

# POLICY BRIEF: Business Recycling as a City-Wide Mandate

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## *EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

Currently, the City of Salisbury does not support or require recycling for local businesses. Ranking 7th in the nation for job growth, business waste will likely continue to grow as the local economy expands. Incorporating businesses into the existing City residential program is not a viable solution due to budget restrictions and other logistical limitations. We therefore propose a comprehensive strategy including the development of a recycling mandate for businesses, the creation of an easily accessible website to guide and encourage business recycling, and the distribution of a complementary sticker for compliance with the long-term policy objectives.

## *CONTEXT AND IMPORTANCE*

Recycling contributes to state and county goals and mandates as well as offers environmental and economic benefits. In supporting business recycling initiatives, the City supports the meeting of Maryland's statewide voluntary recycling goal of 55%. As the current state recycling rate is 35%, much improvement can be made. Recycling is also an easy and cost efficient way to divert materials from the county's quickly filling landfill.

In terms of economic incentives, recycling can be a profitable venture for businesses, saving money on monthly garbage disposal costs. The right incentives can encourage businesses to participate in City mandated recycling programs. This policy proposal places the burden for recycling on businesses, alleviating the City from logistical and financial obligation. Compliance with a City recycling mandate can create a more sustainable Salisbury as well as an aesthetically pleasing environment for the city, resulting in more tourism and economic prosperity of the city.

## *POLICY RECOMMENDATION*

This three part proposal includes the creation of a recycling mandate, the distribution of a complementary sticker for the businesses complying with the mandate, and the development of a webpage that will educate businesses on effective recycling.

**Recycling Mandate:** The most effective way for the City of Salisbury to encourage businesses to reduce waste generation and increase recycling is to implement a mandate in which businesses must comply with one or more of the following terms:

- a) Recycle 20% generated waste
- b) Recycle two types of materials
- c) Provide options for customers to recycle within business facilities

Businesses that do not comply with the mandate may be subject fines or penalties as determined by the City. Communication regarding the new mandate should be publicized through the City of Salisbury's social media as well as by working with the Chamber of Commerce's Beautification and Environmental Affairs Committee.

**Recycling Sticker:** Businesses meeting the City's recycling mandate will receive a sticker for display acknowledging and promoting their participation in the program. The City's website will also recognize participating businesses.

**Recycling Website:** A new webpage or website will provide resources and support for local business recycling efforts. The "Salisbury Green Business" site will advertise businesses that are in compliance with the recycling mandate as well as serve as a resource for businesses, providing information on effective recycling practices. Maintenance requirements of the webpage will be minimal as once built; the website will only need to be updated as new business come to Salisbury or new business recycling resources emerge.

## *POLICY CONSIDERATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS*

This proposal encourages local businesses to recycle at little cost the City. Businesses have the option to participate or bear the financial costs. Although increasing fines are recommended for each month of noncompliance (enforced by the City's Codes and Enforcement Department) the severity of the fines are at the discretion of the City.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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### REFERENCES:

Departments: Business Recycling Howard County, MD. Retrieved December 03, 2017, from <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Public-Works/Bureau-Of-Environmental-Services/Recycling/Business-Recycling>

Blair, R. (2017, September 06). Business Recycling: Anne Arundel County, MD. Retrieved December 03, 2017, from <http://www.aacounty.org/departments/public-works/waste-management/recycling/business/>

### RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:

City and County of Honolulu's Department of Environmental Services: Business Recycling Program: [http://www.opala.org/solid\\_waste/business\\_recycling.htm](http://www.opala.org/solid_waste/business_recycling.htm)

City of Portland's Planning and Sustainability Department: Business Recycling Requirements: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/402792>

City of Minneapolis: Commercial Recycling Initiative: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/solid-waste/recycling/commercial-recycling>