

**Planning Committee/
Recycling Board Members**

Sarah Vared, **President**
Source Reduction Specialist

Deborah Cox, **1st Vice President**
ACWMA

Jillian Buckholz, **2nd Vice President**
Recycling Programs

Bernie Camara, Recycling Materials Processing Industry

Nancy Deming, Environmental Educator

Dianne Martinez, ACWMA

John Moore, Environmental Organization

Tianna Nourot, Solid Waste Industry Representative

Jim Oddie, ACWMA

Dave Sadoff, ACWMA

Francisco Zermeño, ACWMA

Wendy Sommer, Executive Director

AGENDA

**MEETING OF THE
PLANNING COMMITTEE
AND
ALAMEDA COUNTY RECYCLING BOARD**

Thursday, February 14, 2019

7:00 P.M.

**San Leandro Senior Center
13909 E. 14th Street
Arts & Crafts Room
San Leandro, CA 94578
(510) 577-3462
(Directions attached)**

Meeting is wheelchair accessible. Sign language interpreter may be available upon five (5) days' notice to 510-891-6500.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL OF ATTENDANCE

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY PRESIDENT

IV. OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

An opportunity is provided for any member of the public wishing to speak on any matter within the jurisdiction of the Board, but not listed on the agenda. Each speaker is limited to three minutes.

Page **V. CONSENT CALENDAR**

1 1. Approval of the Draft Minutes of January 10 , 2019 (Jeff Becerra)

5 2. Board Attendance Record (Jeff Becerra)

7 3. Written Report of Ex Parte Communications (Jeff Becerra)

9 4. Grants Issued Under Executive Director Signature Authority (Wendy Sommer)

VI. REGULAR CALENDAR

11 1. Multi-Year Fiscal Forecast (Pat Cabrera)

This item is for information only.

17 2. *RecycleWhere?* Search Tool Update (Jeff Becerra)

This item is for information only.

VII. MEMBER COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Directions to the San Leandro Senior Community Center
13909 E. 14th Street - San Leandro, CA 94578

From 580 East ... coming from Oakland

- Take the Grand Ave exit (in San Leandro) from I-580 E
- Turn left onto Grand Ave.
- Turn right onto Sybil Ave.
- Turn left onto Bancroft Ave.
- Turn right onto 136th Ave.
- Turn left at the 1st cross street onto E . 14th St.

From 580 West ... coming from Castro Valley

- Take the exit toward Fairmont Drive/150th Ave
- Slight left onto Foothill Blvd.
- Turn left onto 150th Ave.
- Drive to E. 14th St. Turn right onto E. 14th St.
- Make a U-Turn at 138th Ave.
- Destination will be on right.

From 880 North ... coming from Oakland

- Take the Marina Blvd. East exit
- Turn right onto Marina Blvd.
- Follow Marina Blvd. to San Leandro Blvd.
- Turn right onto San Leandro Blvd. to East 14th Street
- Turn right onto to East 14th Street
- Destination will be on the right.

From 880 South ... coming from Hayward

- Take the Marina Blvd. East exit.
- Keep Right to continue on Marina Blvd.
- Turn right onto San Leandro Blvd.
- Turn Right onto E. 14th St.
- Destination will be on the right.

DRAFT

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE
PLANNING COMMITTEE
AND
ALAMEDA COUNTY RECYCLING BOARD**

Thursday, January 10, 2019

4:00 P.M.

**StopWaste Offices
1537 Webster Street
Oakland, CA 94612
510-891-6500**

**Teleconference
Jillian Buckholz
1206 Hackberry Street Rear
Austin, TX 78702
530-228-4520**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Deborah Cox, First Vice President, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL OF ATTENDANCE

Jillian Buckholz, Recycling Programs (teleconference)
Bernie Camara, Recycling Materials Processing Industry
Deborah Cox, ACWMA
Nancy Deming, Environmental Educator
Dianne Martinez, ACWMA
John Moore, Environmental Organization
Tianna Nourof, Solid Waste Industry Representative
Jim Oddie, ACWMA
Dave Sadoff, ACWMA
Sarah Vared, Source Reduction Specialist

Absent:

ACWMA, Vacant

Staff Present:

Wendy Sommer, Executive Director
Jeff Becerra, Communications Manager
Meri Soll, Senior Program Manager
Farand Kan, County Counsel
Arliss Dunn, Clerk of the Board

Others Participating:

Myvan Khuu-Seeman, Administrative Analyst, City of Newark

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III. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY PRESIDENT

First Vice President Cox welcomed Tianna Nourrot as the new Solid Waste Industry Representative. Wendy Sommer announced that Jeff Becerra, Communications Manager, will now serve as staff to the Recycling Board, replacing Tom Padia upon his retirement in December.

IV. OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

V. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Approval of the Draft Joint Minutes of December 13, 2018 (Jeff Becerra)

2. Board Attendance Record (Jeff Becerra)

3. Written Report of Ex Parte Communications (Jeff Becerra)

There were no public comments for the consent calendar. Board member Oddie made the motion to approve the consent calendar. Board member Martinez seconded and the motion carried 9-0:

(Ayes: Buckholz, Camara, Cox, Deming, Martinez, Moore, Nourrot, Oddie, Sadoff. Nays: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Vared.)

VI. REGULAR CALENDAR

1. City of Newark Expenditure Plan for Accumulated Measure D Funds (Meri Soll)

Staff recommends that the Recycling Board approve the Expenditure Plan submitted by the City of Newark and find that Newark is eligible to continue receiving its quarterly per capita disbursements from the Recycling Fund through June 30, 2020, while it spends its Measure D funds according to the Expenditure Plan.

Meri Soll provided an overview of the staff report. A link to the report is available here: [Newark-Expenditure-Plan.pdf](#). Board member Sadoff stated that he assumes that there has been communication with the City of Newark staff, agency staff, and the Recycling Board since 2016 and inquired about those discussions. Ms. Soll stated that she has been working on this plan since March 2018 and was working with staff in the City Administrator's office. She is now working with a new staff person, and projects under Measure D have since moved from the City Administrator's office to Public Works. Ms. Soll stated that she has had extensive conversations and meetings with multiple staff to explain how Measure D funds are eligible to be used and to brainstorm with staff how to spend down fund balance. Ms. Soll added, Tom Padia was diligent in working with member agencies with regard to Measure D funding and explaining the appropriate activities for using the funds. Board member Martinez commented that a large chunk of the funding for FY 19/20 is targeted towards the construction of the new civic center and inquired about the overall status of funding for the civic center. Ms. Khuu-Seeman stated that the taxpayers passed Measure GG to fully fund the new civic center, which also includes a new city hall, police station, and library. In the past year, they have begun the design process and the city architect and chief building official have been spearheading the process.

Board member Moore inquired about the issues related to the franchise agreement that blocked the Measure D funding. Ms. Soll read from a memo penned by Tom Padia in 2016 which stated in part that Newark was planning to utilize a good portion of their Measure D funding to buy down the cost of implementing new organics collection services under their franchise agreement with Republic Services. However, the term of Newark's franchise agreement, ten years, and the structure of the agreement was prohibited under the terms of the county charter's designation of Measure D funds, which states any projects that exceed five years must seek Recycling Board approval and projects exceeding ten years are not allowed. Board member Oddie commented that this is the second time that we have allowed an expenditure plan for Newark and inquired if the Board has allowed other jurisdictions the same accord. Ms. Soll stated that no other city has been provided with two

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approvals of an expenditure plan. We have approved expenditure plans for the City of Livermore to hold funds to hire an additional staff person, and the City of Hayward was banking funds, which is what prompted the development of the expenditure policy. Board member Oddie commented that construction projects can linger for years and inquired what would happen to the funds if the project was not completed in five to ten years. Ms. Khuu-Seeman stated that the project is front and center with the community and city staff as they have outgrown their current facilities. Ms. Khuu-Seeman added, she is reaching out to other departments as well to inform them of the availability, purpose and goals of Measure D funding. Ms. Sommer commented that the amount of Measure D funding will remain constant and the plan before the Board is for two fiscal years. Staff will monitor the progress of the project and if it appears that it will not be completed in the proposed schedule we will come back to the Board with another plan.

There were no public comments on this item. Board member Sadoff made the motion to approve the staff recommendation. Board member Cox seconded and the motion carried 10-0:

(Ayes: Buckholz, Camara, Cox, Deming, Martinez, Moore, Nourot, Oddie, Sadoff, Vared. Nays: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None).

2. Upstream, Reuse and Repair Agency Activities (Meri Soll)

This item is for information only.

Meri Soll provided an overview of the staff report and presented a PowerPoint presentation. A link to the report and the presentation is available here: [Upstream-Grant-Activities.pdf](#). Justin Lehrer shared the activities of two grantees that participated in previous grant projects focused on upstream. The grantees were Surplus Services located in Fremont, and the California Product Stewardship Council. Surplus Services is a for-profit company that accepts unwanted electronics from corporate, government, and institutional clients, and they prioritize reuse first. Mr. Lehrer shared a video of their business model. A link to the video is available here: [Surplus Services](#). The California Product Stewardship Council was awarded \$15,000 to work with retailers for the Refuel your Fun campaign, to promote refillable propane canisters.

Board member Moore inquired if StopWaste, like CalRecycle, require measurables. Ms. Soll stated staff does not require greenhouse gas metrics but we do require metrics to quantify the types and amounts of materials being diverted, and if there is an educational outreach component, we also require the number of people that are reached. Ms. Soll added we are working with CalRecycle to assist them in developing standards so when the CalRecycle grants are released there is a level playing field with respect to greenhouse gas reductions quantified with certain types of activities. Board member Moore inquired if we would support the Right to Repair Act. Ms. Sommer stated yes, and we have scheduled a meeting with Californians Against Waste on Monday to see if they are still interested. President Vared inquired about the number of organizations funded versus those requesting funding. (Thirteen organizations were funded.) President Vared inquired if the for-profit organizations will be evaluated differently than the non-profit organizations. Ms. Soll stated that the evaluation metrics will be applied equally. We will measure capacity, concept, diversion and impact. Mr. Lehrer stated that we are aware of the benefits of supporting the for-profit model and especially if their business model can generate their own revenue they would not require grant funding year after year.

President Vared thanked Ms. Soll and Mr. Lehrer for their presentation.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBER COMMENTS

There were none.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

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2019 - ALAMEDA COUNTY RECYCLING BOARD ATTENDANCE

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
REGULAR MEMBERS												
J. Buckholz	X											
B. Camara	X											
D. Cox	X											
N. Deming	X											
D. Martinez	X											
T. Nourot	X											
J. Moore	X											
J. Oddie	X											
D. Sadoff	X											
S. Vared	X											
F. Zermeño												
INTERIM APPOINTEES												

Measure D: Subsection 64.130, F: Recycling Board members shall attend at least three fourths (3/4) of the regular meetings within a given calendar year. At such time, as a member has been absent from more than one fourth (1/4) of the regular meetings in a calendar year, or from two (2) consecutive such meetings, her or his seat on the Recycling Board shall be considered vacant.

X=Attended

A=Absent

I=Absent - Interim Appointed

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DATE: February 14, 2019
TO: Recycling Board
FROM: Jeff Becerra, Communications Manager
SUBJECT: Written Reports of Ex Parte Communications

BACKGROUND

Section 64.130 (Q)(1)(b) of the Alameda County Charter requires that full written disclosure of ex parte communications be entered in the Recycling Board's official record. At the June 19, 1991 meeting of the Recycling Board, the Board approved the recommendation of Legal Counsel that such reports be placed on the consent calendar as a way of entering them into the Board's official record. The Board at that time also requested that staff develop a standard form for the reporting of such communications. A standard form for the reporting of ex parte communications has since been developed and distributed to Board members.

At the December 9, 1999 meeting of the Recycling Board, the Board adopted the following language:

Ex parte communication report forms should be submitted only for ex parte communications that are made after the matter has been put on the Recycling Board's agenda, giving as much public notice as possible.

Per the previously adopted policy, all such reports received will be placed on the consent calendar of the next regularly scheduled Recycling Board meeting.

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Date: February 14, 2019

TO: Source Reduction and Recycling Board

FROM: Wendy Sommer, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Grants Issued Under Executive Director Signature Authority

SUMMARY

The purchasing and grant policies were amended to simplify paperwork and Board agendas by giving the Executive Director authority to sign contracts and grant agreements less than \$50,000. A condition of the grant policy is that staff informs the Board of recently issued grants.

Grants: January – February 2019

PROJECT NAME	GRANT RECIPIENT	PROJECT TYPE/DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	VERIFICATION	GRANT AMOUNT	BOARD
Community Outreach Food Waste Reduction Grant	Fremont LEAF	LEAF will educate members and the general public about food waste reduction through public presentations and social media. LEAF will engage 20 people to conduct their own fridge reality check.	Fremont	January 2019	\$5,000	RB
Reuse Mini Grant	Bio-Link Depot	Funds to support Bio-Link's collection of used scientific equipment for redistribution to schools, colleges and science programs in Alameda County.	Oakland	Final Report	\$5,000	RB
Reuse Mini Grant	Transition Berkeley	Funds to develop a community Repair Café prototype as well as host two Repair Café events in Alameda County	Berkeley	Final Report	\$5,000	RB

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DATE: February 14, 2019

TO: Programs and Administration Committee
Planning Committee/Recycling Board

FROM: Wendy Sommer, Executive Director
Pat Cabrera, Administrative Services Director

SUBJECT: Multi-Year Fiscal Forecast

SUMMARY

Starting in 2016, staff committed to presenting a revised multi-year forecast on an annual basis in preparation of budget development. At both the February 14, 2019 Programs and Administration Committee and the Planning Committee/Recycling Board meetings, staff will present a revised multi-year forecast based on new core revenue estimates and a stable core expenditure plan.

DISCUSSION

In Fiscal Year 2017-18, the Agency spent about 94% of the revised core budget, and collected 17% more revenue than projected at the beginning of the fiscal year. The surplus is due to several reasons: an increase in tonnages (explained more below), salary savings, hard-cost savings from consolidation of projects and scopes of work, and reduction in end-of-year encumbrances as we move away from the “use it or lose it” mindset of past budget practices.

Category	FY 17-18 Actuals	FY 17-18 Budget	Difference
Core expenditures	\$10,387,189	\$11,014,412	-\$627,223
Core revenues			
Tonnage: facility fee	\$5,460,992	\$4,672,162	\$788,830
Tonnage: mitigation	\$489,093	\$368,611	\$120,482
Tonnage: Measure D	\$4,647,723	\$4,142,584	\$505,139
Tonnage: fee enforcement (out of county)	\$334,368	\$200,000	\$134,368
Property and interest	\$745,661	\$629,021	\$116,640
Miscellaneous and citations	\$86,727	\$17,770	\$68,957
Total core revenues	\$11,764,564	\$10,030,148	\$1,734,416

The ending core fund balance available totaled approximately \$11.8M in FY 17-18. The Agency continues to accumulate sizeable fund balances along with reserves to cover any budget gaps (should they occur), and to make any pension related lump-sum payments in conjunction with our

long-term expenditure plan. This approach will ensure the ongoing operations of the Agency without the need to increase fees in the near future.

Tonnage Revenue Projections

For the past three years, we have been using a simpler model to project tonnages, as the previously used statistical model was no longer viable. Upon examining tonnages going back to 1999, and based on those trends, we chose to implement a modest annual tonnage decline averaging approximately 3%. In fact, as shown in attachment B, in-county tonnage disposed at the Altamont and Vasco landfills between July 2006 and July 2016 declined an average of 3.6% annualized. However, we have seen an uptick in tonnages starting in FY 16-17. While over the past two and one-half years, one-time disposal tonnages from salt-impacted soils and other special wastes can explain some of the upturn, disposal in general has increased. This increase is consistent with statewide disposal trends and can be explained in part by the strong regional economy. Alameda County's population has also increased by approximately 9.9% since 2010.

In FY 17-18, tonnage-based fees (including fee enforcement efforts) comprised almost 93% of the Agency's core revenues. The remaining 7% came from property-related revenues, interest, and mandatory recycling enforcement activities. For the current fiscal year (FY 18-19), we are estimating that actual tonnage revenues (not including facility enforcement or import fees) will total \$10.1 million, which represents an increase of approximately \$800,000 (8.8%) compared to the budgeted amount. Facility fee and other enforcement related fees are projected to match budgeted figures; however, mitigation fees (from disposal outside of Alameda County) are projected to exceed budgeted amounts by over approximately \$400,000 due to unexpected special waste disposal. As such, total core revenues in FY 18-19 are now estimated to total approximately \$12.0 million.

The attached tonnage trend graph (Attachment B) shows the recent uptick in disposal activity. As such, the new baseline for future projections are reset starting with FY 18-19. From that baseline, and after adjusting for the previous one-time tonnages in FY19-20, we have decreased the projected FY 20-21 through FY 22-23 tonnage estimates by a modest 2.1% annually. This decrease reflects both estimated reduced tonnages resulting from the new Organics Materials Recovery Facility (OMRF) at Davis Street, San Leandro, potential changes due to China's "National Sword" policy, and our programmatic efforts. This forecast could be revised due to several factors: a major downturn in the economy during this period, the OMRF diversion exceeding current estimates, continued change due to National Sword, or any additional waste reduction efforts or changes.

Based on these projections, at the end of FY 22-23 disposal will total approximately 1.18 million tons. While this number does not reflect our aspirational "less than 10% good stuff in garbage" goal (which would translate into roughly 600,000 tons of waste disposal), it is a more reasonable estimate based on current conditions. As always, we will continue to monitor disposal trends carefully and apprise the boards as needed.

Additionally, we have received the NextERA conservation easement payment of approximately \$1.8M and will be replenishing our fiscal reserve by approximately \$600,000 to \$2.1 million. While we have never had to use our fiscal reserve to cover revenue shortfalls, this reserve is prudent to maintain and will provide a sufficient cushion should revenues fall significantly below projections.

Core Expenditures

Staff is in the process of developing the FY 19-20 budget in alignment with the Board-approved guiding principles and with a continued focus on cost synergies. The anticipated FY 19-20 core budget goal is approximately \$10.6 million, which is the same core budget as the current year. This forecast assumes maintaining \$10.6 million core budgets through FY 22-23, based on current revenue projections. Given our commitment to match ongoing expenditures with ongoing revenues, we will make expenditure adjustments as needed during the annual budget process. Furthermore, we have made significant progress in addressing both pension and OPEB (other post employee benefits) unfunded liabilities through substantial lump-sum payments, and as such, have addressed the most pressing financial concerns facing public sector entities. At the end of FY 18-19, we project combined available fund balances and reserves to total \$21.7 million, increasing to approximately \$23.1 million at the end of FY 22-23.

Multi Year Fiscal Forecast

Attachment A1 (Prior Year Multi-Year Forecast) shows a core revenue aligning with core expenditures as well as a small surplus of \$200,000 at the end in FY 21-22. Based on the revisions discussed above, at the end of FY 21-22 the forecast now shows core revenue exceeding expenditures by approximately \$400,000, with a small surplus of \$200,000 at the end of FY 22-23. (Attachment A2).

RECOMMENDATION

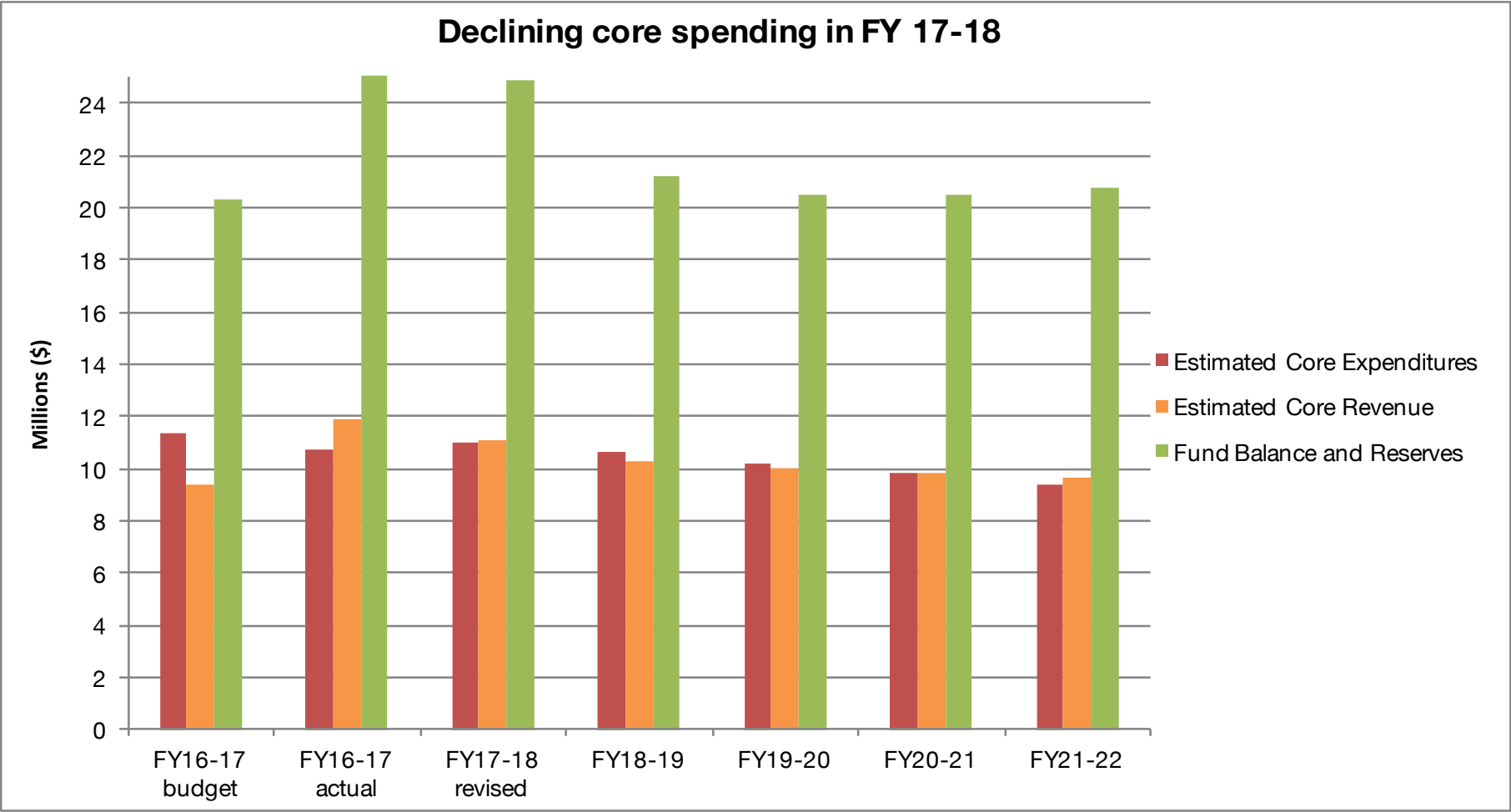
This item is for information only.

Attachment A1: Prior Year Multi-Year Forecast through FY 21-22

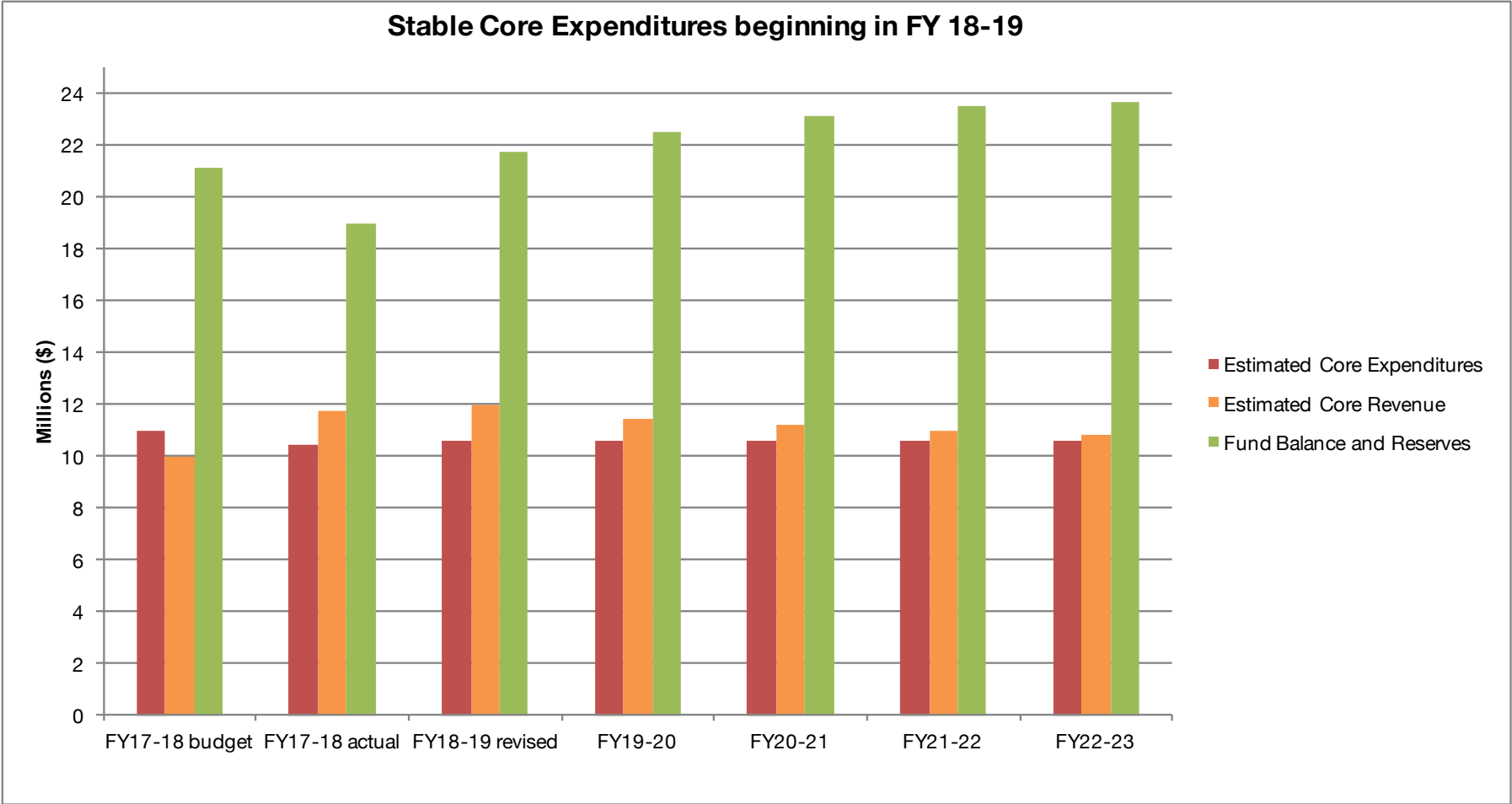
Attachment A2: Revised Multi-Year Forecast through FY 22-23

Attachment B: Disposal Trends in Alameda County

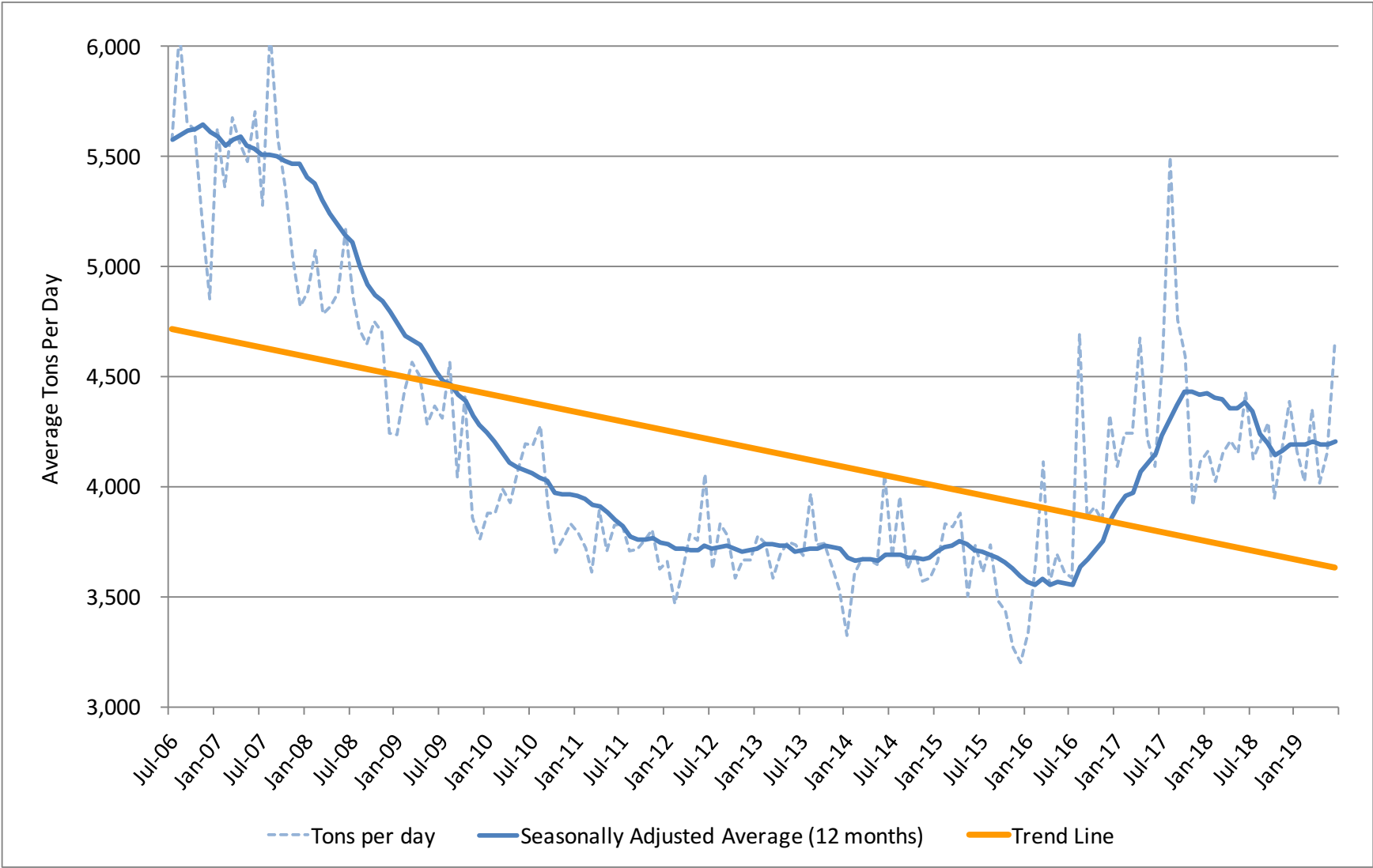
Attachment A1: Prior Year Multi-Year Forecast through FY 21-22



Attachment A2: Revised Multi-Year Forecast through FY 22-23



Attachment B: Disposal Trends in Alameda County





DATE: February 14, 2019

TO: Planning Committee/Recycling Board

FROM: Jeff Becerra, Communications Manager

SUBJECT: *RecycleWhere?* Search Tool Update

SUMMARY

RecycleWhere? is an online search tool that StopWaste provides to help residents and businesses understand how to properly recycle, reuse, or dispose of an item. The tool's development has been a shared project with San Francisco Environment, Contra Costa County and the City of Palo Alto. At the February 14 Planning Committee/Recycling Board meeting, staff will provide an overview of *RecycleWhere?*'s use to date and our plans to update it moving forward.

DISCUSSION

RecycleWhere? replaced the agency's "Recycling Wizard" as an improved public-facing, online searchable database in 2012. The goal of *RecycleWhere?* is to reduce waste by providing accurate information about recycling, reuse, and proper disposal options for residents and businesses without regard to traditional municipal boundaries. The public can access the tool via the www.StopWaste.org home page, member agency websites, or directly at www.RecycleWhere.org.

Over the years, public inquiries have shifted primarily from our phone based "hotline" to electronic self-service. *RecycleWhere?* processes approximately 65,000 searches a year, about a third of which are identified from Alameda County. This compares to approximately 150 phone and email requests we receive a month for help with proper disposal.

After six years in use, *RecycleWhere?* is in need of an update. At the February 14 meeting, staff will share what we've learned from its use, including top searched items, and benefits/drawbacks of a partnership approach. Staff will also discuss plans for replacing the tool, which will be available in online and app versions.

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for information only.

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Business

Big Consumer Brands Will Start Taking Their Packaging Back

By [Emily Chasan](#)

January 24, 2019 2:00 AM

- ▶ Ice cream, soda, dish soap to be sold in reusable containers
- ▶ Pepsi, Unilever, P&G sign onto pilot program in Europe, U.S.

In this article

NESN
NESTLE SA-REG
 84.46 CHF
 ▲ +0.18 +0.21%

PEP
PEPSICO INC
 108.58 USD
 ▼ -0.77 -0.70%

UNA
UNILEVER NV-CVA
 46.40 EUR
 ▼ -0.40 -0.85%

PG
PROCTER & GAMBLE
 93.42 USD
 ▼ -0.18 -0.19%

CA
CARREFOUR SA
 17.28 EUR
 ▼ -0.18 -1.00%

In the environmentalist mantra “reduce, reuse, recycle,” almost all of the attention has been paid to recycling. Now some of the world’s biggest consumer brands are trying to shift the focus to the second R, with a program that provides products in reusable containers that can be returned for a refund.

The durable packaging program, called “Loop” -- a reference to a theoretical circular economy where nothing is wasted -- debuted at the [World Economic Forum](#) in Davos Thursday. Led by New Jersey-based recycling company [TerraCycle](#), Loop will offer popular products from about 25 companies including Nestle, Unilever, Procter & Gamble and PepsiCo in reusable containers that customers order online or purchase in stores and return to the company when finished.



Loop delivery Source: Loop

The effort evokes the milkman of the 1940s, or even the glass bottle deposits still collected today. In many ways, that’s a better model, said TerraCycle founder Tom Szaky. “In the milkman model, the packaging was owned by the dairy and this kind of garbage didn’t exist.”



About 80 percent of all plastic [ends up in landfills or the ocean](#), and grocery packaging creates more waste than the popular scapegoats of plastic bags and straws. “We can’t recycle or clean our way out of this. We have to stop the waste from entering the system to begin with,” Szaky said.

By mid-May, products from Loop will initially be available [online](#) to customers in Paris through Carrefour and, in the

U.S., in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. TerraCycle is finalizing grocery partnerships in the U.S. and Toronto, adding distribution through London's Tesco later this year, and targeting Tokyo in 2020.



Haagen Dazs ice cream Source: Loop

Loop will collect a refundable deposit that customers will get back when they return their containers. UPS will pick up the empties for no additional charge. Even allowing for the energy required to transport and prepare the products for reuse, the program reduces waste, TerraCycle says. It won't stop the stream of plastic waste entering the ocean, but the containers do recover their environmental cost of production after three or four uses.

The brands developed the durable containers with their own product designers. Clorox wipes will come in a shiny aluminum tube, Tropicana orange juice and Hellman's mayonnaise will ship in durable glass. For Haagen-Dazs, Nestle designed a double-walled aluminum jar that actually keeps ice cream colder than the waxed-cardboard disposable packaging.

"Reusability does bring an additional element of complexity," said Simon Lowden, president of PepsiCo's Global Snacks Group. The company's designers wanted to keep the packaging looking "fresh and untampered" and make sure it can be cleaned multiple times. The beverage company is also betting on reusable packaging in other parts of its business, most notably its \$3.2 billion acquisition of SodaStream last year.



Tropicana orange juice and Quaker Cruesli chocolate Source: Loop

"We are looking to help build a world where plastics need never become waste," Lowden said. "Trials like this help us evaluate the future potential for reusable models and our ability to scale initiatives."

The packaging is about twice as expensive for manufacturers to produce, but the cost is offset through accounting rules that allow companies to depreciate the expense for wear and tear.

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TerraCycle has invested about \$10 million in the project, using its free cash and raising capital. "It's a very big bet, but why not?" Szaky said. "Baby boomers look at this nostalgically and say this is how we used to do it, while millennials say, 'I'm sick of all this plastic waste.'"

Berkeley goes nuclear on single-use plastic

 [latimes.com/opinion/editorials/la-ed-plastic-crackdown-berkeley-20190124-story.html](https://www.latimes.com/opinion/editorials/la-ed-plastic-crackdown-berkeley-20190124-story.html)

By The Times Editorial Board

Jan 24, 2019 | 3:05 AM



Discarded cups in a garbage container in Berkeley, Calif. on Jan. 23. (Ben Margot / Associated Press)

Thank heavens for Berkeley. The famously liberal Bay Area city's government may go over the top at times, but is not afraid to take tough and unpopular stands against public health and environmental threats. It adopted the nation's first tax on sugary drinks, for example. It was an early adopter of curbside recycling and banned polystyrene (what you might think of as Styrofoam) 30 years ago, way before it was hip to do so.

So perhaps it was only natural that Berkeley would be the first California city to take on the challenge of crafting a truly comprehensive plan to reduce single-use plastic trash. After months of hearings and study, the City Council adopted the Single-Use Disposable Foodware and Litter Reduction Ordinance on Tuesday to force a shift from plastic to compostable food containers. If everything goes as planned, by this time next year the flow of plastic containers, cups, lids and utensils from restaurants, fast-food outlets and other businesses serving prepared food within city limits will have virtually stopped.

The city's goal, however, is not just to change the composition of its trash piles. It's also to reduce them. Waste, no matter its makeup, comes with a cost to manage. (At least part of the justification for the new ordinance is to cut back on cleanup costs and to meet regional goals of zero litter in stormwater by 2022.) To that end, Berkeley consumers will be required to pay an extra quarter on every takeout cup they use, even after restaurants switch to compostable ones.

The city's goal is not just to change the composition of its trash piles. It's also to reduce them.

City officials estimate that about 40 million to-go cups are used every year in Berkeley alone, so the fee will generate a fairly sizable amount of cash. The businesses get to keep the money and can use it to offset the higher cost of supplying compostable takeout containers, but they are required to make sure that customers know they are getting dinged for not bringing in a reusable cup. Fees are known to change behaviors.

Also, dine-in restaurants in Berkeley will be prohibited from using anything but reusable cups, forks, plates and the like, starting in mid 2020.

There are other elements of the ordinance that bear mentioning. The city plans to set up a grant program to help dine-in restaurants make the transition to reusable plates and cups. The city will install more composting bins to deal with both the heavy volume of compostable takeout containers as well the food remains they carry. And in three years, the city plans to establish a program to develop reusable takeout containers, which has never been done on a large scale so far. If the city can find a model that works, that could be a game-changer for takeout trash worldwide.

Enter the Fray: First takes on the news of the minute »

In short, this is a big deal, and officials in other cities and the state capital ought to pay close attention. It's the kind of broad approach we have urged policymakers to develop, given the vast amount of plastic waste accumulating on the planet — particularly in oceans, rivers and other waterways. So far, the response has been to adopt bans or restrictions on individual items, such as grocery bags or plastic drinking straws. Those kinds of policies get attention but don't make appreciable dents in the staggeringly high — and ever-growing — volume of disposable plastic produced every year.

Meanwhile, plastic is piling up in the natural environment because it doesn't biodegrade. Instead, it breaks down into small pieces that are easily ingested by sea birds and creatures, killing some of them. Microplastic particles, which may contain toxins, have been found pretty much everywhere, including in our drinking water and in the food chain. The long-term health effects of this aren't well studied, but are unlikely to promote good health.

Berkeley, at least, answered the call to think beyond bags and straws. And while we're not endorsing every piece of this complex ordinance, officials there deserve credit for the courage and patience it took to enact such an ambitious, aggressive waste reduction effort that could serve as the test case for other cities and states.