



Executive Director's
Report to the
Board of Harbor Commissioners

DATE: OCTOBER 28, 2025

FROM: ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION NO. _____ - APPROVE CITY OF LOS ANGELES HARBOR DEPARTMENT 2025 ZERO WASTE PLAN

SUMMARY:

Staff requests Board of Harbor Commissioners (Board) adoption of the City of Los Angeles (City) Harbor Department (Harbor Department) 2025 Zero Waste Plan (ZWP), as policy. The 2025 ZWP was prepared by the Environmental Management Division (EMD), with input from the Deputy Executive Director, senior management of key divisions, City Attorney's Office, and other Harbor Department stakeholders. The 2025 ZWP was prepared in accordance with the Mayor's Office 2019 Green New Deal (GND) and 2020 Executive Directive No. 25 (L.A.'s Green New Deal: Leading by Example), with an emphasis on zero waste and meeting the landfill diversion targets of 90% by 2025, 95% by 2035, and 100% by 2050. In addition, the 2025 ZWP acknowledges the City Ordinance 187718 (Zero Waste Ordinance), which requires City facilities, City-permitted events held on City property, and food or beverage providers operating on City property to comply with the Zero Waste Ordinance mandates.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Find that the Director of Environmental Management has determined that the proposed action is administratively and generally exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Article II, Section 2(f) of the Los Angeles City CEQA Guidelines, and Section 15061(b)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines;
2. Adopt the City of Los Angeles Harbor Department 2025 Zero Waste Plan as policy;
3. Authorize the Executive Director, or designees, to carry out this policy to comply with the State of California (State) and City mandates; and
4. Adopt Resolution No. _____.

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DISCUSSION:

Background – In 2015, the City released the Sustainability City pLAN to facilitate a cleaner environment and a stronger economy over the next 20 years. In 2019, facing pressing climate change issues, former Mayor Eric Garcetti expanded the vision on the pLAN through the GND. The GND focuses on tackling the climate emergency with bold actions to eliminate major Los Angeles main sources of carbon emissions, including buildings, transportation, electricity, and waste. The targets of the GND include a zero-carbon grid, zero-carbon transportation, zero-carbon buildings, zero waste, and zero wastewater. The Harbor Department’s ZWP specifically addresses the zero waste initiative.

As part of the GND and focusing on zero waste, each City Department, with support from the Mayor’s Office and Los Angeles Sanitation, was required to submit a plan to reach the City’s landfill diversion targets: 90% waste diversion by 2025, 95% by 2035, and 100% by 2050. EMD developed and submitted the Harbor Department’s first ZWP to the Mayor’s Office on September 30, 2022, which addressed the GND, and existing State and City laws, including but not limited to Assembly Bill (AB) 939 (California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989) and Senate Bill (SB) 1383 (Statewide Mandatory Organic Waste Collection). EMD developed this updated 2025 ZWP (Transmittal 1) to include the Zero Waste Ordinance. The Zero Waste Ordinance mandates include but are not limited to, recycling of food scraps, surplus edible food donation, City-wide reduction of single use plastics, zero waste events, zero waste facilities, and related matters (Transmittal 2). In the 2023 Council Motion 21-1208-S2, the City Council Energy and Environment Committee *requested* that all City Proprietary Departments report on compliance with the Zero Waste Ordinance. The Harbor Department responded with the April 29, 2025 Annual Progress Report (Transmittal 3), which confirmed that “as a proprietary department responsible for its own property, assets and funds, rather than adopt the Zero Waste Ordinance, the Harbor Department seeks to implement its own zero waste principles by the guidelines outlined in the 2022 ZWP, which will be updated in 2025 and presented to the Board of Harbor Commissioners for their consideration.” The City Council Energy and Environment Committee approved the Harbor Department’s April 29, 2025 Annual Progress Report on consent, on June 20, 2025 (Council File 21-1208-S6).

Zero waste is a cyclical approach to the flow of resources and products manufactured and used by human society. The cyclical approach seeks to minimize the extraction of resources from the earth by minimizing waste, reducing consumption, maximizing recycling, and developing products that are made to be reused, repaired, or recycled back into nature or the marketplace. The goal is to avoid sending trash and organic materials to landfills, incinerators, or the ocean. The Harbor Department’s 2025 ZWP presents recommended implementation tasks to achieve the Harbor Department’s zero waste targets.

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Staff requests Board approval of the Harbor Department 2025 Zero Waste Plan. As a City Proprietary Department responsible for its own property, assets and funds, the Harbor Department seeks to implement zero waste principles by the following guidelines in its own ZWP:

1. The Harbor Department-owned buildings occupied or maintained by City employees (Harbor Department and Recreation and Parks Department) shall comply with the City Zero Waste Ordinance as feasible.
2. For all Harbor Department events, the event contractors and operators managed by the Harbor Department shall comply with the City Zero Waste Ordinance as feasible.
3. The Harbor Department's waterfront and commercial tenants that are visitor-serving such as restaurants and retail facilities shall be encouraged to implement zero waste practices, although the Zero Waste Ordinance and its provisions are not being formally adopted by the Harbor Department due to competitive disadvantage. The Harbor Department will provide educational outreach for waste reduction and recycling, including organics, during the annual AB 939 reporting process
4. The Harbor Department's industrial and non-industrial non-visitor-serving commercial tenants, such as offices, educational facilities, terminals, and marinas, shall be encouraged to increase waste diversion. The Harbor Department will provide educational outreach for waste reduction and recycling, including organics, during the annual AB 939 reporting process.
5. All tenants will comply with City and State ordinances and laws as applicable. For example, AB 939 requires collection and reporting of data from a sample of the Harbor Department's tenants.
6. For special public events not hosted by the Harbor Department but on Harbor Department premises, the Harbor Department will include "Special Events" permit conditions in all Applications for Port Projects (APPs) (provided in Appendix F). These "Special Events" permit conditions contain language requiring a three-bin waste collection system and recommends surplus food donation and associated reporting.

Stakeholder Engagement – The Harbor Department's 2025 ZWP was developed through various meetings and feedback with Micheal DiBernardo, Deputy Executive Director of Marketing and Customer Relations, City Attorney, EMD, Construction & Maintenance, Engineering, Finance, Stakeholder Engagement, and Waterfront/Commercial Real Estate.

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Additionally in 2025, EMD conducted outreach to the Port Pantry (Harbor Department cafeteria contractor), City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks (operators of Los Angeles Maritime Museum and Cabrillo Aquarium), and the Boys and Girls Club tenant at Liberty Plaza, to discuss the Harbor Department's 2025 ZWP and its zero waste programs as it relates to their operations. This outreach was important because the Harbor Department manages their waste hauling and/or City employees occupy Harbor Department property. All operators and tenants were receptive, as documented in their outreach surveys (Transmittal 4).

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

The proposed action is approval of the Harbor Department's 2025 ZWP, which is an administrative activity and an activity where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, the Director of Environmental Management has determined the proposed action is admiratively and generally exempt from the requirements of CEQA in accordance with Article II Section 2(f) of the Los Angeles City CEQA Guidelines and Section 15061(b)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

This is an administrative action with no direct financial impact. However, implementation of the ZWP will have a financial impact with respect to compliance with SB1383, the City's Zero Waste Ordinance, and other applicable regulations. No funds are being requested through this Board action.

CITY ATTORNEY:

The Office of the City Attorney has reviewed the City of Los Angeles Harbor Department 2025 Zero Waste Plan and finds no legal issues at this time.

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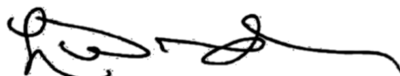
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TRANSMITTALS:

1. City of Los Angeles Harbor Department 2025 Zero Waste Plan
2. Zero Waste Ordinance (Ordinance 187718 – codified as LAAC Sections 10.53-10.53.5)
3. 2025 Annual Progress Report, Motion Council File 21-1208-S2 on the City of Los Angeles Harbor Department Annual Progress on Implementing the Zero Waste City Facilities and Events on City Property Ordinance No. 187718 and Zero Waste Plan
4. Outreach Feedback

FIS Approval: JS
CA Approval: JC



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