the philadelphia city fund

Organics Diversion Strategy – RFP Questions and Responses

DISCLAIMERS:

The Philadelphia City Fund ("the Fund") will serve as the fiscal administrator for this opportunity and will hold the contract awarded to the winning applicant, on behalf of the City of Philadelphia ("the City") and its Office of Clean and Green Initiatives ("OCG"). OCG will serve as the project manager for this contract. References throughout this document to "the City" should be understood to include the Fund as the entity legally responsible for the contracted work.

This Q&A document includes questions submitted that are broadly relevant to the RFP and its prospective applicant pool. Questions that were highly specific to individual circumstances or otherwise not broadly applicable are not included. Questions similar in content have been combined and are answered in one response.

TASK 1 QUESTIONS

1. **Can the City/Fund share a list of the existing studies, waste characterization data, and ORC, and other assessments that the consultant will synthesize in Task 1? Will the full documents be provided at prior to submission or at project initiation?**
   The City is providing the following documents to aid in proposal development. It is expected that the consultant team(s) delve further into these and other materials to inform Task 1 completion upon project initiation. The Department of Sanitation will also be conducting 4-season waste characterization analysis to be completed in 2027. These analyses will be shared on an ongoing basis to inform tasks and deliverables outlined in this RFP.
   - Organics Feasibility Study (PDF/PPT) - **LINK**
   - Residential and Commercial Waste Composition Analyses – **LINK** and **LINK**
   - PGW RFI June 2026 (PDF) – **LINK**
   - ORC Map – **LINK**

Provided maps are intended to provide an approximate layout of current operations. Some areas have shifted since the map was created and a new operation, the Reforestation Hub, now occupies the space labeled as "LCGE (Woody Material Processing Area)" on the map.

TASK 2 AND 3 QUESTIONS

2. **GHG method: Does the City have a preferred method for Task 3 greenhouse gas and lifecycle analysis (for example, EPA WARM, consistent with the recent solid waste RFP)?**

The City does not have a preferred method for GHG and lifecycle analysis but expects consultants to rely on established best practices and widely-accepted models, including, but not limited to, the EPA WARM model and the DOE's GREET model.

3. **Should recommendations assume current Pennsylvania regulatory requirements only, or should potential future diversion mandates, organics bans, climate objectives, or food waste policies also be considered?**
   Policy and programmatic recommendations to complement opportunity pathways and cost-benefit analyses developed during Tasks 2 and 3 should be considered during the planning process, e.g. as scenarios based on existing or future-state regulatory paradigms.

4. **Should the analysis focus exclusively on City-generated organics, or should regional opportunities involving neighboring counties, utilities, institutions, and private-sector generators also be evaluated?**
   The analysis should primarily include organics generated from the City-managed municipal solid waste stream as well as relevant institutional, commercial, and private sector entities based in Philadelphia and the surrounding region as applicable.

5. **Does the City expect market analyses for compost, renewable natural gas, digestate, biochar, and recovered materials to be local, regional, or statewide in scope?**
   Local and regional, if applicable. RNG credit markets are typically national or international, depending on the market opportunity. The City expects to understand the type of markets (voluntary or compliance), historic market pricing, applicable regulatory context, market sensitivities and any relevant market forecasts.

6. **What level of financial analysis is expected under Task 3 (planning-level estimates versus detailed lifecycle financial modeling)?**
   The City expects, at a minimum, planning-level estimates to be completed under Task 3. The City welcomes more detailed lifecycle financial modeling if feasible within the constraints of the provided budget.

7. **How many opportunities/facilities require 10% conceptual design, and what engineering detail is expected? How should conceptual engineering be differentiated?**
   The number of facilities requiring 10% designs depends on the recommended pathways and preferred technologies provided by the consultant. Engineering details for these designs would include plausible facility footprint requirements, types and scale of key facility equipment and assets, and preliminary capital and operation and maintenance cost estimates, and process output volumes. For the purposes of

proposed budgets, Respondents can assume 10% engineering for up to four opportunities/facilities.

8. **Is the City seeking equal evaluation of composting, anaerobic digestion, co-digestion, gasification, and pyrolysis, or does the City have preferred technologies or priority pathways that should receive greater emphasis?**
   Composting and anaerobic digestion should be included as priorities in the pathways analysis. Beyond those, the City would like to take a "solution-agnostic" approach to technologies to manage organic waste based on their potential economic and environmental benefits.

TASK 4 QUESTIONS

9. **Does the $150,000 Task 4 budget cover consultant services only? Or must it also cover pilot equipment, site improvements, hauling costs, and operating labor at the ORC? If these costs fall outside the Consultant budget, has the City identified separate funding for them?**
   The Task 4 budget should cover both consultant services directly related to the pilot design and implementation and costs required to implement the pilot, including limited equipment and site improvements, as feasible within the available budget. Consulting services under Tasks 1-3 are expected to inform and align with Task 4, with the consultant team coordinating across tasks while dedicating sufficient effort to the ORC pilot. Respondents should clearly identify in their budgets the anticipated allocation for consulting services and the pilot implementation costs.

   The City anticipates that site improvements will be relatively modest and that initial pilot needs will primarily be associated with "soft costs," i.e., logistics, planning, permitting, etc. with minimal equipment needs. The Task 4 budget is not intended to cover the ORC's existing operational labor or routine operating costs but should account for any additional labor needs directly associated with the pilot. The City plans to seek additional funding for material equipment, staffing, and implementation costs beyond what is included in the Task 4 Budget as needed. Additional funding is not guaranteed. Proposals should therefore identify a feasible approach to implementing the pilot within the available budget and should not rely on future funding to fulfill the scope of work outlined in the RFP..

10. **What technical information is available for the proposed food waste composting pilot at the Fairmount Park Organics Recycling Center?**
    a. **Can you provide or identify available information on anticipated feedstock volumes and composition, contamination levels, existing equipment and**

processing capacity, site layout, available utilities, and permitting or operational constraints?

Feedstock sources, composition, and volumes will be determined as part of the consultant study. The ORC currently utilizes a windrow composting methodology. Existing equipment includes a windrow turner, horizontal grinder, screener, and front-end loader. Electric and water service are available on site. The site currently operates under a Permit by Rule.

b. **Will proposers be able to visit the Fairmount Park Organics Recycling Center before the proposal deadline?**

Site visits will be coordinated with selected vendors upon project initiation. It's expected that selected vendors will need to regularly visit the site and coordinate with site staff throughout the contract term.

c. **Does PPR hold, or has it applied for, any PA DEP permit or general permit coverage for food waste composting?**

The Organic Recycling Center operates under a Permit By Rule for yard waste composting. PPR does hold a PA DEP permit for food waste composting for a separate site on Rising Sun Avenue but does not currently hold a separate food waste composting permit for the Organic Recycling Center.

d. **What is the current status of the contract with the city's hauler and is there any contract requirement for them to haul food scraps within the city to the ORC or any other site(s) in the city?**

The Sanitation Department is the primary waste hauler for the City. No agreement yet exists to haul food waste to the ORC. Coordinating with City agencies and identifying the most efficient and cost-effective strategy for hauling will be the responsibility of the consultant.

e. **Who will operate the pilot day to day: PPR/ORC staff or the Consultant?**

Philadelphia Parks & Recreation's Organic Recycling Center staff will continue to operate the ORC for existing operations and will ultimately be responsible for on-site operations at the ORC. The Consultant will be responsible for ensuring smooth and coordinated implementation of pilot activities, including integration of food waste into ORC operations, coordination with food waste haulers and producers, and coordination with end users.

11. **If the consultant has already initiated a property search to secure a property within a target neighborhood, can this site be written directly into the proposal as a designated location for the short-term pilot initiatives?**

The pilot identified under Task 4 must occur at the Organic Recycling Center; other sites to be considered for additional pilots will be determined through the study and

feasibility process.

12. **Is the final pilot evaluation expected to be completed within the contract term?**
    Pilot delivery and implementation is expected to be completed and an evaluation framework proposed, but not required to be completed, by conclusion of the contract term.

13. **Is the consultant meant to develop specific Product Marketing Plan(s), or a more general, higher-altitude Market(s) Assessment?**

    At a minimum, a higher-altitude market(s) assessment is required. The City welcomes more granular Product Marketing Plan(s) where feasible.

14. **What level of stakeholder engagement is anticipated (number of interviews, workshops, and presentations) in Task 4?**

    The consultant will determine the stakeholder engagement strategy for City approval as part of the contracted services. Stakeholder engagement will primarily include feedstock providers (e.g. City entities or other participating food waste generators).

15. **AD/co-digestion pilot: If the consultant is tasked with an Anaerobic Digestion or co-digestion pilot, is that funded within the $150,000 or through a separate amendment?**
    Costs for additional pilots beyond the ORC scope will be informed by expected costs for the ORC pilot. Additional funding required for a separate AD or co-digestion pilot should be identified in the proposal.

TASK 5 QUESTIONS

16. **Should Task 5 be priced separately, and does it count toward the $446,500 not-to-exceed amount?**
    Task 5 should be priced separately and should not count toward the given not-to-exceed budget. The City will endeavor to secure additional funding for a potential Task 5 but this funding is not guaranteed and should not be relied upon to carry out the scope of work outlined in the RFP.

TEAM AND CONTRACT STRUCTURE

17. **Is there a preference for a licensed Professional Engineer to lead the Task 2 conceptual (10%) engineering?**
    The City expects that a licensed Professional Engineer be included as part of the

proposal team or as sub-contracted entity.

18. **Is there a preference for a certified digester operator to be part of the team?**
    A certified digester operator is preferred but not required for proposals to be considered.

19. **How should teams be structured to carry out the work? Does the City have a preference for prime consultant qualifications versus specialized sub-consultants for engineering, economic analysis, and stakeholder engagement? Will the City accept proposals from both nonprofit and private entities? Can applicants apply for partial or individual tasks/deliverables?**

    Consultants submitting proposals as a "prime" should have a strong familiarity with municipal solid waste planning and analysis. There is no preference for which component of the applicant team has specific technical expertise so long as the project team collectively has the requisite expertise to meet the requirements outlined in the RFP. The City welcomes proposals from non-profit and private entities so long as the requisite expertise is included on the project team. The City expects proposing teams to identify all potential sub-contractors needed to complete the tasks and deliverables detailed in the RFP document, including but not limited to opportunity pathways, environmental and economic analysis, stakeholder engagement, and pilot program design, delivery, and evaluation.

    Partial applications will be considered. PCF and OCG will reserve the right to award work to one or more firms depending on their expertise and quality of responses and to modify the subcontracts proposed at their discretion with the final consultant team determined during the contract negotiation phase.

20. **How will the awarded contract be structured? (e.g., as a fixed-price contract based on project milestones, or a time-and-materials contract based on hourly professional consulting rates)?**
    a. **What invoicing schedule and payments terms will the contract use?**
    b. **Should costs be broken down per Task?**
    c. **Will Other Direct Costs (ODCs) be reimbursed at cost or is a general & administrative markup permitted?**

    The contract will be structured on a not-to-exceed cost basis. Payment schedules and invoicing terms will depend on the final contracting structure and scope of work, and will be part of the contracting negotiation with the selected project team. Costs in the proposal should be broken down by Task in the RFP submission. Proposals can include direct costs and/or general and administrative costs so long as they do not exceed the allocated budget. Such costs must be included as part of the budget proposal in

response to this RFP.

21. **May a subcontractor be named on more than one applicant team, provided the role is the same and non-exclusive?**
    Yes. The City retains the right to award discrete components of the total scope of work to more than one contractor or project team based on their qualifications, expertise, and ability to meet the requirements outlined in the scope of work.

22. **May an equipment manufacturer or technology provider participate as a technical subcontractor within the selected consultant team and subsequently bid for or supply equipment for the recommended projects or pilots? Please clarify any applicable conflict-of-interest requirements or restrictions on participation in subsequent procurements.**
    Applicants and the selected project team will not be precluded from future procurement. Applicants are expected to disclose any ongoing participation in City contracts and any contracts with the City within the last three years. Holding a current or past City contract will not impact evaluation of submissions. An equipment manufacturer or technology provider may participate as a technical subcontractor or supply equipment for the pilots.

23. **Should letters of commitment from subconsultants be included with the proposal, or is naming each partner with its role and cost sufficient?**
    Letters of commitment are not required for proposals to be considered, but sub-contractor roles and associated costs should be detailed in the proposal.

24. **Must each subcontractor submit its own Diversity Disclosure Report, or only the prime applicant?**
    Only prime consultants or single consultant applicants must submit a Diversity Disclosure Report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

25. **How many community and stakeholder meetings should proposers assume? Are translation or interpretation services expected?**
    Community engagement and stakeholder meetings should be limited to Task 4 activities and may be developed in conjunction with the project team. Translation and interpretation services are not expected for community engagement activities.

CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS, INSURANCE, LIABILITY, AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

26. **May subcontractors carry their own insurance for their scopes, particularly professional liability for engineering work, or must the prime's policies cover all team members?**

All subcontractors carrying out components of the work are expected to carry appropriate insurance for the services they provide. All contract terms are open to negotiation during the contracting process. However, the Fund reserves the right to decline requested changes or propose alternative terms.

27. **Are the indemnification and limitation-of-liability terms open to negotiation at contracting?**
    Yes, all contract terms are open to negotiation during the contracting process. However, the Fund reserves the right to decline requested changes or propose alternative terms.

28. **Will the Fund accept engineering subconsultants' professional liability coverage for their portion of the work? Will it consider adjusted umbrella limits for small businesses?**
    All subcontractors carrying out components of the work are expected to carry appropriate insurance for the services they provide. All contract terms are open to negotiation during the contracting process. However, the Fund reserves the right to decline requested changes or propose alternative terms.

29. **For proprietary hardware and software used by a subcontractor during a pilot, will the Fund accept a license to the Fund or the City for project use, rather than an assignment of ownership?**
    Yes, generally, a license for proprietary project use will be acceptable in lieu of an expectation of ownership. However, all contract terms are open to negotiation during the contracting process, and the Fund reserves the right to decline requested changes or propose alternative terms.

30. **Must the Philadelphia Business Income & Receipts Tax account and Commercial Activity License be in place at proposal submission, or only before contract execution?** The Fund assumes all applicants meet the legal requirements to conduct business in Philadelphia and does not require a BIRT ID or commercial activity license as part of the proposal. At its discretion, the Fund may require this information prior to contract conformance.

M/W/DSBE PARTICIPATION GOALS

31. **Is there an M/W/DSBE participation goal for this contract?**
    a. **Is registration with a Philadelphia certification registry required, and are there diversity participation goals for this contract?**

b. Does the City or the Fund recognize M/WBE certifications from other jurisdictions (NYC, New York State, PANYNJ)?

The Philadelphia City Fund ("PCF") is a separate non-profit organization from the City of Philadelphia and will serve as the contracting entity on behalf of the City for this opportunity. PCF cannot require M/W/DSBE participation as a non-government entity. PCF and the City will utilize the Diversity Disclosure Report as a method of evaluating the applicant's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in its business practices and subcontracting relationships.

FORMAT

32. Is there a page or file limit? Do resumes, the Diversity Disclosure Report and the City contracts disclosure count toward any page limit?

There is no page limit to the proposal Respondents should refer to Section V of the RFP for required proposal components and submit a single PDF document via email to the addresses given in the RFP.

33. Will evaluation criteria weights be shared?

The Project Team will evaluate proposals based on the given criteria; weights will not be shared. Any response, including written documents and verbal communication, by any Applicant to this RFP, shall become the property of the Fund/City and may be subject to public disclosure by the Fund/City, or any authorized agent of the Fund/City, at the Fund/City's discretion

PROPOSAL DUE DATE AND TIMELINE

34. Please confirm proposals are due Sunday, November 22, 2026, by 5:00 p.m. Philadelphia time.

This RFP deadline has been moved to Monday November 23, 2026 by 5:00pm EST.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER CITY INITIATIVES

35. How does the City's Office of Clean and Green Initiatives see this study interfacing with other consultants selected for waste management and planning processes outside of this RFP?

The City will coordinate any applicable information sharing on waste characterization across consultant teams, including information from previous or existing waste planning processes outside this RFP.

36. How will this strategy relate to the plan called for in the proposed Zero Waste and Circular Economy Act?

The Organics Diversion strategy called for in this RFP will serve as a foundational element for the proposed reforms to the city's waste management system envisioned in the Zero Waste and Circular Economy Act.