



Solid Waste Integrated Resources Plan (SWIRP) A Zero Waste Master Plan

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

What is “SWIRP?”

SWIRP is a stakeholder driven planning process to develop a 20-year master plan to reduce waste, increase recycling and manage trash in the City of Los Angeles. This program is being led by the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Bureau of Sanitation.

This plan will be the road map for how the City will manage the solid resources generated in the City through the year 2030. The SWIRP planning process is based upon the Bureau's other, very successful integrated resources planning (IRP) process completed for the wastewater program.

The key to the future success of this innovative approach to planning will be the involvement of stakeholders from the beginning of a six-year effort. The City has identified key stakeholders and the studies, analyses, and approach that must be done to develop a SWIRP that emphasizes sustainability, resource conservation, source reduction, recycling, renewable energy, maximum material recovery, environmental protection, and economic feasibility.

What are SWIRP's goals? What will be accomplished at the end of the planning process?

The goal of SWIRP is to develop a master plan that will detail the policies, programs, infrastructure, regulations, incentives, new green jobs, technological innovation, and financial strategies necessary to:

1. *Lead the way for Los Angeles to become a zero waste city*
 - *Prevent the generation of waste at the source*
 - *Work with manufacturers to be responsible for their products at the end of the useful life of the product.*
 - *Reduce the generation of waste at the source*
 - *Increase recycling and resource recovery*
 - *Design and implement programs to meet the greenhouse gas reduction targets outlined in the Mayor's Climate Action Plan*

- Convert the entire Bureau of Sanitation fleet of collection trucks to clean renewable alternative fuel vehicles
 - Meet the goals set for Los Angeles to become a zero waste city by the Mayor and Council's adopted Recovering Energy, Natural Resources and Economic Benefit from Waste for Los Angeles (RENEW LA) Plan
2. Develop environmentally responsible treatment and disposal methods for residual (post-processing) waste
- Reduce reliance on landfills and end urban landfilling
 - Evaluate alternative technologies to convert waste to renewable energy, electricity, fuels and products
 - Evaluate rail-haul options
 - Evaluate long-term disposal options for residual waste
3. During the first year of a six-year stakeholder driven planning process, the stakeholders will develop a set of Guiding Principles. In the following years, the City with the stakeholders will fold the Guiding Principles into the development of a Facilities Plan, Environmental Impact Report, Financial Plan and Implementation Strategy Plan that will navigate the City and its residents to achieving a zero waste goal by 2030, with milestones and timelines identified.

What is the SWIRP process? When will the plan be finalized?

Phase 1 of SWIRP is a 12-month stakeholder driven planning effort. By April 2008, the City of Los Angeles will have the guiding principles in place to develop the 20-year master plan to achieve zero waste. The calendar of events is listed below.

May Key constituent meetings	June Key constituent meetings Business interviews House mtgs.	July Findings Analysis Key constituent meetings Business interviews House mtgs.	August Workshop Series 1 Forming the Foundation	Sep Workshop Series 2 Goals and Objectives	Oct 20 1st Citywide Conference Zero Waste LA
Nov Workshop Series 3 Policy and Program Options	Dec Workshop Series 4 Facility Options	Feb 2 2nd Citywide Conference Policy, Program and Facility Options	Feb Workshop Series 5 Evaluation	March Workshop Series 6 Recommendations	May 3 3rd Citywide Conference Guiding Principles Sign-off on SWIRP I

What are the differences between workshops and conferences?

Regional Workshops: There will be six regional working groups at different locations throughout the City. These locations will correspond to the six collection wastesheds within the City, comprising of West Valley, East Valley, Western, North Central, South LA, and Harbor regions. Each region will draw stakeholder participation from the local neighborhoods, neighborhood councils, community groups, churches, local businesses, etc. Each regional working group could include as many as one hundred actively involved members. Each group will meet approximately six times during the first year, with each meeting lasting approximately two hours. It is recommended that stakeholders provide consistent participation throughout the first year of this planning process.

Citywide Conferences: There will be a total of three one-day Citywide conferences held throughout the first year of the SWIRP; one conference will follow after every two regional workshops (per wasteshed) to reflect a Citywide vision that comes out of the individual regional groups. This will provide an avenue to share the issues, concerns and ideas coming out of the Regional workshops, at three Citywide conferences, which will be held on a Saturday for approximately four to six hours.

How is this “plan” different from what’s being done by the City already?

The City of Los Angeles is currently diverting 62% of its waste from landfills and the goal set by the Mayor and City Council is 70% by 2015 and 90% by 2025, respectively. New policies, programs and facilities will be needed in order to reach this goal as well as to achieve zero waste by 2030.

Which City department oversees SWIRP? What City departments or other agencies are involved?

The Department of Public Works, Bureau of Sanitation is leading this effort for the City. Participating offices are the Environmental Affairs Department, Planning Department, Department of Water And Power, Department of Building and Safety, Department of General Services, Harbor Department, Department of Recreation and Parks, Bureau of Engineering, South Coast Air Quality Management District, California Air Resources Board, Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Integrated Waste Management Board, Los Angeles Unified School District, neighboring cities, the offices of the Mayor and City Council, and others.

How does SWIRP relate to the City’s other new and ongoing environmental programs?

SWIRP is the long-term overarching plan to manage solid resources and move the City towards zero waste. It encompasses all of the solutions and programs currently in place (i.e.; blue and green bin recycling, multi-family recycling, restaurant food scrap diversion, alternative technologies, hazardous waste recycling, LAUSD recycling program, etc.) and those that will be brought forward during our workshop planning process. In addition, SWIRP is a Mayoral directive that is in line with the Green LA program and the City Council's RENEW LA plan.

How does SWIRP relate to the "3 Rs" i.e. reduce, reuse, recycle?

The 3Rs will be a fundamental part of SWIRP program development. We will also explore other "Rs" including:

- *Refuse*
- *Return*
- *Repair*
- *Restore*

How will SWIRP contribute towards greening Los Angeles?

As defined by the United Nations, sustainable development "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." The SWIRP planning process will identify the policies, programs and facilities that the City will need in the next 20 years to achieve zero waste. This will contribute to the greening of Los Angeles by moving the City closer to sustainability.

What is meant by "waste diversion"? "Resource recovery"?

"Waste diversion" refers to all of those activities that divert waste from landfilling (disposal) and includes waste prevention, recycling and composting. "Resource recovery" can be used as a synonym for waste diversion or the conversion of trash into renewable energy, clean fuels, chemicals, or other useful products.

What is the relationship between SWIRP and RENEW LA Plan? And, SWIRP and the City's Alternatives Technology project?

The City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Sanitation has established the SWIRP

planning process to build on the leadership direction provided by RENEW LA. RENEW LA established a blueprint for the City of no wasted resources and laid the foundation for the City to evaluate alternative treatment methods for residual waste including conversion technologies. RENEW LA programs are directed by the City Council's RENEW LA Ad Hoc Committee. The City SWIRP team regularly reports its progress to the RENEW LA Ad Hoc Committee.

The City's Alternative Technology project is specifically focused on meeting the RENEW LA goal and Mayor's directive to have a new facility for the treatment of residual waste in the City by 2010. The City has evaluated a range of options including thermal, chemical, physical and biological technologies and has solicited proposals for the development of alternative technology facilities. The City is conducting a separate stakeholder process for the Alternative Technology project. The Alternative Technology Project is a piece of the SWIRP planning process. For more information on the Alternative Technology Project, please refer to www.lacity-alternativetechnology.org.

What is "zero waste"?

As defined by the Grass Roots Recycling Network, Zero Waste is a philosophy and a design principle for the 21st Century. It includes "recycling" but goes beyond to address the reduction of "upstream" waste created through mining, extraction, and manufacturing of products.

Zero waste maximizes recycling, minimizes waste, reduces consumption and encourages the development of products that are made to be reused, repaired or recycled back into nature or the marketplace.

Zero waste:

- Recognizes that "waste" is not inevitable*
- Discarded materials are potentially valuable resources*
- Goes beyond "end of the line" strategies*
- Maximizes recycling and composting*
- Reduces materials consumption*

Does SWIRP recommend zero waste? Is zero waste achievable for LA?

Ultimately, this will be determined by the SWIRP stakeholders. SWIRP is a stakeholder driven planning process to determine the best management practices for the City. Striving for zero waste is an expressed goal of the City's and is consistent with its goal to be a sustainable City. Like "zero accidents" at the job site, "zero emission" vehicles, "zero tolerance" for

bad behavior, zero waste is a goal and not a categorical imperative. The City can be a leader in developing strategies for maximizing waste prevention and recycling and coming as close to "zero waste" as possible.

What other methods or technologies, other than recycling, is the city studying to eliminate waste in Los Angeles?

Through the SWIRP planning process, we will be undertaking a comprehensive analysis of waste prevention programs that will include new policies, programs and facilities, such as:

- *Extended Producer Responsibility*
- *Takeback Programs*
- *Recycling Economic Development*
- *Recycling Partnerships*
- *Pay as you throw*
- *Recycle for dollars*
- *Packaging Levies*
- *Mandatory Recycling*
- *Material Bans*
- *Food Scrap Diversion*
- *Resource Recovery Parks*
- *Construction and Demolition Debris Processing*
- *Aerobic Composting*
- *Alternative Technology*
 - *Biological*
 - *Thermal*
 - *Chemical*
 - *Physical*
- *Disposal Options for Residual Waste*
 - *Local options*
 - *Rail haul or long-haul options*
 - *Solid resources and Biosolids co-management options*

Will this plan apply to residential waste only or does it cover businesses too?

The plan will address all generators within the City, residential, commercial, industrial and institutional.

Could SWIRP recommend building a waste processing or transfer facility in my neighborhood and, if so, what is the decision-making process? What steps will be taken to ensure that the facility will be clean, quiet and safe?

The SWIRP planning process will identify the number, types and sizes of new facilities that the City will need in the future (including recycling processing facilities, resource recovery parks, transfer stations and alternative technology facilities). Siting of specific facilities is not included in the SWIRP master plan. Specific siting studies, project level Environmental Impact Reports and extensive public hearing processes will be developed once future sites are identified.

What percentage of waste is City-generated? How much is picked up by the City vs. private haulers?

Approximately 65% of total waste generated comes from the commercial sector which is serviced by private haulers (9,000 tons per day). This includes all businesses, industries, institutions, and multi-family apartments greater than four units. Residential waste comprises approximately 3,600 tons per day, or approximately 25% of the total waste generated in the City, and includes all single-family homes and apartments with less than five units. City Departments contribute approximately 10% of the total waste disposed (approximately 1,250 tons per day).

How much will SWIRP cost to implement?

SWIRP will include a detailed financial plan that will identify the costs, revenue sources and funding options for the programs and facilities identified through the planning process.

Will SWIRP lead to an increase in my trash fee?

Not necessarily. Los Angeles is growing and expected to increase by 20 to 30 percent by 2030 (U.S. Census). New programs in waste prevention, recycling and trash management will be needed. These new programs and facilities will enhance and replace our current infrastructure, but they

do not necessarily need to cost more per household.

What will happen to the current sanitation truck drivers and will new jobs be created through this new plan?

Zero waste includes both reducing waste generation and maximizing reuse, recycling and composting. Our sanitation workers will continue to play a key role in collecting materials including, yard trimmings, recycling and refuse. If the City is successful, we will need more drivers for recycling trucks and fewer drivers for trash trucks. However, the City's needs for sanitation workers will continue to grow over the next 20 years as the City's population grows.

What are "green jobs"?

"Green jobs" is the term for work force opportunities created by companies and organizations whose mission is to improve environmental quality. The need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions also creates the opportunity for these kinds of jobs. Reducing waste is one of the most effective ways that a municipality can reduce its greenhouse gas emissions. Recycling industries create and sustain more jobs than those it takes to maintain a landfill. In fact, for every one job in a landfill, an average of 650 long-term quality jobs can be sustained under a resource recovery model (grn.org). Alternative technology projects are considered "green jobs" because they will create a clean, high-tech industry which will provide quality local jobs.

What's the stakeholder involvement process for SWIRP?

The City is soliciting the participation of stakeholders in forming six regional working groups in each of the City's six collection districts (West Valley, East Valley, North Central, Western, South LA, and Harbor). These regional working groups will lead the planning process for SWIRP. The City SWIRP team will facilitate the planning process by conducting six workshops within each of the six regional working group areas (36 workshops total). The working groups will also come together at three Citywide conferences to address citywide issues and reach consensus on policies, programs and facilities across the City. Phase I of the SWIRP planning process will culminate in the development of the stakeholder Guiding Principles for SWIRP. These Guiding Principles will be the foundation for the development of the policies, program and facilities plan, financial plan, Environmental Impact Report, and implementation plan in Phase II of the SWIRP planning process.

Why should I participate in SWIRP? How will SWIRP impact me?

Every resident and business in the City is a potential SWIRP stakeholder. The outcomes of the SWIRP planning process could directly affect the way our solid resources are managed in the City. SWIRP stakeholders will consider "new rules" that could affect how residents and businesses participate in SWIRP programs. The City is asking the regional working groups to consider what is important locally in the development of the SWIRP guiding principles. In order to be truly representative of the City and its needs, the City needs the participation of residents, businesses, community groups, government agencies, non-government organizations, students and educators throughout the City. If you generate trash in the City, you are a SWIRP stakeholder!

How do I get involved and how much of my time will be required?

Sign up to be a SWIRP stakeholder and receive meeting announcements by registering on the SWIRP website at: <http://www.zerowaste.lacity.org>.

SWIRP stakeholders will be asked to participate in six regional workshops and three citywide conferences over the 12-month planning period (through April 2008). Refer to the website for a more detailed description of the workshops and anticipated time commitment.

There will also be updates through newsletters and e-mail notices related to various SWIRP milestones and upcoming events. A SWIRP website is also available to provide the most updated information, including meeting locations throughout the City at <http://www.zerowaste.lacity.org>

What topics will be covered at the meetings?

Workshop topics are included in the calendar listed above. However, workshop content will also be determined by the needs of the working groups of stakeholders.

What is a House Meeting?

The purpose of a house meeting is to bring together local residents that are not usually involved in other community groups to participate in the planning process of SWIRP. It is a grassroots approach involving local neighborhood canvassing throughout the City, to encourage participation and attendance from local residents. The neighborhood canvass will serve a dual purpose: to invite residents to the regional workshops, and to educate them at their doorstep about the SWIRP process. A local host is identified in the neighborhood to host the meeting, which is typically

attended by 15-25 local residents. Please contact Allen Wang at 213.473.4002 or allen.wang@lacity.org if you would like to host a House Meeting in your community.

Where can I find more information?

Visit the SWIRP website at: <http://www.zerowaste.lacity.org> or contact Allen Wang with the City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Sanitation at 213- 473-4002 or Allen.Wang@lacity.org .

How can I sign up for the newsletter?

Visit the SWIRP website at: <http://www.zerowaste.lacity.org> or contact Allen Wang with the City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Sanitation at 213- 473-4002 or Allen.Wang@lacity.org .

What kind of information can I see on the website?

The SWIRP website will include all documents generated through the SWIRP planning process including, fact sheets, frequently asked questions, on-line surveys, presentations, meeting agendas and meeting minutes.

If my neighborhood council or a community group of which I'm a member already is going to the meetings, can I still participate?

Yes, everyone is a potential stakeholder in the SWIRP planning process. The City is encouraging active participation from both community groups and individuals.

If you have any questions about curbside or multi-family recycling, SAFE centers, household hazardous waste, bulky item pick-up or any other current City environmental programs, please visit the Bureau of Sanitation website at www.lacity.org/SAN/ or call 3-1-1.