

City of Oakland - Zero Waste Strategic Plan
Selected Strategies
Review Draft for September 20, 2006 Public Meeting

Oakland's Zero Waste Goal is to cut the City's current waste disposal 90% by 2020 - a reduction of 360,000 tons over 15 years. In achieving and exceeding the state-mandated goal of 50% waste reduction by 2000, Oakland has reduced its annual disposal by 180,000 tons over the past 15 years. Progress toward the Zero Waste Goal will be evaluated by comparing the amount of annual waste disposed to disposal goals in five-year intervals, ending with the 2020 Zero Waste Goal year (Table 1).

Table 1
Oakland Zero Waste Annual Disposal Goals

Year	Disposal Tons	
1990	580,000	Actual
2005	400,000	Current actual
2010	300,000	Intermediate Goal
2015	150,000	Intermediate Goal
2020	40,000	Zero Waste Goal

In order for Oakland to achieve its Zero Waste Goal, this Plan recommends applying five fundamental strategies/tools to achieve results/outcomes in five major focus areas, guided by evaluative criteria for 'highest and best use' of materials and smallest life-cycle ecological footprint.

Five Strategies/Tools

1. Proactively pursue a defined legislative and regulatory policy agenda
2. Develop and conduct Zero Waste/Sustainability public education, information, branding, outreach, communications, and messaging
3. Develop, implement, and leverage partnerships, programs, and campaigns toward Zero Waste Sustainability
4. City government lead by example in developing and implementing Zero Waste policies and practices
5. Apply incentives and new rules

Applied to Five Major Focus Areas

1. Upstream materials management system redesign and product policy reform
2. Waste management system redesign
3. Green business and jobs, with land capacity for infrastructure
4. Significant advancement in green building practices
5. Significant decreases in business/commercial waste generation and disposal

Evaluative Criteria to Guide All Oakland's Zero Waste Strategies, Policies, and Actions

Zero Waste has been defined by the Zero Waste International Alliance as a philosophy and visionary goal that emulates natural cycles, where all outputs are simply an input for another process. It means designing and managing materials and products to conserve and recover all resources and not destroy or bury them, and eliminating discharges to land, water or air that do not contribute productively to natural systems or the economy. It means preventing, rather than managing waste and recommitting to the priority ordering of the waste reduction hierarchy: First reduce consumption; Next, reuse what is left; Finally recycle what can no longer be reused and landfill any residual. Accordingly, this Strategic Plan recommends that Oakland's pursuit of a Zero Waste Goal shall be guided by evaluative criteria for 'highest and best use' of materials and pollution prevention in all phases of production, use, and disposition.

Strategy #1: Proactively pursue a defined legislative and regulatory policy agenda.

Recommended Next Steps Include:

- Development and advancement of Zero Waste legislative and regulatory policy agenda, and ongoing leadership pursuing attainment of policy agenda priorities
- Continued leadership in development of CA Product Stewardship Council to shift the product waste management system from one focused on government funded and ratepayer financed waste diversion to one that relies on producer responsibility, so as to reduce public costs, drive improvements in product design, and foster product reuse, refurbishment, and repair
- Establish and maintain leadership in national and international stakeholder dialogues, negotiations, and related activities

Strategy #2: Develop and conduct Zero Waste/Sustainability public education, information, branding, outreach, communications, and messaging.

Recommended Next Steps Include:

- Overhaul approach to public education and messaging to effectively communicate Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and sustainability in a way that engages, motivates and inspires:
 - Use new communications tools and new media, social marketing/branding, and social networking
 - Incorporate importance of "aspirational" or "higher level" values that contribute to quality of life, health, and civic good
- Develop media partnerships and other strategies to highlight and celebrate achievements, leadership, and successes; show creativity and progress; and profile businesses, individuals, and institutions, and organizations that are contributing positively to a sustainable City and world
- Develop and sustain a pro-active media and messaging strategy, developing partnerships and leveraging resources

Strategy #3: Develop, implement, and leverage partnerships, programs, and campaigns toward Zero Waste Sustainability.

Recommended Next Steps Include:

- Assume a leadership role and actively participate in formal and informal regional, statewide, national, and international waste reduction and sustainability working groups, particularly engaging and negotiating with product producers and retailers to provide product take back opportunities
- Assume a leadership role in developing existing and new regional media/messaging campaigns
- Engage with advocacy groups that are working on legislative and social change to further zero waste goals and address critical planning and infrastructure issues

Strategy #4: City government lead by example in developing and implementing Zero Waste policies and practices.

Recommended Next Steps Include:

- Adopt an Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy for City procurement that includes Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)
- Set aggressive waste reduction goals with specific, measurable baseline benchmarks and ongoing performance tracking

- Establish model programs in City facilities, and adopt progressive waste reduction practices as City policies

Strategy #5: Apply incentives and new rules.

Recommended Next Steps Include:

- Ban disposal of easily recyclable or problematic materials, such as Seattle, WA has done for corrugated cardboard, as California has done for tires, and several states have done for yard trimmings
- Ban the use of disposable, toxic, or non-renewable products
- Replace incentives for wasting (e.g., government subsidies for virgin natural resource extraction) with policies that favor environmentally and economically sustainable practices over wasteful, polluting, and ultimately costly practices

Focus Area #1: Upstream materials management system redesign and product policy reform

Recommended Next Steps Include:

- Implement ‘upstream’ materials management and system re-design strategies such as:
 - Extended Producer Responsibility, whereby industries that design and market consumer products assume ownership of products at the end of their useful life and responsibility for recycling the products in an environmentally sound manner
 - Phase out use of toxic materials in products and processes, requiring that products be manufactured with non-toxic materials, and designed for either reuse, recycling or composting
- Ensure that Extended Producer Responsibility includes establishment of efficient repair and refurbishment, retaining the form and function of products and ensuring the redesign of products and packaging

Focus Area #2: Waste management system redesign

Recommended Next Steps to Implement Strategy Include:

- Restructure Oakland’s municipal code, garbage franchise agreement, and residential recycling service contracts to provide clear and consistent incentives to reduce waste for both generators (i.e., residential and business ratepayers) and service providers, coinciding with expiration of solid waste and recycling contracts in 2012

Focus Area #3: Green business and jobs, with land capacity for infrastructure

Recommended Next Steps to Implement Strategy Include:

- Develop policy goals and priority commitment (e.g., land use, workforce development) and strategic partnerships (e.g., Port of Oakland, EDAB, ABAG), to retain and expand local and regional reuse, recycling, and green manufacturing businesses and facilities, which constitute critical infrastructure for a Sustainability City and which also provide “Green Collar” jobs for Oaklanders plus other social and economic benefits
- Offer tangible economic incentives for green, sustainable, and Zero Waste businesses including identifying and promoting loan programs from banks and investors for green investments and green businesses, providing tax incentives, incubator support, permit assistance, City procurement preferences

- Explore and pursue opportunities to cluster complementary businesses in an eco-industrial park or otherwise

Focus Area #4: Significant advancement in green building practices

Recommended Next Steps to Implement Strategy Include:

- Expand Construction and Demolition Recycling Ordinance to include a broader range of projects, provide financial incentives to maximize diversion, provide incentives for deconstruction and salvage, and increase diversion requirements to track market development for source separated debris and salvage
- Develop and share green building educational and informational resources, including promotion of existing Oakland Sustainable Design Guide.
- Develop and implement technical assistance and incentives to promote increased green building
- Add green building standards to the City building code that require design for energy efficiency and use of recycled-content products, and construction techniques that improve recovery of building materials for recycling during construction, at the end of the building's useful life, and during renovations

Focus Area #5: Significant decreases in business/commercial waste generation and disposal.

Recommended Next Steps to Implement Strategy Include:

- Implement and sustain a comprehensive marketing and technical assistance program targeting commercial waste reduction, leveraging and partnering with the extensive recycling recovery infrastructure that thrives in Oakland's unique conditions: immediate access to a major multi-modal deep harbor port, and a municipal code which encourages entrepreneurial free market competition for collection of recyclable materials.
- Promote and expand programs and systems that enable green and sustainable business to differentiate their products and services in the marketplace so as to benefit from recognition and rewards.
- Re-design the waste management system, and partner with other utilities to develop and expand incentives that reward businesses who improve efficiencies and reduce waste