



Zero Waste Commission

# City of Berkeley ZERO WASTE COMMISSION Regular Meeting

Wednesday, May 20, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.  
City of Berkeley Corporation Yard (Ratcliff Building, Willow Room)  
1326 Allston Way, Berkeley, CA, 94702

## MEETING AGENDA

### PRELIMINARY MATTERS:

- 5:30 pm 1. Call to Order by Chair and Roll Call by Secretary
- **Steven Sherman (Chair)**, appointed by CM Rashi Kesarwani, District 1
  - **Claire Wilson (Vice Chair)**, appointed by CM Shoshana O'Keefe, District 5
  - **VACANT**, appointed by Mayor Adena Ishii
  - **Layla Dargahi**, appointed by CM Terry Taplin, District 2
  - **Dennis Uyat**, appointed by CM Ben Bartlett, District 3
  - **Philip Monrad**, appointed by CM Igor Tregub, District 4
  - **Sandra Curtis**, appointed by CM Brent Blackaby, District 6
  - **Lucy Longwell**, appointed by CM Cecilia Lunaparra, District 7
  - **Barun Singh**, appointed by CM Mark Humbert, District 8
- 5:35 pm 2. Approve Meeting Agenda and Order of Agenda Items
- 5:40 pm 3. Approve Draft Action Minutes:
- April 15, 2026 Regular Meeting\*
- 5:45 pm 4. Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda  
*Speakers are allotted up to two minutes. Speakers may be allotted less time at the discretion of the Chair.*
- 5:55 pm 5. Staff Updates

### DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS:

*Members of the public may provide comments at the end of each discussion item and prior to the vote of the Commission on any action items. Speakers are allotted up to 2 minutes.*

6:10 pm 1. Mary Lou – A Short History of Recycling in Berkeley, California

6:25 pm 2. City Staff – Zero Waste Fund Forecast and Budget Presentation

6:40 pm 3. ZWC Workplan Progress Check

6:45 pm 4. Discuss which initiatives from the Zero Waste Strategic Plan Executive Summary commissioners will work on

7:05 pm 5. [Action Item] Vote to adopt the revised Transfer Station Rebuild 1-pager

7:10 pm 6. Subcommittee Reports Updates

- a) Special Events Subcommittee
- b) Lease Language Subcommittee

7:20 pm 7. Commissioner Announcements

*Commissioners may make general announcements; no action will be taken.*

7:25 pm 8. Discuss Future Agenda Items

7:30 pm 9. Adjournment

**INFORMATION ITEMS:**


*Information items may be moved to discussion but no action will be taken*

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

*Communications from the public are included as links or attachments in the agenda packet.*

**\*Indicates material included in the agenda packet**

**\*\* Indicates material to be available at the meeting**

 **ADA Disclaimer:** This meeting is being held in a wheelchair-accessible location. To request a disability-related accommodation(s) to participate in the meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please contact the Disability Services Specialist at 981-6418 (V) or 981-6347 (TDD) at least three business days before the meeting date. Please refrain from wearing scented products to this meeting.

**SB 343 Disclaimer:**

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the Commission regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at the Public Works Department located at the address below.

**Communications Disclaimer:**

Communications to Berkeley boards, commissions or committees are public record and will become part of the City's electronic records, which are accessible through the City's website. Please note: e-mail addresses, names, addresses, and other contact information are not required, but if included in any communication to a City board, commission or committee, will become part of the public record. If you do not want your e-mail address or any other contact information to be made public, you may deliver communications via U.S. Postal Service or in person to the secretary of the relevant board, commission or committee. If you do not want your contact information included in the public record, please do not include that information in your communication. Please contact the secretary to the relevant board, commission or committee for further information.

**Commission Secretary:**

Julia A. Heath, Recycling Program Manager,  
Zero Waste Division, 1201 Second St. Berkeley, CA 94710  
510-981-6357

[jheath@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:jheath@berkeleyca.gov)

## MINUTES

The meeting was convened at 5:32pm with Steven Sherman presiding as Chair.

### ROLL CALL

Present: Philip Monrad, Steven Sherman, Claire Wilson, Sandra Curtis, Barun Singh, Dennis Uyat

LOA:

Absent: Layla Dargahi

**STAFF PRESENT:** Julia A. Heath, Johnny de Lara

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT: 7**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS (on non-agenda items): 3**

### ACTION MINUTES:

- **Approval of the April 15, 2026 Regular Meeting Agenda**  
Action Taken: M/S/C (Sherman/Curtis) to approve the February 18, 2026 meeting agenda.  
Ayes: Unanimous; Abstain: None; Absent: Layla Dargahi
  - Changed item 3 (Zero Waste Strategic Plan initiatives) to a discussion only item.
- **Approval of the March 18, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes**  
Action Taken: M/S/C (Sherman/Curtis) to approve the January 21, 2026 meeting minutes.  
Ayes: Unanimous; Abstain: None; Absent: Layla Dargahi
- **Public Comment**  
3 public comment. No Action Taken.
  - Marylou from Urban Ore offers to give a presentation on Urban Ore and its history in the next meeting.
  - Ecology Center Earth Day members meeting!
  - UC Berkeley student group from the Fung Fellowship submits recommendations on reducing contamination and promoting sustainability with local businesses.
- **Staff Updates**  
Discussion only. No Action Taken.
- **Claire Wilson- discussion and update on CARB laws**  
Discussion only. No Action Taken.  
**Public Comment: 1**
  - Request that Claire's presentation be added to the Commission webpage for public view.

- **Vote on the adoption of the finalized Zero Waste Commission Work Plan for Fiscal Year 26-27**

Action Taken: M/S/C (Singh/Wilson) to adopt the finalized Zero Waste Commission Work Plan for FY 26-27

Ayes: Unanimous; Abstain: None; Absent: Layla Dargahi

**Public Comment: 2**

- Recommendation to focus on existing draft ordinances the Commission and staff are already pushing.
- Recommendation to focus on Transfer Station Rebuild

- **Discuss which initiatives from the Executive Summary of the Zero Waste Strategic Plan the Zero Waste Commission will focus on**

Discussion only. No Action Taken.

- Each commissioner will go through the Executive Summary and star initiatives they want to work on. In the next meeting the commission will narrow down these initiatives to discuss forming working subgroups and/or subcommittees focused on the chosen initiatives.

**Public Comment: 2**

- **Reminder that community members can be involved in subcommittees.**
- **Swasti working on relevant Stormwater initiatives, potential collaboration.**

- **Vote to request that City Council direct the Zero Waste Commission to review and recommend changes to any draft competitive solicitations for any materials managed by the City of Berkeley, e.g. recycling, compost, refuse, reuse, salvage, household hazardous waste, etc. and/or processing services, and any draft rate adjustments for consistency with the City's zero waste goals, services, and policies**

Action Taken: M/S/C (Singh/Curtis) to request that City Council direct the Zero Waste Commission to review and recommend changes to any draft competitive solicitations for any materials managed by the City of Berkeley, e.g. recycling, compost, refuse, reuse, salvage, household hazardous waste, etc. and/or processing services, and any draft rate adjustments for consistency with the City's zero waste goals, services, and policies.

Ayes: Unanimous; Abstain: None; Absent: Layla Dargahi

**Public Comment: 3**

- Wordsmithing suggestions
- Swasti: the Planning Department will draft ordinances amongst staff and have them pre-approved to go to council before bringing them to their commission for comment/suggestions.
- Reminder that "zero waste" is a goal.

- **Discuss Zero Waste Fund Forecast, per 2025-2026 Adopted Budget and any updated data from the City**

Discussion only. No Action Taken.

**Public Comment: 0**

- **Vote to disband the Green Building Subcommittee**

Action Taken: M/S/C (Curtis/Singh) disband the Green Building Subcommittee

Ayes: Unanimous; Abstain: Dennis Uyat None; Absent: Layla Dargahi

**Public Comment: 1**

- Potential to re-activate.

- **Subcommittee Updates**

Discussion only. No Action Taken.

**Public Comment: 0**

Special Events Subcommittee

- Igor Tregub trying to rationalize the permitting process.

Lease Language Subcommittee

- Recruited community member Lidia to the subcommittee.
- In conversation with the Rent Board about lease language work.

- **Discuss Future Agenda Items**

**Public Comment: 0**

- Standing item: Commission Workplan progress check
- Marylou – Presentation on the history of Urban ore
- Discuss which initiatives from the Zero Waste Strategic Plan Executive Summary commissioners will work on
- Keith and Leticia – City staff presentation on Zero Waste fund forecast and budget
- Transfer Station Rebuild 1-pager

- **Commissioner Announcements**

Discussion only. No Action Taken.

- SF Climate Week
- SWANA
- Zero Waste Youth USA
- Investor Forum

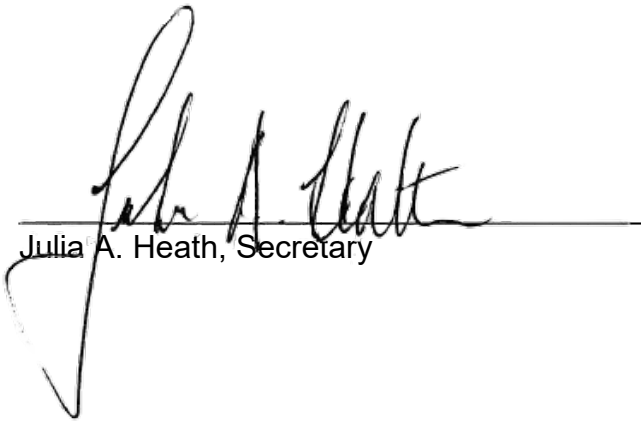
- **Adjournment at 7:35 p.m.**

M/S/C (Sherman/Monrad) to adjourn the meeting.

Ayes: Unanimous; Abstain: None; Absent: Layla Dargahi

The next regular meeting of the Zero Waste Commission will be held on Wednesday, May 20, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. in person at City of Berkeley Corporation Yard (Ratcliff Building, Willow Room) 1326 Allston Way, Berkeley.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julia A. Heath". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line. A large, stylized flourish extends downwards from the left side of the signature.

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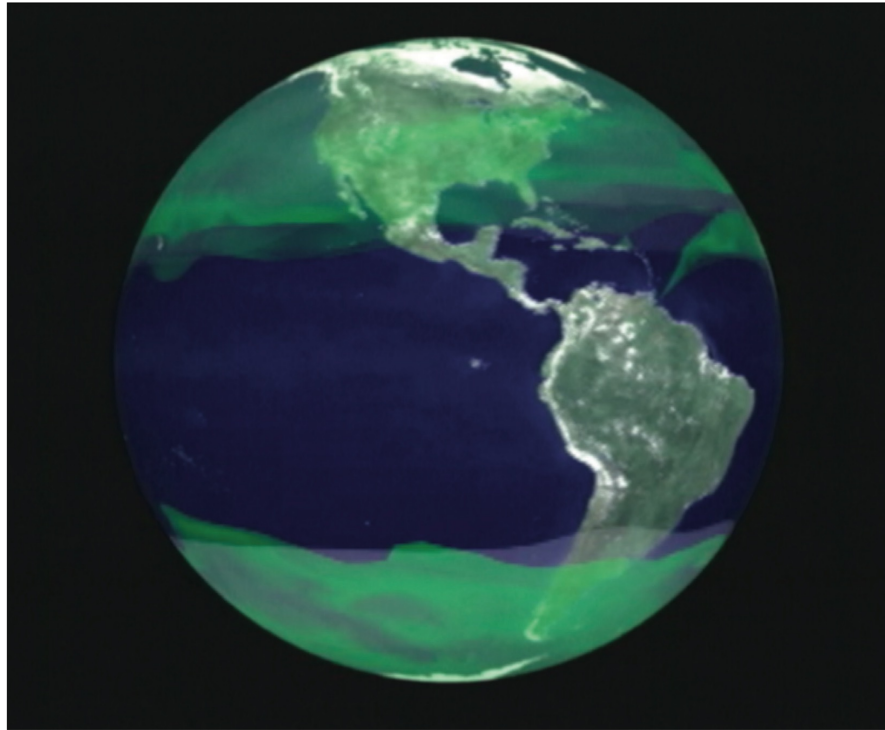
Julia A. Heath, Secretary

**Mining the**  
**URBAN ORE**  
**A 35-Year Saga**

**April 22, 2015**  
**45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Earth Day**

ADVERT.

# Why Bother Recycling?



Let the Earth turn. Watch the methane clouds lap the poles at <http://svs.gsfc.nasa.gov/vis/a000000/a001000/a001020/>

Landfilling is the largest human-generated source of methane, a greenhouse gas 17–100 times more potent than CO<sub>2</sub>. The shorter the timespan, the higher the number. Much more is produced and escapes into the air while filling the landfill than can be captured after equipment is in place. Watch NASA's 1999 animation of the Earth; green shows

the methane clouds at the melting poles. Don't waste discards. They're resources that were cut or mined, refined, made into something, and shipped around the world. Nearly all materials can be recovered and reused, recycled, or composted today – if handled well. Reuse and recycle at home and at work. Talk about it to your friends.

**Urban Ore is a for-profit  
company with a purpose:**

**TO END THE  
AGE OF WASTE**

# **We pursue our purpose by advocating and developing Zero Waste and total recycling. We:**

- **Operate a salvaging and reuse enterprise.**
- **Try to attain Zero Waste in our operations.**
- **Design discard management centers that replace landfills for the materials they handle.**
- **Advocate Zero Waste and total recycling by participating in trade and professional associations; by writing, speaking, and publishing; and by directly influencing policy.**

# Our three-acre Ecopark prevents landfilling

- **We salvage** at the City of Berkeley Solid Waste Transfer station.
- **We receive discards** people bring us, 360 days a year. (We buy some.)
- **We pick up unwanted things** after we screen the materials on the phone.

# Without us – chaos.



**Berkeley Dump circa 1979**

# The bad old days (1979).



Berkeley had an open dump, not yet a sanitary landfill, filling the San Francisco Bay shoreline. It was a common practice.

# **Berkeley mandated salvaging for reuse**

**The 1976 Solid Waste Management Plan called for salvaging for reuse. The Environmental Protection Agency recommended against it. One reason: “too dangerous.”**

**But it can be done safely. In 2014 our Workers’ Compensation experience modification rate was 67%.**

**We got permission to salvage  
and a place to put things down.**



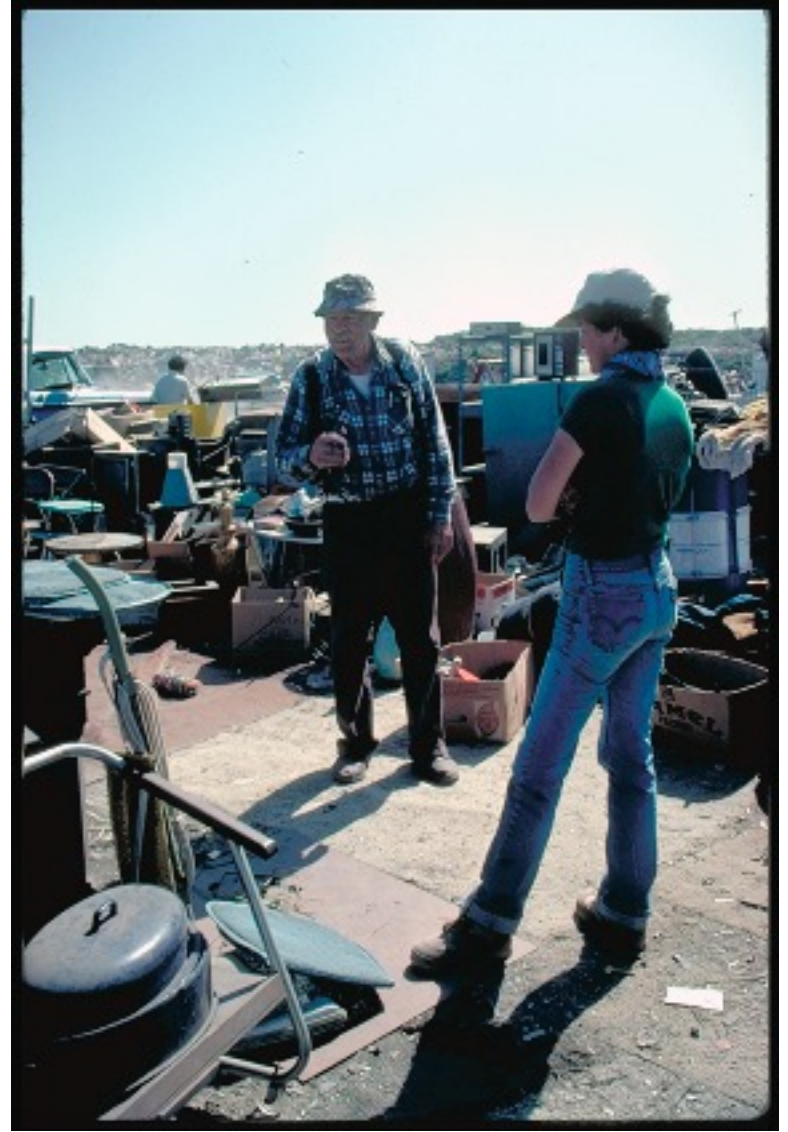
**We sold metals for scrap or reuse, whichever brought more.  
In 1980 we registered as a business.**



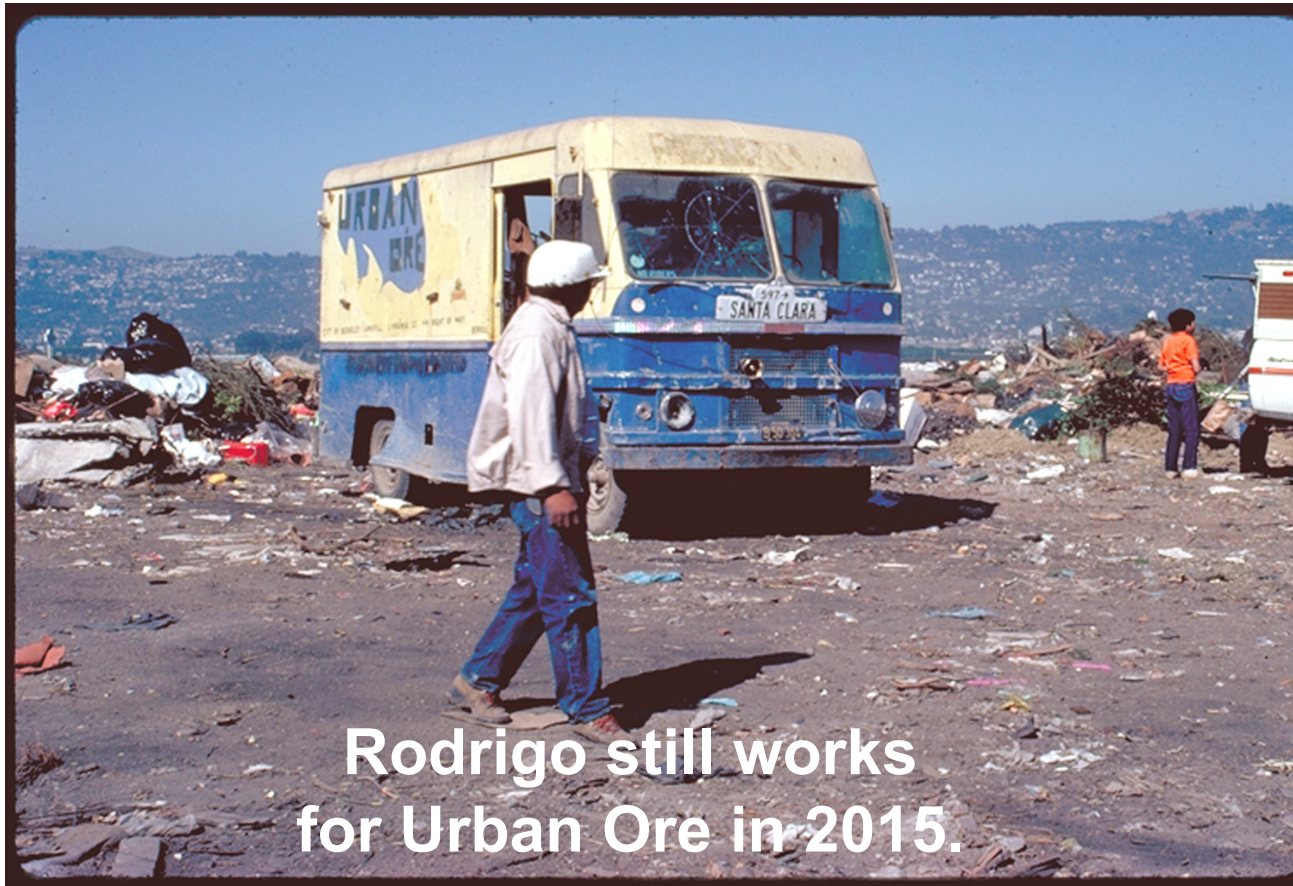
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TO END THE AGE OF WASTE

**We had no  
startup money,  
so we learned to  
sell - fast.**

**Bargaining was  
a must.**



**We saved our pennies and  
upgraded our equipment.**



**Rodrigo still works  
for Urban Ore in 2015.**

**URBAN ORE**<sup>®</sup>  
TO END THE AGE OF WASTE

**We expanded by renting  
a sales yard in town.**



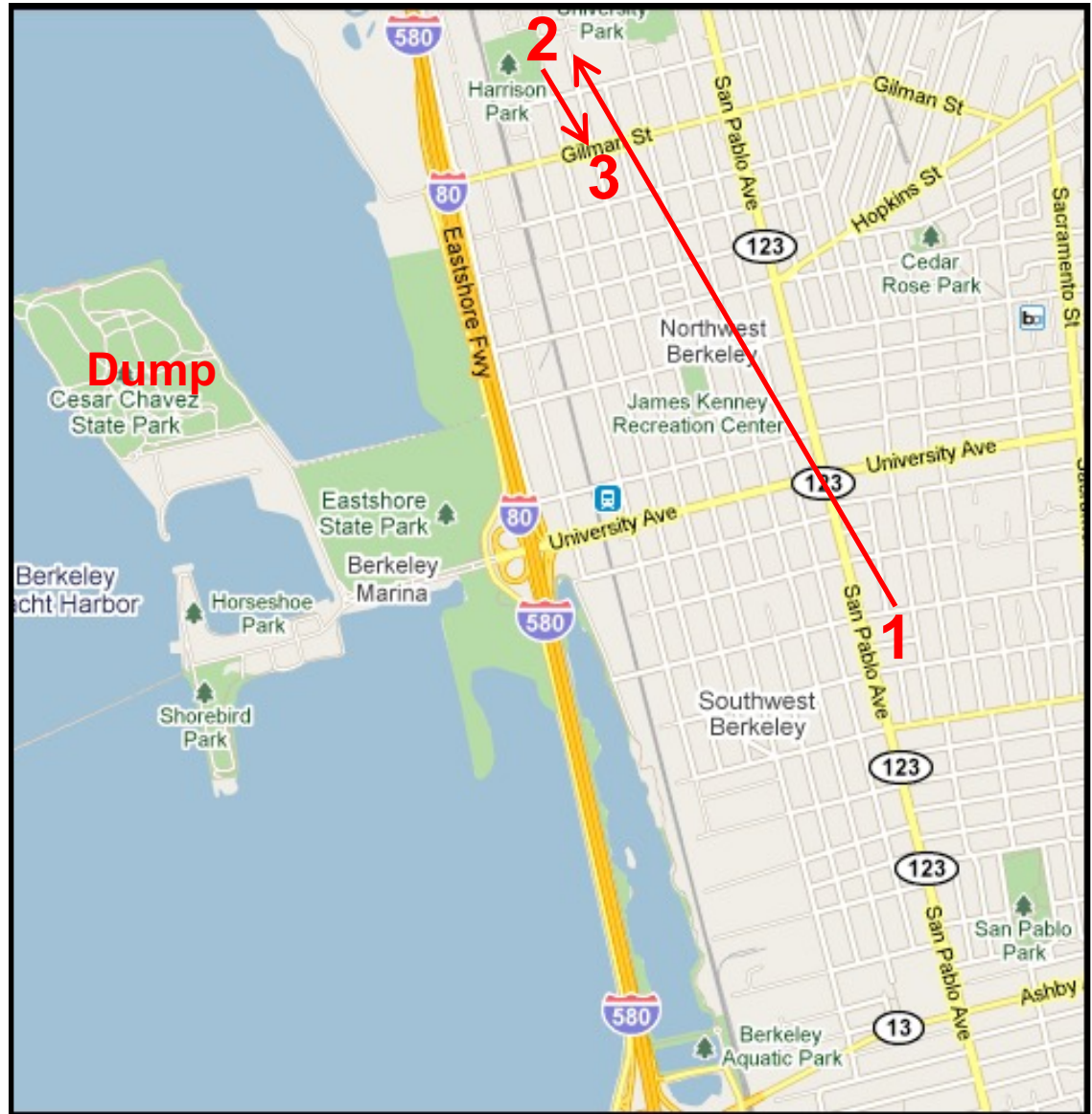
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**Over time it became clear that this yard would make the most money by specializing in building materials.**



**Founder Dr. Daniel Knapp still works the doors in 2015.**

But the building materials yard lost its location and was forced to move twice in two years. Fortunately location 3 was very good.



# Meanwhile we had to begin political advocacy almost at birth.

In 1980 the City planned a garbage incinerator that would burn 65% of incoming materials. For survival, we had to assure long-term access to the resources. But City Council wouldn't meet with recyclers about it. So in 1982 we and the other Berkeley recyclers fought City Hall and passed a citizens' initiative for a five-year moratorium. We won with more than 60% of the vote! Our slogan:

**GIVE RECYCLING A CHANCE!**

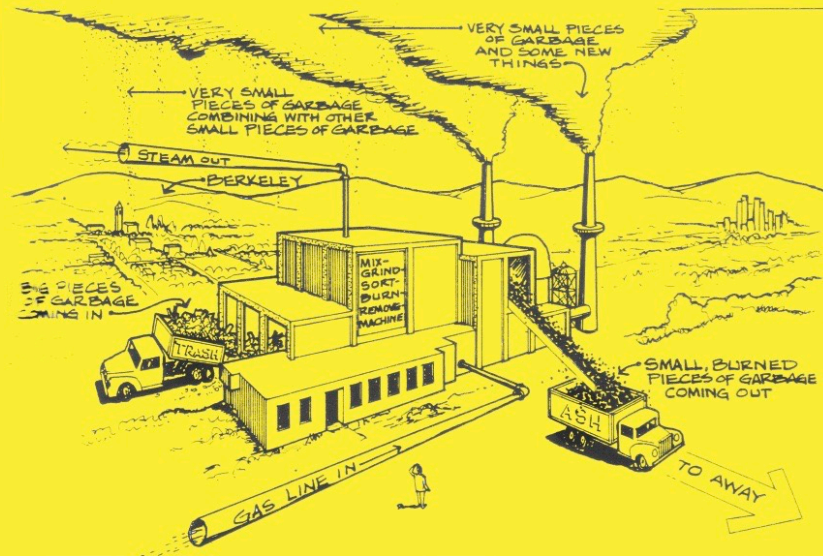
# We self-published to make our case.

An opponent called this “Dan Knapp’s yellow book that seems to be everywhere.” Everything we said was based on science. The approach was influential.

## THE BERKELEY BURN PLANT PAPERS

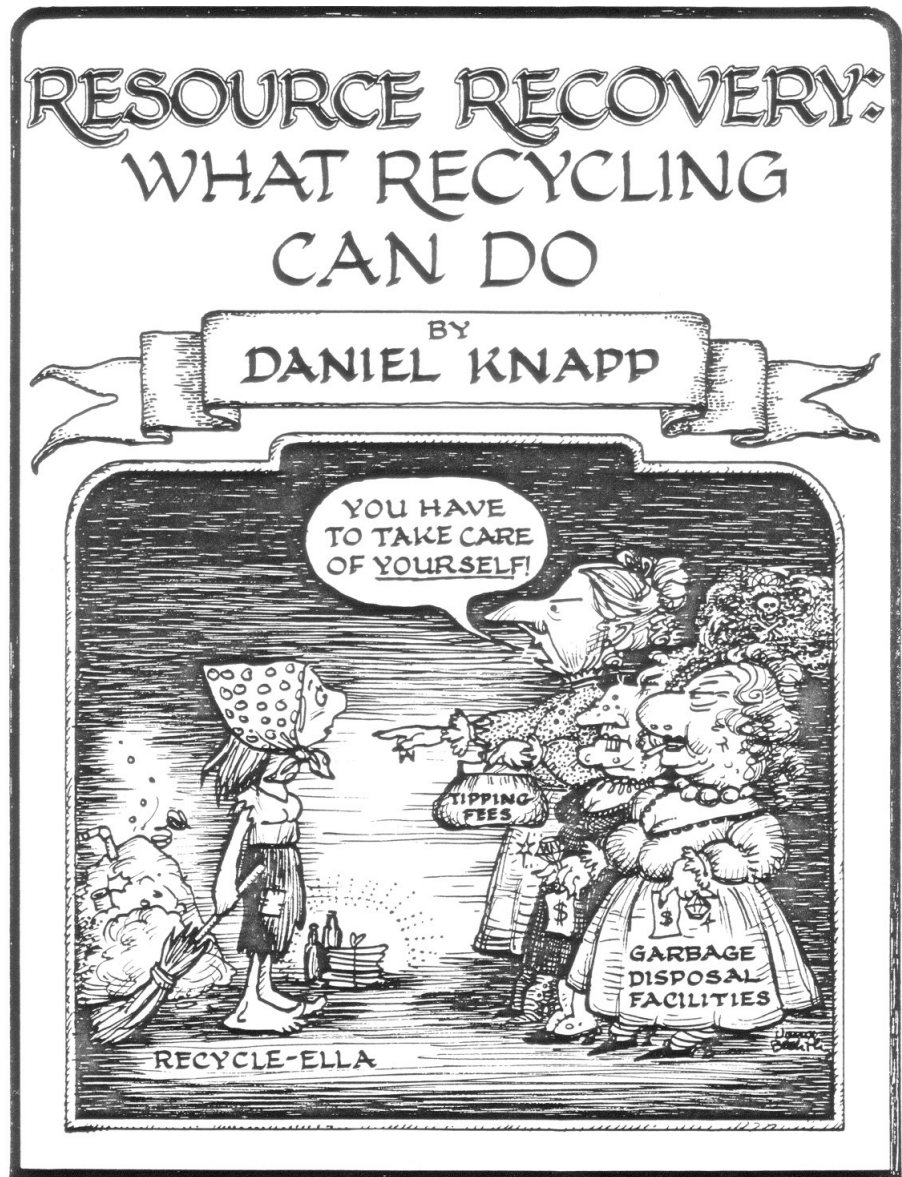
Revised and updated version, Copyright 1981 by Daniel Knapp. For limited distribution. All rights reserved.

1. Waste Into Wealth: Now You See It, Now You Don't	1
2. Notes on the Solid Waste Management Center	7
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10. Taking the Road Not Taken	66

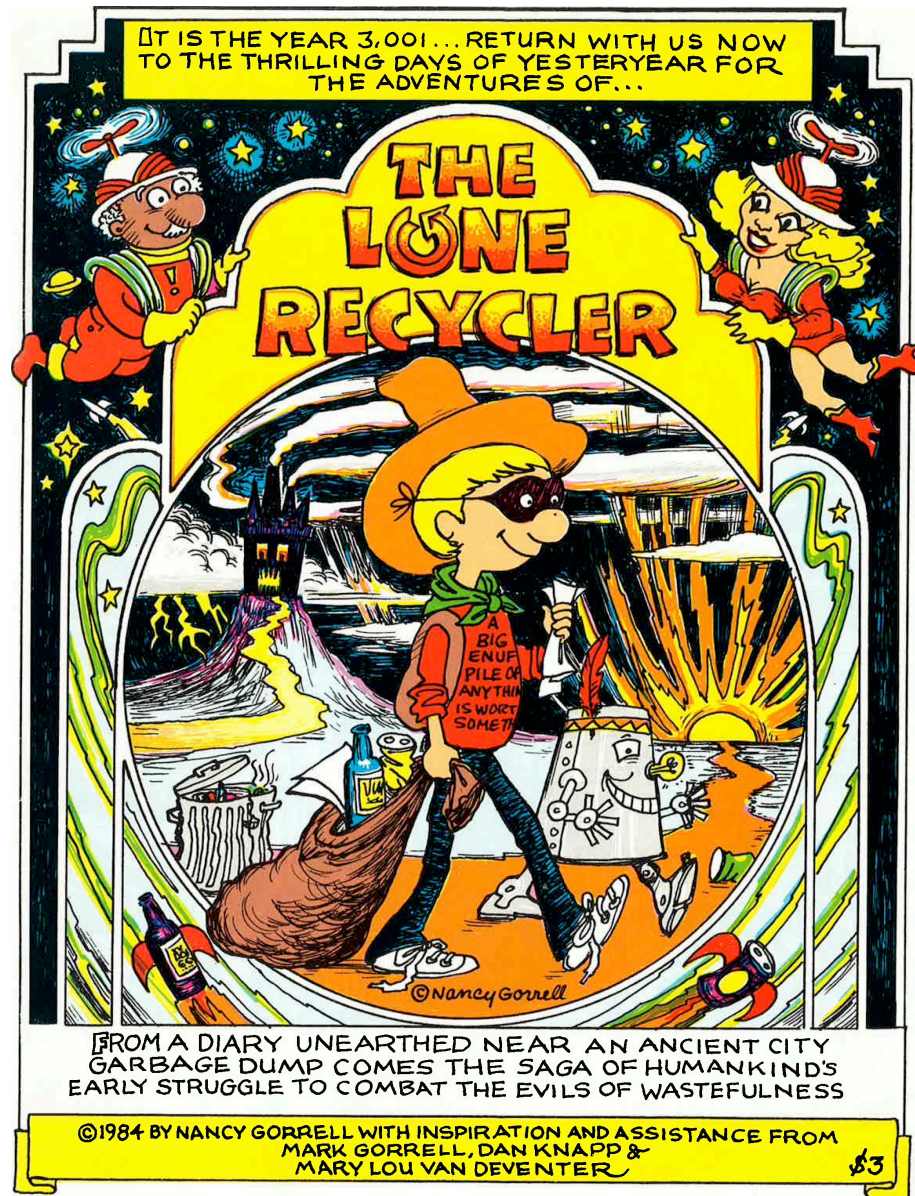


# We spoke truth to power.

This booklet was commissioned by a California agency that opposed incineration. But by the time the book was done, higher powers had pressured the agency to change its mind. So we published it ourselves.

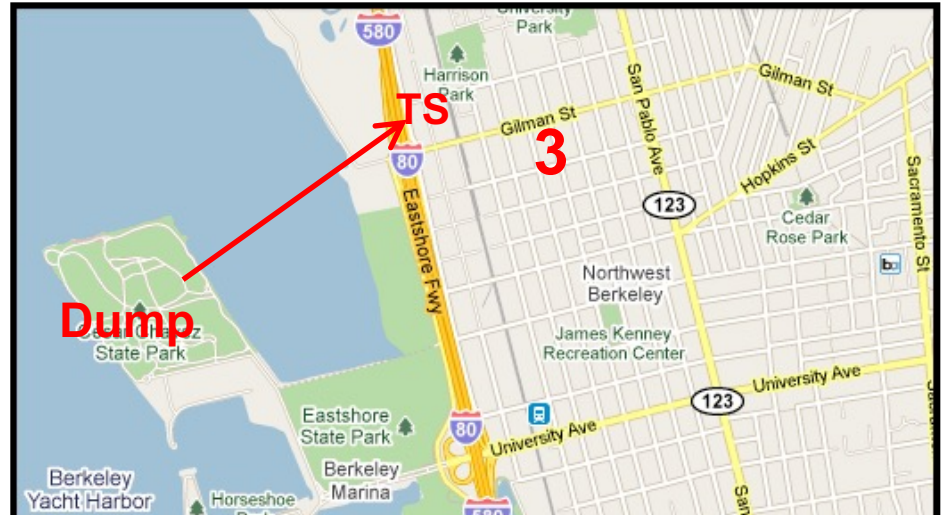


We  
didn't  
forget  
to have  
fun.

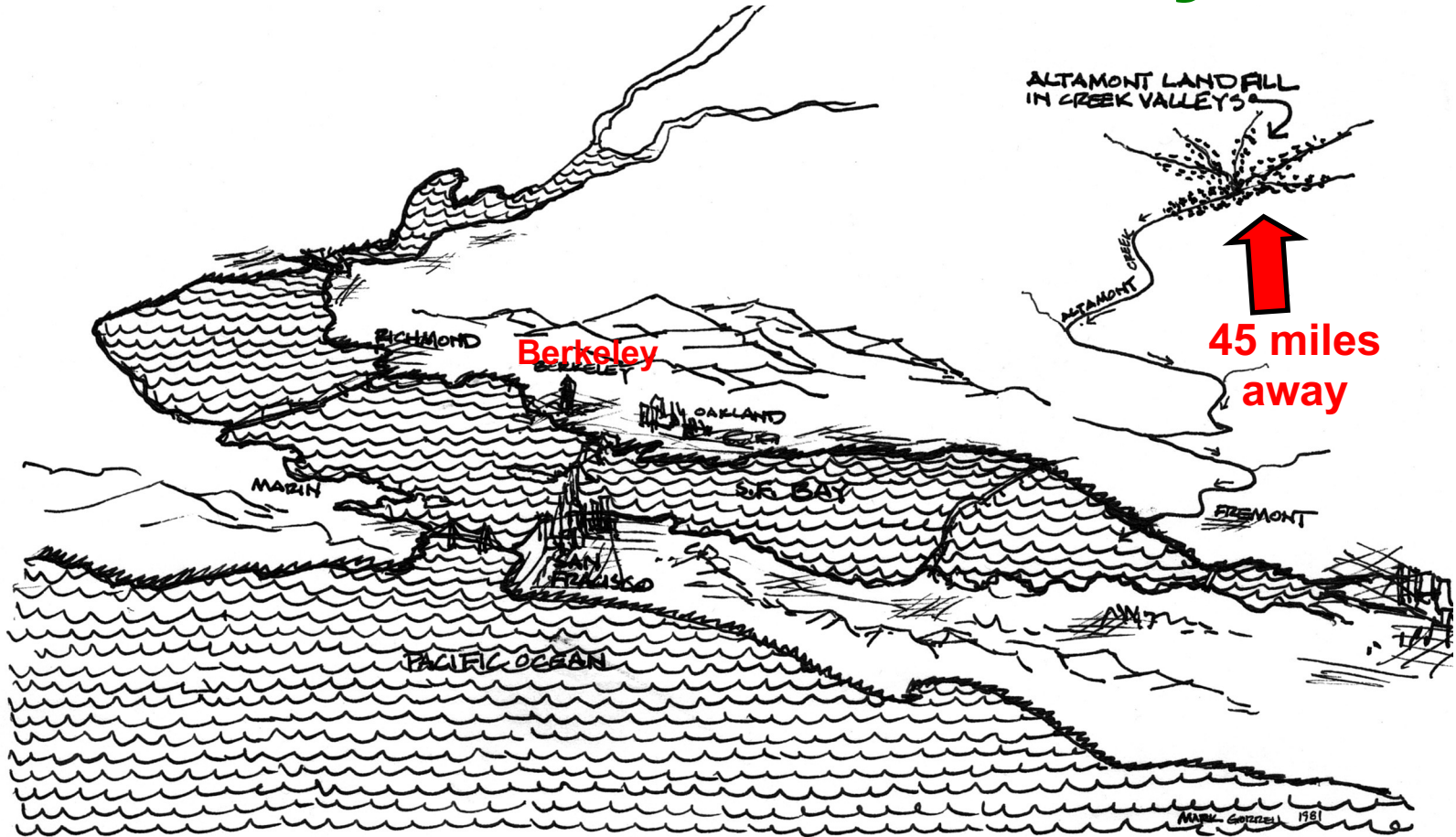


**In the next few years we helped defeat 6 garbage incinerators and pass 2 more citizens' initiatives. One banned incineration and set a 50% City recycling goal, and the other established a County agency to fund recycling. As of today that agency, StopWaste.org, has made millions of dollars in grants and loans available to fund reuse and recycling. We also coauthored Berkeley's Zero Waste Goal.**

When the landfill closed in 1983, the City opened a transfer station. Urban Ore moved its salvaging operation and store to the transfer station.



# The landfill Berkeley uses today is much farther away.



**Salvaging at the transfer station  
was easier than at the landfill.  
The concrete floor helped a lot.**



**The City incubated our business as a community service. We paid no rent until we earned \$11,000 a month. Then we paid 10% of the amount over \$11,000.**



In 1989 we left the transfer station and brought the two parts of Urban Ore together on Location 3, paying commercial rent.



**After 10 stable years we lost our lease and had to move again. This time it took two years and was very difficult. StopWaste, the City, and the State all helped. We upgraded and did earthquake retrofitting on an old pipe manufacturing building, today's location. In 2002 we completed our move. In 2009 we purchased the property! We hope NEVER to move again!**

# Home Sweet Home



# Today the landfill is Cesar Chavez Park.



# We have mixed feelings about the park.



# We still salvage.



Rodrigo in 2007

# We pick up.



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TO END THE AGE OF WASTE

**We receive up to 100 vehicles  
a day in Building Materials.**



**URBAN**  **RE**<sup>®</sup>  
TO END THE AGE OF WASTE

# And in the General Store.



**URBAN**  **RE**®  
TO END THE AGE OF WASTE

# Sometimes we buy.



**Rewards  
modify  
behavior.**

# We sell.



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**And  
sell.**

**And  
sell.**



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1/3 of interior from above



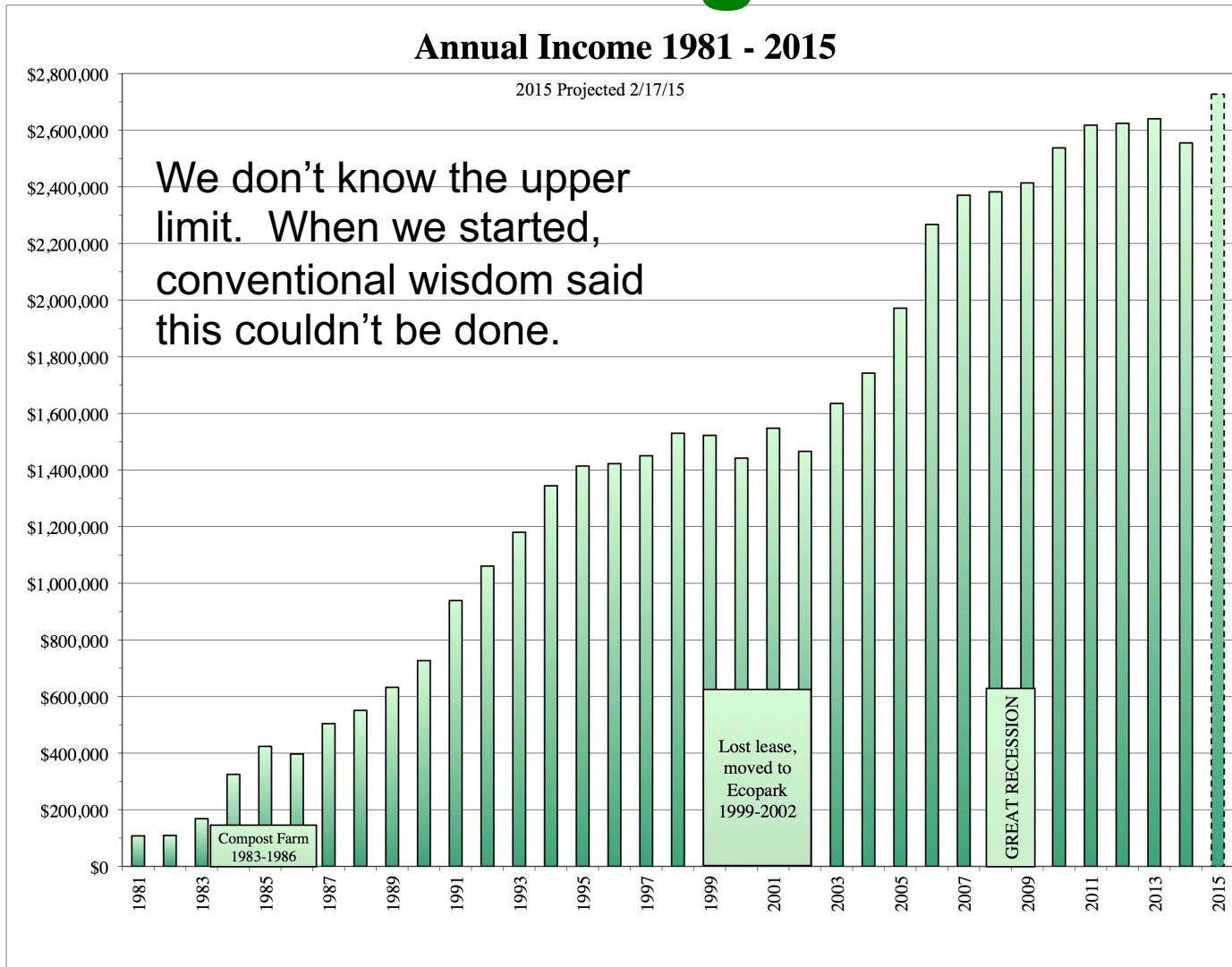
**2 acres more outside**

**What we can't sell, we recycle.**



**URBAN**  **ORE**<sup>®</sup>  
TO END THE AGE OF WASTE

# We have grown.



# **The Triple Bottom Line is our method: Planet, People, Profit.**

- **Planet: prevent landfilling, wasting, and pollution.**
- **People: work both physically and mentally; share income (9.5% of income + \$15/ton salvaged, shared equally according to hours worked); share profit; provide good benefits.**
- **Profit: build the enterprise to do more.**

# We thrive by serving.

## COMMUNITY BENEFIT 2014

- Purchases for resale \$103,254
- Sales taxes collected \$220,500
- Property taxes \$100,050
- Payroll taxes, fed & state \$ 96,588
- Taxes, licenses, fees \$ 8,258
- **TOTAL \$528,650**
- **7,000 tons/yr not landfilled Priceless**

# We educate through publications.

07/23/12

1 of 8

## Building an Ecology of Commerce: Discard Management in Berkeley, California, 10,000 BC to 2012 AD

By Dan Knapp, Urban Ore, Inc.

Today, Berkeley, California has exceeded 70% "diversion" from landfilling, a goal once thought impossible by many discard management professionals, including some prominent recyclers.

At Second and Gilman Streets, the City of Berkeley owns and manages a regional discard management hub that is anchored by six large "materials recovery enterprises."<sup>1</sup> Each of these entities employs dozens of people. Together with wasting, they collectively generate over \$40 million annually from a combination of service fees and product sales. Since these recovered resources are actually used in production and to maintain assets, there is a substantial economic multiplier that has never been accurately measured.

Wasting is declining. Recycling is increasing. The underlying driver is quality production and specialization. Berkeley's resource trading hub draws its supply primarily from local sources, but the commodities and products it generates go all over the region and the world.

The six enterprises are evenly divided between public and private ownership. Three private independent businesses are contractors to the City. Three City-owned recycling enterprises are organized within the waste transfer facility under an enterprise fund structure managed by the Public Works Department. Access to the discard supply is through well-defined "portals" that are split according to specialty.

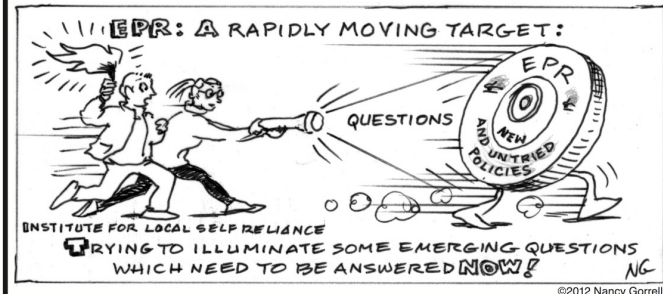
It was not always so. The following chronology shows how this ecology of commerce has grown up around one central imperative: to dispose of all discarded resources responsibly, without wasting anything.

### The Chronology

10,000 BC to 1848: Native Americans dump rot-resistant oyster and clam shells that english-speaking Europeans called "shellmounds" along the East Bay shoreline.

<sup>1</sup> Materials Recovery Enterprise is a category of business that can occupy land zoned Mixed-Use/Light Industrial. Berkeley passed this zoning amendment in 1999 to facilitate the growth of what it then called its "Green Valley," a cluster of green businesses anchored and fed by its regional resource recovery transfer station.

## The EPR Trilogy



©2012 Nancy Gorrell

### Together At Last: Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and Total Recycling

### Total Recovery for Reuse, Recycling, and Composting: How to Make It So

### Extended Producer Responsibility in British Columbia – A Work at Risk

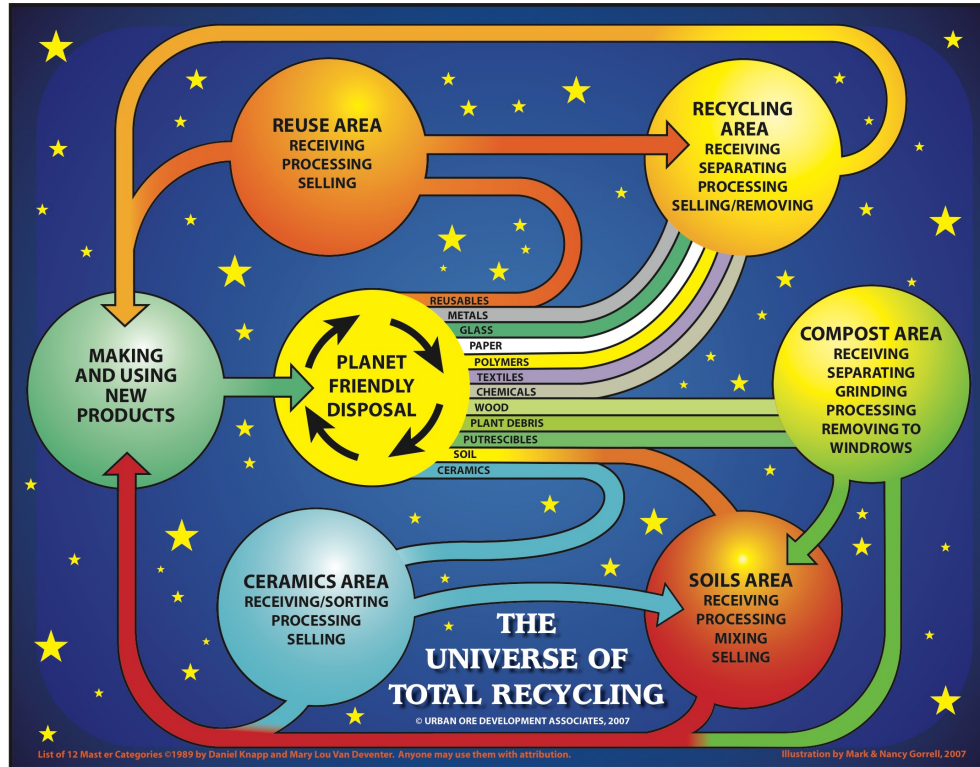
These articles were written individually for publication elsewhere and are collected here pre-publication for distribution to attendees at the Northern California Recycling Association's Recycling Update XVII, March 27, 2012.

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TO END THE AGE OF WASTE

# TOTAL RECYCLING IS NO END-OF-THE-PIPE DREAM

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ADVERTISEMENT

We educate through advertising.



The resource pipe *has no end* - that's the point! After we Reduce our resource use and our discards, we Reuse and Recycle. Total Recycling recirculates manufactured products and already-refined resources. It provides feedstocks for new products, building the economy while preventing unnecessary mining and logging. No waste is good waste.

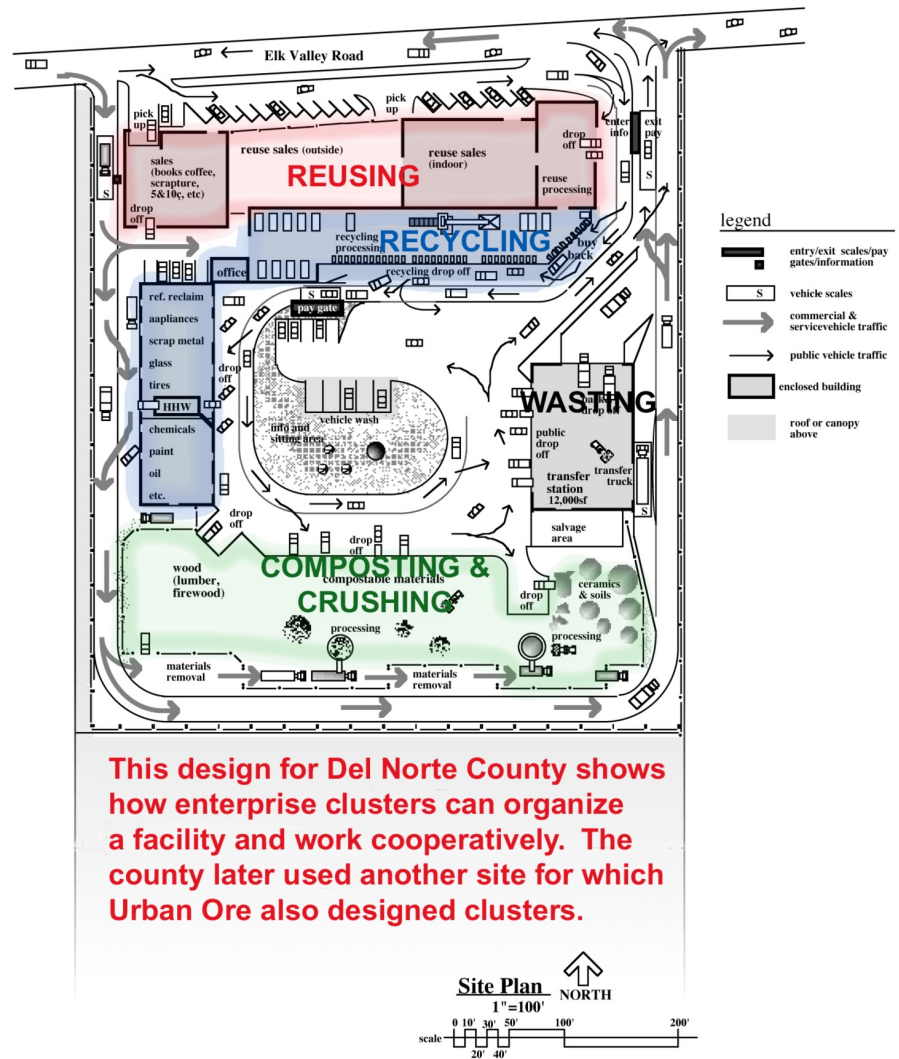
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<http://urbanore.com>

**URBANORE®**  
TO END THE AGE OF WASTE

# We design Zero Waste facilities

We have designed more than 25 community-scale facilities in the US, England, Australia, and New Zealand.



This design for Del Norte County shows how enterprise clusters can organize a facility and work cooperatively. The county later used another site for which Urban Ore also designed clusters.

Urban Ore Design Group  
Berkeley, California  
Mark Gurrell, Architect

Del Norte Solid Waste Management Authority  
Resource Recovery Park  
Site Plan • Phase III • 13 March 2001

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3  
of 3



**As Dr. Ore  
says:  
Waste *isn't*  
waste until it's  
wasted.**

**URBAN**  **ORE**®  
TO END THE AGE OF WASTE

URBAN ORE E

**900 MURRAY ST.  
BERKELEY, CA 94710  
PHONE 510-841-SAVE  
URBANORE.COM**

City of Berkeley, California

# ADOPTED BUDGET



FOR FISCAL YEAR  
2025 & 2026

## Zero Waste Fund

The Zero Waste Fund supports activities related to the removal of waste in the City of Berkeley. Fees for disposal of waste at the City's transfer station and refuse fees charged to owners of premises and places in the City from which garbage is collected generate revenue to this fund. Refuse charges are either collected through the payment of property tax bills or directly paid to the City of Berkeley. Refuse collection fees are established by resolution of the City Council and the conduct of a majority protest process under Proposition 218. Fee amounts are currently determined by the size and number of receptacles, and the frequency of service.

### Analysis of Zero Waste Fund

A rate study was conducted in FY 2022 to evaluate the current rate and any adjustments needed to sustain future Zero Waste Operations, including cost recovery for recycling collection and addressing capital needs at the Transfer Station. Rate increases to the Zero Waste Fund were last approved via the Proposition 218 process in June 2023 with the final scheduled rate increase effective in FY 2027. The fund maintains a positive fund balance but is projecting an annual operating shortfall over the next few years due to permitting and environmental review costs for the Transfer Station Replacement project.

## Zero Waste Fund Forecast

	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Adopted	FY 2024 Est. Actual	FY 2025 Adopted	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Projected	FY 2028 Projected
<b>Beginning Fund Balance</b>	\$ 26,025,170	\$ 24,668,263	\$ 24,668,263	\$ 20,189,889	\$ 13,238,656	\$ 13,579,474	\$ 13,656,604
<b>Revenues</b>							
Residential Collection	\$ 16,453,980	\$ 16,202,780	\$ 16,195,774	\$ 19,185,893	\$ 20,912,623	\$ 22,376,507	\$ 23,271,567
Commercial Collection	17,925,909	16,122,306	17,287,462	20,332,589	22,162,529	23,636,082	24,581,526
Transfer Station	9,552,723	8,505,493	8,920,918	10,309,420	10,618,360	10,925,146	11,252,901
Franchise Fees	528,788	337,644	245,946	425,000	425,000	450,000	450,000
Recycling Fee	229,396	133,447	1,597,202	141,476	150,226	150,196	154,702
Recycling Food Waste	3,133,013	3,053,307	3,355,283	3,727,477	4,062,950	4,347,357	4,521,251
CoB Interdepartmental	1,119,893	1,144,732	1,075,865	1,397,489	1,523,263	1,629,891	1,695,087
Exempt Agencies	436,492	412,211	338,282	503,227	548,518	586,914	610,390
Misc. Revenue	670,223	855,343	1,200,791	870,053	886,086	963,535	992,441
<b>Subtotal, Revenues</b>	\$ 50,050,417	\$ 46,767,263	\$ 50,217,523	\$ 56,892,624	\$ 61,289,555	\$ 65,065,628	\$ 67,529,865
<b>Expenditures</b>							
Personnel	\$ 22,202,239	\$ 22,872,971	\$ 21,730,013	\$ 25,719,141	\$ 26,324,425	\$ 25,378,827	\$ 26,370,702
Non-Personnel & Capital	29,205,085	36,616,659	32,965,884	38,124,716	34,624,312	39,609,671	39,299,824
<b>Subtotal, Expenditures</b>	\$ 51,407,324	\$ 59,489,630	\$ 54,695,897	\$ 63,843,857	\$ 60,948,737	\$ 64,988,498	\$ 65,670,526
<b>Annual Surplus/(Shortfall)</b>	(1,356,907)	(12,722,367)	(4,478,374)	(6,951,233)	340,818	77,130	1,859,339
<b>Ending Fund Balance</b>	\$ 24,668,263	\$ 11,945,896	\$ 20,189,889	\$ 13,238,656	\$ 13,579,474	\$ 13,656,604	\$ 15,515,943

## Zero Waste Fund Forecast Table | Assumptions

### Revenues

- ▶ FY 2024 is Year 1 of a new 5 Year Prop 218 rate schedule.
- ▶ FY 2024 - FY 2027 projections based upon the new rate schedule.

### Expenditures

- ▶ FY 2024 included \$6M included in the capital budget for the Transfer Station Replacement Project.
- ▶ The project is still in the design phase, including early stages of CEQA planning.

## Zero Waste Fund 601 Proposed

	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2026 Revised	FY 2026 Projected	FY 2027 Projected	FY 2028 Projected
<b>Beginning Balance</b>	<b>24,669,999</b>	<b>20,539,424</b>	<b>18,587,276</b>	<b>18,587,276</b>	<b>18,587,276</b>	<b>16,204,152</b>	<b>14,730,981</b>
<b>Revenues</b>	<b>50,552,675</b>	<b>53,984,317</b>	<b>61,289,555</b>	<b>61,289,555</b>	<b>60,971,154</b>	<b>64,376,841</b>	<b>67,288,372</b>
Residential Collection	16,439,530	17,802,265	20,912,623	20,912,623	20,081,208	21,737,208	23,393,208
Commercial Collection	17,616,692	17,990,231	22,089,797	22,089,797	20,824,093	22,281,779	23,173,050
Transfer Station	9,154,945	9,042,449	10,606,938	10,606,938	9,779,318	10,072,697	10,374,878
Franchise Fees	245,946	657,348	425,000	425,000	477,361	475,000	475,000
Recycling Fee	1,598,514	2,047,080	150,226	150,226	2,444,067	2,615,151	2,368,766
Recycling Food Waste	3,390,854	3,456,794	4,062,950	4,062,950	4,152,404	4,443,073	4,620,796
CoB Interdepartmental	1,075,865	1,298,967	1,523,263	1,523,263	\$1,185,775	\$1,268,779	1,319,531
Exempt Agencies	338,282	376,062	548,518	548,518	\$552,669	\$591,356	615,010
Misc. Revenue (interest)	692,048	1,313,120	970,240	970,240	\$1,474,259	\$ 891,797	948,133
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>54,683,250</b>	<b>55,936,466</b>	<b>61,600,713</b>	<b>71,684,415</b>	<b>63,354,278</b>	<b>65,850,012</b>	<b>73,555,071</b>
Personnel	21,687,913	24,380,742	26,130,992	26,211,937	23,235,414	24,660,523	25,646,944
<i>Other Department Personnel:</i>							
Finance	579,492	746,629	908,225	908,225	674,503	704,856	733,050
Planning	77,474	91,875	108,516	108,516	89,503	93,531	97,272
CMO	13,431	14,165	15,219	15,219	14,318	14,962	15,561
PRW	29,010	47,689	52,484	52,484	1,550	1,620	1,685
Total other Department Personnel	699,407	900,358	1,084,443	1,084,443	779,874	814,969	847,567
Non-Personnel	32,995,337	31,555,724	33,269,721	43,199,769	38,338,536	35,889,489	36,608,127
Capital Improvement Projects	0	0	2,200,000	2,272,710	1,780,327	5,300,000	2,900,000
Transfer Station Bond Debt Repayment							8,400,000
<b>Annual Surplus/Shortfall</b>	<b>-4,130,575</b>	<b>-1,952,149</b>	<b>-311,157</b>	<b>-10,394,859</b>	<b>-2,383,123</b>	<b>-1,473,171</b>	<b>-6,266,699</b>
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>20,539,424</b>	<b>18,587,276</b>	<b>18,276,118</b>	<b>8,192,416</b>	<b>16,204,152</b>	<b>14,730,981</b>	<b>8,464,283</b>

## Assumptions &amp; Issues:

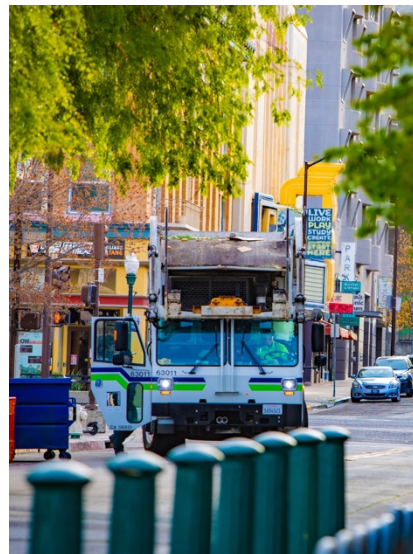
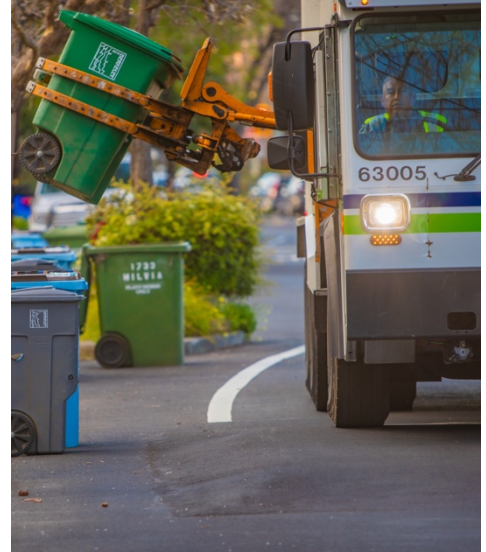
## Revenues

- 1) Residential & Commercial rates - rate increases approved by City Council July 1, 2024.
- 2) Approved Rate Increases through FY 2028: Residential at \$6.00 per unit. Commercial: FY 2024 .4%, FY 2025 9%, FY 2026 9%, FY 2027
- 3) Proposition 218 5-year rate study to determine collections rates expected to be completed mid-year FY 2027.
- 4) Transfer Station Rate increases implemented

## Expenditures

- 1) Public Works Personnel - COLA: FY 2025 6%, FY 2026 4%, FY 2027 4.5%, FY 2028 forward projected includes a 4% for personnel increases (such as
- 2) Public Works Overtime - Operations staff are available to work overtime to cover daily staffing shortages, crews are assigned a second route on
- 3) Capital Improvements - Transfer Station Redesign in progress. Project design complete, CEQA approval nearing completion. Construction
- 4) Estimated Transfer Station Redesign and Replacement Bond Debt Repayment \$8.4MM
- 5) Capital Improvements - Removal of underground fuel storage tank completed December 2026. Installation of above ground fuel storage tank

2026-2027 Draft Goals	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 in the City of 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



AUGUST 2025



# CITY OF BERKELEY ZERO WASTE STRATEGIC PLAN

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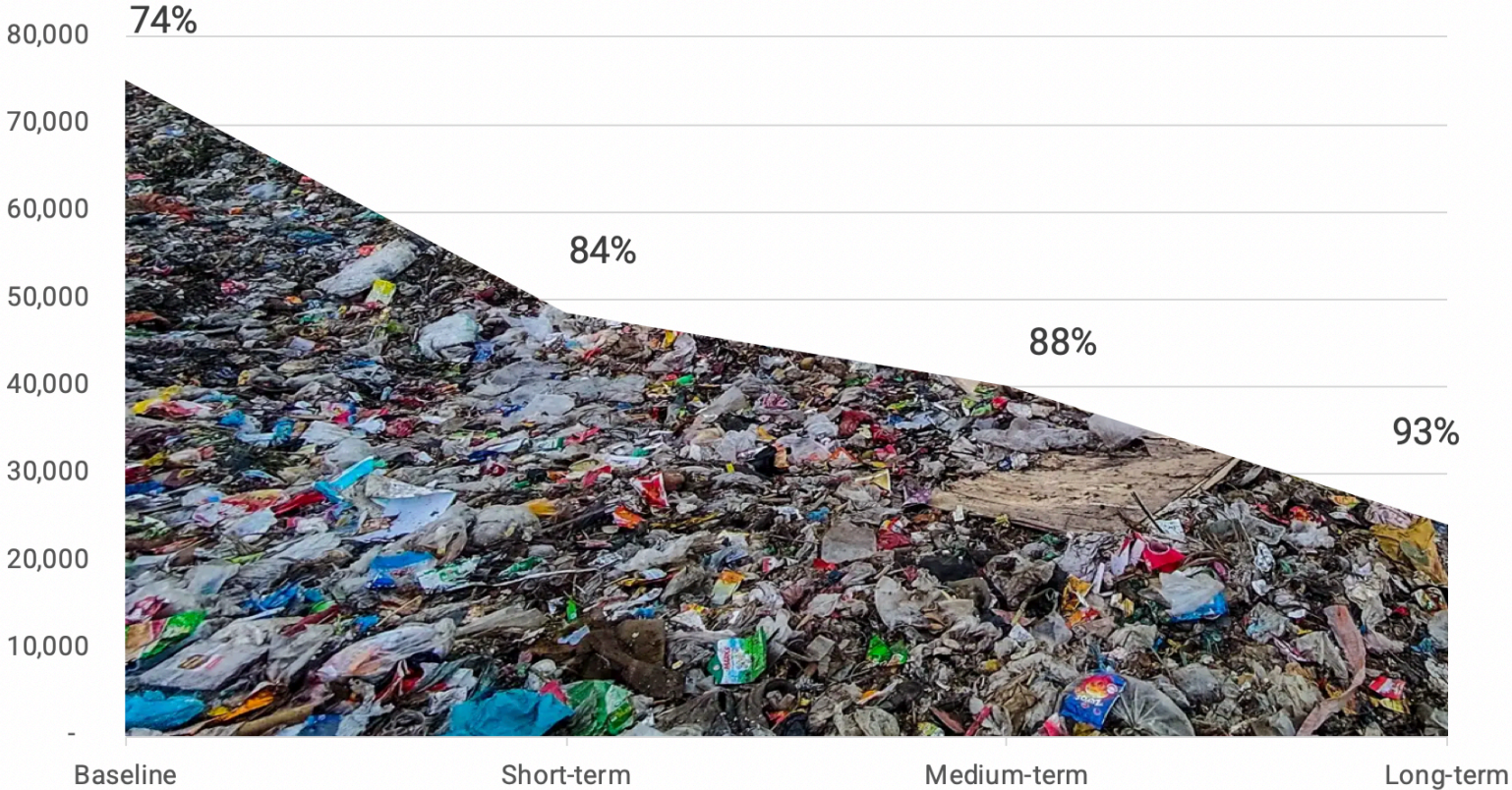
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Berkeley (City) has a long and storied history of local, state and nationwide environmental leadership. The City and its community members have implemented many forward-thinking and effective environmentally focused policies, initiatives, and programs, including establishing one of the first municipal curbside recycling programs in the nation. The Zero Waste Division within the Department of Public Works operates the City’s collection system and City-owned Berkeley Solid Waste and Recycling Transfer Station. The City partners with three mission-driven organizations: Community Conservation Centers, the Ecology Center, and Urban Ore to provide recyclables processing, residential recycling collection, and salvaging reusable items at the Transfer Station.

The City Council adopted a Zero Waste goal in 2005 and the City reached 74 percent diversion from destructive disposal (landfill or incineration) in 2022. The Zero Waste Strategic Plan identifies the policies, programs and infrastructure that will be needed to increase the City’s diversion rate to 93 percent over the 10-year planning period.

### Tonnage Reduction and Diversion Rate Increase Over Time



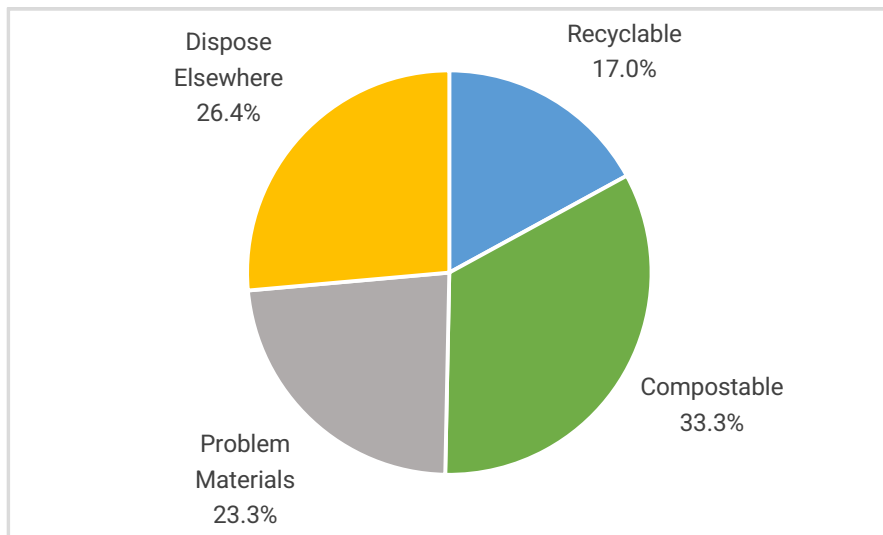
The City conducted a stakeholder-driven planning process which included a citywide survey, listening sessions, interviews and focus groups, in-person and online workshops, and meetings with the City's Zero Waste Commission and Environment and Climate Commission.

As part of the development process, workshop participants identified seven Guiding Principles for the plan.

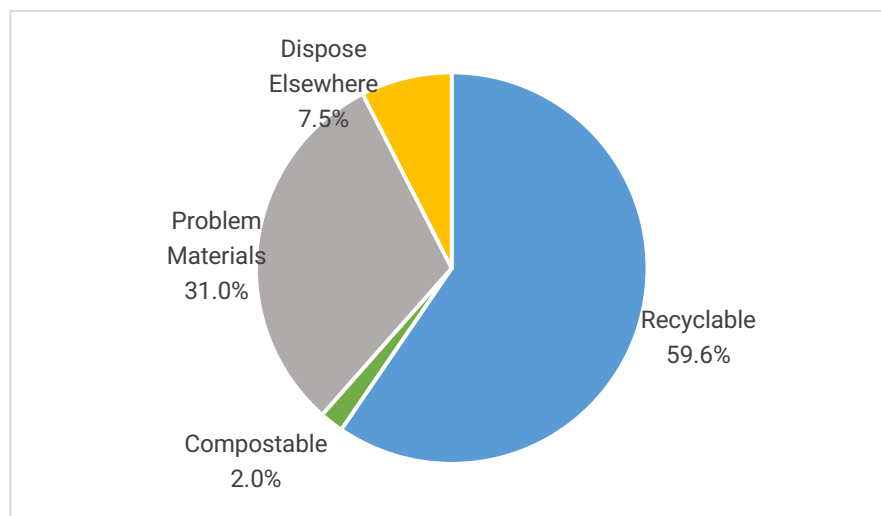
1. Grow community power through public engagement, accountability and a sense of accomplishment
2. Ensure City department leadership in Zero Waste practices
3. Engage public and private institutions to model Zero Waste practices
4. Prioritize reduction, reuse and repair
5. Hold producers accountable for their problem products through state and federal advocacy
6. Create a culture of Zero Waste through reducing consumption and maximizing reuse, recycling and composting
7. Make "doing the right thing" convenient and accessible for all

The City conducted a comprehensive materials characterization study, sampling recycling, organics, and refuse streams from residential, commercial and self-haul customers. The study concluded that over 50 percent of materials disposed as refuse by residential and commercial customers could have been recycled or composted through the City’s current programs. Approximately 26 percent are potentially recyclable elsewhere, but would require new programs in Berkeley. Approximately 23 percent of materials in the refuse are not reusable, recyclable or compostable and would require new policies to address (at the state or local level). Over 60 percent of materials delivered to the Transfer Station by self-haul customers could have been recycled.

**Material Recoverability, Single Family, Multi-Family and Commercial Refuse, 2023**



**Material Recoverability, Berkeley Self-Haul Refuse, 2023**



Based on the stakeholder outreach, materials characterization study, research conducted about potential new policies and programs implemented in other communities, the City identified 33 new Zero Waste initiatives to implemented in the short-term (1-3 years), medium term (4-7), and long-term (8-10 years). Detailed descriptions of the Zero Waste initiatives are included in an attachment to the plan.

### Zero Waste Initiatives

Short-Term (1-3 Years)	Medium-Term (4-7 Years)	Long-Term (8-10 Years)
Single-Use Foodware and Litter Reduction Ordinance Update	Space Allocation for Buildings Ordinance	Mandatory Self-haul Source Separation Ordinance
Zero Waste Events Ordinance	Living Walls, Landscaping, or Rooftop Gardens	Museum of Bad Design Displays
Mobile Food Vending Ordinance	Lease Requirements and Minimum Service Ordinance	Research and Development Institute
Water-Efficient Landscape Ordinance	Food Recovery Program Expansion	"User-friendly" Transfer Station
Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance	Battery Collection	
Zero Waste Business Expansion Ordinance	Household Hazardous Waste Collection	
Space Allocation for Enclosures Ordinance	Hard-to-Recycle Materials Collection	
Green Building Ordinance Update	Furniture and Household Goods Collection	
Zero Waste Education and Enforcement	Diaper Program and Pet Waste Diversion Program	
Share, Reuse, Repair Program	Reusable Foodware Infrastructure	
Alternative Rate Structures	Tool Lending Library Expansion	
Zero Waste Events Program	Water Bottle Refill Stations	
Construction Materials Reuse Exchange	Public Compost Bins	
Zero Packaging and Refill Store Expansion	Household Hazardous Waste Drop-off Expansion	
	Expand Materials Collected Curbside	

An essential component of the City's Zero Waste infrastructure is the redevelopment of the Transfer Station. Built in 1983, the Transfer Station is showing its age. In 2018-19, the City undertook a feasibility study to identify the critical needs in rebuilding the Transfer Station and conducted community outreach to obtain input on the desired program features. The permitting process and environmental reviews are nearing completion and the financing program is in development. As the Transfer Station will need to be operational during redevelopment, the rebuild is scheduled in six phases over five years. The Transfer Station is expected to be operational by 2031.

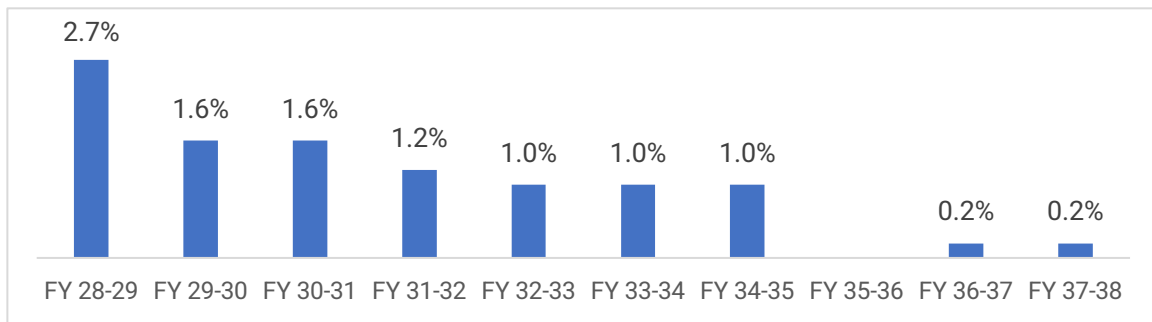


Redesign concept rendering, prepared by Zero Waste Collaborative

The rebuild is necessary not only for program enhancements, but is essential to worker and customer safety, traffic mitigation, and environmental protection. An attachment to the plan includes more details about the Transfer Station Feasibility Study, Estimated Costs for rebuilding the Transfer Station, and the Financing Plan for the Transfer Station.

Costs for implementing the policies and programs identified in the Zero Waste Strategic Plan are estimated to be \$7.5 million over the 10-year planning period and would potentially increase collection rates by 10.5 percent over that timeframe. Some of these costs can be off-set based on staffing reassignment or alternative revenue sources (such as grants and program fees).

### Annual Rate Adjustments for Zero Waste Initiatives (Excluding Transfer Station Rebuild)



Costs for the Transfer Station rebuild is estimated to be \$119.4 million. This cost would result in a 19.7 percent increase to the rates. The City can also potentially reduce the costs of landfilling and increase revenues from the sale of recyclable materials.

Expenditures for implementing the Zero Waste Strategic Plan and Transfer Station rebuild will be subject to annual department budgeting and future actions of the Berkeley City Council.

## Zero Waste

The internationally peer-reviewed definition has been curated by the Zero Waste International Alliance:

Zero Waste is the conservation of all resources by means of responsible production, consumption, reuse, and recovery of products, packaging, and materials without burning and with no discharges to land, water, or air that threaten the environment or human health.<sup>1</sup>

The Zero Waste Hierarchy<sup>2</sup> describes a progression of policies, programs and infrastructure to support the development of a Zero Waste system, from highest and best to lowest use of materials. The components of the hierarchy are:

- **Rethink/Redesign** – Design and purchase products/materials to be durable, repairable, reusable, fully recyclable or compostable, and easily disassembled.
- **Reduce** – Minimize quantity and toxicity of materials used.
- **Reuse** – Maximize reuse of materials and products.
- **Recycle/Compost** – Support and expand systems to keep materials in their original production loop and to protect the full usefulness of the materials.
- **Materials Recovery** – Maximize materials recovery from mixed discards and research purposes after extensive source separation.
- **Residuals Management** – Examine materials that remain and use this information to refine the systems to rethink, reduce, reuse, and recycle in order to prevent further discards. Biologically stabilize materials prior to landfilling.
- **Unacceptable** – Incineration and other “waste-to-energy” or “waste-to-fuels” schemes.



<sup>1</sup>Zero Waste International Alliance: <https://zwia.org/zero-waste-definition/>

<sup>2</sup>Zero Waste International Alliance: <http://www.zwia.org/zwh>

## **Berkeley Transfer Station and Recycling Center**

### **What is It?**

Berkeley's publicly-owned Transfer Station and Recycling Center provides our residents and businesses with convenient, reliable, and affordable recycling, composting, and disposal. This important infrastructure was built over 30 years ago. It was designed just to handle trash. Now, it also processes curbside and drop-off recyclables, yard trimmings and food scraps for composting, construction/demolition debris, reusable materials, and other items. This expanded range of services is no longer optional, but fundamental and essential, given State of California mandates.

### **Why Does It Need Upgrading?**

The facility should be upgraded for public and worker safety and efficiency, and to meet its expanded current and future role in environmental protection, sustainable use of natural resources, and climate change response.

### **What Could Happen If Upgrading Is Not Done?**

Without major upgrading or re-building, we believe that the facility will increasingly pose worker and customer safety and stormwater management risks. If the facility were not available, the City, its residents and businesses would face substantially higher costs, much longer drives and drive times to other materials processing facilities, loss of dozens of local jobs, diminished quality of end products, and greater environmental and climate change impact.

### **What Will the Upgraded Facility Do?**

Upgrading the Berkeley Transfer Station and Recycling Center will allow the City to:

- reduce physical safety concerns;
- better manage operational discharges (e.g., stormwater) to protect environmental health and to avoid citations and fines;
- meet extensive State of California waste reduction, recycling, and composting requirements;
- reduce wait times and improve operational efficiency through better traffic flow and materials processing.

## **The Berkeley Transfer Station/Recycling Center is a Tremendous Public Asset**

1. Centerpiece of Local Environmental Linkages: Hub that links environmental issues, including climate change, with local economy, sustainability and community resiliency.
2. Waste Reduction and Recycling (Resource Conservation): Accepts wide array of reusable, recyclable and compostable materials.
3. Climate Change Response: The facility is the City's single most vital property for making meaningful differences in resource consumption and reduction in greenhouse gas generation.
4. Local Revenue: The facility is a publicly-owned and -operated enterprise that generates revenue for the City from facility usage fees ("gate or tip fees") and from the sale of recyclable materials.
5. Saving Costs: By operating the facility in-house, the City avoids paying the profit margin any third party would charge to perform the same functions, and keeps those funds working within our community instead of flowing to distant corporate shareholders.
6. Local Public/Non-Profit Jobs: The facility employs approximately 100 full-time unionized City workers, and approximately 40 unionized workers who work for a local non-profit.
7. Local Environmental Businesses: The City contracts with a locally-owned reuse business to recover valuable products, such as furniture, windows, and lumber, that otherwise would be buried in a landfill.
8. Environmental Education: Once re-built, the facility plans to provide environmental education tours as a regular feature of its services. Everyone, especially school children, should learn about where things come from and where they go after use, and how our actions matter.
9. Support for Local Economy: The facility is a nearby, reliable, and reasonably priced destination for self-haulers, especially local landscapers and building contractors. Less driving time and lower gate rates translate into cost savings that boost the local economy.