

Executive Summary

OVERVIEW: The Roadmap creates a framework for strategies and initiatives the County can use to decrease reliance on landfills by maximizing the recovery of items.

CHALLENGE: Although Los Angeles County (County) consistently exceeds the State's 50 percent waste diversion mandate (AB 939), disposal capacity continues to diminish and landfill space is nearing capacity. To address the long-term needs of our residential and business communities and meet current and future regulations such as AB 32, which requires the reduction of greenhouse gases; AB 341, the statewide 75 percent recycling goal and commercial recycling mandate; and AB 1826, which requires businesses and multi-family dwellings to recycle their organic waste, more had to be done. It was clear that meeting mandates was no longer enough. The County has to be proactive and innovative in managing waste to reduce the County's reliance on landfills.

INNOVATIVE SOLUTION: To address these concerns, in 2014 the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (Public Works) collaborated with the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to initiate a motion to develop a roadmap to achieve a sustainable waste management future. Subsequently, a Working Group comprised of more than 10 County Departments, Board Offices, Chief Executive Office, and Special Districts was formed to collectively develop the **Roadmap to a Sustainable Waste Management Future** (Roadmap). The resulting Roadmap is divided into three key Focus Areas (County Unincorporated Communities, Regional/Countywide, and County Operations). It includes four strategies and more than 100 initiatives that will maximize the recovery of products, materials, and energy from waste to meet the following intermediate and long-term disposal reduction targets: 80 percent diversion from landfills by 2025; 90 percent diversion from landfills by 2035; and 95+ percent diversion from landfills by 2045.

Executive Summary

ORIGINALITY: Within each of its four strategies, the Working Group identified several initiatives that will build on the success of existing and proposed programs and services, integrate both evaluation and continuous improvement mechanisms, support the development of necessary facilities and infrastructure, and provide effective public outreach and education. The initiatives include plans to recover organics, including food waste, to their highest and best uses; advocate for extended producer responsibility; evaluate County purchasing practices; develop conversion technologies and integrated materials recovery facilities, and much more. The key to this effort is collaboration. Through the Roadmap, initiatives will be further developed by working with residents, businesses, public agencies, the waste industry, environmental organizations, and other interested stakeholders to achieve attainable implementation plans. Once established, the plans can be easily transferred to assist other jurisdictions.

RESULTS: With the Roadmap in place, the County now has an organized strategic plan to protect the environment, enhance the quality of life of our residents, and provide an effective and efficient mechanism to implement new programs and enhance existing programs. Some of the accomplishments so far include waste characterization studies at County facilities, initiation of a possible Los Angeles County food donation program, and most importantly the system to bring County Departments, residents, businesses, environmental organizations, and other stakeholders together to work collaboratively to achieve the Roadmap's diversion goals.

PROJECT CONTACT: Mr. Coby Skye, Senior Civil Engineer. (626) 458-3550.
Email: cskye@dpw.lacounty.gov, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
P.O. Box 1460 Alhambra, CA 91802.