

**Oakland Zero Waste Strategic Plan  
Sustainable Business Leaders Meeting  
June 29, 2006, 8:30 - 9:30 am  
At Metro Furniture, Oakland**

**SUMMARY OF ISSUES RAISED BY PARTICIPANTS**

**ZERO WASTE PLANNING PROCESS**

- ◆ **Work through Chambers of Commerce** - Ask all the Oakland “chambers of commerce” organizations to get information out to their members, including the Chinatown Chamber of Commerce, African American Chamber of Commerce, and Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. This is the fastest way to promote Zero Waste and Plan questions widely to small businesses in Oakland.
- ◆ **Meet again separately as Business Group.** Metro Furniture offered this meeting room to be used again to meet.
- ◆ **Invite businesses to Public Meeting as well.**
- ◆ **For more info, go to [www.zerowasteoakland.com](http://www.zerowasteoakland.com)** ; it was also suggested that businesses in attendance could first evaluate the ZW web site, and then possibly send a short message to their own Oakland business network, encouraging those businesses to get up to speed on the ZW planning process

**INFORMATION**

- ◆ **Models Needed** - Need to provide examples of companies doing the right thing for takebacks, biodegradables, and other sustainable practices. We should get model companies to give presentations in local forums. People within companies need data to highlight to all their bosses that this is important.
- ◆ **Green Loan Programs** - Identify and promote available loan programs from banks and investors for green investments; also promote Waste Prevention grants from StopWaste.org.
- ◆ **Data** - Need to be accessible and transparent with data about progress in meeting goals of Zero Waste. Better to admit where we really are. Make sure businesses are truly green to differentiate products in the marketplace. Skeptical that some of the large businesses noted as “Zero Waste Businesses” are as far along as indicated. If they were, we’d all be further along ourselves on sustainability.
- ◆ **Media** - Need to talk with and develop a partnership with the media to highlight successes. Profile businesses that are doing things positive, to show the creativity and progress; could source case studies from among StopWaste Partners, Green Businesses, Recycling Market Development Zone businesses, etc.
- ◆ **Green Business Directory** - This is a very good tool to approach Greater Oakland businesses. Showing company listings in directories like that and on City’s web site sometimes can sway customers from competitors, by demonstrating what we are doing for the community. If price is competitive, then that message can help.
- ◆ **Yahoo Group** - Need a yahoo group for Zero Waste Businesses in Oakland to share information and ideas.
- ◆ **Education** - Sustainable businesses in attendance are leaders in the field, and should be able to help speak in our own terms to each of our business sectors, to help market the concepts of Zero Waste and sustainability in digestible terms. WE have to be the ones to Green the city.

- ◆ **City Website** - Include Glossary of terms to explain jargon used in the field. Love the Ecological Footprint.

## **POLICIES**

- ◆ **Upstream** - Achieving sustainability is far bigger than an individual company working to be green.
- ◆ **Incentives and Mandates** - Need more concrete carrots and sticks. We're certified as a Green Business and are not making any more money by being certified. There should be tax breaks, cheaper office space, and other benefits of being a green business. Like to make improvements that improve our bottom line. The City needs to make it easy to participate in programs, and can't force people to do things. For example, C&D waste will be dumped on streets if forced to pay more. Agree there needs to be incentives, as it costs more to be a Green Business.
- ◆ **City permits** - Would like to get more support from City offices in issuance of necessary permits to green businesses, as one of the benefits of being a Green Business.
- ◆ **Procurement** - Sometimes need demand-pull for products that are from green businesses. "Green" practices are not factored into bid specifications now. City specifications should include them. City needs to Green its Request for Quotations. Need clear vocabulary and defined terms.
- ◆ **Standards** - Need to set bar higher for what constitutes a Green Business. When recruiting new companies to locate in Oakland, ask them about their green policies and practices before giving them lots of inducements.

## **PROGRAMS**

- ◆ **On-Line Search and Matching Services** -
  - Want CalMax to be more accessible and more timely. There are too many delays, and it seems like it's organized primarily for regularly produced items, not one-time items that need to be handled quickly. Want something more like Craig's List or eBay.
  - FreeCycle.org does that, but is not focused on large volumes, and the items have to be free. So there's still a gap in services needed.
  - Can you merge FreeCycle and CalMax?
- ◆ **Environmentally Preferable Products and Services**
  - Want someplace to go on-line to look for specific items, like pallets, computers, green services. Some in audience suggested:
    - StopWaste.Org
    - Sustainable Business
    - GreenBiz.com
    - CoopAmerica.com
    - GreenPages.com
    - See list at [www.zerowasteoakland.com](http://www.zerowasteoakland.com)
  - There are so many different ways to get information. Only some of those work in Oakland and Alameda County
  - Green printers are also available
- ◆ **Volume Buying** - It would be great to harness the volume buying power of sustainable businesses in Oakland, such as those at this meeting. We need to leverage our buying power as best we can. Compostable packaging encouraged by the recent ordinance (and also banning polystyrene take out food packaging) could be an initial test case for this approach.

## **FACILITIES**

### ◆ **Resource Recovery Parks**

- Sounds important to have a place for recovery services that could locate in the Park to help Oakland businesses.

### ◆ **Land Use Competition** - The City promoting housing as the highest and best use of the land there is running service providers and manufacturing businesses out of West Oakland. Can't just have a city of condos. Recyclers are being forced out. Land development is priority.

### ◆ **Cogeneration** - Can be clean as natural gas. Why are small-scale cogeneration plants not supported under the draft ZW policy?