

Zero Waste Strategic Plan

Jessica Kingpetcharat-Bittner
Sustainability Administrator

Solid Waste Services Department

Outline

- Background
- What is Zero Waste?
- Why is Zero Waste Important?
- Framing the Discussion
- Austin's Zero Waste Strategies
- Austin's Project Priorities
- Next Steps & Implementation Plan
- Question & Answer

Background

- **May 2005.** Mayor of Austin signs United Nations Environmental Accord:
 - 20% reduction of per capita solid waste disposal by 2012
 - Zero Waste by 2040
- **January 2008 – May 2008.** Zero Waste public input process
- **May 2008.** Austin receives support from:
 - Capital Area Council of Governments SWAC
 - Travis County Commissioners Court
- **July 2008 – August 2008.** Staff performs additional research
- **October 3, 2008.** Draft Plan released online
- **October 8, 2008.** SWAC begins deliberations

What is Zero Waste?

- Zero Waste is a pragmatic and visionary goal that attempts to emulate sustainable natural cycles by reevaluating systems to:
 - Encourage the redesign and manufacturing of products to reduce their volume and toxicity of waste and materials;
 - Recognize that one person's trash is another's treasure and all materials are resources/commodities
- Success means diverting:
 - 20% of materials from disposal by 2012
 - 75% by 2020
 - 90% by 2040

Why is Zero Waste Important?

- **Landfill Capacity**

- 33 counties dispose of their waste in area landfills
- Landfills will eventually reach capacity unless we expand existing landfills, open new landfills, or drastically divert waste from landfills

- **Greenhouse Gases**

- Landfills contribute greenhouse gases (GHGs)
- Reducing materials to landfills, reduces GHGs

- **Green Jobs & Green Economy**

- Tourism
- Building/Industry

Framing the Discussion

- **City Authority**

- Responsible for residential collection only
- Provides limited COA Department recycling collection
- Commercial and institutional entities contract waste management and recycling services
- COA has permit authority over haulers in city limits
- No jurisdictional control over private landfills

- **Regional Authority (CAPCOG & County)**

- County has permit authority over haulers in respective region
- No jurisdictional control over private landfills

- **State Authority**

- Permitting authority over landfills

Austin's Zero Waste Strategies

- **Lead by example**
 - **COA facilities evaluation and baseline data**
 - Evaluate all city department waste streams and develop monitoring mechanism to track success
 - Coordinate green teams to develop and implement reduction and recycling programs
 - **Green purchasing standards**
 - Evaluate and develop comprehensive green purchasing policies for contract services as well as office supplies
 - **Green events at city facilities**
 - Work internally to make city sponsored events at city facilities as green as possible
 - Work with stakeholders to develop a green events policy that encourages events using city facilities and rights of way to adopt green practices

Austin's Zero Waste Strategies (continued)

- **Expand & improve programs**
 - **Education/Outreach**
 - Coordinate with other departments to develop comprehensive education and outreach campaigns
 - Partner with area school districts to develop a comprehensive “green education” curriculum that fits within their needs
 - **Recycling and composting programs**
 - Continually evaluate existing programs to increase participation
 - Evaluate public/private partnerships to develop new waste diversion programs

Austin's Zero Waste Strategies (continued)

- **Develop & Invest in Zero Waste Infrastructure**

- **Evaluate various partnerships to:**

- Increase waste diversion capacity
- Improve Zero Waste markets
- Invest in Zero Waste infrastructure
- Develop Green Campuses and Resource Recovery Parks

- **Waste Management Master Plan**

- Identify long-term infrastructure needs to provide economically and environmentally efficient waste management services

Austin's Zero Waste Strategies (continued)

- **Support for and of:**
 - **Waste reduction legislation**
 - Local, regional, state, and national
 - **Texas Product Stewardship Council**
 - Lead by local governments
 - Input received from manufacturers and various other interested organizations
 - **Extended Producer Responsibility**
 - Improve existing EPR legislation
 - Support additional regional initiatives

Austin's Zero Waste Strategies (continued)

- **Educate, Promote, and Advocate Zero Waste**
 - Local and regional organizations
 - CAPCOG
 - Capital Metro
 - And others
 - Local and regional businesses, manufacturers, and industrial facilities
 - Neighboring communities
 - Schools and school districts, public and private
 - Area service providers

Austin's Project Priorities

- Lead by Example
- Include more facilities in existing Recycling Ordinance
- Promote Zero Waste
- Promote Composting

Next Steps

- **Zero Waste Communication Plan**

- Release community-wide online Zero Waste survey
- Based on community input, develop Zero Waste messaging, branding, and logo
- “How Can I Go Zero?” public education campaign
- Revise website to provide access to more resources and information for the community
- Partner with Climate Protection Team and develop Green Teams in City Departments to improve, develop, and build upon green efforts

- **Implementation Plan**

- Each fiscal year, plan for programs & initiatives
- Remainder of FY 2008
 - Develop Departmental waste stream analysis
 - Partner with other City departments to identify methods to increase waste diversion capacity at city facilities
 - Work with the Texas Product Stewardship Council
 - Participate in development of a Green Events Ordinance
 - Evaluate new recycling initiatives/policies
 - Partner with AISD, UT, and others

A photograph of a city skyline with various buildings and greenery. Overlaid on the image is the text 'zerowaste' in a large, bold font. The word 'zero' is in blue, and 'waste' is in green. The letter 'o' in 'zero' is replaced by a blue recycling symbol. Two horizontal blue lines are positioned above and below the text.

zerowaste

Question & Answer

Jessica Kingpetcharat-Bittner, Sustainability Administrator

City of Austin Solid Waste Services Department

512-974-7678

jessica.king@ci.austin.tx.us