

Renew L.A.

■ Councilman Greig Smith thinks green as he introduces long-term plan to end landfilling.

CITY COUNCIL —

At a press conference June 23, Councilman Greig Smith unveiled his R.E.N.E.W. LA plan to end landfilling in Los Angeles, while maximizing resource recovery, reuse and recycling. "My plan is a 'resource management blueprint' for the City, and proposes a paradigm shift in which trash is no longer viewed as waste to be managed, but as a source of valuable, reusable commodities," Smith said.

R.E.N.E.W. LA stands for Recovering Energy, Natural Resources and Economic Benefit from Waste for LA. This monumental plan creates the roadmap for Los Angeles to become the country's leading innovator in dealing with its trash. R.E.N.E.W. LA is a 400-plus page document that contains a policy package including 14 legislative motions to accelerate its goals of maximum resource recovery, an end to landfilling and the creation of clean, renewable energy. The plan has been two years in the making.

R.E.N.E.W. LA is a 20-year action plan, created with the input of environmental, business and community leaders. It raises the bar from compliance with 50-percent AB 939-mandated landfill diversion levels, to a goal of "zero waste" that emphasizes sustainability and environmental protection while creating economic benefits, including job creation. Gary Petersen, a 32-year recycling expert and advocate said: "This is the next step in recycling, that needs to be taken, since we wrote California's Recycling Policy in 1976 - which later became the baseline document for AB 939. We're at a plateau where the state-of-the-art needs to be pushed."

The plan expands recycling programs, particularly in the business and multi-family sectors. There are proposals to offer tax incentives to businesses that locate in Los Angeles and use City-collected trash as a feedstock for a manufacturing process. Businesses could also benefit financially if they significantly reduce or eliminate waste, entirely. R.E.N.E.W. LA also proposes a revised City procurement policy in which highest and best use, reduced toxicity and conservation of resources will be prioritized.

Conversion technologies figure prominently in the plan because they convert waste into clean, renewable energy. The City has set a 20 percent goal for renewable energy by the year 2017, and R.E.N.E.W. LA proposes partnerships between

the Bureau of Sanitation, the DWP and private industry to help meet these goals. Conversion technologies can also be used to create valuable chemicals, alternative fuels, soil amendments and other feedstocks for manufacturing, reducing the need for virgin resources. Use of alternative fuels reduces green house gasses and harmful emissions while decreasing our reliance on fossil fuels and foreign oil sources.

California Integrated Waste Management Board Member Rosalie Mulé said: "I applaud the leadership role you've taken with alternative technologies as part of a 'resource management' strategy. These technologies have the very real potential to create clean, renewable energy from resources formerly thought of as waste. Thus, addressing two issues that are particularly



Greig Smith, Councilman 12th District



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Rita Robinson, General Manager, Bureau of Sanitation and Club Board Member



At the event.

vexing in Southern California."

Councilman Smith became involved in the fight against landfills nearly 20 years ago, helping to close Lopez, Mission and Toyon Canyon Landfills. He is a fierce opponent of the Sunshine Canyon Landfill, which is located in his district and takes the total of LA's residential waste, some 3500 tons per day. Councilman Smith is a founding member of "Dump the Dump," now known as The North Valley Coalition. He served as a member of Mayor James Hahn's Landfills Oversight Committee, where he chaired the Future Alternative Technologies subcommittee. It was during this service that he became aware of conversion technologies and their potential to create useful products, including clean, renewable energy, from waste. He has since traveled to Europe and locally to study and tour operational facilities. The Councilman makes frequent trips to Sacramento to lobby the Waste Board and State Legislature on the benefits of conversion technologies and resource recovery.

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