 2020 Coalition and its partners, should develop reporting requirements for carters that they agree to at the time of permitting. Haulers can be required to report quarterly on such data as: routes and number of pick ups; weight and composition of waste; and the procedures, means and methods of disposal.

Waste & Recycling Education Campaign

The Town of Bedford, working with the Bedford 2020 Coalition and its partners, should consider a series of educational programs to communicate with residents, businesses, schools, institutions, and civic and religious entities to address the myriad issues surrounding consumption, waste and recycling. The focus of such programs might include: consumption patterns; the purchase of goods that are durable, repairable and reusable; minimal packaging; recycling of office materials such as paper, ink cartridges, computers, etc

ADDITIONAL MUNICIPAL MEASURES

Municipal Green Procurement and Recycling Policy

The purchasing decisions that we make and the disposal methods we choose have a profound impact on the environment. The Town of Bedford should develop a Municipal Green Policy that requires environmental considerations into every aspect of acquisition. All items should be vetted through a sustainability lens before purchase to examine the life cycle of a each product (where it was made, where does it go after its usefulness). This would enable the town to reduce the use of products that are created with high energy content or no recycling potential, and would decrease the overall Ecological Footprint, as well as save money. The town should also consider a policy that requires the recycling of paper, cardboard, ink & toner cartridges, and e-waste in all municipal offices, buildings and recreational facilities.

Recycling of Construction Debris

In the event of a renovation, or tear down, most materials are demolished and sent to the landfill. The wood, hardware, windows, and sinks that are traditionally discarded could be reused. There are many reclaim and reuse (deconstruction) companies that will take what would typically be discarded and find another use elsewhere. The energy benefit for Bedford in reusing products would be in diverting the GHG from the mining and transportation of raw materials to factories and wastes created from the generation and transportation of new products as well as reducing emissions from the landfill.

The Town of Bedford should consider a policy in which all town construction or renovation projects be regulated to require recycling of construction debris.

Composting Bins at Town Parks

The Town of Bedford should designate town property in town parks and recreational areas for the use of composting bins to be used to collect organic waste such as leaves and yard waste. Not only would the Town be leading by example, but the location of composting bins in public areas would assist in the goal of educating the entire community about the benefits of composting. Proper signage at such areas could serve as an effective way of instructing the public about the benefits of composting. The Town should also explore the feasibility of including, where feasible, food waste in these composting areas.

Expand and Enhance Existing Municipal Composting

The Town of Bedford has a composting area on Beaver Dam Road for composting yard waste. The facility is currently utilized for town collected leaves and tree waste and is not open to residents. The town should re-evaluate its own municipal composting facility to explore how it might be used as a revenue generator, as an educational tool for composting and as a source of compost for the community.

LAND USE & WATER

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY MEASURES

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Increase Supply, Availability and Consumption of Local Food (Source: City of Portland, CAP)

Food and agriculture are central to the vitality of the Bedford community. Over 10% of US carbon emissions result from the food system – it may be closer to 30% if one includes food importation, agricultural related deforestation and soil degradation.

Individuals can reduce the impact of food choices on climate change by choosing locally produced and “low carbon” foods. By choosing to eat locally, individuals can reduce greenhouse gas emissions generated by food transportation, bolster the town’s economy and help preserve agricultural land in the Bedford area. By eating locally produced fresh food and by choosing grains, fruits and vegetables instead of meat, individuals also create a healthy diet.

The Bedford 2020 Coalition, the Town and our partners should work together to create in Bedford a strong local food system that significantly increases the percentage of home grown and locally sourced food. In particular, the group should work to educate the community on the skills needed to expand the growing of fruit and vegetables in home gardens or in cooperation with neighbors. In addition, the group should work to facilitate the creation of both community and school gardens. The group should also explore other ways to increase community access to locally produced food, including expanded farmers’ markets, support of local community supported agriculture farms, support of local businesses providing access to local food and legislative initiatives to protect agricultural land and promote farming. They might also consider how to bring more locally grown food to community outreach and feeding programs as well as community institutions, such as the hospital.

TREES

Source: The Christian Science Monitor, April 16, 2003 edition

Bedford takes pride in all of its trees on public and private lands. For the past nine years, Bedford has been recognized as a "Tree City USA." In order to gain this distinction a municipality must have: A tree board or department; a tree care ordinance; a comprehensive community forestry program; and an annual Arbor Day observance and proclamation by the local council or board.

Trees are natural pollution-control devices. They absorb carbon dioxide and return oxygen to the air. Their leaves, branches, and trunks help slow the runoff of storm water. They also provide sound buffering, shade, and measurably cooler temperatures on hot summer days, and breeding and roosting places for

local and migratory birds, whose habitat has been disappearing. Trees also have the potential to increase business in commercial areas through beautification.

The Bedford 2020 Coalition should work with the Town, local garden clubs and other partners to expand public and private programs to encourage the planting and preserving of trees on municipal, commercial and private land with an emphasis on native species that are appropriate in size and form to each location. The group should also develop and implement an outreach campaign to educate the public about the many environmental, commercial and social benefits of trees. They should also focus on educating the community about existing tree regulations and tree maintenance and care.