



City of Long Beach

Legislative File Number 08-0670 (version 1)

Recommendation to respectfully request City Council support the County of Los Angeles' efforts to evaluate and promote development of next generation conversion technologies that minimize landfill disposal, create "green collar" jobs, and utilize waste material in an environmentally beneficial manner.

Request that City Manager work with the County of Los Angeles to ensure that Long Beach is considered for any future partnerships for the development of conversion technology facilities.

Request City's legislative advocates work with the County of Los Angeles to support legislation that establishes a viable permitting process for conversion technologies that protect public health, safety and the environment, and provides full diversion credit for these technologies under the California Integrated Waste Management Act.

The City of Long Beach is among the nation's leaders in waste diversion due to the thoughtful planning and investment by city leaders and the Environmental Services Bureau in the Southeast Resource Recovery Facility (SERRF), which began commercial operation in 1988. According to City documents, SERRF is a publicly owned solid waste management facility that uses mass burn technology to reduce the volume of solid waste by about 80% while recovering electrical energy. The facility is owned by a separate authority created by a joint powers agreement between the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County and the City of Long Beach, but is operated by a private company under contract. Residential and commercial solid waste from Long Beach and surrounding contracting communities is combusted in high temperature boilers to produce steam, which in turn is used to run a turbine-generator creating 36 megawatts of electricity. The SERRF site generates enough power each year to supply 40,000 residential homes with electricity and has reduced solid waste from entering landfills by over four million cubic yards. In addition, the SERRF site has allowed the City to keep the cost for waste management significantly below average, passing the savings on to our residents in their monthly bills. Each month, an average 825 tons of metal are recycled rather than sent to a landfill. As a public service and at the request of law enforcement agencies within California, SERRF began destroying narcotics and drug related paraphernalia in 1992. The program has been a tremendous success. SERRF has destroyed an average of 17,000 pounds of narcotics each month. This commitment by the City of Long Beach to assist in the removal of illegal narcotics from our cities' streets has saved law enforcement agencies hundreds of staff hours and thousands of dollars in alternative disposal costs.

The County of Los Angeles has evaluated next generation conversion technologies, which

are capable of converting post-recycled residual solid waste into marketable products, green fuels, and clean, renewable energy, and identified a number of viable technologies for Southern California. This next generation thermal conversion technology differs from our current SERRF technology in that it eliminates the residue combustion ash, which is currently treated and sent to an authorized landfill to be used as road base material. This difference is significant, since the only local landfill permitted to receive the ash is Puente Hills and it is scheduled to close in 2013.

Our existing SERRF site provides a valuable service to the residents of our city, pushing our diversion rate to 69% and converting our waste to electricity. However, next generation conversion technologies can further enhance our efforts to become our own "wasteshed", Conversion technologies may also provide us with the electricity necessary to support increased demand from cold-ironing in the harbor and Port. Just as our predecessors pursued technologies reducing the economic and environmental impacts of sending waste to local landfills, it makes sense that we explore opportunities to increase our conversion rate, better serve our residents, and further diminish our footprint on the environment.

None.

None.

Approve recommendation.

Suja Lowenthal
Councilmember, Second District