

# REPLACEMENT

COUNCIL AGENDA: 11-10-09

ITEM: 7.1



## *Memorandum*

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**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Lee Price, MMC  
City Clerk

**SUBJECT: 2009 SPECIAL EVENT AND  
VENUE RECYCLING REPORT**

**DATE:** 11-02-09

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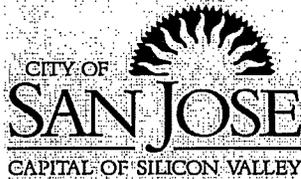
### **RECOMMENDATION**

As recommended by the Transportation and Environment Committee on October 5, 2009 and outlined in the attached memo previously submitted to the Transportation and Environment Committee:

- (a) Accept the staff report on key special event recycling accomplishments and opportunities for improvement.
- (b) Effective May 1, 2010, require special events with over 1,000 attendees, as a condition of their Event Authorization to do the following:
  - (1) Ban Styrofoam™ use by food vendors;
  - (2) Require the use of use # 1 Polyethylene terephthalate plastic recyclable beverage containers for cups 7oz and greater, and paper cups for less than 7 oz.; and
  - (3) Collect, at minimum, plastics, glass, metals, and cardboard for recycling.
- (c) Establish a Green Events Grants Program to help off-set additional costs associated with producing green events in San José.

### **COMMITTEE ACTION:**

The Committee accepted the report and directed staff to work with the Office of Economic Development to ensure that any additional obligations imposed on event organizers by this or any other policy are accompanied by fee reductions or relief



# Memorandum

**TO:** TRANSPORTATION AND  
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

**FROM:** John Stufflebean

**SUBJECT:** 2009 SPECIAL EVENT AND VENUE  
RECYCLING REPORT

**DATE:** 09-18-09

Approved

Date 9/21/09

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommend that the following be placed on the October 20, 2009, Council Agenda for discussion, with the following recommendations:

- 1) Accept this staff report on key special event recycling accomplishments and opportunities for improvement
- 2) Effective May 1, 2010, require special events with over 1,000 attendees, as a condition of their Event Authorization to do the following:
  - a. Ban Styrofoam™ use by food vendors;
  - b. Require the use of use # 1 Polyethylene terephthalate plastic recyclable beverage containers for cups 7oz and greater, and paper cups for less than 7 oz.; and
  - c. Collect, at minimum, plastics, glass, metals, and cardboard for recycling.
- 3) Establish a Green Events Grants Program to help off-set additional costs associated with producing green events in San Jose.

## OUTCOME

Approval of this recommendation would allow San Jose to be a public model for best recycling practices and improve waste reduction at City events and venues. These programs support City goals including: Urban Environmental Accords Actions 4, 5 and 6, City's Green Vision Goals 1 and 5, and the Zero Waste goal.

## BACKGROUND

Large venues and events generate substantial quantities of solid waste, primarily compostable materials such as food waste, and recyclable materials such as beverage containers, corrugated cardboard, paper, and glass. On November 20, 2007, Council directed the Environmental

Services Department (ESD) to pilot Zero Waste programs at the five largest special events for two years. These events included the Cinco de Mayo, American Independence Day, San Jose Jazz Festival, Tapestry Arts Festival, and Italian Family Festa. Additionally staff was directed to:

- Create a certification program to recognize green events in the City,
- Develop resources for event organizers to help "green" their events, and
- Evaluate opportunities to increase recycling at City venues, including specialized off-site processing and composting of waste.

The Council directed that these efforts be evaluated, and reported to the T&E Committee following the first year of the implementation. Following the first year report to the Committee in February 2009, Council approved requiring event organizers to use #1 Polyethylene terephthalate (PET) plastic cups for all events greater than 1,000 attendees. This report includes and evaluation of the second and final year of the pilot program, recommendations for an ongoing City green event program, and a summary of recent waste reduction accomplishments for key City venues.

## ANALYSIS

### **Large Event Recycling**

The results of the special events zero waste pilot are included in Attachment A to this report.

### *Key Program Accomplishments*

The collection of food scraps, compostable food service ware, and recyclables significantly increased the diversion rates for the Zero Waste pilot events in 2008 and 2009. In previous years only 10-15% of total materials generated were recycled. In 2009, the four largest events diverted an average of 94% of materials from landfill. Additional accomplishments of the Zero Waste pilot program include:

- 2009 California Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Award for Waste Reduction
- 2009 "Striving Towards Zero Waste" Award from the California Resource Recovery Association
- 2008 Pride of San Jose Award for Innovation
- Nationwide recognition of San Jose's program and staff expertise, including requests to speak at ten conferences and events
- Extensive positive media coverage (print, radio, and TV) for the City's Zero Waste Event pilot program
- Expansion of a very successful partnership with the San Jose Conservation Corps (SJCC), with SJCC staff undertaking more duties for event recycling and compost collection

- Established a strong partnership between ESD, the Office of Cultural Affairs (OCA), and community event planners for greening events
- Positive feedback on the program from event staff and food vendors, including voluntary adoption of green product use and green event practices at several additional City events
- Green Event Training classes – trained 78 event staff, representing 20 events held in San Jose, and multiple City department representatives working with events
- Launch of an extensive City Special Event and Venue Greening website and resources
- Implementation of a loan program for eco-stations for non-pilot program events
- Expanded effective public education at Zero Waste events
- Increased public awareness of recycling and composting

### *Pilot Program Challenges*

The Large Event Pilot also presented some challenges, including:

- Product Cost – Replacing the vendors food service ware with compostables cost approximately \$50,000 per year, in addition to the \$12,000 cost to manage the inventory
- Staffing Needs – Coordination and implementation of the program required one full time staff, plus an additional 1,700 hours of staff support, and \$70,000 in service contracts like SJCC
- Logistical Limitations – Tight event footprints and limited available space at events for truck delivery of supply and equipment challenging
- Food Vendors – Vendors preferred the convenience of bringing their own products as opposed to picking up the City-provided food service ware on the day of the event

### **Proposal for the 2010 Special Event Program**

Based on work conducted at the 2008 and 2009 Zero Waste pilot program events and feedback gathered from stakeholders, staff developed the following program recommendations for an ongoing special events program. These recommendations were developed in coordination with event planners, OCA, and Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) staff and will be covered in the Special Event Guidelines and the Event Authorization Letter issued by OCA or PRNS.

#### *a. Ban the use of Styrofoam™ food service ware at San Jose events in 2010*

Styrofoam™ food service ware products cannot be recycled or composted. Due to cost and functionality, it is still used by event planners and vendors outside the Zero Waste pilot program. Banning the use of Styrofoam™ at events City wide would significantly reduce non-recyclable waste generated by events, and supports the policy objectives of the City's Keep It Clean! Partnership. This ban supports the City's Keep It Clean! Partnership, approved by Council in October 2008, which requires the City to develop a strategy for local food establishments to dramatically reduce the use of non-biodegradable/non-compostable take out food containers through ban or fee programs.

Staff evaluated the impact of such a ban as well as the availability of non-foam based food service ware during the 2009 event season. More than eight local stores carry paper products and other alternatives to Styrofoam™ food service ware, and the majority of major food service ware distributors serving San Jose provide alternatives to Styrofoam™. During a small informal survey of other events in San Jose, only 50% of vendors were still using Styrofoam™. When these vendors were asked if they would be willing to switch to a paper or compostable alternative, the majority of vendors noted similar bans or requirements for other Bay Area City events, and wanted to know why San Jose had not implemented a similar program already. Some did voice concern regarding increased cost. The use of paper products could add approximately 10% to 25% to the cost over using similar Styrofoam™ products. San Francisco and Berkeley currently ban use of Styrofoam™ at events, and Palo Alto is in the process of banning Styrofoam™ citywide. Staff has and will continue to work with vendors and stakeholders Bay Area wide to identify cost-effective alternatives to Styrofoam™.

*b. Beverage and Sample Cup Requirements*

The City prohibits the use of bottles and cans at large events due to City public safety concerns, resulting in the use of approximately 100,000 cups at a typical large event. Upon approval of Council in June 2007, the City required use of recyclable or compostable beverage containers at events with over 30,000 attendees to ensure that the cups used could be recycled or composted. Due to the recycled plastic market, #1 plastic is much more recyclable than #2-#7 plastics; the new policy required events selecting plastic cups to utilize #1 plastic cups. Subsequently Council approved a policy change for the 2009 event season, requiring all events with over 1,000 attendees to use #1 plastic cups. This policy was successful, reducing confusion between the clear compostable cups and the plastic cups and minimizing contamination of the recyclable materials. Since #1 plastic cups can be purchased locally and through the majority of distribution companies servicing San Jose, this requirement was easily implementable by event organizers.

Staff recommends a continuation of this cup policy, with expansion to include an additional requirement to use paper sample cups for containers less than 7 oz. These small sample cups often end up as litter at events, and get collected along with grass and other organic debris when the grounds are raked clean during clean-up. Switching to a small paper based cup will allow for this material to be recovered and composted, and result in greater recovery of this waste stream.

*c. Recycling required for all events with greater than 1,000 attendees*

At its June 2007 meeting, Council established several requirements for any event that has 1,000 attendees or more and which occurs on City property, streets, and/or park land. Event organizers are required to allow the SJCC access to their event to provide recycling services at no cost to the event. Staff would like to expand this requirement to specifically state that all events of this size must collect materials for recycling.

*d. Event Certification*

Staff proposes to continue recognizing green events that take additional steps to reduce their impact on the environment and bring the City closer to its Zero Waste goal. The City's certification program acknowledges three categories of events that demonstrate commitment to green practices and rewards that achievement with one of the following certifications: Going Green Certification, Green Event Certification, and Zero Waste Event Certification.

Event planners interested in obtaining recognition for their event need to complete and submit a Certification Application 30 days prior to the event, meet the criteria for the level of certification desired, and meet all reporting and policy requirements. Additional details on the event certification process are in Attachment A to this report.

*e. Special Events Recycling Program Resources*

Staff recognizes that additional effort and increased costs may be part of implementing green practices at special events. In order to continue to encourage events to take the steps to decrease the environmental impact of their event, and to increase the number of events the City is able to assist, staff recommends implementing a revised event resource model that is cost neutral to the City, and leverages resources more efficiently and effectively to serve a larger number of events in this very popular program.

In this model, a total of \$80,000, currently used to fund the Zero Waste special events, would be available to all special events on City-owned property with over 1,000 attendees per day on a first-come, first-serve basis. Grant applications would be accepted by ESD on an ongoing basis throughout the year, beginning January 4, 2010, and must be received 90 days or more in advance of an event. Staff would notify events of funding available within 30 days of receipt of application, and funding would be provided upon receipt of approved budget item receipts. Qualifying expenses would be detailed in grant application, and events requesting funding would need to prepare a budget, with ESD assistance, as part of the application. The Green Event Grant Program would be modeled after the highly successful and streamlined Go Green Schools Mini-Grant program, which has been administered by ESD over the past three years. ESD will review the grant program with stakeholders after the first year, and revise as needed to ensure service to the greatest number of events. Grantees would be required to meet the following requirements. Additional grant details are provided in Attachment A:

- Meet City's Zero Waste event product requirements: use of #1 plastic cups and use of compostable food service ware
- Utilize a product compliance policy to ensure vendor participation
- Provide environmental education to the public before and during the event

A letter of support for this recommendation from the Friends of Guadalupe River Park & Gardens is provided as Attachment B.

*f. Technical Assistance and the San Jose Conservation Corps*

Staff would continue to provide technical assistance throughout the year to events, including planning and consulting services. Staff will conduct outreach to both the event organizers as well as the food vendors to ensure the program changes and available resources are communicated effectively to the special events community. The City's requirement for SJCC providing recycling services at events over 1,000 attendees per day at no cost to the event would continue in the recommended program.

**Assessment of Large Venue Recycling**

The following summarizes several recent key initiatives and programs to green several of the City's showcase venues in 2009.

*San Jose McEnergy Convention Center*

The Convention Center has made substantial progress in the area of recycling and compost collection. Implementation of strategic recycling and composting efforts, along with off-site sorting of waste has resulted in a 2008-2009 diversion rate of 60%, a significant improvement from the 2007-2008 rate of 36.4%.

*San Jose Mineta Airport*

- In 2008-2009 the San Jose Mineta International Airport waste management program demonstrated significant continued improvement in waste reduction. The program reduced Airport costs and improved waste diversion from the landfill. Total passengers were down by 15% and, as expected, the amount of waste transported to processing facility was also reduced. Airport staff improved on-site waste collection efficiency, and staff and tenants were educated on proper disposal of garbage and recycling. Prior to 2007-2008, the first year in which large-scale efforts began, the annual diversion rate was under ten percent. With off-site processing and recycling of Airport garbage, the facilities' total recycling rate has increased to 85%.
- \$43,742 in savings was realized on hauling fees by evaluating compactor collection schedule and reducing the number of waste pick-ups.
- Total waste transported to processing facility reduced by 24%, or 540 tons
- Presorted recyclables increased by 35%, or 34 tons
- Total waste to landfill was reduced from 1,978 tons in 2007-2008 to 295 tons in 2008-2009, for a reduction of 1,683 tons
- Total recycling increased to 1,177 tons

A November 2008 kitchen waste audit showed that a large portion of organic waste was being landfilled. The Airport initiated a kitchen composting program with the concessionaires in summer 2009 with assistance from ESD. This program is experiencing some success and some challenges during its implementation. The Airport expects to improve upon the program in 2009-2010, as concessionaires begin to better utilize the program. Airport staff is experimenting

with different pilot approaches to best meet the needs of the Airport and concessions and to find new ways to achieve program cost savings.

#### *Children's Discovery Museum*

In April 2008, City staff in partnership with the Children's Discovery Museum launched a Zero Waste program for the museum and its Kid's Café operated by Hope Services. Public area recycling containers were provided throughout the museum, and disposable food service ware was replaced with compostable materials for the Café. These efforts resulted in a museum public area waste diversion rate of 44%, and a Café recycling rate of 81%, as well as tremendous positive feedback from the public attendees. During 2009, the program expanded to include collection of paper towels from restrooms and compostable materials in staff break areas. This project received a Council commendation on June 23, 2009.

#### *Tech Museum of Innovation*

Staff initiated recycling program improvement discussions with the Tech Museum of Innovation. ESD is assisting the Café in switching to compostable food service ware and expanding of the recycling program to include off-site sorting of facility garbage for recycling. Staff will work with the museum over the next year to implement the program and develop outreach materials for the attendees and staff.

#### *HP Pavilion*

Over the last several years, the HP Pavilion has implemented various recycling and composting initiatives. As a result, the facility diverted 90% of its waste in 2008, and expects to improve on that diversion rate in 2009. The SJCC sorts waste after large events to retrieve recyclable containers; internal staff performs this function for smaller events. Cardboard, paper, and pallets are collected and recycled. The concessionaires have eliminated Styrofoam™, and use recyclable materials for food containers. The majority of the waste from the facility is food and compostable materials (plates, napkins, paper towels, etc), and this is processed at a local composting facility. Recycling containers have also been placed in each of the suite boxes. The HP Pavilion continues to look at additional opportunities for recycling or recovery of materials, with a goal of zero waste.

### **Green Events and Venues for Economic Development**

Environmental and sustainability goals, requirements, and preferences continue to drive organizations to choose event and venue locations which can achieve and exceed their expectations. To ensure that San Jose retains and enhances its position as a premier choice nationwide for events and conferences, staff believes that it is essential to ensure recycling and other sustainability programs are competitive with other leading cities. In May 2009, San Jose was recognized by Green Tech Media as the greenest City in the United States for travel and meetings. The article specifically noted San Jose's green hotels and recycling efforts at large venues such as the Convention Center. Building upon and expanding these successful program implementations to other events and venues Citywide will further San Jose's success as a "Green Destination".

### **Future Plans for Large Venue Recycling**

Staff will continue to work with the key venues mentioned above to help them identify program improvement opportunities. In addition, staff is identifying other key venues in the City to implement similar programs. Over the next year, staff plans to expand the venue recycling website to include resources and technical assistance information similar to the site developed for the special events program.

### **EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

Staff will provide regular evaluations of these initiatives as part of the Green Vision reporting and update process.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST**

The criteria below do not apply to this report.

- Criteria 1:** Requires Council action on the use of public funds equal to \$1 million or greater. **(Required: Website Posting)**
- Criteria 2:** Adoption of a new or revised policy that may have implications for public health, safety, quality of life, or financial/economic vitality of the City. **(Required: E-mail and Website Posting)**
- Criteria 3:** Consideration of proposed changes to service delivery, programs, staffing that may have impacts to community services and have been identified by staff, Council or a Community group that requires special outreach. **(Required: E-mail, Website Posting, Community Meetings, Notice in appropriate Newspapers)**

Staff will continue to work closely with the Office of Cultural Affairs, to ensure that program requirements are communicated to event organizers, and to solicit program feedback.

### **COORDINATION**

This report has been coordinated with the Office of Economic Development, the City Attorney's Office, Budget Office, Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services, Planning Building Code Enforcement, and the Airport.

**COST SUMMARY/IMPLICATIONS**

Costs for these programs are included in the Environmental Services Department's existing base budget in the Integrated Waste Management Fund.

**BUDGET REFERENCE**

N/A

**CEQA**

Not a project.



JOHN STUFFLEBEAN  
Director, Environmental Services

Attachment A – Special Events Zero Waste Pilot Results and Program Modifications  
Attachment B – Zero Waste Event Program Support Letter/Friends of GRPG

For questions, please contact Jo Zientek, Deputy Director, Integrated Waste Management Division, at 408-535-8557

**Attachment A  
Special Events Zero Waste Pilot Results and Program Modifications**

**PROGRAM SUMMARY**

During the summers of 2008 and 2009, ESD staff implemented a Zero Waste Pilot program for the five largest events in the City (based on single day attendance). The table below contains a summary of the event statistics and diversion results for the pilot program.

*Statistics and Results – 2008 and 2009 Zero Waste Events*

<b>Event</b>	<b>2008 Total Discards</b>	<b>Total Materials Diverted</b>	<b>Diversion Achieved</b>	<b>2009 Total Discards</b>	<b>Total Materials Diverted**</b>	<b>Diversion Achieved</b>
<b>Cinco de Mayo</b>	5.87 tons	2.6 tons	44%	4.78 tons	3.69 tons	77%
<b>Independence Day</b>	11.99 tons	8.41 tons	70%	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Jazz Festival</b>	13.99 tons	12.91 tons	93%	19.51 tons	18.85 tons	97%
<b>Tapestry Art Festival</b>	6.92 tons	5.94 tons	86%	7.18 tons	6.96 tons	97%
<b>Italian Family Festa</b>	4.84 tons	3.74 tons	77%	5.264 tons	5.1 tons	97%
<b>Totals</b>	43.61 tons	33.6 tons	77%	36.52 tons	34.42 tons	94%

\*\*Materials Diverted at 2009 Zero Waste Events: Cardboard, Bottles, Cans, Plastics, Metals, Glass, Mixed Paper, Paper Towels, Food scraps, Food Soiled Paper, Food Service ware, Cooking Oil, Charcoal, Plastic Film

ESD staff provided the following services for each of the events:

- Communication and coordination with event organizers, contractors, and the Office of Cultural Affairs (OCA) to arrange zero waste infrastructure needs prior to events
- Informational meetings for each event’s food vendors to learn about program and product requirements
- Purchase and distribution of compostable products for all event food vendors
- Order processing, inventory management, and delivery of compostable food service ware products to event food vendors
- Set-up of 75-100 eco-stations (compost, recycling, and trash collection bins) at each event, including new “what goes where” signage developed in 2009
- Contracted with the San Jose Conservation Corps (SJCC) to collect compostables and recyclables at events, and remove all recyclable materials
- Contracted with Green Mary to sort all materials collected in recycling containers to remove contaminants
- Contracted with Got Grease to provide containers and removal of oil for recycling

- Sent trash collected from events to an off-site facility for processing and additional recovery
- Coordinated all material management and recovery activities on site

In 2009, ESD staff and interns spent over 1,700 hours to provide zero waste services and coordination outlined above. A breakdown of staff hours per project area is noted below. Product costs totaled approximately \$51,000, inventory management and delivery was an additional \$12,000, eco-stations and related supplies totaled over \$12,000, and an additional \$70,000 was spent on contractor support for program.

- One full time ESD staff person to manage program components
- 600 hours on pre-event material management planning and coordination
- 540 hours onsite managing material recovery activities
- 250 hours conducting pre-event outreach to food vendors
- 200 hours processing pre-event food vendor orders and inventory management
- 115 hours onsite handling food vendor orders at events

## PILOT PROGRAM CHALLENGES

### *Program Cost*

For the pilot program, staff recommended to focus on the five largest events in the City, to evaluate the feasibility of extended recycling and composting at large events. In order to ensure a successful pilot, staff took on many of the logistical and organizational responsibilities that event organizers would normally manage. This included ordering food service ware for each of the vendors, storing and distributing the service ware, and organizing trash, recycling and compost collection and hauling services for the events. The process of contacting each vendor, ensuring that their product needs were met with alternative products, ordering, storing, staging, and distributing these products was extremely staff resource intensive. In addition, staff was present at each of the events, setting up and managing the three-part trash/compost/recycling stations (Eco-Stations), and providing technical assistance to the vendors and event staff. Staff and intern costs for onsite support at the four 2009 events was approximately \$26,000

During the first year of the pilot program, staff introduced compostable food service ware to the vendors at the five largest events, and required all vendors to use these alternative products. Based on the first year's experience and the ability to successfully process these materials, the City's compost processor agreed to expand the program to include non-coated and lightly-coated paper products, such as Dixie™, Solo™ and Chinet™ brands. The cost for these paper products is typically 15% to 40% lower than similar products marketed as compostable, and the paper products and required, recyclable #1 plastic cups are readily available at local stores and suppliers.

Local access to compostable utensils made from corn or potato continues to be a challenge, and these utensils are the only viable alternative for disposable, plastic utensils. As part of the pilot program, staff continued to purchase all vendor food service ware for the four events in 2009 at a cost of \$51,000.

### *Logistical Limitations*

In order to provide food service ware to the vendors and provide ESD eco-stations and related material management supplies to events, event organizers needed to provide large vehicle access and parking for multiple ESD vehicles. Given the tight footprints for each event, the additional parking requirements often presented a challenge for event organizers. In exchange for the free ESD provided products, food vendors were asked to pick up their product orders from the ESD trucks. This also presented a challenge for food vendors, who typically order and bring their own products to events. The required use of these products at only five events in San Jose also created an unlevel playing field, where food vendors might elect an alternative event where they could use their own products as normal.

### *Resource Limitations*

In order to ensure successful implementation of the program, staff worked very closely with each of the four events, attending planning meetings, communicating with vendors, and providing logistical support and planning as where needed. With the expanded success of the pilot program, many other City events expressed an interest in greening their events. Over the course of the 2009 event season, approximately 30 additional City events requested technical assistance or loaner eco-stations from ESD staff. Because of the resource intensive nature of the pilot program, staff was unable to assist these additional events. The proposed changes for the 2010 events season will allow staff resources to reach a larger number of events in the City.

## 2010 SPECIAL EVENTS PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the 2008 and 2009 Zero Waste pilot program events, and feedback gathered from stakeholders during the pilot, ESD has developed the following program recommendations for the special events Zero Waste program.

### *Maintain Green Events Certification Program*

ESD staff has developed a green events certification program to recognize events that go the extra mile to reduce their impact on the environment and bring the City closer to its Zero Waste goal. The City formally acknowledges three categories of events that demonstrate commitment to green practices and rewards that achievement with one of the following certifications: Going Green Certification, Green Event Certification, and Zero Waste Event Certification. Several City events have pursued this certification over the past two years, and the feedback from the program has been very positive.

#### Zero Waste Events

- 2008 Comcast San Jose Jazz Festival

- 2008 Ice Cream Zoofari
- 2009 Spring in Guadalupe Gardens
- 2009 Cinco de Mayo Parade and Festival
- 2009 AT&T San Jose Jazz Festival
- 2008 & 2009 Tapestry Arts Festival
- 2008 & 2009 Italian Family Festa

#### Green Events

- 2008 Cinco de Mayo
- 2009 Cycling Classic

The following sections detail the levels of certification and requirements for each.

#### Going Green Certification

Going Green events in San José are taking steps towards reducing their environmental impact. Going Green events will recycle a minimum of 25% of the materials that would otherwise go to landfill. To achieve this standard, event organizers must:

1. **Implement a recycling program.**  
Arrange for a recycling collection service or collect and recycle bottles, cans, plastics, and cardboard separate from waste. Visit Recycling & Compost Collection for more information.
2. **Use recyclable #1 plastic cups.**  
Require vendors, caterers and samplers to use recyclable #1 plastic cups for beverages, samples, condiments, etc. Visit Best Greening Practices to see examples of contact language to help implement this practice.
3. **Pick up litter at event and protect all storm drains from discharges.**  
Litter can fall into storm drains during events and be carried to creeks, rivers or the Bay when it rains. Help protect the environment by covering any open storm drains and assigning staff or volunteers to pick up litter during your event.

#### Green Event Certification

San José's Green events are ready to take the next steps towards reducing their environmental impacts. Green events should expect to recycle and compost a minimum of 50% of the materials generated at the event. In addition, Green events must meet all of the following requirements:

1. **Meet all Going Green requirements.**
2. **Prevent and reduce waste by practicing sustainable purchasing.**  
There are many ways to prevent and reduce waste with a little planning and communication. Examples are provided here for reference only, and only scratch the surface of possibilities:
  - Use reusables instead of disposables for food and decor
  - Borrow materials from another event instead of purchasing new materials

- Print posters or conference guides on minimum 30% post-consumer recycled content paper with soy-based inks
  - Limit give-aways and materials in goodie-bags, etc.
  - Visit Best Greening Practices for more tips
3. **Use compostable food service ware and ban the use of Styrofoam™.**  
Require vendors, caterers and samplers to use compostable food service ware for all food service needs. This includes plates, bowls, forks, sample and condiment cups, etc. **Exceptions:** Aluminum foil may be used for wraps or sandwiches. Plastic recyclable cups should be used for beverages. These items can be recycled. Visit Product & Material Information for more information about compostable and recyclable products.
  4. **Compost organics.**  
Implement a compostable materials collection program OR have waste sorted to recover food scraps, compostable food service ware, and food-soiled paper for composting. Event must make arrangements to have organic materials processed at a Commercial Composting Facility. Visit Recycling & Compost Collection for more information.
  5. **Educate participants.**  
Develop and execute an education campaign prior to and during the event to ensure that event stakeholders and event attendees are aware of your greening efforts. Visit Best Greening Practices for more information.
  6. **Provide adequate staff.**  
Provide sufficient volunteer and/or paid staff to implement and manage the waste reduction, recycling, composting, sorting, and education activities for the event.

### Zero Waste Certification

A Zero Waste event consistently demonstrates a commitment to reducing their environmental impact to zero, or as close as practically possible. Zero Waste events should expect to recycle and compost more than 75% of the materials discarded. These events must meet all Green Event requirements and at least two of the following criteria:

1. **Prohibit non-recyclable/ non-compostable materials.**  
Implement and enforce vendor contract language banning all non-recyclable/non-compostable materials, including vendor give-away items.
2. **Recycle cooking oil and charcoal.**  
Provide used cooking oil and charcoal collection and recycling for all food vendors. Implement and enforce vendor contract language requiring all vendors that generate waste cooking oil and/or charcoal to recycle materials correctly.
3. **Offset your event's impact.**  
Calculate the greenhouse gas emissions of the event and purchase (or find a sponsor to purchase) carbon offsets from a certified carbon offset broker.
4. **Engage event attendees and vendors.**  
Provide an interactive activity to raise awareness and help event attendees bring your green message home. Examples include alternative fuel vehicle or hybrid vehicle demonstrations, compact fluorescent light give-aways, provide take-back

collection services for hard-to-dispose-of items like batteries and cell phones, or home-composting demonstration.

5. **Ban the sale of single use plastic water bottles.**

Prohibit the sale of water in plastic single use bottles, provide water filling stations, and encourage attendees to use reusable or recyclable cups at the event.

6. **Solar power generation.**

Implement solar alternatives (panels, generators, stages, etc.) to generate electricity during your event.

*Green Events Grants Program*

In order to help off-set any increased costs that may be associated with greening an event, ESD is proposing to begin a Special Events Grants program. Funding would be available throughout the year beginning January 4, 2010, with applications due a minimum of 90 days prior to an event. Events wishing to receive grant funding would be required to:

- Meet City special events policy and reporting requirements. Forms have been developed to help event planners meet this requirement
- Meet Zero Waste product requirements, including banning the use of Styrofoam™, using paper cups and service ware for containers less than 7 oz, using #1 plastic cups for beverages 7 oz. and larger, and using a product compliance policy to incentive participation
- Collect glass, metal, and plastic from vendors and attendees in separate, blue labeled containers for recycling
- Collect cardboard for recycling
- Collect oil and grease for recycling (if applicable)
- Assign or hire a person to manage materials onsite. This person must attend a free workshop offered by ESD, "How to Green Your Own Event". Workshops will be offered monthly
- Send all event trash and compostables to a processing facility in lieu of landfill (ESD provides this service at no cost to event)
- Provide an exhibit space at the event for environmental education
- Apply for Green Event certification, and promote the event using the certification
- Include educational information about the Zero Waste program on event website, in program materials, and in stage announcements

In return for meeting the above requirements, ESD will provide the following to the events:

- Use of City eco-stations (containers for recycling, compost, and trash), including signage, bags, and instructions for set-up
- SJCC recycling services, including delivery and pick-up of recycling roll-away containers, staffed collection of recycling (when applicable), and hauling of recyclable materials collected during the event

- Free technical assistance, including green event planning, material management plan and event diversion reporting assistance, free monthly workshops, and assistance with recycling budget preparation
- Logo to promote the events certification level, and assistance with press release information about the program
- Funding for expenses related to event greening, including cost of staffing to manage event recycling, cost of staff to collect and sort recyclables and compostables (if not included in the City contract with SJCC), cost of staff to set up and tear down eco-stations (if not SJCC), coupons for vendor purchase of compostable utensils (\$100 per vendor booth), additional debris boxes needed for collection of recyclable and/or compostable materials, and cost of oil and grease collection

By moving to this model of assistance for events, ESD staff will be able to assist many more events throughout the City, increasing the exposure of the program, and moving special events towards the Green Vision goal of Zero Waste.

Friends of  
**Guadalupe**  
River Park & Gardens

**2009 Board of Directors**

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September 14, 2009

The Honorable Sam Liccardo  
Chair, Transportation & Environment Committee  
200 East Santa Clara Street  
San Jose CA 95113

Jim Alves

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John Tang

Bracey Tiede

Sandra Wheatley

Ken Yeager

Dear Council member Liccardo:

Friends of Guadalupe River Park & Gardens (GRPG) provides community leadership for the development and active use of San Jose's Central Park through education, advocacy, and stewardship. We are collaborating with the City to create a world-class attraction for residents and visitors. Part of this effort is the production of two festivals, Spring in Guadalupe Gardens in April, Pumpkins in the Park in October, and several other smaller events every year.

We have been delighted to see the City of San Jose engage in a Zero Waste pilot program for the city's five largest events. Though none of our events were part of this pilot, we applied for and received Zero Waste status for Spring in Guadalupe Gardens this past April, and hope to do the same for next month's Pumpkins in the Park. Though this process required extra time, money and effort, we gladly engaged to further our stewardship mission.

Dedicated city staff members have adapted information to help smaller groups like ours. Training programs have offered newcomers numerous insights about what it takes to make an event more environmentally friendly. Now that the pilot has concluded, we request that the City expand this program to smaller events. We recognize that this will require additional staff for more training, logistical support, and event inspection. Furthermore, many smaller events would be more likely to strive for Zero Waste status if there were grants available from the City to underwrite some of the additional expenses associated with this endeavor.

Failure to properly fund this program would result in more waste heading to the landfill from events, and lost opportunities to educate the public about our waste stream. We hope San Jose will continue to be a leader in the field of Zero Waste events.

Thank you for your efforts to encourage environmental sustainability.

Sincerely,



Leslee Hamilton  
Executive Director

cc: Transportation & Environment Committee

**Executive Director**

Leslee Hamilton