

**Work Session– 5:45 p.m. – Council Chambers**

Purpose: To Hear and Discuss a Report on the Final Draft of the Zero Waste Plan for Oberlin

A work session of the Oberlin City Council was held in Council Chambers on December 16th, 2013 preceding a regular City Council Meeting in Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m., by Presiding Officer Ronnie Rimbart. Those in attendance were as follows:

Council Members Present:

Present

Absent

Charles Peterson
Bryan Burgess
Sharon Soucy
Elizabeth Meadows
Scott Broadwell
Aaron Mucciolo
Ronnie Rimbart

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Appointees Present:

Belinda Anderson, Clerk of Council
Eric Norenberg, City Manager

Others Present:

Michael Greenberg
Molly Kathleen
Michael McCullough
Keith Bailey

The purpose of the work session was to hear and discuss a report on the final draft of the Zero Waste Plan for the City of Oberlin. Open remarks from the City Manager revealed that the report was a collaborative effort from several groups including City Staff, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Commission, GT Environmental, Inc., out of Westerville, Ohio, and the Lorain County Solid Waste Management District. The goal of the plan is to enable Oberlin to serve as a model community in reducing waste and diverting waste into other purposes.

The discussion was lead by a team from GT Environmental made up of Michael Greenberg, Owner/Principal Consultant, Molly Kathleen, Environmental Planner I, and Michael McCullough, Solid Waste Planner. It was noted that Keith Bailey, Director of Lorain County Solid Waste Management District was also available to answer questions.

Highlights of the discussion were outlined in a PowerPoint presentation (attached) which addressed the following goals and objectives to:

- Meet the City's Climate Action Plan (CAP) commitment by reducing solid waste by 90 percent.
- Initiate necessary and planned replacement of the City's residential collection equipment
- Develop a plan that would have cost neutrality
- Create a broad-based solution (something that everyone can do).

The presentation was followed by discussion.

Peterson asked what impact has the cart- system had on personnel in other communities who have transitioned over to the proposed recycling program. Greenberg replied that most of the cities that have implemented the program have experienced a cost savings factor because there are less people on the truck. However, this has not led to increased layoffs. Additional benefits include an estimated savings of over a million dollars in workers' compensation due to switching over to an automated system which will ultimately result in fewer injuries. The expected savings is for communities larger than Oberlin but Oberlin can still expect some savings in this area as well.

Soucy asked the presenter to share how GT will address the recycling needs for apartment buildings using the cart system. Greenberg remarked that two options have been considered in other communities that can be used in Oberlin as well. Apartment owners can be offered an incentive for allowing a dumpster to be placed on site. If placing a dumpster in the parking lot will result in the loss of too many parking spaces then the City of Oberlin can set up drop off locations in the community.

Burgess said he has heard from other communities that went to the cart system (some over a decade ago) that it is difficult to manage the large carts. He would be interested in hearing if Oberlin could have various sized carts on variable payment amounts. Greenberg noted that the City would be able to customize the program to suit its needs. He noted as an example, that one community established a Zero Waste Plan that required there to be an option to choose between three carts: a 32 gallon, 64 gallon, and a 96 gallon cart. In addition, there would also be a 10% price differential between each cart, the largest cart being the most expensive.

Broadwell asked what needed to be done to start the program before the proposed date of 2020. Greenberg remarked that the City can start the program at any time, but there are start up costs that will need to be factored into the budget. In addition, there is an outreach aspect that needs to be done to promote the program. GT has found that programs are more successful when done in phases as opposed to hitting residents with a change all at once. Finally, there is also a need to coordinate operations with the Lorain County Solid Waste Management District which won't be ready to start operations for at least two years.

Keith Bailey, Director of Lorain County Solid Waste Management District said they couldn't process recycling without having the infrastructure in place first. They will need to build the infrastructure to support this program. Four locations are currently under review for setting up shop. Once the location site is selected a recommendation will be submitted to the LCSWMD policy committee which writes the district plan. Then they will have to choose the proper company to manage the program. This is a \$2.5 million dollar project that will take a minimum of three years before it will be fully operational. Lorain County has about 33,000 tons of yard waste being recycled right now. There is probably another 20,000 tons of yard waste that goes to landfill every year. That yard waste will have to be taken out of the system before they can proceed because you cannot compost food wastes without having a carbon source, which in the this example would be the yard waste. They will first need to protect the carbon source and get it collected into a central location and then they have to make the food routes; which is why it will take some time before they can initiate the Zero Waste Plan.

Rimbert asked if GT Environmental and City administration had looked at what this was going to cost in staff time. Greenberg said they looked at some of the costs associated with staff time but not the costs associated with the outreach component of the Zero Waste Plan. Rimbert asked the presenter to identify some of the negatives associated with moving

over to the Zero Waste Plan. Greenberg remarked that one of the major negatives is going to be the start up costs associated with purchasing the new equipment, training, and the costs of licensing and permits.

Rimbert expounded on earlier comments raised by Mr. Peterson, expressing his concern for the impacts that this could have on personnel.

Aliza Weidenbaum, 99 South Cedar Street, said she would like to see the City diversify its options and invest its money in a Zero Waste Plan that will offer other services in conjunction with hauling garbage.

Being that there was no further business to come before Council the meeting adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

Attest:

BELINDA B. ANDERSON, MMC
CLERK OF COUNCIL

H. SCOTT BROADWELL
PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

APPROVED: 01/21/2014

POSTED: 01/22/2014

The City of Oberlin

Resource Conservation and Recovery Commission

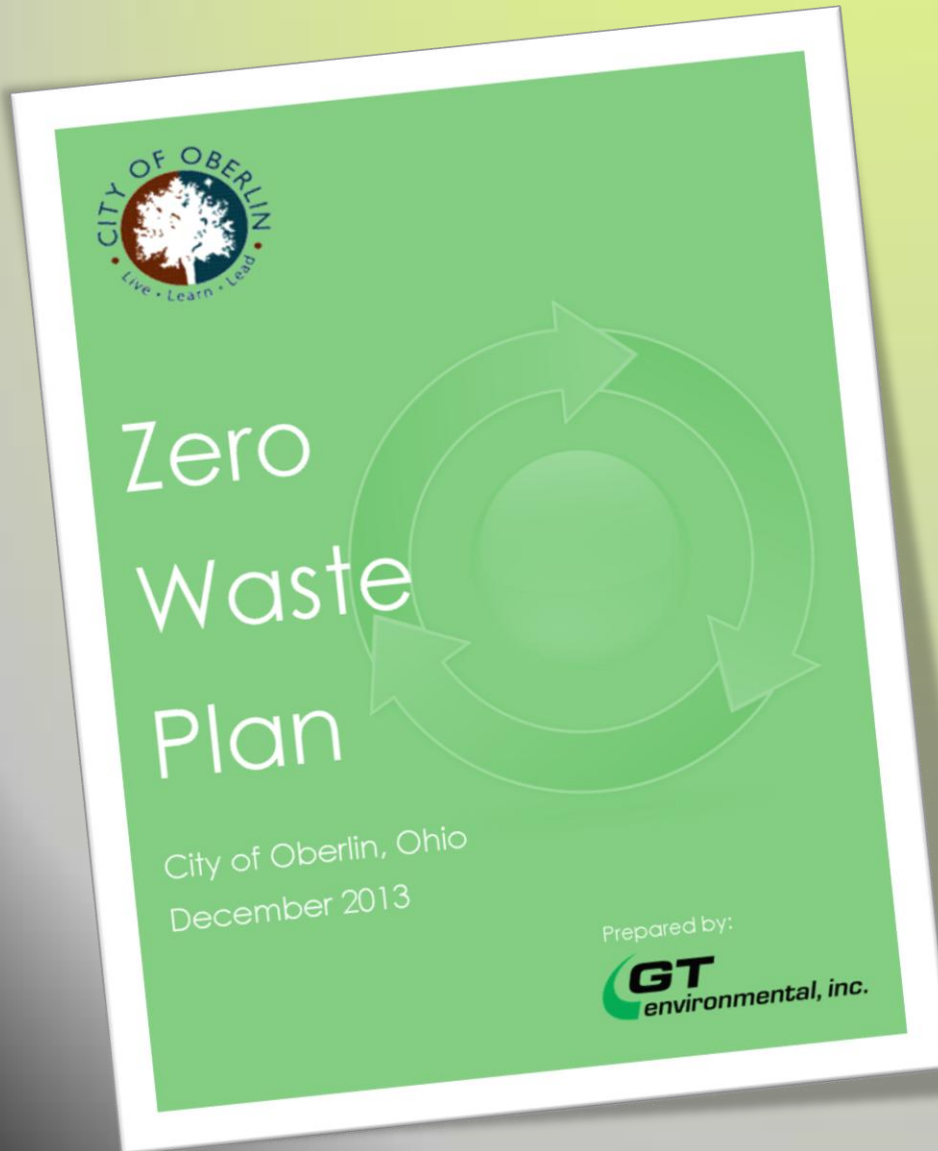


Zero Waste Plan

City Council Meeting
Monday, December 16, 2013

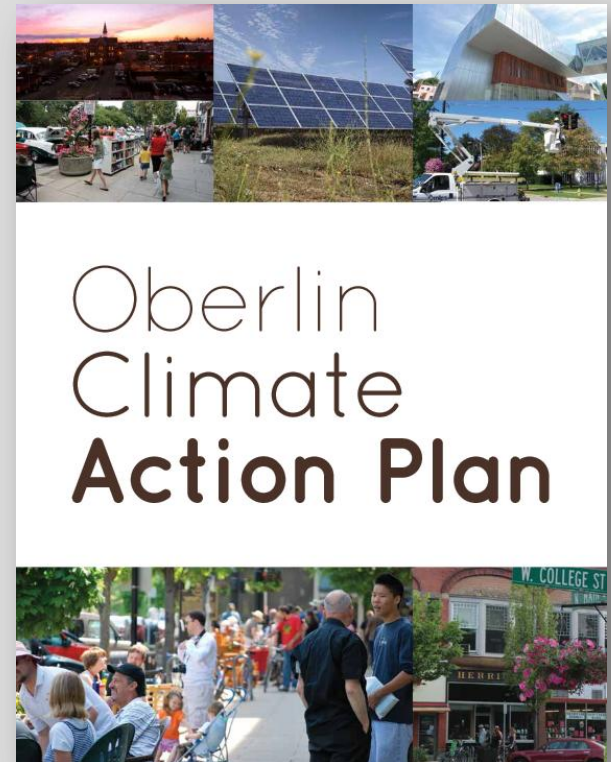
Goals & Objectives:

- 1) Meet the City's *Climate Action Plan* commitment by reducing solid waste by 90 percent
- 2) Necessary and planned replacement of the City's residential collection equipment
- 3) Cost neutrality
- 4) Broad-based solution (something that everyone can do)



Background to Zero Waste Plan

- The City and Oberlin College have commitments to become “climate-positive” by reducing greenhouse gas emissions below zero by 2050.
- The City's 2013 **Climate Action Plan** is a roadmap to the goal. The Climate Action Plan includes present and future strategies in six categories:
 - renewable energy
 - energy efficiency
 - transportation
 - green building
 - education & awareness
 - **waste management**



Background to Zero Waste Plan (continued)

- The zero waste plan (ZWP) is a Climate Action Plan strategy
- Lorain County Solid Waste Management District
 - identified zero waste planning for political subdivisions as an area of focus
 - provided the funding for Oberlin's ZWP

Participants in ZWP Development

- City staff
- Resource Conservation and Recovery Commission (local ZWP team)
- College (Facilities Operations and Office of Sustainability)
- Lorain County SWMD
- GT Environmental, Inc.



Zero Waste Definition

“Zero Waste is the City’s goal to minimize the final disposal of waste materials as completely and rapidly as possible. This reduction will be achieved using a combination of environmentally sound strategies with an emphasis on education, on source reduction and reuse, and on recycling and composting.”



Further Explanation of Goal

- This is a zero waste plan, but does not provide for the total elimination of waste
- Establishes a goal of **90%** waste reduction (or waste diversion) by 2050 or sooner.
- Waste minimization through incineration shall not count towards ZWP goals.
- Future energy recovery methodologies must be examined on case-by-case basis.



Getting to 90 Percent

1. City is in a unique position
 - Self-haul community
 - Located close to Republic facilities
2. Equipment replacement necessary
 - Collection vehicles have exceeded life expectancy



Getting to 90 Percent

Increase Recycling: Fully-automated cart collection system (2015)

- Easy to roll to the curb
- More space for recyclables
- Lids reduce litter, scavenging from animals, and protect cardboard/paper from rain
- Reduced injuries to public service workers (less lifting)
- Better efficiency – more houses serviced per day
- Cart systems have demonstrated substantial increase in recycling



Getting to 90 Percent (continued)

Oberlin College

- Increase recycling (carts)
- Waste sorts
- Early education for new students
- Expand food waste recovery
- Donation stations
- Sporting events
- Data collection



Getting to 90 Percent (continued)

Implement Strategic Plan

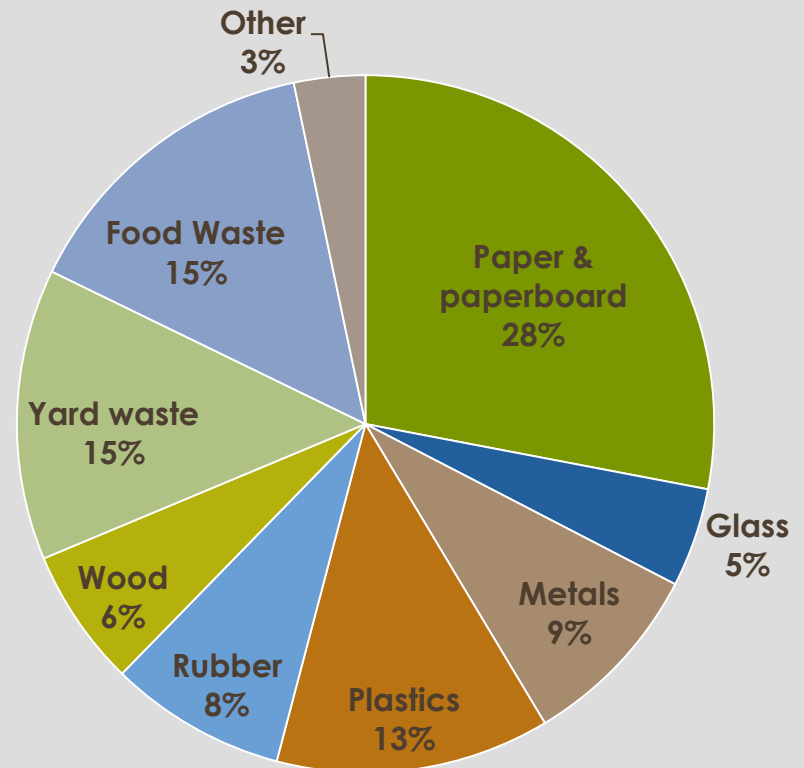
- Education/technical assistance to “green teams”
- Identify needed processing or waste management facilities
- Detailed outreach program through social media



Getting to 90 Percent (continued)

Food waste recovery

- Pilot program in 2020
- Full-scale implementation in 2022
- 3rd cart for all organics
- Local “excess harvest program” and unused food donations



Getting to 90 Percent (continued)

Other Programs

- Waste audits/sorts
- Data collection
- Environmentally-preferable purchasing
- Regulatory/financial incentives



Getting to 90 Percent (continued)

Other Programs

- Construction, demolition, and deconstruction material recovery
- Encouraging more reuse and source reduction
- ZWP reassessment and update
 - Pickup frequency
 - New technologies
 - Update projections



ZWP Cost

Paths to the Goal of *Cost Neutrality*

- Reduced disposal costs over time
- Potentially lower processing fees for recyclables



Questions?