



Zero Waste Commission

CONSENT CALENDAR

October 24, 2006

To: Honorable Mayor and  
Members of the City Council

From: Zero Waste Commission

Submitted by: Steen Jensen, Commission Chair, Zero Waste Commission

Subject: Regional Composting Facility

RECOMMENDATION

That Council support and participate in a proactive countywide process to identify appropriate in-county locations for future composting facilities.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

None

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

At their meeting of August 28, 2006, the Zero Waste Commission passed the following resolution to Council:

The Zero Waste Commission regrets the collapse of efforts toward the creation of the Regional Composting Facility in the Sunol vicinity, but reaffirms its support for such facilities in Alameda County, noting that, as an alternative to landfills, there will be an increasing need for such operations, and that their creation should be encouraged. (M/S Kalil/Blachman, 6/0/0, Dodson absent)

We ask the City Council to support and participate in a proactive countywide process, working with fellow jurisdictions and county authorities to identify appropriate in-county locations for future composting facilities. (M/S Schultze-Allen/ Jensen, 5/0/1, Dodsworth absent. Tam abstains due to wanting to specify that the facilities be publicly owned with a collective capacity of 3000 tons per day of food and landscape discards.)

The Alameda County Waste Management Authority Board, at their September 27, 2006 meeting, will discuss pursuing other sites for in-county composting facilities, and will establish a process to accomplish this task. The Commission is not requesting a resolution at this time because no specific process or site has been selected.

BACKGROUND

At their meeting of April 24, 2006, the Zero Waste Commission (Commission) passed a resolution in support of a proposed regional composting facility at Sunol that was proposed by the Alameda County Waste Management Authority. This resolution did not go forward to Council because the situation was changing rapidly, and the Alameda County Board of Supervisors rejected the permit. However, the Commission wants to be on record as supporting establishment of regional composting facilities.

The Alameda County Waste Management Authority determined that a regional composting facility is necessary to ensure that member cities will have a place to take their organic discards, and that a high quality compost would be made. Diversion of plant debris, food waste and related papers is necessary to achieve 75% and zero waste diversion goals. In addition, organic material in landfill decomposes anaerobically and creates methane, a serious greenhouse gas. Private composting facilities are nearing capacity, with many more tons remaining to divert.

The City of Berkeley contracts with Grover Landscaping, in Tracy to transport and compost the City's materials. This contract expires June 30, 2009.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Zero Waste Commission requested this recommendation be transmitted to Council.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None

CITY MANAGER

The City Manager concurs with the content and recommendations of the Commission's Report.

CONTACT PERSON

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