

# CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION

No. 20090115-050

**WHEREAS**, consistent with its goal to make Austin the most livable city in the country, the Austin City Council adopted Resolution No. 20050519-44 in May 2005 supporting the United Nations Environmental Accord and committed the City to achieving a 20 percent reduction in per capita solid waste disposal to landfills and incinerators by 2012, and Zero Waste to landfills and incinerators by 2040; and

**WHEREAS**, Zero Waste is an ambitious goal to divert 90% of waste from landfills and incinerators by 2040 using a “whole system” approach to evaluate and manage the flow of resources and waste created by our communities; and

**WHEREAS**, Austin is part of a regional waste management system within the Capital Area Planning Council of Governments (CAPCOG) region; and

**WHEREAS**, as the Capital Area continually grows, outpacing other Texas communities, the region will be faced with a need to expand existing landfills, open new landfills, or divert a drastic amount of waste from current landfills to properly ensure the health and safety of the region. Austin’s Zero Waste Plan seeks to extend the life of existing landfills while acknowledging that a certain amount of residual waste is inevitable; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council adopts the Zero Waste Strategic Plan, attached hereto as Exhibit A and hereafter referenced as the “Plan,” as a long term planning vehicle and further directs the City Manager to incorporate the Plan into the development of a Solid Waste Services Master Plan. City Council recognizes that the policy and program recommendations in Section C of the Plan may necessitate changes to rules, ordinances, and/or policies and will require on-going collaboration with key stakeholders, public private partnerships, and close coordination with public and privately owned regional waste disposal facilities and recycling and compost operations; and

**WHEREAS**, Austin recognizes the need to encourage and assist in the development of one or more public and/or public/private material recovery facilities which can respond to the solid waste and recyclables markets through composting recycling, landfilling and other appropriate means of solid waste management; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2007, the City hired Gary Liss and Associates to work with community members and develop a Zero Waste Strategic Plan; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

The City Council adopts the Zero Waste Strategic Plan, attached hereto as Exhibit A and hereafter referenced as the “Plan,” as the long term planning vehicle. City Council recognizes that the policy and program recommendations in Section C of the Plan may necessitate changes to rules, ordinances, and/or policies, and will require on-going collaboration with key stakeholders, public private partnerships, and close coordination with public and privately owned regional waste disposal facilities.

City Council approval is required for any changes to existing policies in effect as of January 14, 2009 with regard to control over pricing, collection and disposition of commercial solid waste and commercial recyclable materials, or to impose surcharges to, or limit the rights of, area landfill operators to receive waste.

City Council recognizes that the successful implementation of the Plan and achievement of Zero Waste will require the adoption of policies and procedures designed to encourage all stakeholders to work cooperatively toward this ambitious goal.

The City Manager is directed to continue to inform and involve the City Council, the Solid Waste Advisory Commission, and other stakeholders as work progresses on specific programs, and to seek City Council approval on changes to policy and ordinances.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Council directs the City Manager to develop an interim Zero Waste infrastructure transition plan to manage and implement the following four Zero Waste policy priorities pending completion of the Solid Waste Master Plan:

1. Lead by example. Evaluate departmental waste streams for baseline data and future monitoring within one year of adoption of the Plan. Within three years of adoption of the Plan, frame, develop and implement, where appropriate and feasible, waste diversion programs with input from City Departments.
2. Consider and implement proactive education and enforcement methods for the Commercial and Multi-family Recycling regulations. Develop and present to City Council City Code amendments as necessary to require recycling at all commercial enterprises and multi-family residences and include them in the stakeholder process. The proposed City Code amendments should become effective in phases over a three year period.
3. Reach out to institutions, industrial facilities, and manufacturers, to encourage them to adopt and implement zero waste goals.
4. Promote composting to remove organic material and compostables from landfills, which is necessary to reduce methane and carbon emissions. First, identify the best strategies to promote on-site composting at work and home. Second, evaluate infrastructure for residential curbside, commercial, and institutional composting; develop strategies to increase composting capacity; and implement a pilot curbside composting program when composting capacity is available.

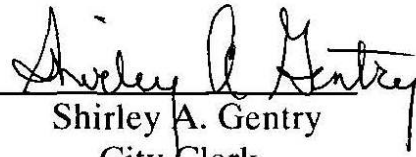
The City Council further directs the City Manager to pursue the following Zero Waste items, as staff time and funding permits:

- Until the Master Plan can provide recommendations on the Pay-As-You-Throw rate structure, build on the progress made in the FY2009 budget and make the Pay-As-You-Throw rates incentivize waste diversion and fully fund zero waste initiatives and SWS operational requirements.
- Develop and present to City Council, City Code amendments or implement rule changes as necessary to encourage sustainable practices, including recycling and other zero waste practices, at events that require the use of public facilities and rights of way, starting with large events.
- Develop an education program for Appendix D of the Plan, identifying the various resources available to the community.
- Allocate staff time and resources to work with local government officials across Texas to launch a Texas Product Stewardship Council.

- Evaluate and develop a public and private partnership for neighborhood reuse center (possibly a pilot program).
- Play an active role in lobbying the state legislature to improve the Texas Computer Take Back Law and expand producer take back to other products such as TVs, fluorescent lighting, pharmaceuticals, nonrechargeable batteries, etc.
- Recognizing the legislative limits of flow control over landfills, begin a dialogue with regional partners to evaluate ways to influence flow control and enhance Zero Waste in the CAPCOG region.
- Evaluate advancements in technology and facilities that help the city/region achieve zero waste with an emphasis on the economic and environmental impact.
- Encourage existing landfill operators to collect methane gas, and initiate a study of issues surrounding the use of landfill methane as an energy resource and its implications for the City's goals regarding zero waste and climate protection.

**ADOPTED:** January 15, 2009

**ATTEST:**

  
Shirley A. Gentry  
City Clerk