



DATE: January 9, 2020
TO: Programs & Administration Committee
Planning Committee/Recycling Board
FROM: Meghan Starkey, Senior Management Analyst
SUBJECT: Countywide Element Update: Follow Up Discussion

SUMMARY

At the December 12 meetings of the WMA Committees and the Recycling Board, staff presented a draft of the goals, objectives, and policies to be included in the comprehensive update of the Countywide Element of the Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan (CoIWMP). At the January 9 meetings, staff will lead a discussion of several policies, as identified by Board members at the December meetings, and request additional input on this chapter.

DISCUSSION

The CoIWMP chapter containing the goals, objectives, and policies is the keystone of the Countywide Element in terms of guiding WMA actions and spending. Any action the WMA takes – whether approving a facility as consistent with the CoIWMP or deciding to spend money on one type of program as opposed to another – needs to support the goals, objectives, and policies in the Countywide Element. This chapter describes the desired state of waste and materials management (goals), more specific details on what it will look like once these goals are realized (objectives), and the policies that direct what the WMA will do to achieve each objective.

Board members from both committees used colored dots to indicate their general reaction to the draft. The rating scale used green to express agreement, yellow to flag items for further discussion or more information, and red to record serious objections. The combined dot ratings, reflecting review from both committees, are included in Attachment A¹ as an overlay on the full language of the objectives and policies.

Overall, there was a strong preponderance of green dots, indicating that staff is generally on the right track, especially as there were no red dots placed. The items with multiple yellow dots are

¹ One change from the draft presented in December is to express the goals as action items rather than just titles.

discussed below, for review and input at the meeting. Written comments made by Board members were used to identify the issues for discussion.

1. Fifteen Mile Rule

Under the 15 mile rule (Attachment A, Policy 1.2.2), solid waste that is collected by municipalities or franchised collectors, and hauled more than 15 miles from the collection point to a landfill, must be transported either in a high volume transfer trailer or clean air/clean fuel vehicles. The purpose of the 15 mile rule is to improve air quality as well as lessen traffic impacts on congested Alameda County freeways.

Given that garbage transfer stations are located in Berkeley, San Leandro, Fremont, and Pleasanton, and that the landfills are located within 15 miles of Livermore, most cities are easily able to comply with the rule. However, to comply with the 15 mile rule, solid waste from Castro Valley, as well as portions of Hayward, is currently being hauled west to a transfer station in San Leandro, before being consolidated and hauled back east to the Altamont Landfill. By restricting the ability to direct haul to landfills, the 15 mile rule limits the options available to member agencies when contracting for waste hauling services.

Staff recommends that we discuss the 15 mile rule and get input from Committee members regarding the rule now. Before adopting any changes to the rule, staff would need to determine if such changes would affect traffic, air quality, or other environmental factors. Depending on results of this analysis, additional environmental review may be required. The current CoIWMP revision is intended to primarily update, clarify, and consolidate rather than to propose substantive policy changes that could have environmental impacts.

2. Goal Setting

Both committees discussed issues in setting numeric goals, and how to evaluate progress towards the proposed goal of landfill obsolescence. The proposed policy drops the “Less than 10% ‘good stuff’ in garbage” goal altogether, and frames the two 75% goals in Policy 1.3.2 as benchmarks rather than firm numbers driving programs and evaluation.

While discussing this topic, both committees expressed their desire to have useful, numeric, and measurable goals in order to inform priority setting and evaluate progress. Staff has established and used more practical numeric interim targets and narrower goals to guide specific policy and programmatic choices, as included in the adopted FY 19-20 Annual Budget (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Agency Goals Through 2021



		Organics	Packaging	Built Environment	
	REDESIGN Increase in materials optimization	Increasing state and local policies addressing reduction of wasted food	Increasing adoption of the How2Recycle label by major brands and greater recognition by consumers	Increase in presence of environmentally certified building materials	INDICATORS
	RETHINK Increase in awareness	10% increase of families likely to reduce food waste at home ✓	TBD	TBD	SPECIFIC GOALS
	REDUCE / REUSE Less waste generated	10% of food service and grocers participate in food donation	50% reduction in all single-use bags distributed by newly affected stores ✓	<45% waste generated by construction and demolition projects in landfill ✓	
	RECYCLE / ROT Increase in proper sorting	<20% organics in landfill ⌚ At 25% currently	< 5% recyclables in landfill ⌚ At 11% currently		

In addition to this approach, staff will report annually:

- Total landfill tonnages over time
- Per capita disposal rates over time
- Per business disposal rates over time
- Tonnages handled through municipally controlled recycling and composting streams (2017 and later)

3. Climate Impacts & Food Waste Reduction

Objective 3.1 (climate change) and related policies codify a principle that was established during the last Board priority setting process: Prioritize waste reduction and prevention projects that have beneficial climate impacts. This guiding principle directly acknowledges the connection between material consumption and climate impacts. According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, material consumption makes up 45% of global emissions impact on climate, presenting a large opportunity to make a difference. Food waste in particular is an area that has a lot of potential for reduction. Board members flagged the policies under this objective for discussion, especially Policy 3.1.2 regarding emphasizing reduction of food waste and elimination of organics from landfill.

These objectives and policies are intended as a complement to those under Goal 2. Goal 2 focuses on end-of-life efforts such as recycling and composting. Connecting our other efforts with climate change reinforces two compelling considerations; first, the importance of source reduction, since preventing waste is always better than managing it after it is produced, and has the biggest impacts overall; and second, alignment with member

agencies' implementation of SB 1383 (Short Lived Climate Pollutant legislation) which will fundamentally reorient member agencies organics collection and processing programs.

4. Outreach Campaigns

Board members indicated interest in understanding the content of outreach campaigns and how to make them more effective. The agency relies heavily on outreach to residents, schools and businesses to achieve its goals. Specific campaigns are developed or continued each year as part of the budget adoption process, consistent with the guiding principles that the Board adopts during priority setting. Staff can provide additional insight into the campaign development process at a future Board meeting.

5. Building Recycling or Composting Facilities on WMA's Property

There were several comments about using the property to develop recycling or composting facilities, as a local response to international markets and contamination challenges.

One issue is whether development would be consistent with the Save Agricultural and Open Space Lands initiative, or the County's urban growth boundary policy. County counsel is researching this, and will report to the Board. Even if facility development was found to be consistent, there are a number of environmental challenges (such as lack of water and traffic impacts) that would need to be investigated.

RECOMMENDATION

Discuss the issues listed above and provide input to staff.

Countywide Element: Goals, Objectives and Policies

DRAFT

(rev. 12/30/19)

GOAL 1: DISPOSAL CAPACITY: Manage Discards and Minimize Landfill Impacts
Consistent with Waste Reduction Objectives. ●●●●●●●

Objective 1.1: Alameda County jurisdictions have a minimum of 15 years of disposal capacity available.

Policies:

1.1.1 Monitor disposal facilities and material flows, both in county and out of county.

1.1.2 Evaluate needs for landfill capacity before reaching 15 year minimum.

1.1.3 Maintain the property owned by the WMA in the Altamont for contingency landfill space in the event of lack of availability of cost effective disposal capacity. Consider acquiring additional land in the vicinity of the WMA property from willing sellers in order to advance the objectives of this plan.



1.1.4 Plan for contingency landfill capacity in the event of emergencies that generate large quantities of debris. ●●●●

Objective 1.2: Negative environmental impacts of landfills are mitigated. ●●●●

Policies:

1.2.1 Plan for the mitigation of environmental impacts due to watershed changes and/or new landfills. ●

1.2.2 Except under emergency conditions as determined by the WMA, solid waste that is collected by municipal or franchised collectors and hauled more than 15 miles from the point of collection to the landfill, must be transported in vehicles carrying a minimum payload of 14 tons. Notwithstanding the foregoing, this policy shall not apply where in the reasonable discretion of the Authority where waste is transported in clean air/clean fuels vehicles or transported in equivalent capacity transfer vehicles. ●●●●

- 1.2.3 Oversee Household Hazardous Waste programs. ● ●
- 1.2.4 Model and pilot property management practices in support of broader sustainability goals. ● ●
- 1.2.5 Ensure all WMA actions related to the WMA-owned property in the Altamont Hills are consistent with applicable laws and permitting processes, including the Save Agriculture and Open Space Lands Initiative. ●

Objective 1.3: Landfills become obsolete as a means of managing materials, replaced by continuous material flows that rely upon minimal inputs of non-renewable resources, elimination of waste through redesign of products and systems, and effective recovery of materials. ● ● ● ● ● ●

Policies:

- 1.3.1 WMA will develop programs that take into account the multiple factors that affect achieving this objective, such as infrastructure, economics, technology, public awareness, cost, partners, diversity of program approaches, and current issues. ● ● ●
- 1.3.2 Benchmarks to assess progress towards landfill obsolescence are: 75% less total materials deposited in landfills compared to 1990 and 75% reduction of organics in landfills compared to 2014. ●

Objective 1.4: Goals and targets are rooted in a systems perspective, using measurement that ensures effective program implementation and use of funds, while advancing systemic changes which are difficult to measure. ●

Policies:

- 1.4.1 Recognizing that, at the system scale, many external variables influence progress towards overarching goals, the WMA will focus its measurements and studies primarily on evaluating program effectiveness. This evaluation will be based on specific, measureable, and actionable outcomes. ● ● ●
- 1.4.2 Environmental “scans” of progress towards the landfill obsolescence will be used to identify key issues to investigate and set priorities.
- 1.4.3 The WMA will set more specific and narrower targets within its planning, priority setting and budgeting processes, which are responsive to emergent issues and current data, and which reflect a diversity of programmatic approaches. ●

1.4.4 Units of measurement for evaluation shall be appropriate to both the activity type (e.g., disposal v. consumption), material type (e.g., organic v. construction materials) and desired impacts (e.g., simple material tonnage to landfill v. overall environmental impact). ● ● ●

GOAL 2: RESPONSIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE: Maximize Environmental Benefits by Balancing High Volume of Recovery with Related Considerations: Quality of Commodities, Operating Impacts of Facilities, and Other Environmental Impacts of Programs. ●●●●●

Objective 2.1: Member Agencies have efficient, adequate, and environmentally sound infrastructure for managing recycling, organics, and other discards. ●●●●●

Policies:

2.1.1 Monitor recycling and composting facilities and Alameda County discarded materials flows, both in county and out of county.

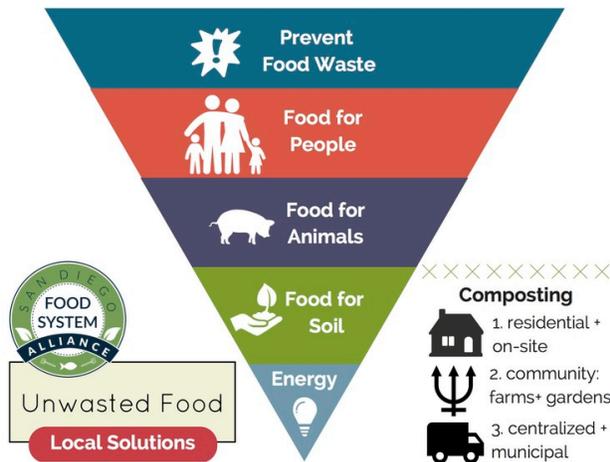
2.1.2 Conduct periodic studies of type, quantity, quality, and other attributes of materials handled through three streams (disposal, recycling, composting) or through other means such as source reduction and reuse. ●●●

2.1.3 Periodically survey infrastructure and identify gaps.

2.1.4 Use information developed through studies to develop plans and projects supplementing the CoIWMP.

2.1.5 Support member agency efforts to secure comprehensive materials handling and processing operations at landfills and transfer stations by: ●●

- Providing a list of issues for consideration by member agencies during franchise procurement and negotiation. ●
- Maintaining a reference library of all current contracts between member agencies and service providers. ●
- Considering grant requests to support development of new infrastructure.
- Prioritize reduction of organic waste sent to landfills to support 75 percent diversion and in support of climate goals. Programs should consider highest and best use using the food hierarchy. ●●●●



Objective 2.2: Direct and indirect environmental impacts of infrastructure, facilities, and related transportation are kept to a minimum.

Policies:

- 2.2.1 Provide input through the local land use approval, CEQA, and WMA conformance finding processes to reduce or avoid adverse human health and safety and environmental impacts. ● ●
- 2.2.2 Consider climate and other environmental impacts, including equity, when analyzing or designing recovery systems and programs, rather than focusing solely on quantity. ● ● ● ● ●
- 2.2.3 Except under emergency conditions as determined by the WMA, solid waste that is collected by municipal or franchised collectors and hauled more than 15 miles from the point of collection to the landfill, must be transported in vehicles carrying a minimum payload of 14 tons. Notwithstanding the foregoing, this policy shall not apply where in the reasonable discretion of the Authority where waste is transported in clean air/clean fuels vehicles or transported in equivalent capacity transfer vehicles. ● ● ●

Objective 2.3: Member Agencies and processing facilities have reliable markets for commodities produced, including new markets or other beneficial uses. ●

Policies:

- 2.3.1 Support development of healthy markets and/or other beneficial uses for materials recovered from the waste stream through WMA programs. ●

2.3.2 Convene stakeholder groups, including participants such as service providers, member agencies, and reuse/repair industry, to share information on market issues. ●

Objective 2.4: Materials processed at facilities have minimal contamination, both from the source and post processing, and end products are suitable for their intended use. ●●●●●

Policies:

2.4.1 Work with haulers and member agencies to identify sources, types, and impacts of contamination, and share information with all stakeholders.

2.4.2 Coordinate with member agencies on outreach and education materials to promote proper sorting. ●●●

Objective 2.5: Facilities are managed and periodically upgraded, and/or new facilities developed, to maximize both the recovery of materials and the value of end products. ●●●●●●●

Policies:

2.5.1 Consider grant requests to support upgraded or new facilities with available funds. ●

GOAL 3: MATERIALS MANAGEMENT: Shift from Managing Discards to Reducing Consumption, Managing Materials at Their Highest and Best Use, and Addressing Environmental Impacts Across the Full Life Cycle of Materials and Products. ●●●●●●●●●●

Objective 3.1: Prioritize waste reduction and prevention projects that have beneficial climate impacts. ●●

Policies:

3.1.1 Develop Agency programs and policies that reduce GHG emissions and consider the full life-cycle impacts of materials. ●●

3.1.2 Emphasize reduction of food waste and elimination of organics from landfill. ●●●●●●●●

3.1.3 Offer grants and financial incentives in support of waste reduction and prevention projects. ●●●●

Objective 3.2: Influence production and consumer demand by incentivizing and promoting the use of materials that are beneficial to human health and the environment. ●●

Policies:

3.2.1 Support the development of new markets and/or other beneficial uses for materials recovered from the waste stream (e.g. building deconstruction, reuse, and recycled market development). ●●

3.2.2 Foster local demand and a robust infrastructure for reuse, repair, and redistribution solutions to reduce waste that is accessible to all residents of Alameda County. ●●

3.2.3 Engage with industry and other stakeholders to support efforts that further the goals sustainable production and consumption. ●●●●●

GOAL 4: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT: Inform and Engage the Public in Waste Reduction Activities. ●●●●●●●●●●

Objective 4.1: Member agencies and the public are informed of WMA activities and notable waste reduction topics. ●●●

Policies:

4.1.1 Prepare an annual budget that clearly conveys WMA priorities, revenue sources and amounts, and expenditures at the project level. ●●

4.1.2 Respond in a thorough and timely manner to inquiries from the public and news media. Keep state legislators (East Bay Delegation) and policy makers properly informed of waste-related issues to make sound decisions and policy. ●

4.1.3 Prepare and distribute electronic newsletters and website content to keep member agency staff, the public and other stakeholders up to date on WMA activities.

4.1.4 Host regular meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee, staffed by member agency representatives, to share current waste reduction best practices. ●●●

Objective 4.2: Alameda County residents, schools and businesses have easy access to information on how to reuse, repair, recycle, and when needed-dispose of an item. ●●●●●

Policies:

4.2.1 Maintain and keep up to date content that provides “how-to” information on waste reduction topics. Engage directly with the public in an easily accessible manner. ●●

4.2.2 Maintain and keep up to date information that easily identifies how to reuse, repair, recycle, and when needed-dispose of an item. ●

4.2.3 Media and information are developed and distributed in a manner that is inclusive of Alameda County’s diverse communities. ●●●●

Objective 4.3: The public in Alameda County is educated and motivated to take action and adopt positive waste reduction habits aligned with WMA priorities. ●●●●●

Policies:

- 4.3.1 Engage students and their communities on topics aligned with Agency priorities, throughout the county including in underserved districts. ●
- 4.3.2 Conduct community outreach to engage directly with the public on topics aligned with Agency priorities. ● ●
- 4.3.3 Conduct broader public outreach campaigns, on topics tied to Agency priorities. ● ●

GOAL 5: REGIONAL COLLABORATION: Address Regional State and Federal Issues and Develop Programs in Partnership with Member Agencies, the Private Sector, and Other Key Stakeholders. ●●●●●●●●

Objective 5.1: As a Joint Powers Authority of Alameda County, facilitate inter-jurisdictional cooperation. ●

Policies:

5.1.1 Prepare and maintain the CoIWMP, including conformance findings and Plan amendments. ●

5.1.2 Undertake countywide planning efforts, such as initiating and acting as the lead agency on countywide CEQA analyses and consideration of model ordinances. ●●●

5.1.3 Support and coordinate with the WMA Board and the Alameda County Recycling Board to fulfill the joint aims of the two bodies.

5.1.4 Coordinate member agency and countywide programs in order to maximize economies of scale, reduce environmental impacts, strengthen marketing, and avoid unnecessary duplication. ●

Objective 5.2: Develop shared positions and policy, demonstrating leadership related to local, regional, State and federal legislation and regulation. ●

Policies:

5.2.1 Monitor legislation and proactively promote the interests of the WMA and its member agencies. ●

5.2.2 Support member agency compliance with and implementation of State and federal laws, including developing model ordinances with an emphasis on scalability and replicability.

5.2.3 Act a leader by piloting innovative approaches to waste management and diversion in response to member agency priorities. ●●●

5.2.4 Build and convene a network of partners to elevate issues and find solutions. ●●

Objective 5.3: Provide opportunities for the exchange of information and ideas among member agencies and other organizations working, affecting or serving Alameda County. ● ●

Policies:

- 5.3.1 Convene member agencies through the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). ● ● ●
- 5.3.2 Provide technical and program assistance to member agencies and other organizations working in Alameda County and directly support pilot and demonstration projects including WMA-sponsored programs. ●
- 5.3.3 Facilitate the formation of working groups and stakeholder meetings for shared ideas, information and policy development. ●
- 5.3.4 Partner with local nonprofits, schools, businesses, and other potential stakeholders, to create a network and promote opportunities for sharing of knowledge and resources. ● ● ● ●

GOAL 6: FUNDING. Manage Revenues and Expenditures to Implement Countywide Priority Programs and Facilities to Achieve the Goals Outlined in the CoIWMP. ●●●●●●●

Objective 6.1: Maintain consistent funding for WMA programs and facilities. ●●

Policies:

- 6.1.1 Collect AB 939 per-ton landfill facility fees, household hazardous fees and import mitigation fees on out-of-county waste pursuant to adopted resolutions and ordinances, to support WMA programs. ●
- 6.1.2 Pursue funding from sources other than tonnage fees, including but not limited to grants and fee-for-service contracts. ●
- 6.1.3 Consider revenue-generating opportunities at the agency’s property at the Altamont Hills area that do not interfere with current operations and conservation efforts. ●●
- 6.1.4 Consider increases or changes to per-ton fees if the WMA determines that such changes or increases are necessary to attain this objective. ●
- 6.1.5 Conduct annual short and medium term fiscal projections to assess revenue collections, reserves and fund balances, and adjust expenditures accordingly.
- 6.1.6 Maintain administrative overhead at the most efficient level necessary. ●
- 6.1.7 Review financial information, provide fiscal oversight of costs, and implement controls as necessary of programs and facilities that are owned or operated by the WMA, or other entities supported with WMA funds. ●
- 6.1.8 Explore options with both public and private funds to implement countywide capital-intensive programs or facilities. ●

Objective 6.2: Distribute costs and benefits equitably. ●●

Policies:

- 6.2.1 Ensure that costs and benefits of implementing countywide programs and facilities are equitably distributed among jurisdictions, based on criteria such as WMA’s priorities, program usage, tonnage of waste generated, and population. ●●●

6.2.2 Adopt and update, as necessary, the formulas for distributing program benefits and costs among member agencies as part of program development and approval process. ● ●