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**MEMORANDUM**

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**DATE** DECEMBER 18, 2013  
**FROM:** RICH LALLIER, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC WORKS  
**TO:** CITY OF SAINT PAUL CITY COUNCIL  
**CC:** BRUCE SPEESE, KRIS HAGEMAN, ANNE HUNT, PA VANG  
**RE:** REQUEST TO ADOPT CITY SOLID WASTE GOALS

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**Summary**

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Policy Plan 2010-2030 establishes new solid waste diversion goals for the region that call for reducing the amount of trash headed to landfills by 75% by 2030. Ramsey County has adopted these aggressive goals and placed requirements on municipalities to help reach these goals. The City of Saint Paul currently does not have any stated solid waste goals. Staff is requesting that the city consider adopting both short and long term goals to assist with program planning over the next fifteen plus years. This memo presents reasons for why a city solid waste goal should be adopted and proposes a few ways we can measure our progress. Additional documentation is provided as supplemental information:

1. Appendix A: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Metropolitan Solid Waste Policy Plan Fact Sheet
2. Appendix B: 2-page Recycle it Forward Executive Summary report prepared by Wilder Research
3. Appendix C: Summary of district council and citywide tonnage and pounds per household
4. Appendix D: Summary of Saint Paul's Program Changes

**Background**

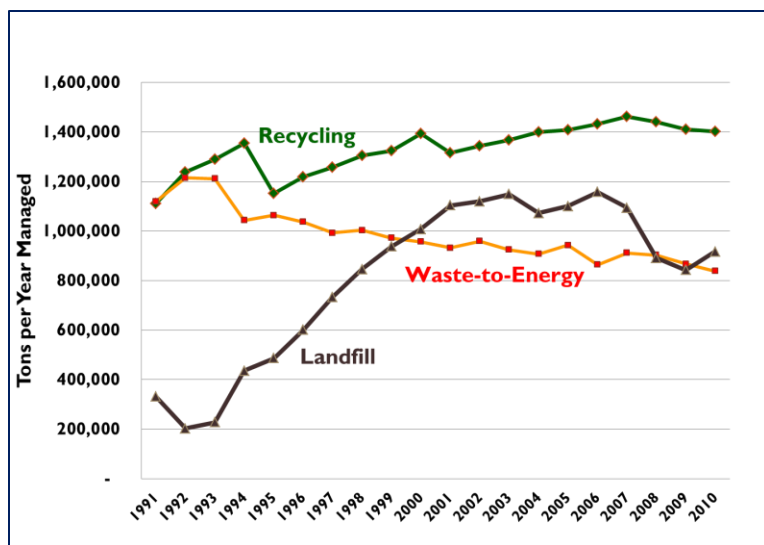
For over 24 years, the City of Saint Paul and its partners – Eureka Recycling, Saint Paul District Councils, and Ramsey County – have provided a high quality, innovative and cost-effective curbside recycling program for Saint Paul residents. The program has evolved over time and added services to multi-family residents, increased the list of acceptable items, opened a permanent recycling drop off center as well as provided exceptional education materials.

However, the MPCA has conducted 'waste sorts' that have determined large amounts of recyclable and organic materials still remain in our waste streams (residential and commercial). These 'waste sorts' were conducted at landfills and transfer stations throughout the state to evaluate the composition of the trash stream in rural, suburban and urban areas. As an example of the data reported states that currently approximately 31% of material found in the waste stream was organic. In addition, markets for recyclable materials have matured, and recycling industry's technology has changed allowing for the processing of a wider range of materials. Saint Paul's municipal recycling and waste management programs must adjust and take advantage of new information, technologies and innovation.

Paper		Plastics		Organics	
2000	2013	2000	2013	2000	2013
34%	25%	11%	18%	26%	31%

Waste composition matrix: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency: *Minnesota Statewide Waste Characterization Study, 2013*

The twenty year landfill trend mirrors the waste generation trend. As more waste is generated it ends up in the landfill, rather than other, more-preferred management methods. The following graph shows regional SW trends to provide perspective as we review and discuss our goals, program activities and measurement capabilities.



Waste generation Chart: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency: *Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Policy Plan 2010-2030*

Waste-to-energy is the process of generating energy in the form of electricity and/or heat from the incineration of waste.

In 2010 Ramsey County Awarded the City of Saint Paul with a \$100,000 Public Entity Innovation Grant—that allowed the city to embark on a community-wide assessment project *Recycle it Forward*. This project allowed the city to gather input from the community and key stakeholders regarding waste management programs and services (recycling, composting, bulky wastes, litter and garbage issues). As a part this assessment project, City staff also gathered feedback and comments from the community through Open Saint Paul and via email and phone calls about the recycling program. The city partnered with Wilder Research to conduct this comprehensive assessment, which resulted in the following six major recommendations:

1. Launch a major educational and promotional campaign to inform residents and reinvigorate their enthusiasm around recycling, composting and waste reduction.
2. Expand and simplify the selection of plastics collected for recycling.
3. Transition to a single-sort recycling collection system with wheeled, lidded carts.
4. Transition to a source-separated organics (SSO) collection system (curbside or alley), paired with expanded education on food waste prevention and backyard composting.
5. Diversify bulky waste management to offer more convenient reuse and disposal options.
6. Coordinate trash collection to lower costs, reduce truck traffic, and design trash pricing to incentivize recycling.

All the information gathered through this project has guided the decision making process for proposed program initiatives and services into the next decade and beyond. In August 2013, Mayor Chris Coleman announced a number of initiatives to improve the recycling program in Saint Paul in 2014 which includes increasing the types of plastics collected for recycling, allowing recyclables to be co-mingled in the existing blue bins which will eliminate the need to sort materials, and boosting education efforts around recycling.

City staff is currently working with the City Council, Ramsey County, Eureka Recycling and other partners to prepare for the upcoming changes in 2014. This work has involved hiring a marketing firm, Beganik Strategy + Design, to develop a new brand/logo for the city's solid waste efforts. City Council has been made aware of our draft marketing plan.

The City of Minneapolis made major changes to their residential recycling program in 2013. The first full month of city-wide one-sort recycling resulted in a 57.75% increase in the volume of recyclables collected. The 894 additional tons of recycling collected compared to the same time period in 2012 brought the Minneapolis' recycling rate from 16.4% under the multi-sort system to 24.4% with the one-sort system. The City is on track to double its recyclables collected from 18,000 tons to 36,000 tons per year by 2015. Minneapolis is well on the way to meet the 22.8% target for 2013 and have a 35% goal for 2017.

### City of Saint Paul Solid Waste Goals

Staff thinks it will be critical to set both short and long term solid waste diversion goals related to our programs and services. These goals will serve as milestones in reaching the state's overall 75% recycling rate by 2030 requirement. These goals focus on residential services as well as some communitywide activities such as event and public space recycling and materials captured at our community clean up events. While the city can offer technical assistance and guidance for commercial recycling activities, Ramsey County is taking the lead on increasing diversion from the commercial sector.

### Recommended Goals

Below are staff recommendations for city goals.

#### Recycling

	State of MN 2015	Saint Paul Current	Saint Paul 2016	Saint Paul 2020	Saint Paul 2025	State of MN 2030
<b>Participation</b>	NA	~ 55%^	65%	75%	85%	NA
<b>Diversion Rate*</b>	45-48%^	20-22%	35%	45%	60%	53-60%
<b>Annual Tonnage**</b>		~16,500	25,000	30,000	TBD	TBD

\* includes all residential, drop-off center, and community cleanup recycling tons

\*\* includes only residential amounts

^ Minnesota Pollution Control Agency: *Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Policy Plan 2010-2030* and includes commercial as well as residential material

^^ based on city estimates and Eureka Recycling's participation trend study data

#### Organics

- Increase community outreach and educate about backyard and worm composting and source separated organic (SSO) drop-off locations
- Increase number of households participation (workshops, backyard composting, drop offs )
- Increase education about food waste prevention
- MPCA's organic goals are 3-6% by 2015 and 9-15% by 2030. Ramsey County is currently at 7%.

**Public Space Recycling**

- Increase number of recycling containers within Parks, Parks buildings (rec. centers), Municipal Athletic Fields
- Increase number of containers placed on Right of Way
- Increase Green Gathering activities at events

**Reuse:**

- Increase awareness of reuse and donation opportunities (i.e. Twin Cities Free Market)
- Increase participation in community cleanups

Staff believes these goals will be achievable with the upcoming recycling service changes over the next few years outlined in Appendix D. These include:

**Timeline of service changes:****2013**

- Increase education and outreach on recycling

**2014**

- Expand plastics recycling to include all #1, #2, #4, #5 and #7
- Launch new education campaign
- Transition to Single-sort in the current blue bins
- Increase backyard & worm composting education
- Expand source separated organics drop-off sites
- Restructure community cleanups to increase participation and volume of materials collected
- Provide more opportunities to reuse and dispose of bulky items
- Expand number of recycling containers available in public spaces
- Expand recycling at events and festivals

**2015**

- Convert to a wheeled, lidded cart for recycling collections
- Transition to alley recycling collection wherever feasible
- Continue education and outreach on composting and SSO drop-off
- Identify options for organics collection
- Prepare recycling request for proposal
- Continue to examine options to address illegal dumping and trash collection

**2016**

- Select recycling hauler for 2017
- Transition to wheeled, covered cart for organics collection
- Continue to examine options to address illegal dumping and trash collection