

Alternative Technology Advisory Subcommittee
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste Management Task Force

Minutes for June 16, 2022

WEB CONFERENCE

Los Angeles County Public Works
900 South Fremont Avenue
Alhambra, CA 91803

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Steve Cassulo, Waste Connections
Charles Darenbourg, Los Angeles County Public Works
Michelle Dewey, California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery
(CalRecycle)
Dorcas (Dee) Hanson-Lugo, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens, Inc.
Ron Kent, rep by Flavio Da Cruz, Southern California Gas Company
Ben Lucha, City of Palmdale
Kevin Mattson, Waste Management
Mark McDannel, Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts
Mike Mohajer, Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force
Darshna Patel, City of Los Angeles
Eugene Tseng, UCLA Solid Waste Program

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Chris Coyle, Republic Services
Kay Martin, Bioenergy Producers Association

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jennifer Ang, Los Angeles County Public Works
Josephine Chen, Los Angeles County Public Works
Tran Kiem, Los Angeles County Public Works
Carol Oyola, Los Angeles County Public Works
Kawsar Vazifdar, Los Angeles County Public Works
Jeffrey Zhu, Los Angeles County Public Works
Christine Arbogast, Tetra Tech
Janelle Auyeung, CalRecycle
Matt Hutton, Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Charles Darensbourg called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MAY 19, 2022 SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES

Mr. Mike Mohajer made a motion to approve the minutes, and Mr. Wayde Hunter seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

III. PRESENTATION – PUBLIC WORKS

Ms. Kawsar Vazifdar provided a [presentation](#) on a proposed draft strategy for refocusing the Conversion Technology (CT) program, as well as opportunities for Public Works (PW) and the Subcommittee to collaborate to foster the development of CT facilities. The CT program needs to be refocused to help the County of Los Angeles and Cities comply with Senate Bill (SB) 1383, which came into effect on January 1, 2022, and requires the development of new processing facilities to handle organic waste.

The County needs at least five million tons per year of organic waste processing capacity in addition to the capacity available at existing facilities. Of the 5 million tons per year, 1.6 million tons per year of capacity is needed just to handle food waste. New CT facilities, such as anaerobic digestion (AD) facilities, are needed to handle food waste, because many commercial composting facilities cannot accept mixed food waste and green waste. The goal is to initiate the draft strategy within the next 12 months, which includes the following actions:

- Expand efforts to identify suitable sites for AD facilities.
- Collaborate with stakeholders to leverage funding (e.g., State and Federal Funding Bills as well as CalRecycle funding programs).
- Refocus the ATAS efforts on constructing a CT facility (e.g., collaborating with the ATAS on analyzing potential sites as well as considering new technologies).
- Provide enhanced resources for stakeholders (e.g., updating CT website, including the technology vendor and financial resources databases, and providing answers to Frequently Asked Questions for developers).

Mr. Mohajer mentioned that State law, as well as regulations established by CalRecycle, have created barriers to the development of CT facilities in California. He added that these barriers prevent private investment in CT facilities. He continued that if Assembly Bill (AB) 1857 is approved, it will prevent the development of CT facilities and will only allow AD and biomass conversion facilities. Mr. Mohajer suggested that the strategy be updated to recommend that PW begin discussions with the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. Ms. Vazifdar responded that the proposed draft strategy is intended to promote the development of AD and biomass

conversion facilities, which is feasible under current state statute, and that PW staff realizes that the legislative and regulatory policy changes are critical to the development of other CTs. She added that this draft strategy is focused on short-term actions and that PW will develop another strategy containing actions that will require a more lengthy, legislative and policy advocacy process.

Mr. Mohajer suggested conducting outreach to elected officials about the need for and the benefits of CTs, including developing outreach materials with photographs.

Mr. Ben Lucha asked if the analysis of potential sites is limited to the County or if it will include nearby Counties where facilities that could serve the County could be developed. Ms. Vazifdar responded that the initial analysis identified sites within the County because local jurisdictions outside of the County also need additional capacity for organic waste.

Mr. Mohajer commented that CTs other than AD and biomass conversion are considered disposal in California and that the development of these facilities must be identified in the host county's siting element.

Mr. Lucha asked how local jurisdictions can support the development of CT facilities by purchasing renewable products created from CT facilities. Mr. Darensbourg responded that local community choice aggregators may provide renewable energy for local jurisdictions to purchase and that the State recently approved requirements for investor-owned utilities to provide renewable energy as well. Mr. Darensbourg added this topic could be a subject for a future Subcommittee meeting.

IV. UPDATE ON CONVERSION TECHNOLOGY PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Arbogast reported that Tetra Tech continues to support PW in SB 1383 planning efforts, completed an initial evaluation of closed landfill sites for potential organic waste processing facilities, and provided recommendations for expanding the evaluation to additional sites in the County.

Mr. Darensbourg announced that the Calabasas AD Request for Proposals was released on June 9, 2022, and that PW hosted a pre-proposal conference on June 15, 2022. PW will host a Calabasas landfill site visit on June 22, 2022. PW expects to select a developer by the end of August 2022 and sign an agreement by December 2022.

V. UPDATE ON CONVERSION TECHNOLOGY POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Mr. Darensbourg provided the following update:

- The next CalRecycle meeting is scheduled for June 21, 2022, and an update will be provided at next month's Subcommittee meeting.

- The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) seeks input on Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Efforts. The EPA released three Requests for Information (RFIs) seeking input on new waste prevention, reuse, and recycling initiatives funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The three RFIs pertain to:
 - Solid Waste Infrastructure - comments due on July 25, 2022
 - Recycling Education and Outreach – comments due on July 25, 2022
 - Battery Collection – comments due on July 11, 2022
- The Solid Waste Infrastructure RFI is of particular interest to this Subcommittee. This RFI seeks information about needed improvements to post-consumer materials management, including waste reduction, collection, sorting, processing, and end-markets for reuse and recycling. This stakeholder input will inform the EPA's efforts to develop effective grant programs that improve recycling infrastructure across the nation.
- PW is preparing a response for the Solid Waste Infrastructure RFI to emphasize that organic waste management is a priority in California, especially due to the need for local jurisdictions to comply with SB 1383, and significant investments are needed to divert 20 million tons of organic waste from landfills statewide. PW is also considering responding to the other RFIs.

Mr. Mohajer asked if the AB 1857 letter was distributed to the Subcommittee and if it included the necessary enclosure. Mr. Darensbourg responded that he would check and that the letter was resent to the Senate Committee on Environmental Quality with the enclosure.

V. UPDATE ON CONVERSION TECHNOLOGY EVENTS/MEETINGS/OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Ms. Darensbourg provided an update on events and conferences, which can also be found in the [Conversion Technology newsletter](#) and Subcommittee meeting minutes:

- VerdeXchange 2022: June 19 - 22, 2022, Los Angeles, CA
- SWANA Workshop: June 23, 2022, Ontario, CA
- A&WMA 115th Annual Conference & Exhibition: June 27 – 30, 2022, San Francisco, CA
- The 13th Waste Conversion Technology Conference: August 10 - 12, 2022, San Diego, CA
- Resource Recycling Conference: August 15 - 17, 2022, Austin, TX
- 17th Annual CEAC Policy Conference: August 18 - 19, 2022, Sacramento, CA
- CRRA Annual Conference and Tradeshow: September 6 - 9, 2022, Oceanside, CA

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comment.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m. The next ATAS meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, July 21, 2022, at 10 a.m.