



Legislation Text

File #: RES 14-519, **Version:** 2

Establishing solid waste diversion goals for the City of Saint Paul.

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul (the City) is committed to protecting the environment and public health, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and conserving energy and natural resources; and

WHEREAS, the City is committed to opportunities to make Saint Paul one of the most sustainable cities in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Minnesotans produce, on average, more than one ton of garbage per person each year - more than 6 million tons annually, a substantial amount of which is placed into landfills or incinerated, resulting in wasted resources; and

WHEREAS, in the last ten years, mixed municipal solid waste (MMSW) generation has grown by 8 (eight) percent and recycling rates have remained essentially flat; and

WHEREAS, the largest segments of materials still remaining in the MMSW stream are Organics (primarily food waste & wood) 31% and Paper (both recyclable and compostable) 24.5% ; and

WHEREAS, the State of Minnesota has established source reduction, recycling and organics recovery targets of:

- 1-2% by 2015 and 4-6% by 2030 for source reduction;
- 45-48% by 2015 and 53-60% by 2030 for recycling; and
- 3-6% by 2015 and 9-15% by 2030 for organics diversion.

WHEREAS, local governments in Minnesota are held responsible by the State for waste management outcomes, including assuring recycling opportunities, regulating and enforcing solid and hazardous waste laws, hazardous waste collection, and other costly waste management programs; and

WHEREAS, Ramsey County has established hazardous waste collection and commercial recycling support systems, while residential waste reduction and recycling program management responsibilities fall upon municipal governments; and

WHEREAS, Ramsey County sets reporting requirements and recycling program guidelines and supports municipal programs with Select Committee on Recycling for the Environment (SCORE) grant funds as well as additional incentive grants and technical support; and

WHEREAS, A Wilder Research Foundation study: *Recycle it Forward, A comprehensive assessment of recycling and waste management*, August 2013, informed City staff and leadership about residents habits and barriers to participation, as well as, educational needs related to recycling and managing waste; and

WHEREAS, Wilder Research Foundation recommended changes to the current residential recycling programs and other waste management programs to reinvigorate participation and increase recycling and organics recovery rates; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul recognizes the challenges ahead and the need to work with partners such as Ramsey County, District Councils, the State of Minnesota and service providers to reach these goals on a pathway toward zero waste; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul acknowledges the short term difficulties in measuring diversion rates and will take advantage of all opportunities to track efforts, as well as, prepare for operational changes that are supported by a mature waste management infrastructure.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, in an effort to reinvigorate participation, educate the community about all opportunities to reduce waste, recycle more and divert organic materials from the waste stream the City of Saint Paul establishes an overall residential waste diversion goal of:

- 35% by 2016
- 50% by 2020,
- 65% by 2025, and
- 80% by 2030

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in order to reach the newly established goals the City will:

- Ensure all residents have convenient access to recycle a broad range of materials where they live;
- Ensure recycling requirements are being met at events, parades, races and public assemblies;
- Improve opportunities to reduce waste;
- Improve opportunities to reuse and recycle bulky items such as appliances, e-waste, and construction debris in an environmentally preferable manner;
- Increase significantly opportunities to divert organic materials from the waste stream, including moving toward collection of organic material by 2017;
- Increase public space recycling opportunities within parks, right of ways, athletic complexes, entertainment centers and sporting venues;
- Support efforts to address extended producer responsibility;
- Ensure diversion requirements are being met for construction, demolition and deconstruction project;
- Support and encourage waste diversion initiatives within the commercial sector; and
- Have the Public Works Department or other appropriate city staff provide a written and oral report to City Council annually, if not more often, about progress toward meeting the waste diversion goals outlined above, and make this information easily accessible to the public on the City's website.