

Roadmap to a Sustainable Waste Management Future Subcommittee Meeting

Los Angeles County Department of Public Works
900 S. Fremont Ave, Alhambra CA 91803
Conference Rooms B & C

Thursday, May 12, 2016
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

MEETING SUMMARY

Welcome and Introductions

Carlos Ruiz, Public Works

- Attendees were welcomed and participants introduced themselves.
- It was explained that the subcommittee and working group meetings will be merged going forward.

Inspiring Solutions to Plastic Pollution Presentation

Katie Allen, Executive Director, Algalita (Presentation starts on slide [#3](#))

- Algalita was founded in 1999 by Captain Charles Moore, who discovered the Great Pacific Garbage Patch.
 - Algalita was the first to research micro/macroplastic samples from the ocean.
 - Their POPS Education Program is an environmental youth outreach program to raise awareness of plastic pollution in the ocean.
 - Works with individuals, schools and businesses to reduce plastic waste worldwide.
- Synthetic polymers used to make plastics do not break down in nature. The preproduction plastic pellets are called “nurdles” and can be found on every beach in the world.
- Recycling symbols with numbers inside are called resin codes. They do not mean the material is recyclable, only the type of plastic it is.
- Plastic waste in the ocean catches a ride on vortex-like currents called gyres and builds up there.
 - Waste from the US west coast ends up in Asia and vice versa over several years
- The majority of plastic waste in the ocean is smaller than a grain of rice. UV rays photodegrade plastic, creating a “plastic soup” in the ocean.
- If nothing changes, the ocean could contain 1 ton of plastic for every 3 tons of fish by 2025.

- Many toxic chemicals that end up in the ocean are hydrophobic, so they adhere to and are absorbed into plastic debris. This debris is eaten by fish and bioaccumulates up the food chain.
 - In 2008, Algalita found that 40% of the lanternfish within their study area in the North Pacific Gyre had plastic in their stomach.
- Recycling is seen as the best way to stop plastic waste, but only 3-5% of the plastic we generate is recycled.
- The big picture solution mirrors a circular economy with a commitment for change from industry, government, businesses, and consumers.
 - Industry can design products to be more valuable and sustainable and support extended producer responsibility
 - Government can work with industry to improve secondary markets; ban plastic bags, styrofoam and microbeads; work to standardize recycling, implementing standardized labels; and launch and monitor trash collection programs
 - Businesses can replace single-use plastics with sustainable alternatives, improve their internal waste management systems, and educate the public on single-use plastics
 - Consumers can bring their own to reduce single-use and, support local pollution campaigns, and clean local beaches
- Algalita is planning a city district level, culturally specific education program. The program will focus on socioeconomic factors, which determine culture and lifestyle. Local influencers determine change.
 - It's not about behavior change, but culture change
 - Create models for different types of communities (affluent, working class, underserved, business)
 - Reach different age groups
- Big challenge to reducing pollution is cheap cost of landfilling. Trash needs to be more valuable so there is an incentive to recover it.
- What is government's role in influencing industry to redesign their products? Companies change when their customers demand change or failing that, government bans or legislation.
- When reaching out to communities, it is important not to approach as us teaching them, but instead, us learning about their culture and lifestyle and how they can contribute.

Breakout Sessions

- County Unincorporated Communities (CUC) Subcommittee
 - Making Recycling Easier – Providing more public recycling receptacles (Strategy 1, Initiative C)
 - Beverage container recycling grants may be available for more receptacles
 - Big Belly Solar Compactors are an option for public receptacles to reduce collection frequency for the trash
 - Recycling containers would need to be secure and lockable
 - Place recycling bins where people are, i.e. parks, bus stops, outside cafes and coffee shops
 - Would more distributed recycling centers for residents and businesses improve recycling rates? (Strategy 3, Initiative D)
 - Where would funding come from?

- Where would they be sited and who would own, operate, and maintain?
 - CSD had to shut down a recycling center due to operational costs even though it was well attended by residents. Market rates of recyclable commodities make it difficult to be profitable.
 - Landfilling needs to be more expensive for more people to choose recycling. (Strategy 1, Initiative C)
 - Consider creating some type of Landfill fee that raises the rate of trash disposal
 - Discussed organics management (Strategy 1, Initiative D)
 - Source Separated vs. Mixed Waste Processing
 - What portion of residential waste is organics, Food vs. Green Waste
- Regional/Countywide (R/CW) Subcommittee
 - Reuse and Source Reduction
 - Waste characterization studies - To learn more about what constitutes a majority of the trash, to be better informed and know where to focus our reduction efforts. (Strategy 1, Initiative C)
 - Repair Café - A neighborhood initiative that promotes repairing items as an alternative to throwing them away when damaged. Discussed expansion of these types of programs and how to notify the public that these events exist. (Strategy 1, Initiative A3)
 - LACoMAX - Conserve landfill space by helping businesses, residents, organizations, and institutions find alternatives to the disposal of valuable materials which are presently discarded as waste.
 - Paperless Office - Discussed the Department's efforts moving towards a paperless future, such as scanning documents rather than storing them, performing digital plan reviews, rethinking our record retention policy, and how to encourage other Departments to make this transition. (Strategy 1, Initiative A)
 - Things we can do on a personal level – Reducing the amount of junk mail we receive, contacting credit card companies to opt out of receiving new offers in the mail, and being less wasteful regarding complimentary food routinely offered/served at restaurants. (Strategy 1, Initiative A)
- County Operations (C/O) Subcommittee
 - Reduce source usage and therefore storage space for use and disposal.
 - Prioritize refusing to use items in the first place, since recycling takes away guilt of disposing and using disposables. (Strategy 1, Initiative A1)
 - Sheriff's Department switched from disposable to reusable foodservice ware.
 - Switch to purchasing and using refillable/reusable items from disposable items. (Strategy 1, Initiative A4)
 - Pass Board of Supervisors (BOS) resolution/motion to have County departments comply with paperless initiative focusing on signature forms and regulation/policies/manuals with minimal and infrequent updates. (Strategy 1, Initiative A5)

- Pass BOS motion for assigned Department Recycling Coordinators to be in positions to adequately manage and implement programs. (Strategy 1, Initiative C3)
 - Justification
 - Rising cost of Paper Recycling & Trash/Rubbish services. (Strategy 2C1)
 - Include analysis of purchase costs versus savings for switches in items and/or to electronic processes. (Strategy 1, Initiative A4)
 - Education/Outreach
 - Show bad effect of current operations. (Strategy 4, Initiative B1)
 - Show method to reduce inconvenience of carrying around reusable/refillable items. (Strategy 4, Initiative B1)
 - Show method to easily transition from old way to new way making new habits permanent. (Strategy 4, Initiative B1)
 - Develop and place paper posters in communal areas and distribute flyers to employees electronically. (Strategy 4, Initiative B3)
 - Report past usage savings to Roadmap Annual Report (# or weight and \$) for those methods already moved electronically. (Strategy 4, Initiative B4.a)
 - Example - Bring Your Own flyer (reusable foodware and cutlery to office events/fundraisers)
 - Task for subcommittee members
 - Identify processes or document systems that are still mainly using paper in their respective departments. (Strategy 1, Initiative A1)
- Outreach and Education Subcommittee
 - Recap on last subcommittee meeting (April 14, 2016) discussion.
 - Roadmap Brochure was shared and discussed.
 - Discussed the Departmental Recycling Program and the Surplus Program – Coordinators for both programs should work hand in hand.
 - Reviewed and discussed the Bring Your Own (BYO) flyer.
 - Received feedback from subcommittee to finalize flyer to share with County Departments.
 - Will work on a BYO Countywide Campaign (both County Departments and the general public).
 - Board Motion possibly to acquire Board Support.
 - Work with businesses to spread the message as partners of the Campaign.
 - Public Health will look into possible issues with “brining your own” containers to markets, deli’s, etc.
 - Reviewed and discussed a sustainability tips flyer prepared with Recycling Coordinators in mind but can be shared with everyone.
 - Will work with PRG to incorporate feedback and distribute to Departments.
 - Discussed Repair Cafés
 - Long Beach Time Exchange conducted a workshop on Saturday, May 14, 2016.

- Will follow-up with event organizer to learn best practices for coordinating similar events in the County.

Open Discussion and Next Steps

- A representative from each subcommittee provided a brief summary of their subcommittee's discussions.
- The group was informed of the Repair Café in Long Beach and the new Public Works hydration station pilot program.

Next Subcommittee Meeting Tentatively Scheduled for June 8, 2016 at 9:00 A.M.

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

County Operations	
Frank Estrada	Animal Care and Control
Carlos Zimmerman	Beaches and Harbors
Alexander Ng	Fire Department
Candelaria Rodarte	Internal Services
Lois Giron	Internal Services
Wendy Mercado	Internal Services
Inna Sarac	Medical Examiner-Coroner
Ada Lopez	Probation
Michelle Hochstein	Probation
Nick Morell	Sanitation Districts
Donal O'Sullivan	Seed CG
Richard Sigur	Sheriff
Armando Aguilar	Public Works - EPD
Nilda Gemeniano	Public Works - EPD
Regional/Countywide	
Kendra Rusinet	Seed CG
Jalaine Madrid	Public Works - EPD
Trishena Robison	Public Works - EPD
Kawsar Vazifdar	Public Works - EPD
Suk Chong	Public Works - EPD
Carlos Slythe	Public Works - EPD

Outreach and Education	
Ken Pellman	ACWM
Jennifer Lieu	Arts Commission
Tom McKenzie	Arts Commission
Dorcas Hanson-Lugo	Public Health
James Dragan	Public Health
Lucy McDonald	Public Health
Bereket Tadele	Public Works - EPD
Edna Gandarilla	Public Works - EPD
Kathy Salama	Public Works - EPD
Tranette Sanders	Public Works - EPD
Vanessa Olivas	Public Works - EPD
County Unincorporated	
Marge Santos	CEO
Gerry Villalobos	Public Health
Maurice Pantoja	Public Health
Lupe Carrillo	Public Works - PDD
Allen Ma	Public Works - WMD
Habib Kharrat	Sanitation Districts
Chris Sheppard	Public Works - EPD
Saro Toutounjian	Public Works - EPD