

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
OAKLAND

# OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL



City Attorney

2006 NOV 16 PM 4: 24 RESOLUTION No. \_\_\_\_\_ C.M.S.

## RESOLUTION ADOPTING A STRATEGIC PLAN TO ACHIEVE THE CITY COUNCIL GOAL OF ZERO WASTE BY 2020 FOR THE CITY OF OAKLAND

**WHEREAS**, the City of Oakland has taken steps toward promoting sustainable use of resources and materials, including programs and policy goals to reduce, reuse, and recycle materials that would otherwise be disposed as waste; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 6, 2006 the Oakland City Council approved Oakland Resolution #79774 C.M.S. which adopted a Zero Waste Goal by 2020 and directed Public Works Agency staff to prepare a Zero Waste Strategic Plan for the City of Oakland; and

**WHEREAS**, Public Works Agency staff, in concert with the Mayor's Office, conducted four public meetings to solicit input and receive feedback from the general public and sustainable business leaders, and has prepared a Zero Waste Strategic Plan for the City of Oakland based on participant feedback received via this public process as well as its own research and guidance provided by the Resolution which adopted Oakland's Zero Waste Goal by 2020; and

**WHEREAS**, this Zero Waste Strategic Plan for the City of Oakland includes the following strategies encompassing traditional, "end of the pipeline" recycling programs as well as "upstream" solutions to product waste, and policy and regulatory changes:

1. Expand and Improve Local and Regional Recycling and Composting
2. Develop and Adopt New Rules and Incentives to Reduce Waste Disposal
3. Preserve Land for Sustainable Development and Green Industry Infrastructure
4. Advocate for Manufacturer Responsibility for Product Waste, Ban Problem Materials
5. Educate, Promote and Advocate a Zero Waste Sustainability Agenda; and

**WHEREAS**, the potential to implement these strategies over the next 14 years requires a commitment of will and resources; now, therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the City Council hereby adopts a Strategic Plan to Achieve the City Council Goal of Zero Waste by 2020 to 40,000 tons annual landfill disposal; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, that Oakland will assume a leadership role, partnering with other Zero Waste local, regional and international communities and sustainability advocates to actively pursue and advocate for strategies and incentives to advance Zero Waste principles for materials management, system re-design, highest and best use of discarded products and materials, and a closed-loop sustainable production and consumption society; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the City Council will consider and appropriate resources to implement these strategies in the course of planning and adopting its biennial policy budget, and approve and consider policies that will implement these strategies.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_

**PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:**

AYES - BROOKS, BRUNNER, CHANG, KERNIGHAN, NADEL, QUAN, REID, and PRESIDENT DE LA FUENTE

NOES -

ABSENT -

ABSTENTION -

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

LaTonda Simmons  
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council  
of the City of Oakland, California

CITY OF OAKLAND  
NOV 29 10 4: 24 AM '06

**CITY OF OAKLAND**  
**AGENDA REPORT**

TO: Office of the City Administrator  
ATTN: Deborah Edgerly  
FROM: Public Works Agency  
DATE: November 28, 2006

RE: **Resolution Adopting A Strategic Plan To Achieve The City Council Goal Of Zero Waste By 2020 For The City Of Oakland**

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### SUMMARY

On March 6, 2006, the Oakland City Council adopted Resolution #79774 C.M.S., which set a Zero Waste Goal by 2020 for the City (Goal), and directed staff to develop a Zero Waste Strategic Plan (Plan) to provide guidance in the planning and decision-making to achieve the Goal. This staff report presents the Strategic Plan to achieve Oakland's Zero Waste Goal (Attachment 1) and a Resolution adopting the Plan.

Zero Waste is a sustainability philosophy and design principle that goes beyond recycling, taking a whole system approach to the vast flow of resources and waste through society, and moving to eliminate waste. Oakland's Zero Waste Goal is to cut the City's current waste disposal of 400,000 tons per year to 40,000 tons per year – a 90% reduction. This is an ambitious goal for Oakland, and no single strategy will achieve Zero Waste. Zero Waste is as much a journey toward sustainability, as it is a discrete destination. The strategies in the Plan prioritize “upstream” solutions to stop waste before it is created, emphasize improving traditional “end of the pipeline” recycling programs, and identify the critical need for public education and economic solutions.

The City of Oakland has taken steps toward promoting sustainable use of resources and materials, including programs and policy goals to reduce, reuse, and recycle materials that would otherwise be disposed as waste. Adoption of the Plan is consistent with, and an explicit validation of, the Council goal to Develop a Sustainable City. In preparing this Plan staff conducted a series of public meetings with residents, and met with Oakland sustainable business leaders to solicit discussion and comment on the proposed strategies to be included in the Plan. This report recommends that the City Council approve the Zero Waste Strategic Plan, and commit to implementing its strategies by adopting policies and allocating resources to pursue them.

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Public Works Committee  
November 28, 2006

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Pursuing specific strategies to achieve Oakland's Zero Waste Goal will lead to proposed programs and projects requiring funding as part of the budget development cycle for FY 2007-09 and in subsequent biennial budget cycles. Current waste reduction programs are funded within the Recycling Program Fund (Fund 1710), from which fee revenues are derived through garbage rates.

For the FY 2007-09 budget cycle, the following will likely be proposed:

- An economic and municipal finance study (by professional services contract) to identify and evaluate alternatives for restructuring Oakland's municipal solid waste system to provide clear and consistent incentives to reduce waste for both generators and service providers. Estimated cost: \$200,000, one time.
- Additional staffing and resources to focus on economic development, green business, and green market development; and implementation of City policies and operations toward Zero Waste and sustainability. Estimated cost up to \$300,000 annually.

Funding through FY 2007-09 is available in the Recycling Program Fund (Fund 1710), and up to \$150,000 per year in the Non-Residential Recycling Fund (Fund 2175, Project H63640), so the initiative will be funded from fees derived through garbage rates and not affect the City's General Purpose Fund.

## **BACKGROUND**

On March 6, 2006, the Oakland City Council adopted Resolution #79774 C.M.S., which set a Zero Waste Goal by 2020 for the City (Goal), and directed staff to develop a Zero Waste Strategic Plan (Plan) to provide guidance in the planning and decision-making process to achieve the Goal. Public Works Agency staff, in concert with the Mayor's Office, conducted four meetings to solicit discussion and comment from the general public and sustainable business leaders, and have incorporated input and feedback received via this public participation process into development of the Plan. At the first Public Meeting on June 28, 2006, participants were introduced to Zero Waste concepts and Oakland's sustainability goals. At the second Public Meeting on July 19, 2006, participants reviewed possible Zero Waste options and strategies for Oakland, and provided input on which to pursue. At the third Public Meeting on September 20, 2006, participants reviewed and commented on the proposed strategies to be included in the Plan. Additionally, on June 29, 2006, staff convened a meeting of Oakland sustainable business leaders to introduce Oakland's Zero Waste Goal to businesses who are already practicing intensive waste reduction and other sustainable business practices, and to receive their input on how best to engage, inspire, support, and incentivize Oakland business toward widespread alignment with and support of Oakland's Zero Waste Goal.

The March 2006 Council Resolution adopting the Zero Waste Goal stated, "Oakland will assume a leadership role, partnering with other Zero Waste local, regional and international communities and sustainability advocates to actively pursue and advocate for strategies and incentives to advance Zero Waste principles for materials management, system re-design, highest and best use of discarded products and materials, and a closed-loop sustainable production and consumption society." Since March 2006, the Mayor's Office has taken a leadership role in establishing the California Product Stewardship Council, whose stated mission is, "To shift California's product waste management system from one focused on government funded and ratepayer financed waste diversion to one that relies on producer responsibility in order to reduce public costs and drive improvements in product design."

A more detailed background of the legislative and policy history and framework for sustainability over the past 15 years is included in the Plan.

## KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

### Why is Zero Waste Important?

As detailed in the March 2006 staff report for the Resolution establishing Oakland's Zero Waste Goal, pursuing Zero Waste is important for Oakland because it is:

- Needed for Oakland to achieve sustainability and 75% waste reduction goals
- Needed to reverse growing local/regional health and financial liabilities of waste disposal
- A key element of local economic and workforce development
- Needed in a worldwide effort to reverse damage to the planet's natural systems

### What is Zero Waste?

Zero Waste derives from applying the principle of sustainability to redefine the concept of "waste" in our society. The presumption that waste is a natural by-product of our culture and economic system that is handled by end-of-the-pipeline waste management activities, programs, or technologies, is replaced with the presumption that:

- Products are designed and used so that they can be and are repaired, reused, or recycled
- Any output during the production, transportation, use, and disposition of these products that is destined for land, sea or air is not a threat to planetary, animal, or plant health

### Environmental Hierarchy to Guide Oakland's Zero Waste Strategies, Policies, and Actions

As detailed in the Plan, Oakland's pursuit of its Zero Waste Goal will be guided by an environmental hierarchy for 'highest and best use' of materials and pollution prevention in all phases of production, use, and disposition of products and materials. This hierarchy is derived from the core Zero Waste principle of preventing, rather than managing, waste and pollution. It recommits to the priority ordering of the waste reduction hierarchy: first reduce consumption; next, reuse products by maintaining their form and function; and finally, recycle anything that is no longer usable and landfill any residual. The hierarchy formalizes, organizes, and clearly presents how Zero Waste is a fundamentally different approach to waste reduction than the

recycling programs of the past 15 years: Zero Waste tackles the root causes of wasting and broadens responsibility for the solutions to include government, producers, and consumers.

#### Implementation of Strategies, and Progress Status Updates

Pursuing specific strategies will require policy and advocacy initiatives, and lead to proposed programs and projects requiring funding as part of the budget development cycle for FY 2007-09 and in subsequent biennial budget cycles. It is critically important for Oakland's government, businesses, and citizens to develop and sustain leadership in legislative policy and advocacy toward being a Sustainable City, including participation in state, national, and international dialogues and negotiations.

Staff will provide status updates to the Mayor and City Council through the biennial budget process on progress toward the Zero Waste Goal, including implementation of strategies and waste disposal reduction progress toward the goal of landfilling only 40,000 tons per year by 2020.

### **ZERO WASTE STRATEGIES FOR OAKLAND**

The following five strategies comprise traditional recycling programs as well as system redesign solutions for product waste, and policy and regulatory changes. They provide the framework for Oakland's Strategic Plan to achieve Zero Waste by 2020.

#### **1. Expand and Improve Local and Regional Recycling and Composting**

Oakland residents recycle more each year, local private-sector recyclers with access to Pacific Rim markets via the Port of Oakland help businesses reduce waste, and construction and demolition debris recycling continues to increase. Yet large amounts of recyclable and compostable materials are landfilled each day. Maximizing waste reduction from programs that are already capitalized and in place is both efficient and cost-effective. Increasing recycling and composting will require greater engagement with the business community and general public; additional local and regional recovery facilities and services; and new initiatives and innovations.

For more details on Strategy #1, see Strategic Plan (Attachment 1) page 11. Recommended next steps to implement this strategy include:

- Expand residential food scraps recycling promotion to increase participation
- Promote development of regional composting and recycling processing capacity
- Implement and sustain a comprehensive marketing and technical assistance program targeting non-residential waste reduction

## **2. Develop and Adopt New Rules and Incentives to Reduce Waste Disposal**

Oakland's Municipal Code and garbage franchise have provided a good framework for achieving 50% waste diversion. However, meeting the City's 75% waste diversion and Zero Waste goals will require ending the current incentive for landfilling. Other cities in and beyond the Bay Area have developed systems that realign economic incentives to reward all parties for reducing waste, and end the incentive to landfill. Development and adoption of a new waste management system design in preparation for Oakland's next collection and disposal contract is key to the goal of reducing waste. Other new rules and incentives detailed in this Plan are needed to encourage and reward reuse, repair, and reduced consumption.

For more details on Strategy #2, see Strategic Plan (Attachment 1) page 13. Recommended next steps to implement this strategy include:

- Restructure Oakland's municipal code, garbage franchise agreement, and residential recycling service contracts to provide clear and consistent incentives to reduce waste for both generators and service providers so that those who waste pay the most
- Implement a measured, phased approach to banning from disposal readily recyclable materials such as corrugated cardboard

## **3. Preserve Land for Sustainable Development and Green Industry Infrastructure**

Increased recovery of a broader variety of materials will require more businesses and more services, producing more green collar jobs for Oakland residents. Industrial land close to the Port and to transportation and other support services is urgently needed for concrete crushing, recycled asphalt production, and other activities that reuse and recycle building materials. Reuse and deconstruction businesses create more jobs than recycling and disposal, and also need space to grow. Manufacturing new products from local recycled materials could drive further green industry and workforce development, and will require appropriate industrial land. Land for Zero Waste infrastructure should be strategically allocated, just as it is for vital public infrastructure such as wastewater treatment facilities and power generation.

For more details on Strategy #3, see Strategic Plan (Attachment 1) page 14. Recommended next steps to implement this strategy include:

- Develop policy goals and priority commitments regarding land use, workforce and business development support, and strategic partnerships to retain and expand reuse, recycling, and green manufacturing businesses and facilities both locally and regionally
- Offer tangible economic incentives and technical assistance for green, sustainable, and Zero Waste businesses
- Partner with regional agencies to help site new regional processing facilities that are needed, but cannot be sited within Oakland

**4. Advocate for Manufacturer Responsibility for Product Waste, Ban Problem Materials**

Every year brings an increase in complex, toxic and non-recyclable products and packaging. This increase is outpacing local government's ability to safely and cost-effectively handle the associated wastes, as well as increasing Oakland's future environmental liability. Unless this cycle is corrected, not even a high-performing recycling region like ours can recycle our way to Zero Waste. Oakland needs to join regional, statewide, national, and international efforts to end the "waste subsidy" for manufacturers that is currently borne by local governments and ratepayers, and to insist that the costs and risks to manage end-of-life products and materials be the responsibility of manufacturers. Such measures can provide incentives for manufacturers to "design the waste out" so that products can be readily reused, repaired, reconditioned, or recycled. Local retailers can assist in collecting and returning selected products to manufacturers. Use or sale of problematic products can also be banned, as Oakland has recently done for expanded polystyrene food packaging and the European Union and China are doing for hazardous materials in electronic products.

For more details on Strategy #4, see Strategic Plan (Attachment 1) page 16. Recommended next steps to implement this strategy include:

- Assume leadership in regional, statewide, national, and international waste reduction and sustainability initiatives to shift product waste management toward producer responsibility in order to reduce public costs and risks, drive improvements in product design, and foster increased reuse and repair
- Develop and actively pursue a Zero Waste and sustainability legislative and regulatory policy agenda at the state, national, and international level

**5. Educate, Promote and Advocate a Zero Waste Sustainability Agenda**

Efforts have been made in Oakland to educate, inform, and instruct the general public and specific targeted audiences on how and why to reduce, reuse, and recycle. Yet many do not participate, even where convenient recycling systems are in place. Meanwhile, much of the language of Zero Waste and sustainability has been focused on a policy-making audience and not the general public. There is a need for messaging and communications that speak clearly and concisely about Zero Waste and sustainability in a way that makes sense in people's daily lives, in order to move society from awareness into acceptance and action. Educating and engaging diverse audiences will require innovative developments in the message and how it is communicated, along with effective price signals and other financial incentives. It will be necessary to develop partnerships within and beyond Oakland to pursue and advocate for needed policy and behavioral changes, incentives and new rules, and to listen to questions, concerns, and ideas about the new approach.

For more details on Strategy #5, see Strategic Plan (Attachment 1) page 18. Recommended next steps to implement this strategy include:

- Overhaul public education and messaging to effectively communicate ‘reduce, reuse, recycle’ and sustainability in ways that engage, motivate and inspire
- Develop media partnerships and other strategies to highlight and celebrate achievements, leadership, and successes of individuals and organizations that are contributing positively to a sustainable City and world
- Engage with advocacy groups that are working on legislative and social change to further Zero Waste goals
- Adopt Zero Waste policies and practices in the City’s own operations, facilities, capital improvement and maintenance practices

## **SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

Economic: Zero Waste strategies help Oakland businesses reduce waste, thereby increasing operating efficiency and reducing costs. Expanding and actively supporting use of discarded materials drives local economic and workforce development with ‘green collar’ jobs and value added production. It also supports the export of recyclable materials - one of the dominant mechanisms for returning empty export containers to Pacific Rim countries, which is an important consideration for the expected doubling of import activity at the Port of Oakland by 2020.

Environmental: Zero Waste strategies promote sustainability, conserve natural resources, reduce air and water pollution, and protect habitat.

Social Equity: Zero Waste strategies can provide new living wage jobs for the community, as well as preserve and enhance natural systems that provide basic ecological services such as clean water, clean air, and safe food.

## **DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS**

This project will not have any direct impact on disability and senior citizen access.

## RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE

Staff recommends that City Council approve the Resolution Adopting a Strategic Plan to Achieve the City Council Goal of Zero Waste by 2020 for the City of Oakland, as an explicit validation of Oakland's commitment to become a Sustainable City. By pursuing Zero Waste strategies Oakland can achieve its sustainability and 75% waste reduction goals, reverse growing local/regional health and financial liabilities from waste disposal, support sustainable local economic and workforce development, and contribute to a worldwide effort to reverse damage to the planet's natural systems.

## ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the Resolution Adopting a Strategic Plan to Achieve the City Council Goal of Zero Waste by 2020 for the City of Oakland.

Respectfully submitted,



Raul Godinez II, P.E.  
Director, Public Works Agency

Reviewed by:  
Brooke A. Levin  
Assistant Director, Public Works Agency  
Department of Facilities & Environment

Prepared by:  
Jonelyn Weed, Manager  
Environmental Services Division

Mark Gagliardi  
Senior Recycling Specialist  
Zero Waste Team Leader

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE  
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

  
Office of the City Administrator

Item #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Public Works Committee  
November 28, 2006