



Office of the City Manager

INFORMATION CALENDAR

July 29, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Zero Waste Commission

Submitted by: Christienne de Tournay Birkhahn, Chair

Subject: Zero Waste Commission Fiscal Year 2025-26 Work Plan

INTRODUCTION

The Zero Waste Commission (ZWC) considers and advises City Council on solid waste policy and goals, including refuse, composting, and recycling services, budgets, and other decisions relating to solid waste. The ZWC adopted the FY 2024-25 Work Plan on May 15, 2025.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Zero Waste Commission prioritizes solid waste policy and goals, which is a Strategic Plan Priority Project, advancing our goal to provide state-of-the-art, well-maintained infrastructure, amenities, and facilities. Additionally, 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 (SW&RTS),
- Implementing various local ordinances and state laws to reduce the generation of discarded products, packaging and materials, and to increase the recycling of organic materials such as food scraps,
- Developing a division-level strategic plan for zero waste.

BACKGROUND

Zero Waste Strategic Plan: Development of the draft plan began in 2023 and is continuing. It is anticipated that the draft plan will be ready for Council consideration of adoption in 2024.

- SB 1383 - Food Recovery and Organics Diversion: This State of California law requires substantial effort by local governments to reduce the landfilling of compostable materials and to increase the recovery of otherwise discarded edible food, as a way to reduce climate change effects associated with methane emissions resulting from the landfilling of organic (carbon-containing) materials.

- 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. In addition, some new zero waste ordinances may be helpful in guiding businesses and residents toward following zero waste practices as standard operating procedures.

Accepted Materials in City Collection Programs: Periodically, the list of accepted materials in City collection programs deserves review. Recycling tends to subject the City to the vagaries of international commodity markets, with considerable swings in demand and prices, changes in product specifications, ability to track custody and supply chains, and end uses. Composting is not a panacea for the large variety of hard/controversial-to-compost products and packaging, such as plastic-lined paper and potentially compostable plastics. As with recycling, composting processors' specifications and end uses can change over time. Meanwhile, some harder-to-recycle materials potentially could be added to City collection services, such as batteries.

- Proposed State Legislation: The City may take positions that could influence the outcome of proposed State of California legislation regarding zero waste.

The Zero Waste Commission voted to adopt this Work Plan and inform Council at the May 15, 2025 Meeting.

Action: Adoption of the 2025-2026 Zero Waste Commission with a subsequent Information Report to Council

Motion: Commissioner Sherman

Second: Commissioner Curtis

Ayes: 6; Abstain: 0; Nays: 0; Absent: 2

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.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Future Action Items that ZWC may send to City Council include:

- Resolution to support adoption of a new Zero Waste Strategic Plan;
- Resolutions to support adoption of modifications that strengthen existing ordinances and to adopt new ordinances that further zero waste efforts.
- Other zero waste-related recommendations to City Council.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

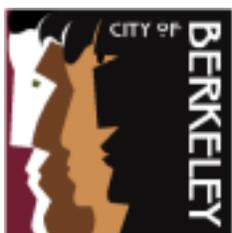
The Zero Waste Strategic Plan will contain numerous recommendations that have potential fiscal impacts, particularly infrastructure upgrades, compliance requirements, and program service expansion.

CONTACT PERSON

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Attachments:

1: Zero Waste Commission Work Plan Matrix



Zero Waste Commission

FISCAL YEAR 2025-26 WORK PLAN

The following goals and activities have been identified for fiscal year 2025-26:

Goal	Resources	Program Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
Development of Zero Waste Strategic Plan	Consulting team, City staff	Various public presentations and workshops. Distribute information to increase public input.	Recommendations to Council as needed.	Support for the development of a comprehensive, detailed strategic plan to achieve City's zero waste goals.
Compliance with SB1383-- Food Recovery and Organics Diversion	City staff, community partners	Continue updates from staff, explore community compost opportunities, invite community partners and related resources to discuss their efforts with Commission.	Recommendations to Council as needed.	Help in achieving compliance with SB1383 requirements and to promote local resiliency.
Strengthening existing and adopting new zero waste ordinances	City Staff, consulting team, Ecology Center, UC Berkeley/ Cal Zero Waste, BUSD	Through sub committees and then the commission as a whole, evaluate and recommend ways to strengthen existing City ordinances and to adopt new ones that further efforts to achieve zero waste goals.	Recommendations to Council as needed.	Support for strengthened and new zero waste ordinances.

<p>Review and assessment of accepted materials: Inclusion or exclusion in City collection services</p>	<p>City staff, Urban Ore, CCC, Ecology Center, CAW, NCRA, CPSC, StopWaste, Others</p>	<p>Presentations at ZWC by community partners, specialists. Review list of accepted materials, and recommend changes, if any.</p>	<p>Commission on feedback.</p>	<p>To help Council have an accurate understanding of City's collection services and the extent to which they align with the City's goals.</p>
<p>Review of regional and State proposed legislation</p>	<p>City Staff, Californians Against Waste, California Product Stewardship Council, Northern California Recycling Association</p>	<p>Presentations by outside organizations to help ZWC track and understand proposed legislation, for the purpose of advising Council.</p>	<p>Recommendations to Council as needed.</p>	<p>To help establish effective, fiscally prudent laws that support City's zero waste goals</p>

