



# ZERO WASTE ADVISORY COMMISSION

## CONSTRUCTION & DEMOLITION ORDINANCE REFORM COMMITTEE

### FRIDAY APRIL 23, 2021 MEETING SUMMARY

Presented to ZWAC Wednesday May 12, 2021

# Meeting Summary

ZWAC Attendees: Cathy Gattuso, Amanda Masino, Ian Steyaert

- Citizen Communication
  - 4 speakers—representing a local recycling business, industry organization, and a non-profit
  - Some key issues (& various opinions)
    - certification
    - enforcement
    - wood as fuel
- Approved February 28, 2017 minutes
- New Business
  - Staff briefing on committee bylaws—Selene Castillo (ARR)
  - Staff briefing on existing C&D Recycling Ordinance requirements—Elizabeth Nelson (ARR)

# C&D Recycling History

- Austin Energy Green Building
  - Initial commercial checklist in 1995, included strategies to reduce waste
- 2009 – C&D Ordinance development began
- 2016 – C&D Ordinance went into effect



# What IS C&D?

Estimated 20% of total waste stream

- Wood
- Cardboard and Paper
- Metals
- Concrete
- Asphalt

- Stone, Brick, Porcelain
- Plastic
- Trash



# Material Handling

- Commingled Processing
  - Hand sorted
  - Mechanically sorted
  - Combination
- Source Separated
  - High value materials



# Austin's Construction and Demolition Recycling Ordinance

- Ch 15-6 Article 9 – Construction and Demolition Materials Diversion Program [Solid Waste Code]
- Ch 25-11-39 - Construction and Demolition Materials Diversion [Land Development Code]

# Ordinance Requirements

## Affected Projects:

- > 10/1/16: > 5,000 sq ft of new or remodeled floor area
- > 10/1/19: Commercial and multifamily demolition projects

## Diversion requirements, either:

- Divert  $\geq 50\%$ , or
- Dispose  $\leq 2.5$  lbs / sq ft

Post-Construction Report online

Waiver Request: if materials are non-recyclable

# Qualified Processors

- Commingled C&D Processors
- Optional
- 3<sup>rd</sup> party verified facility diversion rate (through RCI or City registered evaluator)
- Simpler reporting for contractors



# Processing and Disposal

- Commingled materials are sorted through automated or manual processes, or a combination
- Material disposed in Type I (MSW) or IV (C&D) landfills
- Processors are not required to register with COA
- Regulated by TCEQ
- Haulers take material to either in-house or 3<sup>rd</sup> party processor or landfill

# 2020 Economic Impact Study on C&D Recycling

## Key Findings:

- Minimal economic impact to affordability
- Data from demolition projects insufficient (effected in 2019)
- Low reporting rate may skew diversion data upward
- Processors able to handle increased volume, if key materials are not contaminated
- 3<sup>rd</sup> party haulers struggle to compete due to limited processing facility access

# C&D Ordinance Data

	2021	2020	2019
Submission Rate	10%	16%	13%
Average Diversion Rate (50% min)	61%	59%	67%
Average lbs per Sq Ft Disposed (2.5 max)	0.15	3.94	0.07
Waiver Approval Rate	N/A	74%	50%

Data is self reported to ARR from ordinance affected projects.  
Does not include AEGB project data.

# Key Takeaways

- Low project submission rate
  - Multiple outreach channels used; outreach increased in recent years
  - Limited reporting result in lack of data
- Lack of enforcement options
  - ARR Compliance team actively being formed
- Changing markets for C&D Materials
  - Lack of markets for materials (gypsum, asphalt shingles)
  - Conflict with department master plan and “burning for fuel” being allowed with RCI certification
  - Contaminated loads rejected by processors

# Future Agenda Items

Next meeting expected: June, 2021

- Recommendations to address issues brought up by speakers and for key decision points we should consider when recommending changes to the C&D ordinance (e.g. impact of burning fuel pellets vs. recycling)
- Other cities' C&D recycling processes as case studies
- RCI certification allowing biomass burning and how it differs from the City's Comprehensive plan
- Material end markets that are realistic and environmentally sound
- C&D ordinance education