

Town of Westford



Strategic Plan Sustainability Outcome Area WRC Update – FY2025 Qtr. 4

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Agenda

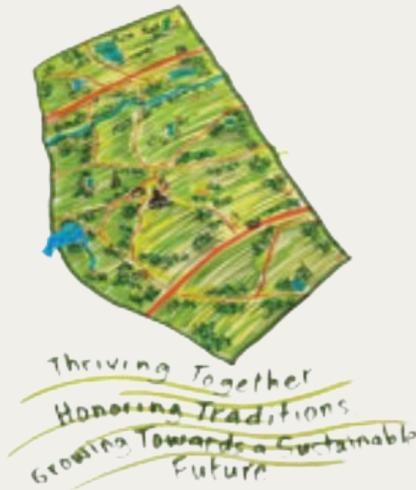


- Strategic Plan Overview
- FY2025 Qtr. 4 Strategy Updates
 - #4 – Comprehensive Waste Reduction
- Fee-For-Service Strategy Overview
- Comprehensive Waste Reduction Plan Status
- PAYT Status
- Coming up...
- Questions

Strategic Outcome Areas



- Responsive and Responsible Town Government
- Caring and Engaged Community
- Opportunities for Recreation and Preservation of Open Space
- Quality Educational Opportunities
- Commitment to Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action
- Diverse and Attainable Housing Options
- Intentional and Appropriate Economic Growth



Commitment to Environmental Sustainability & Climate Action



Priority Strategies:

- Developed collaboratively by a working group of staff, Select Board members and CEASC volunteers
- Considered actionable and realistic for the first 2-3 years following adoption of Strategic Plan
- Representative of what we can accomplish with the resources we have available and projected budget constraints
- Prioritized due to potential to positively impact Town and School operating budgets and free up resources for future investment
- Are within the Town's full control

Commitment to Environmental Sustainability & Climate Action



Strategies:

1. Create a solar siting plan utilizing municipal and school properties.
2. Conduct a portfolio-wide building energy audit and develop a prioritized implementation plan and funding strategy for energy efficiency improvements to Town and School facilities.
3. Develop a Fleet Transition Plan towards more energy efficient vehicles with supporting infrastructure.
4. **Develop a comprehensive waste reduction strategy to include residential and municipal sectors.**

Strategy #4 – Comprehensive Waste Reduction



Reduce waste generation and increase recycling rates to promote environmental sustainability and cost efficiency in waste management

- Action Item 1 - Develop SharePoint site to provide hub for managing collection and disposal contracts (in collaboration with WRC) and tracking/reporting data and trends.
 - In progress, but delayed due to staff capacity limitations
- Action Item 2 - Develop a comprehensive waste reduction strategy to include residential and municipal sectors
 - Staff and NMCOG are working with WRC working group on draft plan
 - WRC has inventoried all events and programs and staff is working on the Town/School side
 - Staff is gathering cost and program data from several vendors for specialized collections (food waste, mattresses, universal waste, etc...)
 - Public input survey will identify need and gaps in waste diversion offerings

Strategy #4 – Comprehensive Waste Reduction (cont.)



- Action Item 3 - Develop processes to allow more complete and disciplined management of existing solid waste and recycling contracts to optimize performance and minimize costs in order to redirect existing budgets to additional waste diversion efforts through an Enterprise Fund
 - The Town settled a claim for \$110K with Waste Management for non-performance
 - Staff regularly works with WRC to audit recycling invoices; this has resulted in over \$18K in invoice credits
 - WRC members met with EL Harvey and toured the MRF to resolve questions over glass recycling practices and charges

Strategy #4 – Comprehensive Waste Reduction (cont.)



- Action Item 4 - Implement Pay-As-You-Throw curbside collection
 - September 23rd planned update to Select Board
 - MassDEP Technical Assistance Grant awarded in August; staff is currently working with Municipal Assistance Coordinator on program design
 - Staff is collecting cost and program data from cart and bag suppliers and working on any contract implications with E.L. Harvey
 - Recommendations will include several new or enhanced diversion opportunities to mitigate impact on residents of any program changes

Strategy #4 – Comprehensive Waste Reduction (cont.)



Solid Waste Tonnage

| | FY2023 | FY2024 | FY2025 | FY2026 | change | | change | |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|
| | | | | | FY25>FY24 | as % | FY26>FY25 | as % |
| July | 530.39 | 558.61 | 464.14 | 487.75 | (94.47) | -16.9% | 23.61 | 5.1% |
| August | 589.51 | 619.37 | 512.45 | 516.75 | (106.92) | -17.3% | 4.30 | 0.8% |
| September | 601.38 | 589.58 | 471.04 | - | (118.54) | -20.1% | | |
| October | 556.81 | 584.95 | 595.63 | - | 10.68 | 1.8% | | |
| November | 599.35 | 603.42 | 482.39 | - | (121.03) | -20.1% | | |
| December | 558.56 | 567.65 | 508.38 | - | (59.27) | -10.4% | | |
| January | 587.92 | 574.01 | 516.36 | - | (57.65) | -10.0% | | |
| February | 443.10 | 472.21 | 362.91 | - | (109.30) | -23.1% | | |
| March | 536.99 | 502.04 | 460.65 | - | (41.39) | -8.2% | | |
| April | 519.01 | 562.63 | 480.95 | - | (81.68) | -14.5% | | |
| May | 591.33 | 609.86 | 510.47 | - | (99.39) | -16.3% | | |
| June | 628.02 | 580.81 | 495.31 | - | (85.50) | -14.7% | | |
| Total | 6,742.37 | 6,825.14 | 5,860.68 | 1,004.50 | (964.46) | -14.2% | 27.91 | 3.0% |
| <i>Increase over prior year - tons</i> | | 82.77 | (964.46) | | | | | |
| <i>% Increase over prior year</i> | | 1.2% | -14.1% | | | | | |
| <i>Average Monthly Inc(Dec) FY25 vs. FY24</i> | | | | | (80.37) | | | |

Strategy #4 – Comprehensive Waste Reduction (cont.)



Recycling Tonnage

| | FY2023 | FY2024 | FY2025 | change FY25>FY24 | as % |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|--------|
| July | 166.94 | 166.09 | 152.66 | (13.43) | -8.1% |
| August | 171.34 | 186.75 | 174.01 | (12.74) | -6.8% |
| September | 134.53 | 178.32 | 179.46 | 1.14 | 0.6% |
| October | 175.40 | 162.43 | 131.30 | (31.13) | -19.2% |
| November | 188.73 | 169.67 | 128.46 | (41.21) | -24.3% |
| December | 186.54 | 194.79 | 171.60 | (23.19) | -11.9% |
| January | 211.24 | 194.82 | 205.76 | 10.94 | 5.6% |
| February | 143.21 | 123.01 | 137.73 | 14.72 | 12.0% |
| March | 178.68 | 132.05 | 158.70 | 26.65 | 20.2% |
| April | 153.32 | 175.98 | 165.48 | (10.50) | -6.0% |
| May | 170.35 | 195.57 | 176.18 | (19.39) | -9.9% |
| June | 186.65 | 180.52 | 159.45 | (21.07) | -11.7% |
| Total | 2,066.93 | 2,060.00 | 1,940.79 | (119.21) | |

Strategy #4 – Comprehensive Waste Reduction (cont.)



Key Metrics

| | FY2023 | FY2024 | FY2025 | FY2025>FY2024 | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| | | | | Tons | % |
| Total Trash | 6,742.37 | 6,825.14 | 5,860.68 | (964.46) | -14.13% |
| Total Recycling | 2,066.93 | 2,060.00 | 1,940.79 | (119.21) | -5.79% |
| Total entering waste stream | 8,809.30 | 8,885.14 | 7,801.47 | (1,083.67) | -12.20% |
| Recycling as % of total | 23.5% | 23.2% | 24.9% | | |
| Trash Tons per eligible HH (FY2025) | | n/a | 0.731 | | |
| CY2024 Westford tons/HH | | | 0.784 | | |
| CY2024 Average (all MA curbside) | | | 0.750 | | |
| CY2024 Average (market basket curbside) | | | 0.811 | | |
| CY2021 Westford (Budget Task Force Report) | | | 0.950 | | |

Strategic Plan KPI's



| Key Performance Indicator | Person(s) Responsible | Target | FY2024 | Data Source |
|--|--------------------------|------------|--------------|--|
| Total renewable energy generated annually (kWh) | Town Manager | TBD | 18,819 | Mass Energy Insights/ Solren/Yaskawa |
| Reduction in energy use intensity for all Town buildings (total kBtu/total sqft) | Town Manager, Facilities | TBD | -1.66 | Mass Energy Insights |
| Increase in annual fleet clean energy use (*metric being refined*) | Town Manager | TBD | TBD | This metric is being refined |
| Reduction in annual landfilled trash tons per household | Town Manager | TBD | -0.12 | MassDEP ReTRAC Report (note this is calendar year) |
| Tons of waste diverted through curbside and residential recycling programs | Town Manager | TBD | 1,939 | MassDEP ReTRAC Report (note this is calendar year) |

Fee for Service Strategy



- As a waste reduction tool...
 - Household standard based on target tons per household
- As a tool to improve service delivery...
 - Move majority of collection to automated pickup with standardized cart
 - Provide cost-effective way to allow residents to dispose of excess waste
- As a tool to support housing and economic development goals...
 - Shift a portion of tax burden from businesses and multi-family taxpayers
- As a revenue tool...
 - Recommendation to use only for covering costs in excess of waste targets; current tax levy should cover basic household service

Fee for Service Strategy (cont.)



- Revenue strategy
 - Enterprise Fund – requires 2/3 approval by Town Meeting
 - Bag and bulk sticker revenue used to:
 - Offset program costs
 - Fund additional/expanded waste diversion (recycling) activities
 - Fund (partially) staff required to implement program
 - Housing Authority properties charges for service
 - MassDEP grants will cover majority of implementation costs
 - Equity of cost burden
 - Shift costs from ineligible taxpayers (multi-family, commercial) and to users of the service
 - Recommendations will include programs to mitigate impact on low-income and senior households through Town social service departments

Comprehensive Waste Reduction Plan



- Plan Elements
 - Westford waste profile, trends & comparisons with other municipalities
 - Asset mapping – inventory of programs and services
 - Public input and outreach – past & planned
 - Gap/Opportunity analysis
 - What needs are unmet (and what will they cost)?
 - What revenue opportunities exist?
 - Unintended consequences – illegal dumping & other issues we may face
- Recommendations
 - PAYT
 - Additional diversion activities – mattress program, food waste/compost, events, etc...
 - Drop-off center

Comprehensive Waste Reduction Plan (cont.)



- Completed:
 - Comprehensive review of eligible households
 - Comparable communities & statewide comparisons
 - Public Input Survey #1
 - WRC program inventory
 - PAYT modeling
 - Bag-based program
 - Hybrid (35G cart + bags)
 - Proposals from mattress collection vendors
 - Agreement under review with UTEC and Town Counsel

Comprehensive Waste Reduction Plan (cont.)



- Ongoing:
 - NMCOG & MassDEP Technical Assistance Grant MAC hours
 - Food waste collection
 - Drop-off center evaluation
 - Enterprise Fund modeling
 - Town/school facilities review & illegal dumping
 - Draft Plan Report
- Outstanding:
 - Public input survey #2
 - Eligible household data integration into existing platform

Pay-As-You-Throw Program



- Reminder on program goals
 - Incentivize waste reduction & control costs
 - Minimize demand on staff and inventory management
 - Move towards majority automated collection
- Hybrid PAYT (current recommendation)
 - 35G carts + overflow bags (fee tbd)
 - Estimated between 147,853 – 194,543 bags, or 1,848 tons
 - At a minimum, fee for bags will cover overflow disposal and PAYT program costs
- Bag-in-cart (pilot concept)

Pay-As-You-Throw Program



35G Cart and 35G Overflow Bag Analysis

| | | |
|---|-----------|-----------------|
| Projected FY2026 Tons | 5,108 | |
| Eligible Households | 7,817 | |
| Weekly disposal included in 35G Cart | 64% | |
| % of disposal requiring overflow bag | 36% | |
| Tons included in levy (assuming no fee for 35G) | 3,260 | |
| Start-up tonnage reduction (from WZ) | tbd | |
| Tons requiring overflow bag | 1,848 | <i>MassDEP</i> |
| Lbs. requiring overflow bag | 3,696,325 | <i>estimate</i> |
| Pounds per overflow bag (WasteZero estimate) | 19 | 25 |
| Total overflow bags required | 194,543 | 147,853 |
| Tipping fees on overflow tonnage (projected) | 102.76 | |
| Total cost of overflow disposal | 189,923 | |
| Bag costs (each) | \$ 0.38 | |
| Bag outlay | 90,000 | |
| Collection cost (by Harvey) | tbd | |
| Total Cost of overflow disposal and collection | 279,923 | |
| Bag fee required to fully offset disposal | \$ 1.44 | \$ 1.89 |

Coming Up...



- Select Board Updates:
 - September 23rd – PAYT/Waste Reduction Plan status update
- MOU with UTEC
- Continued work with MassDEP, WasteZero and EL Harvey to refine cost model and Enterprise Fund projections
- FY2027 Budget



Questions?

WRC FY2025 4TH QUARTER UPDATE

MIKE EDWARDS

ASSISTANT TOWN MANAGER – STRATEGIC OPERATIONS

SEPTEMBER 11, 2025