



To: Zero Waste Commission members

From: Aiden Cohen, Business Outreach Program Manager
Austin Resource Recovery (ARR)
(Representing the URO Committee)

Subject: Universal Recycling Ordinance Committee 2012 Summary

Date: January 9, 2013

The purpose of this memo is to summarize actions of the Universal Recycling Ordinance Committee of the Zero Waste Advisory Commission (ZWAC) for calendar year 2012 as required by current bylaws.

Background

On November 4, 2010 the Austin City Council adopted the Universal Recycling Ordinance (URO) as part of Austin's Zero Waste goal to achieve a 90 percent reduction in landfill waste disposal by 2040. The Universal Recycling Ordinance (URO), which became effective October 1, 2012, amended or replaced the Commercial/Multifamily Recycling Ordinance (CMFRO).

During 2012, the Zero Waste Advisory Commission's Universal Recycling Ordinance Committee and staff conducted three public meetings to consider amendments to the Universal Recycling Ordinance. Amendments considered included additional properties types and sizes, provisions to address food scrap, and clarifications to existing provisions of the current ordinance. Property uses impacted by the proposed amendments include food service, retail, manufacturing, and industrial properties.

Discussion Items

Committee members, stakeholders, and ARR staff discussed the potential impacts to the business community. With staff assistance and input, the Committee developed and forwarded to ZWAC an intent document with recommendations to amend the ordinance. Discussion also included the best use of food scraps and requiring food service establishments to divert compostable materials. The recommended amendments will expand Universal Recycling requirements to most commercial properties over the next 5 years.

Status

The URO Committee conducted three public meetings in 2012. At the first meeting in April 2012, staff presented the findings from the first six months of the restaurant recycling pilot project. In June 2012, the Committee considered a staff-authored ordinance intent document. In July 2012, the Committee approved the document with amendments.

URO Committee Recommendations

In September 2012, the ZWAC approved a final version of the Intent Document. Then, ARR and Law Department staff worked closely to develop the draft language for the ordinance amendments that met the ZWAC-approved intent. At the Dec. 18 ZWAC meeting, the Commission tabled discussion of the proposed ordinance until their Jan. 9, 2013 meeting.

Next Steps

The Zero Waste Advisory Commission will review and may take action on the proposed amendment language at the Jan. 9, 2013 meeting. Once the ZWAC takes action, the proposed ordinance amendments will be considered by Council.

Cc: Jessica King, ARR Strategic Initiatives, Manager
Tammie Williamson, AICP, ARR Assistant Director
Sam Angoori, PE, ARR Deputy Director
Bob Gedert, ARR Director