

**A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING SOLID WASTE REDUCTION GOALS AND  
A METHOD TO ACHIEVE THOSE GOALS FOR THE CITY OF HELENA**

**WHEREAS**, according to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (“USEPA”), waste prevention and recycling -- jointly referred to as waste reduction -- “are potent strategies for reducing greenhouse gases” and, taken together, will reduce emissions from energy consumption, reduce emissions from incinerators, reduce methane emissions from landfills, and increase storage of carbon in trees; and

**WHEREAS**, the USEPA estimates 42% of all United States greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are associated with the management of materials (including food) as they flow through the economy, from extraction or harvest, production and transport, provision of services, reuse, and disposal; and

**WHEREAS**, unlike many GHG mitigation options, waste management is largely determined at the local level; and

**WHEREAS**, in June 2020, the City adopted a new Growth Policy consistent with Montana’s Integrated Waste Management Act, in which the City committed to reduce the amount of solid waste generated by households, businesses, and governmental entities and disposed of in the landfill, employing the commonly recognized waste hierarchy principles of “reduce, reuse, recycle, and compost” before landfilling; and

**WHEREAS**, these waste reduction principles promote the highest and best use of materials, emphasize a “closed loop” system of production and consumption, and will create and sustain productive and meaningful jobs; and

**WHEREAS**, Helena’s current solid waste diversion rate of approximately 20% is significantly below the national average of 35%, which diversion rate Helena’s 2009 Climate Action Plan recommended be achieved in Helena by 2020; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Helena and Lewis and Clark County are parties to an interlocal agreement for waste management, however the City can set its own goals for waste reduction generated within the City’s limits; and

**WHEREAS**, in managing its solid waste, Helena would like to focus its resources on waste diversion as the preferred waste management option; and

**WHEREAS**, through education, implementation of waste reduction measures, and community engagement at all levels, Helena can become a regional leader in waste reduction.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF HELENA, MONTANA:**

**Section 1.** The City Commission directs its staff to develop a Strategic Plan for Waste Reduction in Helena (“Strategic Plan”) using the principles of “refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle, and compost.”

**Section 2.** The Strategic Plan shall be designed to achieve the goal of City solid waste diversion from the landfill at a minimum of 50% by 2040, with an interim minimum goal of 35% by 2030.

**Section 3.** These waste reduction goals are not intended to be final goals for the City, and the City Commission will revisit these goals every 5 years, starting in 2027.

**Section 4.** The Strategic Plan shall identify a baseline of Helena’s current waste stream from which to measure the City’s future success at achieving the diversion goals established in this Resolution. This baseline information shall include a breakdown of the types of material diverted from and landfilled by the City.

**Section 5.** The City Commission directs its Sustainability Coordinator, in collaboration with Helena’s Public Works Department and the Citizen Conservation Board, to coordinate the development of a Strategic Plan by the spring of 2022.

**Section 6.** The City of Helena shall develop and implement its Strategic Plan through active community engagement with stakeholders, including but not limited to city residents, property owners, renters, businesses, nonprofits, schools, institutions, Lewis and Clark County, and other governmental entities.

**Section 7.** The City of Helena’s Public Works Department shall develop budgeting recommendations for the Commission’s consideration that will enable the City to transition to this significantly decreased waste stream while continuing to provide for the efficient, convenient, and cost-effective delivery of waste services to Helena’s citizens and businesses.