



Resolution No. 007-02-COE - April 16, 2002

URGING THE MAYOR AND THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO TO ADOPT A GOAL OF 75% LANDFILL DIVERSION BY THE YEAR 2010, TO ADOPT A GOAL OF ZERO WASTE BY 2020, TO SUPPORT SENATE BILL 1526 TO SET SIMILAR GOALS FOR CALIFORNIA AND TO REQUIRE DISCLOSURE ON THE USE OF GREEN AND RECYCLABLE MATERIAL AS LANDFILL COVER OR AS WASTE IN LANDFILL.

WHEREAS, the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 required cities and counties to reduce, reuse and recycle (including composting) solid waste generated in the state to the maximum extent feasible before any incineration or landfill disposal of waste, to conserve water, energy and other natural resources, and to protect the environment ; and,

WHEREAS, the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 mandated that California cities and counties divert 50% of all waste generated by the year 2000 or by up to 2005 if approved, but did not set any subsequent waste reduction goals ; and,

WHEREAS, the landfill diversion rate increased statewide from 10% to 42% between 1989 and 2000, while the amount of waste dumped in landfills only decreased by 13% during that period ; and San Francisco's diversion rate increased from 35% to 46% between 1990 and 2000, while the tonnage from San Francisco disposed in landfills actually increased by over 30% ; and,

WHEREAS, for every ton of municipal waste landfilled, 71 tons of manufacturing and production waste end up being disposed of in other ways ; and,

WHEREAS, disposing of waste in landfills or incinerators endangers public health and the environment by polluting the land, water and air with methane and other greenhouse gases, toxic metals, dioxins, acid gases and toxic ash residue ; and,

WHEREAS, landfill and incinerator disposal fees do not reflect true costs, because taxpayers pay billions of dollars in tax subsidies for virgin resource material extraction and processing, as well as bear the costs of the subsequent environmental and public health damage ; and,

WHEREAS, waste reduction, reuse and recycling conserve natural resources, reduce pollution and are cheaper than disposal when all costs are considered and create more jobs in local communities ; and,

WHEREAS, to maximize waste reduction, reuse and recycling, product manufacturers must share responsibility for their product and packaging waste and participate in redesign of the product lifecycle process to ensure that all material can be safely recycled ; and,

WHEREAS, Alameda County has set a goal of achieving a 75% waste diversion rate by 2010 , and as a condition of the Waste Disposal Agreement for disposing San Francisco waste at the Altamont landfill

in Alameda County, the City and County of San Francisco must recycle or divert waste at the same or greater level than that of East Bay jurisdictions using the Altamont landfill ; and,

WHEREAS, the Waste Disposal Agreement for San Francisco's waste at the Altamont landfill allows for up to 15 million tons to be disposed starting on November 1, 1988 , approximately 7 million tons capacity remained as of January 1, 2001, which is less than 10 years capacity at 2000 disposal levels ; a new landfill contract could significantly increase San Francisco disposal costs, therefore, it is imperative to reduce the amount of waste that the city sends to landfill; and,

WHEREAS, the California Integrated Waste Management Board adopted a goal of a "zero-waste" for California in its 2001 strategic plan, with a commitment to work closely with jurisdictions and businesses "to reduce, reuse, or recycle all waste materials back into nature or the marketplace in a manner that protects human health and the environment and with all materials being managed to the highest and best use to create a sustainable California" ; and,

WHEREAS, the San Francisco Sustainability Plan, adopted by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1997, includes a long term goal "to maximize sustainable uses of natural resources and to eliminate solid waste generation," and the City and County of San Francisco achieved a 46% diversion rate in 2000, and expects to exceed 50% diversion by 2003 ; and,

WHEREAS, other jurisdictions have adopted zero waste as a long term goal, including Santa Cruz and Del Norte Counties in California, Seattle, Toronto (by 2010), Canberra, Australia (by 2010), New South Wales, Australia (by 2010) and 45% of New Zealand's local governments (by 2020)¹⁷, and there are many small and large communities in the U.S. and Canada that have already exceeded 50% or greater waste diversion¹⁸; and,

WHEREAS, a variety of businesses have adopted zero waste goals or have reduced landfilled waste by more than 80%, with some over 90%, including Amdahl Corporation, Collins & Aikman, Fetzer Winery, Herman Miller Inc., Hewlett Packard, Mad River Brewing, Interface, Inc., Pillsbury, Xerox Corp., San Diego Wild Animal Park¹⁹, and in San Francisco restaurants such as Jardinere, Lulu and Scoma²⁰; and,

WHEREAS, a zero waste goal can act as a guiding principle to eliminate waste and pollution in resource and materials management by redesigning the manufacture, use, and recycling of materials, by requiring extended producer responsibility, by valuing the highest and best use of materials, and thereby create a whole system closed loop material cycling based economy for long term true sustainability²¹ and,

WHEREAS, AB 1647 (1996) allows communities unlimited diversion or recycling credit for covering landfills (called "alternative daily cover" or ADC) with landscape trimmings ("green") material or other "beneficial reuses" at landfills²²; and,

WHEREAS, giving communities diversion credit for putting green material in landfills has contributed to the quadrupling of ADC use at some landfills, with as much as 45% of the material in the landfill now being ADC²³; and,

WHEREAS, the use of ADC in the state has increased from 394,000 tons in 1995 to over 1.7 million tons in 2000, with an additional 2.5 million tons in 2000 used for landfill construction and erosion control, resulting in two-thirds of all source separated green material being put in landfills²⁴; and,

WHEREAS, using green material as compost or landscaping mulch is more beneficial than putting it in a landfill, the demand for compost and mulch continues to exceed the supply available, there is excess capacity at composting facilities²⁵ and there are alternative materials available to cover landfills²⁶; and therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Commission of the Environment urges the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco to adopt a goal for San Francisco of 75% landfill diversion by the year 2010 with a goal of zero waste by 2020; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission of the Environment urges the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco to support portions of Senate Bill 1526 (Romero) which promotes a zero waste goal for California, and to request the sponsor add an interim goal for the state, cities and counties of 75% waste diversion rate by the year 2010 with a goal of zero waste by 2020; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission on the Environment urges the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco to adopt a policy of promoting the highest and best use of discarded materials and not allowing credit toward meeting the city's 75% diversion goal when green or other recyclable material is used as ADC if there are higher uses available; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission on the Environment urges the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco to support state legislative or regulatory efforts to restrict unnecessary use of green or recyclable material as ADC, including support of the portion of Senate Bill 1526 (Romero) that requires any local agency that mandates residents or business to source separate green material that is then used as landfill cover or landfilled to disclose to garbage bill payers the amount of green material collected in the local agency's jurisdiction and used for landfill cover or landfilled; and to disclose the amounts of mandated source separated recyclables that are collected and that are not recycled, except in instances where either material is contaminated and must be landfilled.

I hereby certify that this resolution was adopted by the Commission on the Environment at its special meeting on April 16, 2002

Kristal Aliyas
Commission Secretary

VOTE:

Ayes: Commissioners Bradford-Bell, Evans, Hayes, Shah and Werbe

Noes: None.

Absent: Commissioners Bingham and Rodriguez