

# CHARTER

## Solid Waste Committee

### Zero Waste Planning Process

*January 2022*

**Purpose:** The Arlington County Solid Waste Bureau (SWB) of the Department of Environmental Services (DES) has been directed to develop a Zero Waste Plan (ZWP) that recommends policies, programs, strategies, initiatives, and actions that will divert 90% of County generated waste from landfilling or incineration by 2038 and fulfill the State requirements for the County's next Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP). This planning effort will identify the long-term, mid-term and short-term diversion goals as well as key strategies and actions to be taken by government, the private sector, the non-profit sector and individuals to meet those goals.

**Project Objectives:** Building on our strengths as a smart growth community of intelligent and committed citizens, the objectives of this project are to:

1. Engage a broad representation of the community in a comprehensive discussion of Arlington County's zero waste future;
2. Build awareness in the community of current initiatives and recent efforts in reducing waste disposal, and of short-term, mid-term and long-term contributions community members can make to reducing waste generation;
3. Establish countywide long-term, mid-term, and short-term waste diversion goals;
4. Identify strategies and actions to achieve waste diversion and GHG emissions reduction goals; and
5. Produce a ZWP based on science, community values, and discourse, which fulfills the state's solid waste planning requirements. The ZWP will serve as the next SWMP, which could, as determined by the County Board, become an element of Arlington County's Comprehensive Plan.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

##### SWC:

The SWC will provide advice and information to the Technical Working Group regarding the feasibility and impacts of policies, programs, and strategies on the Arlington community. They will also advocate for the plan in the community. The SWC's Zero Waste Working Group will be composed of representatives from:

- Arlington Business Community;
- Arlington Citizens/Citizen Groups;
- Education Community;
- Restaurant/Hospitality Community;
- Environmental Community;
- Nonprofits/Trade Associations;

- Hauler/Processing Community;
- Office and Apartment Building Community; and
- Arlington Public Schools

Technical Working Group and Advisors, Consultants and the SWB (collectively, “TWG&A”):

The TWG&A is the group primarily responsible for drafting the ZWP/SWMP and all supporting reports, studies and documentation. It will provide specific technical support in formulating the content of the Zero Waste Plan. TWG&A will include County project staff, consultants, and multiple technical experts in a variety of topic areas.

The consultants are responsible for providing research, analysis and subject-matter expertise, as well as creating related documentation. The consultants will also be responsible for producing a complete draft of the ZWP/SWMP, with oversight from the SWC and County staff.

SWB staff will oversee the development of the ZWP/SWMP and will ensure coordination among the SWC, consultants, County Board and County staff.

**Scope:** The TWG&A, in conjunction with the SWC, will complete the following tasks:

1. Gain a thorough understanding of the planning guidance from the County Board, the state’s solid waste management plan requirements, the County’s current solid waste management system and the waste diversion strategies currently employed in Arlington County, including Arlington’s baseline waste audit data; *(Q1 2022)*
2. Examine nationally and internationally recognized best practices in achieving zero waste; *(Q1 2022)*
3. Engage key community stakeholders through ongoing outreach and engagement activities, such as educational seminars and interactive web tools; *(Throughout ZWP planning process)*
4. Formulate long-term (2038), mid-term (2034) and short-term 2029 (5 years from plan completion) waste diversion goals; *(Q2-Q3 2022)*
5. Formulate long-term (2038), mid-term (2034) and short-term 2029 (5 years from plan completion) waste diversion strategies and actions to achieve waste diversion goals, by identifying and outlining the following elements: *(Q3 2022 – Q3 2023)*
  - a. Best practices from other zero waste plans;
  - b. Innovative ways to achieve greater diversion by reducing waste generation, reusing appropriately, recycling and composting correctly and disposal as a last resort;
  - c. Obstacles to achieving goals and ways to address them; and
  - d. Economic and financial implications for all sectors of achieving waste diversion goals
6. Develop performance measures, key performance indicators, and performance targets (including a plan for tracking and reporting results) to measure the success of Zero Waste Plan implementation efforts; *(Q2 2022 – Q3 2023)* and

7. Identify future study areas related to waste reduction and diversion and recommend ways to engage the Arlington community (including County government) in future waste reduction and diversion efforts.

**Project Phases:**

1. Establish the SWC which involves making appointments, assigning County project staff, finalizing the project budget, and hiring consultant(s) – *Q1-Q2 2022*.
2. Conduct zero waste visioning sessions with all sectors of the community – *Q2 2022*.
3. Data collection, research and analysis, including the evaluation of the zero waste plans from a number of zero waste communities, as developed by our contracted consultant – *Q1-Q2 2022*.
4. Process the data and information, discuss options and identify the best strategies and actions for Arlington to achieve zero waste, taking into consideration the environmental, social and economic impacts of the proposed strategies. – *Q3-Q4 2022*.
5. Develop long-term (2038), mid-term (2034) and short-term (5-years from plan completion) waste diversion goals – *Q3 2022*.
6. Develop long-term (2038), mid-term (2034) and short-term (5-years from plan completion) strategies and actions necessary to achieve stated goals – *Q4 2022*.
7. Draft the Zero Waste Plan – *Q3 2022-Q2 2023*.
8. Review draft plan and implement final edits – *Q2 2023*.
9. Review draft Zero Waste Plan with the community and solicit comments – *Q3-Q4 2023*.
10. Incorporate final edits to draft plan based on community input – *Q4 2023*.
11. Finalize Zero Waste Plan, present document to County Board for review and approval in June 2024 – *Q1-Q2 2024*.