



Office of the Mayor

Tom Bates
Mayor

ACTION CALENDAR
March 22, 2005

Date: March 14, 2005
To: Members of the City Council
From: Mayor Tom Bates
Council Member Kriss Worthington
Subject: Zero Waste Goal

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council adopt a resolution 1.) reaffirming the City's commitment to reaching the Alameda County goal of 75% reduction in waste going to landfills by 2010; 2.) setting a goal of reaching "zero waste" by 2020; 3) referring this issue to the Solid Waste Commission for review as they finalize the new Solid Waste Plan and look to the future; and 4) requesting the Solid Waste Commission examine changing its name to the Zero Waste Commission, Waste Recovery Commission, or another more appropriate name.

BACKGROUND:

Berkeley has long been a leader and an innovator in efforts to reduce waste going to landfills. We were one of the first cities in the nation to adopt curbside recycling and were leaders in the effort to adopt and meet a goal to reduce waste going to landfills by 50%.

Since that time, governments and organizations have been working to push even harder to reduce waste. Alameda County has adopted a goal for reducing waste going to landfills by 75%. In 2001, the California Integrated Waste Management Board set a zero waste goal in its strategic plan for the state. In addition, many cities have adopted goals for achieving zero waste – including San Francisco, Santa Cruz, Seattle, Toronto, and others. Businesses have also adopted zero waste goals – including Hewlett Packard, Xerox, Fetzer Winery, and others.

The goal of zero waste – which really means "as close as practicable" to zero waste – was also listed in the Sustainable Business Action Plan recently passed by the City Council,

As part of the on-going effort to reduce waste, the City of Berkeley and the Solid Waste Commission are currently working with a consultant on a new solid waste plan to reach the 75% reduction goal.



This item would reaffirm the City's goal of meeting the 75% waste reduction goal and set a goal of achieving "zero waste" for the year 2020. This item does not propose major changes to the current solid waste plan, which is near completion. Instead, this item directs the Commission to review the new solid waste plan in the context of the Council's desire to move towards zero waste. The Solid Waste Commission should work to examine all the tools at the City's disposal to reach the zero waste goal and report back to Council with some ideas on how to move forward.

FISCAL IMPACTS: None at this time.

CONTACT PERSON: Mayor Tom Bates, 981-7100
Council Member Kriss Worthington, 981-7110

ATTACHMENT: Draft Resolution.

ZERO WASTE GOAL

WHEREAS, in 1976, only six years after the first Earth Day, Berkeley's City Council established a goal of recycling 50% of its then-landfilled discard stream; and

WHEREAS, Berkeley's citizens ratified the city's 50% recycling goal in 1984 by passing Measure G in that year's citywide election; and

WHEREAS, the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939) required cities and counties to reduce, reuse, recycle, and compost all discarded materials to the maximum extent feasible before any landfilling or other destructive disposal method is used; and

WHEREAS, AB939 mandated that all California jurisdictions achieve a 50% diversion rate by the year 2000, or incur financial penalties, or submit a plan for approval to achieve that rate by 2005, but did not set any further goal to reduce waste once the 50% rate was achieved; and

WHEREAS, Berkeley surpassed the state's 50% goal; and

WHEREAS, in 1990, Alameda County's voters passed ballot Measure D, which set a goal for all its communities, including Berkeley, to reduce land filling by 75% by 2010; and

WHEREAS, City staff and the Berkeley Solid Waste Commission are currently working to develop a new city solid waste plan to help reach the 75% waste reduction goal which will be an important step in reaching a zero waste goal; and

WHEREAS, in 2001 the California Integrated Waste Management Board set a goal of zero waste in its strategic plan for the state, calling for expanded public and private efforts "to reduce, reuse, or recycle all [discarded] materials back into nature or the marketplace in a manner that protects human health and the environment and with all materials being managed to the highest and best use to create a sustainable California;" and

WHEREAS, cities, councils, counties, and states worldwide have adopted a goal of achieving zero waste, including the counties of San Francisco, Santa Cruz, and Del Norte in California; the cities of Seattle in Washington; Toronto in Canada, and Canberra in Australia; and the state of New South Wales in Australia; and 45% of New Zealand's local government councils; and

WHEREAS, the dates for achieving these zero waste goals range from 2010 to 2020, and

WHEREAS, many American businesses have reduced their waste by 80% or more and adopted zero waste goals, including Amdahl Corporation, Collins & Aikman, Fetzer Winery, Herman Miller, Inc., Hewlett Packard, Mad River Brewing, Intefacc, Inc., Pillsbury, Xerox, and the San Diego Wild Animal Park; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has undertaken a public/private initiative to “green” Berkeley by developing sustainable businesses, developing environmentally preferable purchasing policies, collaborating with university entities on such purchasing, creating an Energy and Sustainable Development Office, developing goals to increase energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gases, and by supporting the marketing of Berkeley as an environmental leader among cities; and

WHEREAS, Governments set zero waste goals to conserve valuable material resources, reduce pollution, conserve land, expand commercial and industrial activity, and improve community health; and

WHEREAS, a complex, profitable, and growing collection of materials recovery enterprises has developed within Berkeley, including a mix of municipal, nonprofit, and for-profit enterprises that recover and process diverse feedstocks ranging from source-separated metals, glass, paper, and agricultural materials to individual reusable objects suitable for retail redistribution, all activities that generate substantial revenues and represent significant savings to the City’s landfill bill through tipping fees and sales taxes, which support local government; and

WHEREAS, this materials recovery business infrastructure is already a major employer in Berkeley providing over 275 good green-collar jobs in at least 65 local companies, mainly in West Berkeley; and

WHEREAS, Zero Waste science is a systematic methodology for moving with maximum speed in logical increments toward the goal of zero waste; and

WHEREAS, Berkeley’s citizens and recycling entrepreneurs pioneered the concept of the zero waste transfer station, which is the fundamental technology and infrastructure that Berkeley must develop further so it can replace waste-based infrastructure, achieving zero waste and using resource recovery as the preferred disposal method for all twelve major discard flows; and

WHEREAS, the zero waste industrial complex is organized into modules or trading areas for the following discard supply categories, including: reuse, recycling, composting, and regulated items; and

WHEREAS, the zero waste industrial complex may be decentralized and embedded in the community, especially in West Berkeley, forming an ecology of commerce encompassing repair, remanufacturing, upgrading, reprocessing, re-crafting, and generating new products, including green building materials, or arts and crafts from recovered materials.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Berkeley reaffirms its commitment to meet the Alameda County Measure D goal of reducing the materials Berkeley sends to land fill by 75% by the year 2010.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City also sets a Zero Waste Goal of eliminating Berkeley’s materials sent to landfills by the year 2020.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council acknowledges and appreciates the work of the Solid Waste Commission and City staff who are working diligently to create a new solid waste plan as a roadmap to reaching the 75% waste reduction goal.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council directs the Solid Waste Commission to review the new solid waste plan in the context of the Council's desire to move towards zero waste and examine report back to Council with some ideas on how to move forward.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Solid Waste Commission examine changing its name to something more reflective of the City's waste reduction goals and report back to the Council with an potential suggestions.

