

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
CLIMATE ACTION SUBCOMMITTEE

TO: CLIMATE ACTION SUBCOMMITTEE  
FROM: JOEY HEJNOWICZ, ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYST,  
TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS  
SUBJECT: COUNTYWIDE GOAL OF ZERO WASTE BY 2030  
AGENDA ACTION: DIRECTION TO BRING RESOLUTION TO COUNCIL

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RECOMMENDATION

The Transportation and Public Works Department recommends that the Climate Action Subcommittee review the Sonoma County Zero Waste Resolution which would adopt a Countywide goal of Zero Waste by 2030 and approve bringing the Resolution to the entire City Council.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Many scientists acknowledge the unsustainable pace at which we are consuming our natural resources, and the environmental impacts associated with the ongoing pollution of our water, air and land. Zero Waste strives to reduce the amount of waste sent to the landfill to zero. It is defined as a process and philosophy that involves a redesign of products and a redesign of consumption, so that all material goods can be reused or recycled – or not needed at all<sup>1</sup>.

Zero Waste Sonoma's (formerly Sonoma County Waste Management Agency) Board of Directors adopted the proposed Sonoma County Zero Waste Resolution at its September 19, 2018 meeting and requested that Zero Waste Sonoma staff work with member jurisdictions to present the Zero Waste resolution to member agencies for their consideration.

BACKGROUND

Jurisdictions in Sonoma County have collectively adopted regional goals for waste reduction, reuse and recycling. These goals are stated in the Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan as well as the regional Climate Action Plan. Landfills are a significant source of methane, a Green House Gas (GHG). As such it is extremely important that organic waste including food waste be diverted from landfill disposal. In addition, reuse and recycling of materials protect our finite natural resources. The

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/zerowaste/>

Sonoma County Central Landfill has a remaining capacity of approximately 26 years. As the capacity nears its end, Sonoma County decision makers will be faced with either figuring out ways to further expand the existing landfill, site a new landfill, or permanently haul solid waste to out-of-county landfills.

According to a 2016 report by CalRecycle<sup>2</sup>, the San Francisco Bay Area only had 44 years of existing landfill capacity. This means that if the generation of landfill materials continued at the current pace, and no new landfill capacity is created after the Central Landfill stops accepting waste, only about 13 years of nearby Bay Area disposal would be available. Ultimately, this scenario will require trucks to drive further distances to dispose of materials, increasing transportation congestion, and emissions, as well as costs. Given the millions of dollars required to create new landfill capacity, a more cost-effective approach should be landfill diversion and preservation through Zero Waste principles and policies.

#### PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

None.

#### ANALYSIS

The AB 939 Local Task Force (LTF), a County-created advisory group to the Board of Supervisors and Zero Waste Sonoma has created a model Zero Waste resolution which it recommends its member agencies adopt to create a Zero Waste framework throughout Sonoma County. The resolution was created through input from stakeholders including the Sonoma County Waste Management Agency, 350 Sonoma, North Bay Jobs with Justice, Sierra Club Redwood Chapter, Compost Coalition of Sonoma County, Zero Waste Sonoma County, North Bay Labor Council, Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Authority, Sonoma County Conservation Action, Recology Sonoma-Marin, Sonoma County Resource Recovery, and other local businesses and engaged citizens. The Zero Waste Resolution drew from examples of Zero Waste resolutions adopted by jurisdictions around the Bay Area, including Zero Waste Marin, Oakland, San Jose, Alameda, Palo Alto and San Francisco.

The LTF sought to build on previous collaborative policy efforts like the Solid Waste Advisory Group (SWAG), which adopted a policy of reaching 80% diversion by 2015 and 90% diversion by 2020. In support of this request, the LTF also provided sample resolutions, 33 initiative suggestions and numerous resources on the impact of wasting.

Increasing diversion rates is a mutually beneficial goal. Zero Waste is defined by Zero Waste International Alliance as “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

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/Publications/Download/1203>

environment or human health.”<sup>3</sup> The LTF’s Zero Waste Task Force has developed several Zero Waste Initiative suggestions in the areas of Reduction, Recovery and Reuse, Education, Green Purchasing, Hauler Relations and Fiscal Sustainability to provide jurisdictions with guidance and assistance with further implementation of Zero Waste initiatives.

While Santa Rosa has developed a Santa Rosa specific Zero Waste Plan with focused strategies, measurable goals and dedicated funding, it is important for Santa Rosa to demonstrate its commitment to Zero Waste countywide. By adopting the Zero Waste Resolution Santa Rosa maintains Zero Waste consistency throughout Sonoma County.

### FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this action does not have a fiscal impact on the General Fund.

### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

### BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

### NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

### ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – 2018 Sonoma County Zero Waste Resolution Request

Attachment 2 – 2018 Sonoma County Zero Waste Initiative Suggestions, Food Waste Impacts and References

Attachment 3 – Sonoma County Zero Waste Resolution

### CONTACT

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<sup>3</sup> <http://zwia.org/zero-waste-definition/>