

City of San Diego Long-term Resource Management Options (LRMO)
Strategic Plan - Phase II
Resource Management Advisory Committee (RMAC)
Environmental Services Department, Ridgehaven Court, San Diego, CA 92123
2nd Floor
Wednesday, November 4, 2009, 2:30 – 5:00 pm

Meeting Summary

RMAC Members Present:

Richard Anthony, San Diego County Integrated Waste Management/Citizens Advisory Committee
Mike McDade, San Diego County Disposal Association
Sylvia Castillo, City of San Diego Environmental Services Department (ESD)
Andrea Eaton, City of San Diego Council District 7
Robert Epler, ESD
Beryl Flom, League of Women Voters San Diego
Barbara Lamb, City of San Diego, Mayor's Business Office
Amy Harris on behalf of Lani Lutar, San Diego County Taxpayers Association
Leslie McLaughlin, Navy Base San Diego
Brian Henry, ESD
Alan Pentico, San Diego County Apartment Association
Jacquie Adams on behalf of William Prinz, City of San Diego Solid Waste Local Enforcement Agency

RMAC Members Absent

Fatih Buyuksonmez, San Diego State University, Dept of Civil and Envr Studies
Jamie Fox-Rice, City of San Diego, Council District 3
Lynn France, City of Chula Vista, Public Works Dept

Project Team Members Present:

Lewis Michaelson, Katz and Associates
Sonia Nasser, Bryan A. Stirrat and Associates, a Tetra Tech Company (BAS)
Cesar Leon, BAS
Chris Gonaver, ESD
Steven Greal, ESD
Kip Sturdevan, ESD

Public

Keith Battle, Public Policy Partners
Lawrence Chapman, Taman
Patrick Hadley, City of San Diego, Business Office
Carlie Peck, Solana Center
Renee Robertson, ESD

Introduction:

Lewis Michaelson introduced himself as the neutral facilitator for the Resource Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) process. Each RMAC member and the remaining audience were asked to introduce themselves and the organization they represented. Mr. Michaelson then reviewed the agenda for the meeting and introduced Chris Gonaver.

Environmental Services Department Update:

Chris Gonaver, Director of ESD, thanked the committee members for attending and began by providing a brief update. Mr. Gonaver discussed the subcommittees that had been formed with the Franchise Haulers to share and exchange information on Collection Services Equipment, Maintenance and Purchasing costs and Collection Services Operational Practices.

Stephen Grealy provided an update on several aspects of disposal and diversion, including the decline of waste volume disposed at Miramar Landfill, the effects of the City's Recycling and Construction & Demolition (C&D) Ordinances, AB939 fee revenue and curbside recycling commodities sales revenues. He also discussed the new C&D processing facility in El Cajon, a pilot asphalt processing facility and the expanded area for greenery at Miramar. Stephen also mentioned the new recycling bag developed for apartment residents in conjunction with the San Diego County Apartment Association. Alan Pentico mentioned that as apartment units come on-line they look for every press opportunity to highlight and showcase the new program. Stephen later brought down and showed what the colorful, heavy duty recycling bag looks like.

Q: How much food waste is being composted along with the green waste at Miramar?

A: Current 2500 tons per year are being composted and the source of the material is from Sea World, Petco Park and other restaurants.

Q: What caused such large dip in the curbside recycling commodities in earlier years?

A: The graph reflects net revenue and that particular year accounted for program costs such as bin expenses and the equipment to collect the recyclables?

Q: Can the use of recycling bin colors be standardized across the region?

A: Yes, the City and the other hauler's did not coordinate the color of the recycling bins, however it is not currently possible to make all haulers have the same color recycling bin, more education on the use of the recycling bins however is possible.

Q: What is the status of the ESD Business Process Reengineering (BPR) effort?

A: The ESD BPR has been implemented and resulted in a 16% full time employee (FTE) reduction which helped ESD improve its efficiency and effectiveness.

Q: How much additional composting will the City be able to do with the expanded Miramar Greenery facility?

A: The facility processes approximately 2,000 – 2,500 tons of food waste currently and with the expansion may be able to double the amount of food waste it takes.

Phase I Report Overview:

Sylvia Castillo provided a brief overview of the work completed in Phase I of the LRMO Strategic Plan. Phase I found that the West Miramar Landfill would reach capacity in 2019. The RMAC proposed 39 options to be carried forward to Phase II of the project, to be considered as possible components of a future system for resource management.

Q: Won't the economy impact the tonnage received at Miramar which would impact the predicted closure date of the landfill?

A: Yes, projected disposal demand and the date the landfill will reach capacity will be a moving target. Phase II of the effort will consider economic factors used by the City to appropriately forecast tonnage and financial impacts.

Q: Why is the regional capacity listed as 2030 while Phase I points out a capacity of 2019?

A: The regional capacity is projected to be to year 2030 while the City's, Miramar Landfill is projected to have a capacity to year 2019. The regional capacity takes into account landfills outside of the City's system (e.g. Sycamore and Otay)

Q: Will there be a paradigm shift in financing following the shift from landfilling to zero-waste?

A: The costs of financing infrastructure facilities (material recovery facilities, landfills) are substantially higher than funding programs such as education that will assist in the zero waste effort.

Q: Were the 39 options listed the RMAC's suggestions? Are they ranked in order?

A: Yes, the list was developed based on RMAC's input and no, the list does not rank the options. Any option that received a screening value of 3 or higher by the RMAC and the project team was included in the list of options that should be carried forward into Phase II. However their screening values did not carry forward, in Phase II those options would be evaluated anew as part of system configurations, not stand alone options

Q: Can we add to the list of options?

A: If a significant option was missed or is needed those can be considered. For example in Phase I the expansion of West Miramar was not anticipated, however it is now one of the options that will be evaluated in Phase II.

Phase II Scope of Work Revised:

Barbara Lamb from the Mayor's Business Office provided an overview of why the Phase II Scope of Work which has been modified to provide a greater focus on financial analysis and the cost of options available to pursue various resource management strategies. The RMAC will continue to provide valuable input and feedback during Phase II of the LRMO strategic planning process.

Q: Does the City and ESD specifically have the budget for implementing the strategies suggested by the RMAC?

A: ESD is not planning on receiving any new dollars for implementation, but different financing options will be explored in Phase II of this effort.

Q: Has the City looked at new concepts such as "pay as you throw"?

A: A committee formed by Council will be looking into new revenues options for the City. Phase II of this effort will be looking at different financing options for different strategies. It will be focused on the big picture questions on how we move forward in investing, building, hauling, etc.

Phase II Scope of Work Elements:

Sonia Nasser provided an overview of the various tasks the Project Team will be undertaking during Phase II, such as updating the demand and capacity models, costing and providing timing for various infrastructure options. Then the team will develop various system configurations for which financial plans to year 2045 will be modeled. The year 2045 was selected because that is the year the land lease for Miramar expires.

Evaluation Criteria & System Configurations:

Lewis Michaelson provided an overview of evaluation criteria and system configurations. A system configuration will include different resource management options, programs, and policies designed to meet the City's waste management needs. The evaluation criteria will be used to rank each system configuration and to aid in the decision making process. It is important to note that the highest ranked configuration will not always be the best choice moving forward. Other externalities will play a role in the decision making process. In order to develop a weighted score for each criterion, each RMAC member was asked to distribute 100 points across

six different evaluation criteria (financial, technical, environmental, capacity optimization, and sustainability). The results were collected and will be tabulated and shared with the RMAC as a follow up to this meeting.

Q: Who developed the list of criteria? Do the criteria make sense and are they comparable?

A: The RMAC developed the evaluation criteria in Phase I of this effort. Individual criteria are not meant to be comparable; they are intended to take into account and reflect varying perspectives and preferences.

After the criteria weighting exercise was completed, RMAC members were asked for their feedback on what types of system configurations they thought should be formulated and evaluated in Phase II. The RMAC provided a number of suggestions on various combinations of policies, programs and facilities. Some suggestions emphasized zero waste programs, additional organics collection, some expanding capacity at Miramar, and some emphasized diversion and other more traditional approaches. Based on this feedback, ESD and the consultant team will generate representative system configurations and share with the RMAC for their review and feedback, before beginning their technical and financial analysis.

Q: What other models (system configurations) are being used currently? Can we examine what other regions are doing?

A: Phase I of the effort looked into best practices in resource management implemented in other regions. Phase II will look at the options the RMAC developed and group them into different system configurations to ultimately develop a preferred strategy. Yes there are other entities developing or that have zero waste programs however the City of San Diego is unique because of its constraints from the People's Ordinance (single family residents do not pay for trash collection) and Proposition H (limitation on incineration of waste to 500 tons per day and siting criteria restrictions).

Q: There are two main issues that the City has to deal with. One being the People's Ordinance and the other is Proposition H. Should we develop configurations with these limitations in mind?

A: The system configurations will consider constraints such as these and the analysis will allow the RMAC to evaluate whether it would be worth the effort to pursue changes in such ordinances. For example, the comparison of system configurations would enable us to understand if the benefits to the system would be great enough to warrant pursuing the difficult political challenge of seeking change to the People's Ordinance or Proposition H. Options should not be thrown out based on restrictions but evaluated to determine if the options are feasible and worthwhile.

Q: How will externalities in the future impact our decision making now? More specifically, how will certain federal fiscal and regulatory policies impact the way things are done in the future?

A: Phase II of the project will consider projections that the City currently uses in its financial reports to ensure consistency. To a certain extent, the model that is developed for the City can be modified to revise projections based on future policies, programs, and procedures.

Conclusion:

Lewis Michaelson thanked everyone for attending and providing input. He also stated that the next meeting has not been scheduled, but would not occur before the end of the year. In the meantime, ESD and the consultant team would be compiling the criteria weighting exercise and system configuration inputs from the RMAC and providing them in draft form to the RMAC for feedback. Also, from this point forward, Barbara Lamb from the Business Office will be the primary contact for RMAC members if they have questions or comments during Phase II. Barbara's e-mail address is: BLamb@sandiego.gov.