



Office of the City Manager

INFORMATION CALENDAR

July 14, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Zero Waste Commission

Submitted by: Steven Sherman, Chair

Subject: Zero Waste Commission Fiscal Year 2026-27 Work Plan

INTRODUCTION

The Zero Waste Commission (ZWC) advises the City Council on solid waste (“zero waste”) policy and goals, including refuse, composting, and recycling services, budgets, and other decisions relating to solid waste. The ZWC unanimously adopted the FY 2026-27 Work Plan on April 15, 2026.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The City is enacting important changes and improvements to its Zero Waste services and long-term plans, including:

- Continuing the process to design the re-build of the Solid Waste & Recycling Transfer Station;
- Implementing various local ordinances and state laws to reduce the generation of discarded products, packaging and materials, and to increase the composting of food scraps; and
- Developing a division-level strategic plan for zero waste.

The City’s long standing goals regarding zero waste include:

1. Provide state-of-the-art, well-maintained publicly-owned infrastructure, amenities, and facilities; and
2. Serve as a global leader in addressing climate change, advancing environmental justice, and protecting the environment.

BACKGROUND

The following topics have shaped Zero Waste in the City and are monitored closely by the ZWC, including the goals for the upcoming fiscal year.

Zero Waste Strategic Plan: A draft plan has been completed by the City’s consultants. Whereas new programmatic and policy elements of the draft plan are relatively modest in scope and cost, infrastructure upgrades to the Transfer Station, as currently conceived by staff and its consultant, are very substantial in scope and estimated cost.

**SB 1383 - Food Recovery and Organics Diversion:** This State of California law requires local governments to reduce the landfilling of compostable materials, to reduce climate change effects associated with methane emissions resulting from the landfilling of such items. Implementation of State Law SB 1383 requires the City and subsequently the Zero Waste Division to provide education and outreach to residents and businesses, monitor contamination, manage an edible food recovery program, and many more activities.

**Zero Waste Ordinances:** The City has adopted various zero waste ordinances over time. Now that their effects are being observed in practice, some of them may merit modifications to improve their effectiveness. Many Zero Waste ordinances and programs have been evaluated for effectiveness in the City of Berkeley in the draft Zero Waste Plan.

**Accepted Materials in City Collection Programs:** Periodically, the list of accepted materials in City collection programs deserves review. This is especially prudent with the adoption of SB 54, which becomes effective January 1, 2026. Review of accepted materials lists for the City's recycling and composting programs will be required. Additionally, consideration of harder-to-recycle materials potentially could be added to City collection services, such as batteries.

**Zero Waste Program Oversight:** Two primary topics for consideration involve the Commission's role in advising Council on whether the content of draft competitive solicitations for zero waste services (e.g., compostables, recyclables, refuse, reusables, household hazardous waste, etc.), and review of any draft zero waste rate adjustments, are consistent with the City's zero waste-related goals, services, and policies.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

Potential to reduce the disposal of products, packaging, and other materials via waste reduction, re-design, reuse, repair, recycling, and composting, with positive effects on resource conservation, climate change mitigation, and local economic development.

#### POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

The ZWC may provide recommendations to the City Council from time to time regarding topics contained in this report.

#### FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

The work of the Zero Waste Commission does not have any fiscal impact on the City directly. However, recommendations, including the City's draft Zero Waste Strategic Plan will contain numerous recommendations that have potential fiscal impacts, particularly infrastructure upgrades, compliance requirements, and program service expansion.

CONTACT PERSON

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Attachments:

1: Zero Waste Commission Work Plan Matrix



Zero Waste Commission

### FISCAL YEAR 2026-27 WORK PLAN

The following goals and activities for the ZWC have been identified for fiscal year (FY) 2026-27 and are provided in Table 1, below:

Goal	Resources	Program Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
Advocate for City Council to adopt the Zero Waste Strategic Plan	Consulting team, City staff, other commissions	Work to build momentum towards adoption of the zero waste plan and rates to support zero waste activities. Distribute information to increase public input and build consensus with other commissions	Articulation of the benefits of and risks of non-adoption to Councilmembers and other identified stakeholders	Support for the adoption of a comprehensive, detailed strategic plan and funding to achieve City's zero waste goals
Support community engagement regarding zero waste in Berkeley	City Staff, Ecology Center, UC Berkeley/Cal Zero Waste, BUSD, the public	Presentations at ZWC by practitioners. Join other Commission meetings and zero waste events in the community	Foster public support for zero waste activities and programs. Have attendance by a least one commissioner at 10 events during the year	Foster zero waste goals and awareness in the community
Strengthening existing and adopting new zero waste ordinances outlined in the draft zero waste plan	City Staff, consulting team, Ecology Center, UC Berkeley/Cal Zero Waste, BUSD	Through subcommittees, and then the commission as a whole, evaluate and recommend ways to strengthen existing City ordinances and to support adoption new ones that further efforts to achieve zero waste goals	Staff reports, draft ordinance language, and recommendations to Council as needed	Support for strengthened and new zero waste ordinances

Review and assessment of accepted materials: inclusion or exclusion in City collection services	City staff, Urban Ore, CCC, Ecology Center, CAW, NCRA, CPSC, StopWaste, others	Presentations at ZWC by specialists. Review list of accepted materials, and recommend changes, particularly with the onset of SB 54	Recommendations to Council as needed	To help Council have an accurate understanding of City's collection services and the extent to which they align with the City's goals
Monitor outside resources and funding opportunities	City Staff, StopWaste, CalRecycle, California Product Stewardship Council	Presentations by outside organizations to help ZWC track and understand proposed legislation, for the purpose of advising Council	Recommendations to Council as needed	To help establish effective, fiscally prudent laws that support City's zero waste goals
Preliminarily assess organization and oversight considerations regarding the City's Zero Waste Program	City staff, consulting team, other commissions, other communities	Research other communities' practices for: (a) public oversight of rate-setting processes; (b) administrative structure for leading zero waste programs	Preliminary assessment of organization and oversight considerations regarding the City's Zero Waste Program	Hold preliminary discussions with City Councilmembers about preliminary findings and potential opportunities

