

**LONG RANGE SOLID WASTE PLANNING TASK FORCE****INTERIM REPORT TO COUNCIL**

October 27, 2005

**INTRODUCTION**

The City of Austin Long Range Solid Waste Planning Task Force (Task Force), convened as an ad hoc subcommittee of the Solid Waste Advisory Commission, at the direction of Council Member Betty Dunkerley, first met on April 11, 2005. This, our first interim report, outlines our work to date and points toward our intended next steps. Attached, please find a roster of current members.

**FINDINGS**

The City of Austin Long Range Solid Waste Planning Task Force Finds:

- The issues of local and regional solid waste management are inextricably intertwined.
- Several and various City, County, Regional, State and Federal Government Agencies have jurisdiction and influence over matters of solid waste management; a situation that, without coordination, inhibits effective local and regional planning, management and regulatory efforts.
- The stakeholders in issues of solid waste management include the public-at-large, governments, service providers and the recipients of solid waste management services, all of which may benefit from a concerted and cooperative planning effort.
- The issues encountered in solid waste management planning are various, numerous and intricate.
- The Task Force has identified several key elements that warrant further research and discussion: baseline data, infrastructure, technology, public policy, implementation and ongoing management.
- Consensus has been reached, tentatively, on several topics; including adoption of Zero Waste as our target and the potential use of a solid waste authority or district or lead organization as a means of achieving that aim.
- Further investigation requires the application of a professional facilitator and/or consultant and ongoing staff support.

## **GOAL/MISSION STATEMENT**

The goal of the Task Force, adopted at the first meeting on April 11, 2005, is to produce a written solid waste management plan for the City of Austin, but with a regional focus. This plan is to be presented to the Austin City Council, the Capital Area Council of Governments, the Travis County Commissioners Court, and other stakeholders (for example, counties bordering Travis County, businesses and environmental groups). The plan is for the next 50 years, providing both a broad vision of where we hope to be and suggested strategies to achieve implementation of that vision. The plan will include consideration of residential, commercial/industrial/institutional, construction and demolition (C&D), and imported and exported solid waste. At the July 29, 2005 meeting, The Task Force adopted the World Environment Day Urban Environment Accords (recently signed by Mayor Will Wynn) related to waste reduction (below) as an amendment to our goal. [The baseline will be the data from the final RW Beck Waste Minimization and Landfill Alternatives Report (CAPCOG)]:

- 1) Establish a policy to achieve zero waste to landfills and incinerators by 2040.
- 2) Adopt a citywide law that reduces the use of a disposable, toxic or non-renewable product category by at least 50% in seven years.
- 3) Implement "user friendly" recycling and composting programs with the goal of reducing by 20% per capita solid waste disposal to landfill and incineration in seven years.

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

The Task Force's primary responsibility, based on the above goal, is to generate a Plan that will be presented to the elected officials, principal policy and decision-making entities, and appropriate governmental organizations in the region. It is anticipated that the Task Force will continue to advise and assist as that plan is considered and, hopefully, implemented. In developing the Plan, the Task Force has and will continue to seek input from key stakeholders, experts in the field of solid waste management, related boards and commissions, members of the public, elected officials and their staffs, and industry representatives. We will continue to research those topics and technologies that directly impact solid waste management and particularly affect this region to insure that we generate a Plan that is complete and accurate. Finally, the Task Force will prepare a presentation of the Plan to be made available to as many entities as possible in an effort to enhance the potential for the Plan's implementation.