



Zero Waste Commission

INFORMATION CALENDAR
June 27, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Zero Waste Commission
 Submitted by: Steve Sherman, Chair, Zero Waste Commission
 Subject: Zero Waste Commission Fiscal Year 2023-24 Work Plan

INTRODUCTION

The Zero Waste Commission (ZWC) is responsible for making recommendations on city-wide zero waste policies and goals, including commercial and residential refuse, recycling, and compost services, hard to recycle materials programs, budgets, rates, and other decisions relating to reducing solid waste in the City of Berkeley. The ZWC adopted the FY 2023-24 Work Plan on May 23, 2023.

M/S/C: Ayes: 4 ; Abstain: 0 ; Absent: (2)

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Over the last few years, the City of Berkeley, along with the rest of the world, has made its best efforts to survive during Covid-19. Operations and staff have suffered from low-staffing/high vacancies following the initial lock-down period and subsequent supply-chain issues and labor shortage. The City of Berkeley is enacting important changes and improvements to its Zero Waste services and long-term plans, including:

- Continuing the process to design and build the replacement of the Solid Waste & Recycling Transfer Station (SW&RTS), which is currently nearing submission for the required CEQA process,
- Adapting to changes in the recycling export markets and determining which materials should be accepted in any of our streams, and assessing what else can be diverted from landfill through near approaches and partnership programs,
- Berkeley's compliance with SB1383 and its Food Recovery Mandates,
- Implementing the Single Use Foodware and Litter Reduction Ordinance and Pre-check Bag Reduction Ordinance
- Participating in the Zero Waste Strategic Plan Development process, and
- Reviewing and recommending to Council which State and Regional Bills to support in order more gainfully achieve our zero waste goals.

ZWC supports the development of the Zero Waste Strategic Plan, and SW&RTS replacement, as well as seeks to evaluate and/or recommend new or proposed local

legislation or programs that could target some remaining components of avoidable waste in our community.

These projects advance the City’s Strategic Plan goals to:

1. Provide state-of-the-art, well-maintained infrastructure, services, and facilities
2. Be a global leader in addressing climate change, advancing environmental and social justice, and protecting the environment.

The following goals have been identified for the upcoming year:

Goal	Resources	Program activities	Outputs	Outcomes
Transfer Station Rebuild	City Staff, Consultants (when hired)	Stay abreast of CEQA progress status; Consultant presentation for next phase TBD	Recommendations to Council as appropriate when process proceeds to next phase.	State-of-the-Art facility that replaces outdated, aged structure; increase public interaction.
Zero Waste Strategic Plan	Abbe & Associates, City Staff	Presentations for updates ZW plan throughout process (total 3). Disseminate information to increase public input, including individual commissioners.	Recommendations to Council as needed.	To support the development of a comprehensive and detailed plan suited to achieve City’s ZW goals.
Food Recovery and Organics Diversion SB1383	City Staff, Community Partners	Continue updates from staff, explore community compost opportunities, invite Berkeley Food Network to present.	Recommendations to Council as needed.	To help achieve compliance with SB1383 requirements and promote local resiliency.
Zero Waste Ordinances (SU Foodware & Litter Reduction, Pre-Check-out Bags Reduction, future & proposed, etc.)	City Staff, Ecology Center, UC Berkeley/Cal Zero Waste, Grocery Association/BIDs	Review progress of Foodware Reduction Ordinance; offer staff support for successful implementation of Pre-checkout Bag Reduction Ordinance. Explore sustainable alternatives for banned materials/products.	Recommendations to Council as needed. Support Reusables Foodware Pilot program with recommendations. Engender community partnerships for innovative reuse programs.	To increase Council’s awareness of status an ordinance’s Implementation progress and/or viability of implementation plan.
Review & Assessment of Accepted Materials: Inclusion or Exclusion in City Collection Services	City Staff, Urban Ore, CCC, Ecology Center, CAW, NCRA, CPSC, Status of Materials Markets, StopWaste, Local Partners	Presentations at ZWC by community partners, specialists. Review existing ordinances and recommend changes; support or suggest	Commission feedback to City Partners and Council	To help Council have an accurate understanding of our collection services and if they are achieving our ZW and environmental/social justice goals.

Goal	Resources	Program activities	Outputs	Outcomes
		new or proposed ordinances.		
Review of State & Regional Proposed Legislation/Bills that the City of Berkeley Should Support	City Staff, Californians Against Waste, CPSC, NCRA	Presentations by outside organizations that align with City's ZW goals. Research/vet proposed laws.	Recommendations for Council Support	To establish strong State and Regional Laws that support our ZW goals and potentially reduce staff time to implement.

BACKGROUND

- Transfer Station Replacement: Community meetings were held in 2019 for design of replacement input. First Carbon Solutions has been retained to conduct the CEQA certification process for the replacement project.
- Zero Waste Strategic Plan: Currently in progress.
- Food Recovery & Organics Diversion SB 1383 requires reduction of organic waste disposal 50% by 2020 and 75% by 2025. Starting in 2022, all CA jurisdictions will need to provide organic waste collection services to all residents and businesses. Berkeley will be required to use products made from this recycled organic material, such as renewable energy, compost, and mulch. Food service businesses must donate edible food to food recovery organizations. This will help feed the almost 1 in 4 Californians without enough to eat. California has a 2025 goal to rescue 20% of edible food currently thrown away, and redirect it.
- Single-Use Foodware & Litter Reduction Ordinance: All of the phases of the ordinance have been enacted. Phase 2, requiring disposable foodware to be compostable and includes a 25 cent charge for disposable cups, took effect on 1/1/2020. Phase 3, mandating reusables for dine-in, took effect on 7/1/2020. Enforcement of all phases was relaxed due to the pandemic; staff is currently aggressively working to affirm and monitor compliance.
- Plastics - Feasibility of Recyclability: Due to declining infrastructure/operations and unreliable markets for many grades and compositions of plastics, the City's municipal collection program will require reassessment of which plastics should be acceptable in its stream, and how to locate and support new regional facilities for processing materials that currently have markets out of the region, State or country.
- Proposed State and Regional Legislation that Council Can Support: Berkeley can officially show support for proposed legislation that helps to further the City's current zero waste goals.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Potential to reduce quantity of material sent to landfill and reduce consumption of new materials.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Future Action Items that ZWC may send to City Council include:

- Recommendation to support a Regional Deconstruction Ordinance
- Recommendation to adopt the new Zero Waste Strategic Plan
- Resolution to support a Citywide Reusable Food Container program
- Resolution to support an expanded coordinated effort with UCB during Cal moveout months

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Reusable Food Container pilot program and other reuse programs require funding.

CONTACT PERSON

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