

## **SECTION 1.0**

### **WHAT IS THE LONG-TERM RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OPTIONS STRATEGIC PLAN?**

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### **1.1 PURPOSE**

In 2007, the City's Environmental Services Department (ESD) initiated the development of a **L**ong-term **R**esource **M**anagement **O**ptions **S**trategic **P**lan (LRMOSP) or "Strategic Plan" to address the resource management needs of the City through the year 2030. The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to consider short- and long-term strategies for waste management including zero waste strategies (reducing, recycling, and reusing solid waste to the maximum extent feasible) and provide for the management of the City's waste in a safe and cost-effective manner.

In April 2007, the San Diego City Council approved an agreement for professional services with the BAS Consultant Team to assist ESD in the preparation of a LRMOSP for the City. The BAS Consultant Team included Katz & Associates, Clements, JRMA, and HF&H. A list of the BAS Consultant Team members is shown on Table 1-1.

The Strategic Plan is to be completed in two phases. During Phase I, the Consultant Team, in collaboration with ESD staff and a RMAC, identified and evaluated various programs, policies, infrastructure facilities, conversion technologies, waste-to-energy, and in- and out-of County disposal options to address the City's resource management needs through the year 2030. The effort included discussions and consensus building with representative stakeholders of the community who were part of the RMAC. A website was established to make information available to the public regarding the Strategic Plan (meeting notices, agendas, meeting summaries, and other relevant information) at [www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/geninfo](http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/geninfo).

## 1.2 STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The goals of the Strategic Plan are as follows:

- Develop a plan for the residents and businesses of the City of San Diego for the long-term management of resources in addressing solid waste generation and disposal up to year 2030.
- Anticipate the projected closure in 2012 of the City's only landfill disposal site, West Miramar Landfill, and evaluate options for solid waste reduction, recycling, reuse, conversion, and disposal in- and out-of San Diego County.
- Evaluate opportunities for promoting and expanding zero waste philosophies and programs in the City of San Diego.
- Consider options that are technically and economically feasible and protective of public health and the environment.
- Sustain the economic viability of ESD programs which provide collection, disposal, energy conservation, waste reduction, environmental protection, and sustainability and resource management services.
- Seek stakeholder input in developing recommendations for the Strategic Plan.
- Provide recommendations at the end of Phase II to address the City's resource management issues.

Some materials in the waste stream are resources that should not be wasted.

This paradigm shift, illustrated in the figure to the right, has been incorporated in the City's Strategic Plan process. With waste diversion rates at more than 50 percent, landfilling is now the smallest part of the waste pyramid with source reduction being the primary focus of waste management planning.



### 1.3 PHASE I REPORT OVERVIEW

The Phase I Report documents the Phase I Strategic Plan process and includes the data gathered, the landfill capacity model runs and the screening analysis of the almost 100 options that were evaluated. It includes a comprehensive study of the current and projected disposal needs of the City and also considers the projected diversion rates from recycling and zero waste programs. The report also includes the current ESD resource management and financial programs, regulatory requirements, and key policy and planning issues impacting waste management in the City and the region that were reviewed and analyzed.

At the end of the Phase I process, preliminary options were identified that could help meet the future resource management needs of the City. Options, policies, and programs were ranked and those with a medium to high feasibility were recommended for further analysis in Phase II. A summary of what was analyzed during the Phase I process follows:

#### 1.3.1 WHAT IS THE CITY'S CURRENT ROLE IN WASTE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT?

The City provides resource management programs, including collection services, waste reduction and disposal programs, zero waste initiatives, and Citywide diversion and recycling programs. A discussion regarding the City's existing resource management programs, as well as a proposed West Miramar Height Increase and Material Recovery Facility/Transfer Station is included in Section 2.0, *What's The City's Current Role in Waste/Resource Management?*

#### 1.3.2 HOW MUCH WASTE DOES THE CITY AND REGION DISPOSE OF AND WHERE DOES IT GO?

Using the most recent San Diego Association of Governments' (SANDAG) population projections, the City's and region's solid waste projected disposal tonnages up to the year 2030 were developed. Then landfill capacity modeling was performed using current and proposed capacities for the landfills in San Diego County. Included in the modeling were the proposed Miramar Height Increase, the proposed Sycamore Landfill expansion, the projected diversion

rates from the implementation of the recycling and C&D ordinances, and the projected capacity for the Gregory Canyon Landfill. The results were used to determine current and projected system deficiencies for both the City and the San Diego region.

Without the West Miramar height increase, the landfill is projected to close in 2012. If the West Miramar Height Increase is approved, the landfill gains capacity to year 2017. With the implementation of the recycling and C&D ordinances, the WML is projected to have capacity to 2019.

Allied Industries is proposing an increase in the capacity at the Sycamore Landfill; if approved, the Sycamore Landfill could provide regional capacity to 2029. In addition, if the Gregory Canyon Landfill (a new landfill site proposed in Northern San Diego County) were to complete its permitting requirements and begin operating by 2010, it could provide regional landfill disposal capacity beyond 2030. A detailed discussion of the capacity projections can be found in Section 3.0, *How Much Waste Does the City and Region Dispose of and Where Does it Go?*

### 1.3.3 HOW HEALTHY ARE THE ESD OPERATING FUNDS?

The BAS Consultant Team reviewed ESD's three major operating funds (the General Fund, Refuse Disposal Fund, and the Recycling Fund) to determine their financial health, such as adequacy of reserves to manage cash flow demands.

No significant adverse trend was identified regarding total General Fund operating expenditures, which increased at a rate less than inflation.

ESD has implemented cost cutting measures and increased efficiencies to maintain the funds in a positive financial position. However, given the overall trend of the Refuse Disposal and Recycling funds and the additional impacts from diversion efforts, both funds are expected to be in a deficit in the near term. A detailed discussion of the financial analysis is included in Section 4.0, *How Healthy are the ESD Operation Funds?*

#### 1.3.4 WHAT REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS AND POLICY ISSUES IMPACT THE CITY'S WASTE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT?

Pertinent regulatory requirements and key policy issues related to local and regional solid waste/resource management were identified and analyzed and then the information was integrated with the strategic planning process. The BAS Consultant Team reviewed both regional and City planning, policy, and contract documents relevant to resource management which included the People's Ordinance of 1919 and Proposition H, as well as franchise agreements, leases with the Navy, and other pertinent documents. About 16 different regulatory requirements, policy and/or planning documents, were reviewed and are briefly summarized in Section 5.0 of this report. More information on key policy and planning issues can be found in Appendix A and copies of key documents (People's Ordinance of 1919, Proposition H of 1987, City Recycling Ordinance, and the City Construction & Demolition Ordinance) are included as Appendices A-1, A-2, A-3, and A-4, respectively.

The People's Ordinance of 1919 is codified in the City's Municipal Code Section 66.0127 which requires the City to provide certain collection and disposal services with no direct charge to the City's residential customers. Currently, the City funds this mandate from the General Fund.

Another regulatory constraint on the City's waste management planning is Proposition H. This proposition includes siting restrictions and other constraints for any facility over 500 tons per day that uses technology that combusts or burns refuse. However, Proposition H would allow for a waste-to-energy plant processing up to 500 tons per day of waste. In addition, any proposed conversion technology that uses a non-combustible process may not be restricted by Proposition H requirements.

#### 1.3.5 HOW WERE THE PHASE I OPTIONS DEVELOPED?

The BAS consulting Team, along with ESD and RMAC members, developed and screened potential options to address the City's solid waste management and resource management needs. RMAC input was sought throughout the Phase I

process and culminated in the development of a list of options to be further analyzed in Phase II. A list of RMAC members is shown in Table 1-2. A discussion of the RMAC is included in Section 6.0, *How Were The Phase I Options Developed?* Appendix B contains the RMAC Mission Statement, meeting agendas, and meeting summaries.

#### 1.3.6 WHAT OPTIONS ARE THERE TO MANAGE THE CITY'S WASTE/RESOURCES?

One of the goals of Phase I was to identify potential options to meet the City's resource management needs up to the year 2030. Over 100 options were considered and evaluated and are grouped into the following categories:

- Zero Waste Programs,
- Zero Waste Infrastructure,
- Conversion Technologies,
- Waste-to-Energy,
- Landfill Optimization, and
- Other Disposal Options.

A summary of options developed to address the City's resource management needs is included in Section 7.0, *What Options Are There To Manage The City's Waste/Resources?*

#### 1.3.7 SCREENING THE OPTIONS IN PHASE I

Screening criteria were established to rank, measure, and compare the relative merits of various options, including those which further zero waste goals. Using criteria collaboratively established by the BAS Consultant Team, ESD, and the RMAC, over 100 options, policies, and programs were screened to address the City's waste management needs. The options were grouped into categories of high, medium, and low feasibility. Forty (40) options with a medium to high feasibility were recommended for further evaluation in Phase II. A summary of the screening process, including the criteria used and the ranking of options is, included in Section 8.0, *Screening The Options In Phase I*, of this report. A detailed discussion on the evaluation and ranking of the options is included in Appendix G, *How The Options Were Evaluated and Screened*.

## **1.4 WHAT HAPPENS IN PHASE II?**

After the Phase I Report is presented to the City Council, the BAS Consultant Team, RMAC, and ESD staff will begin evaluation of the medium- to high-feasibility options identified in Phase I. In Phase II, a comprehensive Strategic Plan that includes short- and long-term strategies for managing the City's waste/resources, including infrastructure needs, a financial plan, and an implementation plan, will be developed.