

Subject: Austin Passes first Zero Waste Plan in Texas

Texas Campaign for the Environment Applauds the Austin City Council's Unanimous Support of the Austin Zero Waste Strategic Plan and the Formation of the Central Texas Zero Waste Alliance

Texas Campaign for the Environment is very glad that the Austin City Council voted unanimously today to approve the Austin Zero Waste Strategic Plan as a policy directive to achieve Zero Waste (or darn close to it) by 2040. Austin became the first city to embrace a plan for Zero Waste, but it cannot be the last.

Just as significant was the outpouring of grassroots support for the formation of the Central Texas Zero Waste Alliance. Achieving the goal of Zero Waste will require harnessing the efforts, creativity, passion, soul and smarts of Central Texans and the new Alliance can be a catalyst towards directing this energy.

Texas Campaign for the Environment is very committed to working towards this goal with the Central Texas Zero Waste Alliance, policy-makers, institutions, businesses and Central Texans from all walks of life.

Background

Speakers at the press conference included Karly Jo Dixon with Ecology Action, Pastor Sterling Lands of the Greater Calvary Bible Church, Dave Hogan, who attends St. Matthews Episcopal Church and work on the church's environmental committee, Ira Yates with Republicans for Environmental Protection, Maydelle Fason and JD Porter who sit on the City of Austin's Solid Waste Advisory Commission and Bill Adams, a San Marcos resident and long-time construction contractor who advocated for more recycling of construction and demolition materials.

Local artists displayed sculptures made from recycled materials at the City Hall to show that the creativity of Central Texans in reusing materials that otherwise might be tossed in landfills. A TCE activist dressed as a trash monster served as a "tour guide" to the artworks.

In 2005, the Austin City Council appointed a task force to develop a long-range plan for the city's trash. Subsequently, the Mayor and City Council endorsed the UN Urban Environmental Accords goal of Zero Waste or Darn Close by 2040. With the assistance of a Zero Waste consultant and input from dozens of stakeholders, the Austin Zero Waste Strategic Plan was developed. Travis County and the regional Capital Area Council of Government, have passed resolutions supporting this initiative.

Link to Austin Zero Waste Strategic Plan:

http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/council_meetings/item_attachments.cfm?meetingid=150&itemid=9203&item=62

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