

SCALING UP COMPOSTING IN CHARLOTTE

WHY WAS MECKLENBURG COUNTY CHOSEN?

3rd Annual National Zero Waste Business Conference

“Creating Value through Zero Waste”

May 8, 2014

Presenter

Laurette Hall, Environmental Manager

Mecklenburg County Solid Waste

Charlotte, NC

Mecklenburg

- Population: 722,627 City of Charlotte,
966,160 Mecklenburg County, 1,857,624 MSA
- Seven Municipalities
- 35% Waste Reduction Goal by 2018
- Target Food Waste Trimmings/Scrap to achieve

Commitment to Proper Management of Organics



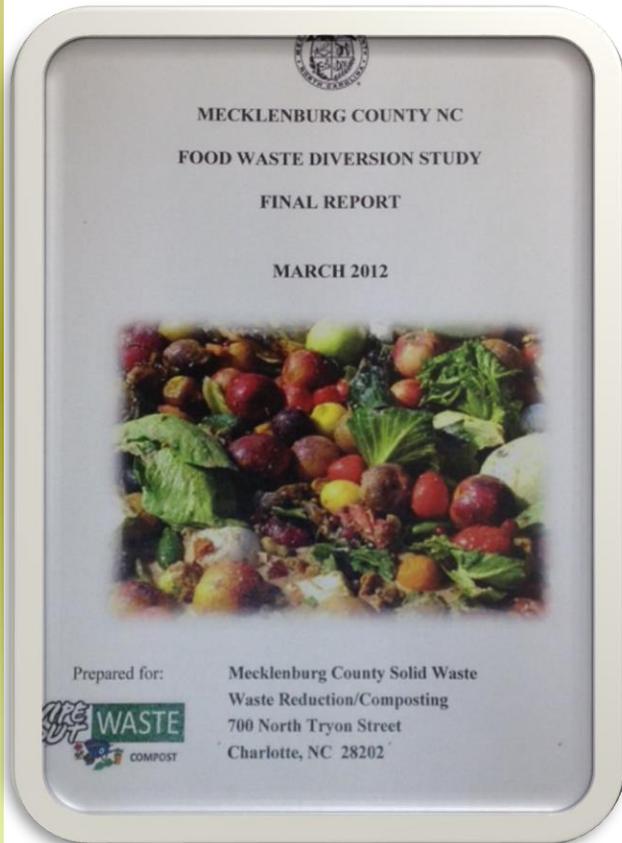
Mecklenburg County owns and operates a permitted Large Type 1 Compost Facility – Compost Central

May receive 125,000 tons annually

Ground material is sold as mulch, boiler fuel or composted

Yard trimmings and other vegetative debris are banned from disposal in Subtitle D Landfills in the North Carolina

Planning



Food Waste Diversion Study

Commercial

- Identify major generators
- Identify and profile existing recovery programs and facilities
- Estimate current diversion practices
- Assess potential food waste collection and transport options
- Identify economic, environmental and policy drivers for recovery
- Identify barriers to successful recovery

Residential

- Estimate per household food waste generation
- Assess potential for existing curbside collection to include food waste
- Identify program implementation gaps and opportunities

Key Findings

Business

- The six largest food waste generating sectors are food manufacturers, food stores, restaurants, hotels/lodging, medical/health services and education.
- Businesses generate approximately 143,000 tons annually
- County could recover 30,000 tons/year utilizing a 60% recovery rate
- 36,000 tons already composted, 30,000 tons of unused capacity exist

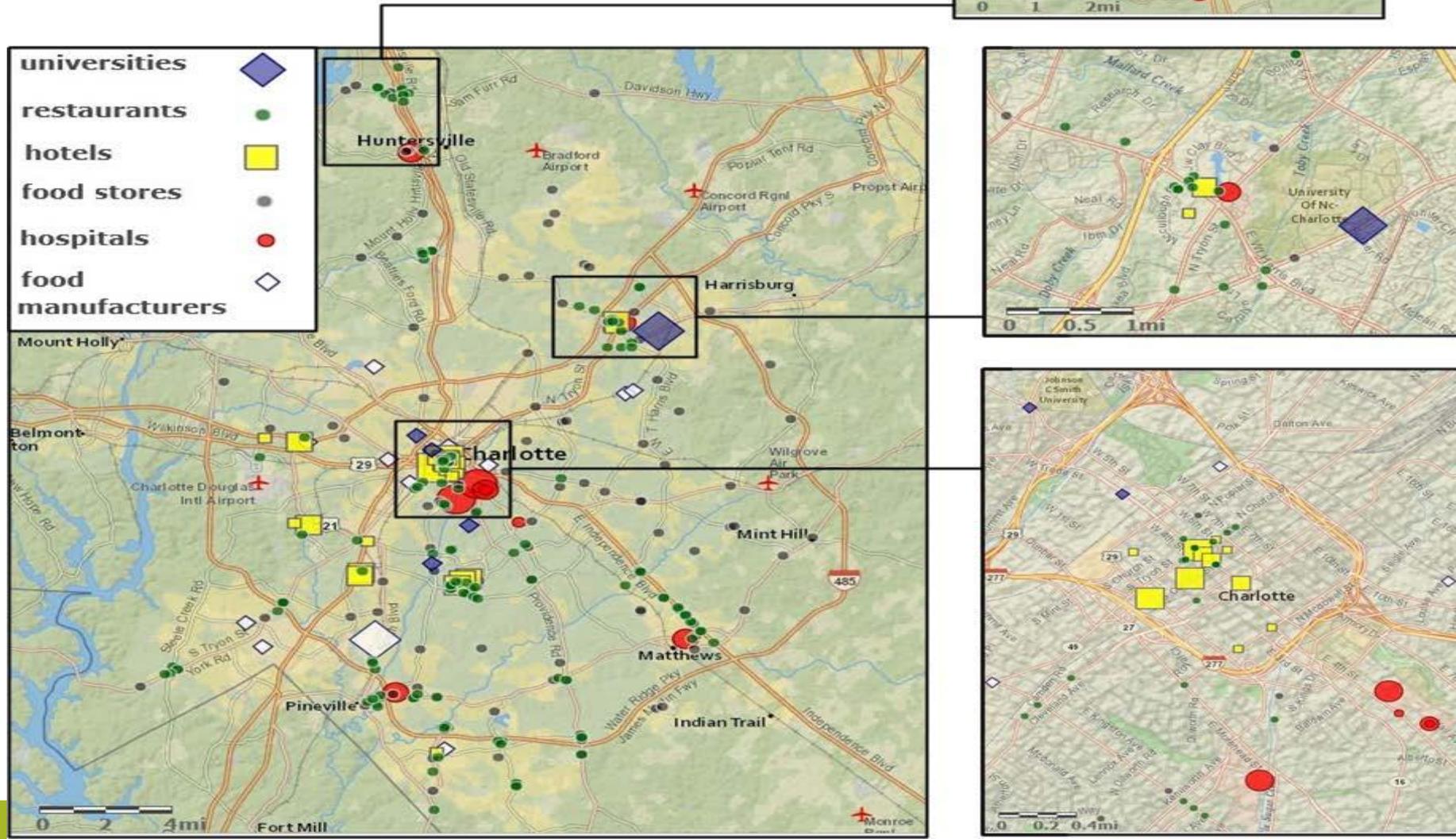
Residential

- Residents generate 39,000 to 60,000 tons annually
- A residential waste characterization study is need to obtain more accurate quantities
- The Town of Huntersville, that offers a 96-gallon roll cart for weekly collection of yard debris, is best suited to conduct a food scraps recovery pilot

Business and Residential Findings

- Existing capacity to perform pilot collection programs
- Not enough capacity for the County to roll-out a countywide program

Major Site Generators



Food Waste Diversion Study

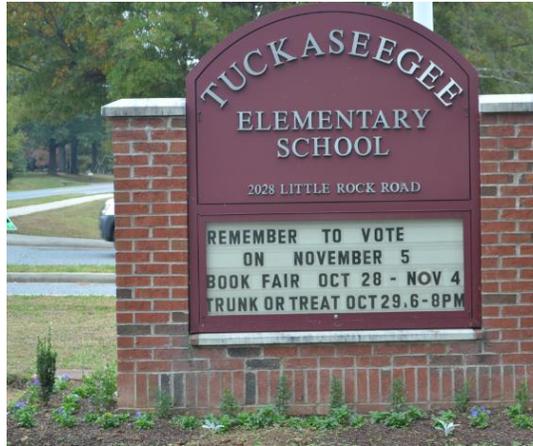
Drivers to Recovery

- Economic
- Environmental
- Policy

Barriers to Recovery

- Generator Awareness
- Collection Infrastructure
- Processing Capacity
- Economics
- Environmental Awareness
- Options for pilot programs

Charlotte Mecklenburg School System and Private Schools



The Process

The 5-month process starts with organic material we gather from the Charlotte area. Everything we collect is tested to ensure we are not putting anything non-compostable into our mix, and to make sure we have our perfect recipe of nitrogen and carbon.



Charlotte Douglas Airport

5000 tons diverted



Foster Caviness (Produce Distributor) Vermicomposting





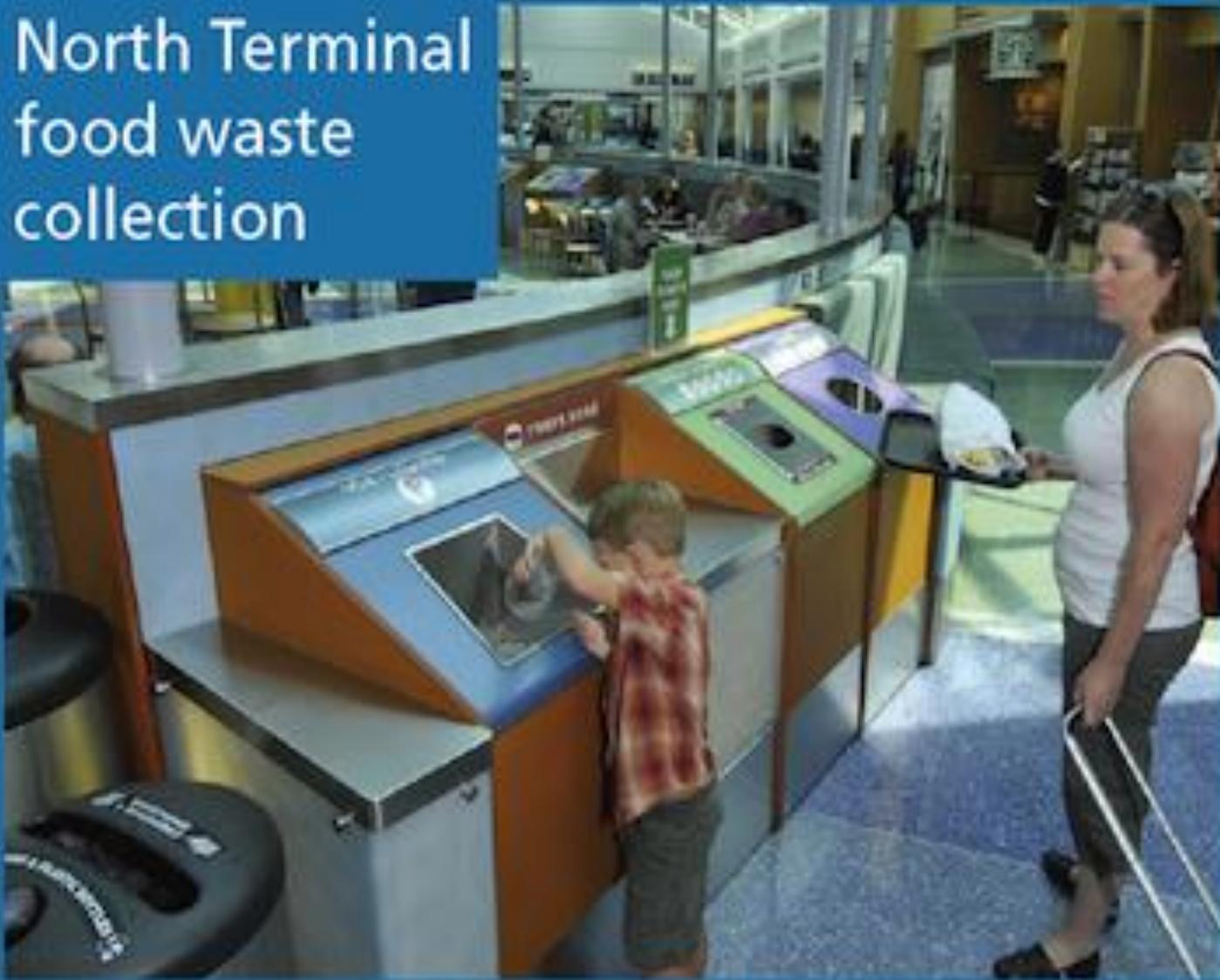
Panther Stadium Food Waste Recovery

- 11.86 tons in 10 Games

Events



North Terminal food waste collection



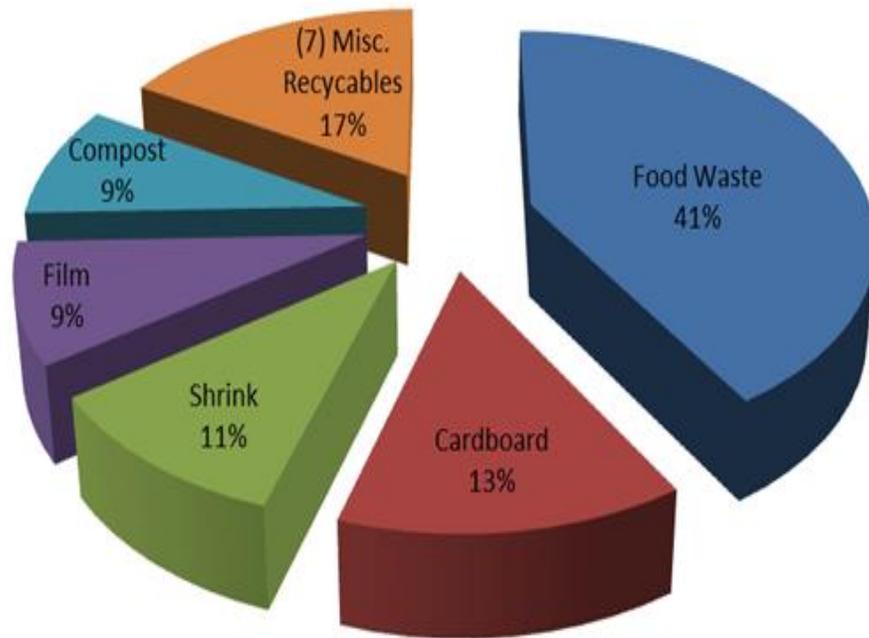
- **Food Courts**
 - SouthPark Mall
 - Carolina Place Mall
 - Northlake Mall

Opportunities Still Exist – Synder's Lance

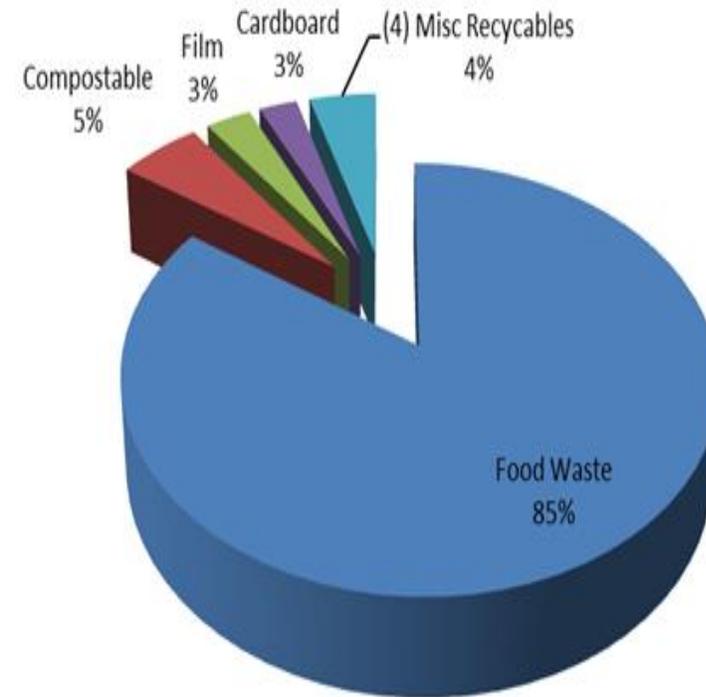


Opportunities Still Exist – Synder's Lance

Bakery Dumpster Dive - Recycling Break Down



Chip Plant Dumpster Dive - Recycling Break Down



**OPPORTUNITIES STILL
EXIST IN MECKLENBURG
COUNTY TO RECOVER
FOOD SCRAPS**