



Date: January 24, 2006
To: Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers
From: Councilmember Bonnie Lowenthal, First District *BL*
Subject: Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling

Background

Construction and demolition (C & D) materials account for almost 22% of the waste stream, according to a 2004 Statewide Waste Characterization Study. C & D materials are defined as lumber, drywall, metals, masonry (brick, concrete, etc.), carpet, plastic, pipe, rocks, dirt, paper, cardboard, or green waste related to land development. Of these items, lumber makes up the majority of debris that is still ending up in landfills, while metals are commonly recycled.

Recycling of C & D materials is a component of sustainable development, and the City of Long Beach has already gone on record supporting sustainable development. This means reducing, reusing, or recycling most, if not all, materials that remain after a construction or renovation project, and recycling as much as possible from demolition, including wood, concrete and other types of masonry and drywall. Rather than just demolishing a building, oftentimes it can be "deconstructed" with the primary goal of recycling the materials. It can be as simple as taking out windows, fixtures or cabinetry, or as involved as manually taking apart the building frame.

In addition to supporting the worthy goal of sustainable development, a C&D ordinance will help the City comply with AB939 requirements.

Recommendation

I, therefore, request that the City Attorney draft a C&D ordinance for adoption by the City Council that will 1) support the City's sustainable development goals, 2) help the City conform to AB939 goals, and 3) possibly provide an incentive for deconstruction and/or recycling of construction materials.