

# 2005 Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire

developed by the

## **NYC ZERO WASTE CAMPAIGN**

### **1. Zero Waste Goals and Policy, Infrastructure and Programs**

The Mayor plays a key role in setting policy and ensuring that the policy is carried out. Zero waste goals and policy are important for coordinating the initiatives of a variety of different agencies in city government, in order to reverse the clearly unsustainable focus on trash disposal with its high economic and environmental costs, and to measure progress. At the same time actual implementation is essential and can take years to develop; this includes adequate infrastructure (physical facilities) and the development of new programs. Do you agree that City government needs to emphasize goals and policies as well as infrastructure and programming for Zero Waste? (Answer yes or no for each or both.) Describe what Zero Waste initiatives you would like to implement if elected.

Do the Mayoral Candidates support Zero Waste?	Bloomberg	Ferrer	Fields	Miller	Weiner
Zero Waste Goals and Policy, Infrastructure and Programs	<b>Partial YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>Partial YES</b>

**Bloomberg** - Nearly 50,000 tons of waste and recyclables are collected in New York City every day, roughly 25% of which is directly managed by the Department of Sanitation (DSNY), and so I wholeheartedly agree with Zero Waste's belief that City government needs to emphasize goals and policies as well as infrastructure and planning in the pursuit of sustainable waste management. To that end, the Draft 20-Year Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP), which is now before the City Council, incorporates both planning initiatives and programmatic changes that will enable the City to generate less waste and to deal with waste more efficiently. The Draft SWMP establishes the ambitious goal of diverting 70% of recyclables from the combined commercial and DSNY-managed waste stream by 2015. By 2007, the City hopes to achieve a 25% diversion goal for curbside and containerized waste generated by residents and institutions, and a 35% diversion goal for the total DSNY-managed waste stream.

To help realize these goals, we are entering into a 20-year processing contract with the Hugo Neu Corporation for metal, glass and plastic (MGP) recycling that will not only stabilize the existing recycling program, but will enhance and expand it over time. By agreeing to an extended contract, the City will increase the net recovery rate for MGP by creating a relationship in which the processor has an economic incentive to expand product markets. Further, the long-term contract will enhance opportunities developing new technologies to produce and market new products by recovering materials that are now marginal, thereby increasing the MGP recovery rate even further. This plan also involves a public education component; to support this project, the City will help finance materials recovery infrastructure including a model green facility with classrooms and viewing areas for public education.

An additional goal of my Administration's Draft SWMP is the evaluation of new and emerging technology alternatives to landfilling and incineration. To this end, the City commissioned a comprehensive evaluation of these technologies in order to properly assess their potential. The evaluation concluded that anaerobic digestion, gasification and hydrolysis merit further consideration, and the City is now studying these solutions in greater detail. These alternatives could benefit the City in a number of ways, including insulating the City from the effects of an increasingly monopolistic national waste management industry, reducing the City's reliance on other states, alleviating the risk caused by federal obstacles, and creating the ability to recover and reuse a greater portion of the solid waste stream. Though there are significant technology transfer, scale-up and siting considerations involved in implementing new technologies, by exploring the options now, the City will be strategically positioned to move beyond landfilling and incineration when a viable solution has been found.

We are aggressively planning for the future. The City is conducting a Waste Characterization Study (WCS) that will: help determine whether additional materials may be appropriate for recycling or other methods of handling and/or reducing wastes in the future; improve the DSNY's waste prevention, reuse and recycling efforts by targeting of groups of waste generators for outreach and publicity; improve the DSNY's enforcement of existing recycling and other sanitation laws and codes; inform DSNY operations, including equipment procurement, facility construction and collection route structure; generate information relevant to recycling processors and other entities

engaged in market development for the City's recyclable materials; and foster a better understanding of how Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) in the City has changed over the past decade. The WCS is unprecedented among municipal waste characterization studies for cities throughout the nation, as it is examining the variation in waste composition by housing density and income and is attempting to link, through direct observation, structural characteristics of multi-unit buildings and their recyclables composition. It will assist the City in setting ambitious goals for the future and will set a new standard in municipal waste characterizations in the United States.

**Ferrer** - Yes. I do agree that City needs to emphasize goals and policies and programs for Zero Waste. While Bronx Borough President, to reduce government waste from excess paper, I advocated shifting to a paperless government where documents and forms are available on-line. As Mayor, I would advocate working toward zero waste policies that are practical and lead to a reduction in waste.

**Fields** – Goals and Policies – Yes – I was concerned to see how little weight was given to the non-export elements in the new draft Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP), and I am glad that the Council is working hard to add and expand the other components that are the elements of zero waste. I was encouraged by the administration's initiative in sitting down with OUN and formulating its export plan based in part in response to the environmental justice community. As mayor I will carry that work forward by championing the strategies that will improve environmental conditions in all communities, including the far-flung ones that are hosting landfills for NYC's solid waste. There always seems to be an excess of money available to fund the interim, truck-based export plan, a plan that brings no return. However, investment in infrastructure and programming that will bring jobs, a resurgence of manufacturing in a new form (remanufacturing and reuse) and a concomitant reduction of the cost of waste export has not been a priority of the current or past administrations. Our current thinking has gained primacy as a result of our new consciousness of the finiteness of the earth's resources and the consequent need for human activity to become sustainable. Credit must also be given for the 20-year recycling contract the City has negotiated with Hugo Neu. I am committed to the goals and policies of the Zero Waste Plan of preventing, reducing, recycling and reusing waste, and most importantly, doing so in ways that promote sustainable economic activity, so that we continually create meaningful entry-level employment.

Infrastructure and Programming – Yes - The Zero Waste Plan is a comprehensive roadmap of the full range of infrastructure and programming, which I will use to inform the actions of my administration. The zero waste goals can be accomplished through a deputy mayorship and an office dedicated to the plan and implementation of its policies. Because economic development is as important a piece of the puzzle, the interagency coordination is needed. Second in importance is the necessity of government as a model. Therefore, public-space and institutional recycling are critical elements that should be implemented early on. Likewise, City procurement policies must set an example of sustainable purchasing and contracting for industry. This will be a first step toward producer responsibility. These and other initiatives must be embodied in the new SWMP, with discrete goals and provisions for public accountability centered in the new deputy mayor's office. In order to take advantage of the already-invested resources and time, it is important to build on existing initiatives begun by the administration and the Council, but the prongs of education and accountability are two that need special emphasis going forward. Government must also partner with citizens in every community and with the organizations that have an understanding of the current system as well as what can and needs to be done to affect the shift in emphasis from waste disposal to zero waste.

**Miller** - As City Council Speaker, I have been a proud and progressive advocate for the environment. I fought to restore city requirements for plastic and glass recycling after the Mayor suspended it from the 2003 budget and was a strong supporter of the 1998 weekly recycling bill. However, I know New York still has a long way to go to and as Mayor, I will help the City reach our maximum recycling capacity. Achieving zero waste depends upon garnering public and government support in part through the promotion of the economic development potential of a zero waste future. As Mayor, I will lead the City in viewing a zero waste program as a catalyst for job creation and economic development, not simply waste management. If we can make people understand that processing facilities create ten times as many jobs as transfer stations, landfills and incinerators I believe we can help this movement obtain the funding and support it needs to make the transition to a zero waste city. In order to maximize economic benefits, I will work to reduce private sector waste handling and increase City-owned waste handling, and minimize the number of "put or pay" contracts the city enters into. As Mayor, I will also increase the number of city contracts with recycling plants that implement smart agricultural design and transport the majority of the recyclable material by barges rather than containers. Making the transition from containers to barges will be a key focus in deciding

which waste and recycling plants the city contracts with because shipping by barge greatly reduces environmental burdens on the city. I will not only focus on the goal of zero waste, but implement the necessary infrastructure to pursue it.

**Weiner - Yes,** I support the goals of the Zero Waste Campaign, and believe we should be enacting policies that reduce the amount of trash that each of the five borough produce. In particular, I think City government should be working across agencies to find creative solutions to the challenge of recycling and reusing more of the materials that are too often thrown out.

**2. Management Structure for Recycling**

As you know, NYC enacted a landmark recycling law in 1989. Since the passage of this statute, the city’s overall residential recycling rate has climbed from less than 1% to roughly 20%, with some districts achieving diversion rates of over 30%. By diverting paper, bottles, cans and other recyclables away from landfills and incinerators, this program helps reduce pollution of our air, land and water. Further, especially with escalating export costs, recycling has become an increasingly cost-effective approach for New York City. Recycling has achieved this success despite the lack of an appropriate management structure within the Department of Sanitation. The Department has neither assembled the staff nor the resources necessary to make the program a full-success. One big problem is that the city’s small recycling office does not have sufficient clout within city government to expand the programs or to develop a comprehensive market development plan. Indeed, the head of the program is not even at the level of assistant commissioner (where the position used to reside) at the Sanitation Department. Other diversion programs—waste prevention, reuse and composting-- have fared even worse than recycling. If you were elected Mayor, would you support creating a more powerful office at the Deputy Commissioner level to focus exclusively on recycling, waste prevention, composting and reuse either outside or within the Sanitation Department? (Answer Yes or No.) Please explain your plan to accomplish the restructuring or your rationale for not addressing this management problem?

Do the Mayoral Candidates support Zero Waste?	Bloomberg	Ferrer	Fields	Miller	Weiner
Management Structure for Recycling	NR	Partial YES	YES	YES	Partial YES

**Bloomberg -** In 2002, due to significant budget constraints, the City temporarily suspended the recycling of glass and plastic, which was highly labor-intensive, inefficient, and for which existing markets were insufficient to achieve cost-effectiveness. The intent was not to undermine recycling as a whole, but to enable the City to revisit the way in which recycling of plastic and glass was conducted. I was very pleased to fully reinstitute the program as well as the funding for composting and other services, and I believe that the current plans for the future of the recycling program represent a vast improvement over the program of the past. The City is fully committed to this program and has set very ambitious goals for recycling diversion rates in both the short and long-term. In addition to focusing on municipal recycling, the Draft SWMP includes a proposal for DSNY to work with the Business Integrity Commission to distribute commercial recycling information to all private carters, helping them understand their responsibilities under Local Law 87. DSNY will also partner with the Commission to ensure that private carters inform their clients of the requirements of this law.

Beyond setting numeric goals, my Administration is also putting the infrastructure in place to support our recycling program. In addition to the Hugo Neu contract I discussed earlier, the City is assisting Visy Paper, which recycles 40% of the City’s paper waste, by reactivating the Staten Island Rail Road. Under this plan, which is being spearheaded by the Economic Development Corporation, the currently dormant railroad will be used to haul freight from the interior of Staten Island to the Howland Hook Marine Terminal. I believe my actions have shown that recycling is an integral part of my solid waste management strategy, and that I will commit the resources necessary to ensure that this program is an ongoing success.

**Ferrer –** As Mayor, I will make recycling, waste prevention, composting and reuse a priority. I will encourage the responsible strengthening of recycling at the sanitation department, and work towards waste prevention and reduction.

**Fields** - Yes – It does not make sense to keep all the aspects of moving toward zero waste within the confines of DSNY. The Department’s mission is to expeditiously move a mountain of waste out of the City every day, and it accomplishes that extraordinary task with remarkable efficiency. It is unfair to ask more of the agency. The SWMP plan is comprehensive and involves many arms of government. There should, therefore, be a deputy mayor responsible for all aspects of zero waste and be centrally accountable for results and progress on all fronts. The single-minded focus of Deputy Mayor Doctoroff’s marshalling City resources to plan West Side development in anticipation of the Olympics is a good, if unfortunate, example of the kind of focus possible and necessary for the Zero Waste plan to be successful.

**Miller** - Yes, I will elevate the standing of my top recycling and waste prevention official within the bureaucracy. That official and I will focus on the interdependency between economic development and waste management. Because shipping trash to landfills outside of New York has become increasingly more expensive, and reducing waste creates jobs and provides revenue, decisions concerning waste management should include representatives from both the Department of Sanitation and Economic Development. As Mayor, I will address the Department of Sanitation’s structural problems so that it better and more efficiently collaborates with the Economic Development Corporation, allowing it to identify those communities that would most benefit from, and be most welcoming to, the construction of new recycling plants and associated businesses.

**Weiner** - Yes, I will work to ensure that efforts to promote recycling, reduce trash are not lost in the bureaucracy of the Department of Sanitation. Those working inside the Department to improve the way we reduce waste will always have direct access to me.

**3. Waste Prevention**

Longstanding Federal and New York State solid waste policy clearly stipulates that reducing waste generation at the source and promoting repair and reuse of consumer products is at the top of the hierarchy of preferred solutions to our burgeoning solid waste problems. The Department of Sanitation more than ten years ago identified waste reduction as the cheapest solid waste management option available in the 1992 Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP), stating that more than \$130 dollars per ton could be spent on waste prevention and the City would still be saving money. And yet, the City's Sanitation department devotes the vast majority of its fiscal resources to collection and export of materials that could have been prevented, repaired, recycled, or composted here in the City. Currently the City's waste prevention staff is Zero. The City's 20-year solid waste management plan (not yet finalized) includes minimal provisions for waste prevention. This plan will not be effective at reducing the environmental impact of waste until it prioritizes waste prevention programs in relation to other waste management strategies and allocates appropriate levels of staffing. In addition specific quantitative goals should be set to assess program effectiveness in preventing waste and incentives developed to engage New York City residents, businesses, and institutions. As Mayor, would you make waste prevention a higher priority and commit to establishing a permanent, well funded, and effective waste prevention program in New York City? (Answer Yes or No.) Describe the waste prevention programs and level of funding you would put in place.

Do the Mayoral Candidates support Zero Waste?	Bloomberg	Ferrer	Fields	Miller	Weiner
Waste Prevention	<b>YES</b>	<b>Partial YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>

**Bloomberg** - Along with recycling, I believe that the City should adopt aggressive waste prevention strategies. For this reason, my Administration has pursued and the Draft SWMP incorporates a number of these strategies, including:

- **Yard Waste**-The organic fraction of the waste stream will play an important role in meeting the diversion goals of our plan. To keep yard waste out of the waste stream, DSNY is restoring funding for its backyard composting and “Leave it on the Lawn” education programs, as well as its subsidized compost bin promotional programs. In addition, DSNY will continue to promote its compost facility to residential landscapers.

- **Junk Mail-**To reduce junk mail, the Mail Preference Service allows residents to remove their addresses from most national mailing lists. DSNY posts information about this service both on its website and its NYC Wastele\$\$ website, and continues to distribute information at local recycling and waste-prevention events.
- **Electronic Recycling-**The growth of toxic electronic waste, though only a fraction of 1% of the waste stream currently, will undoubtedly be one of the biggest challenges we face over the next twenty years. The City supports federal Extended Producer Responsibility legislation that would require manufacturers of electronic goods and computers to provide for the return and safe disposal of these items. Locally, DSNY used a grant from Dell Inc. and Lexmark to conduct a series of electronics recycling events in the Fall of 2004, which will be repeated this year.
- **Hazardous Household Waste-** Due to State permit restrictions, a number of potentially dangerous chemicals and other household items are not accepted at DSNY Special Waste sites. To provide an outlet for these materials, DSNY is seeking to reinstitute an annual Household Hazardous Waste collection day in each borough, and is developing an RFP for collection services.
- **Tire Disposal-** At its Household Special Waste Drop-off Sites, DSNY accepts up to four tires from passenger cars. The tires are collected and taken to a facility where they are converted to electricity.

In addition to these efforts, it should be noted that there is currently a Deputy Director for Waste Prevention, supported by a dedicated full-time staff, at the DSNY Bureau of Waste Prevention, Reuse and Recycling (BWPRR). These members of the DSNY administer a number of important waste prevention initiatives, including the award-winning NYCWastele\$\$ website. A lot of work has been done by this bureau since the 1992 SWMP and, though the initially optimistic savings projections for waste prevention have been soberly revised, we are still working hard at waste prevention to bring about important incremental changes.

Finally, it is important to reiterate that these plans are currently under discussion with the City Council as part of the SWMP negotiations. I look forward to working with them on adopting a final plan that includes waste prevention strategies.

**Ferrer** – Yes. Waste prevention is an important goal. Where appropriate, I will direct existing resources to increase outreach and education on recycling and waste prevention, working to ensure a higher rate of recycling.

**Fields** – Yes – The City government must be a model for any policy implementation. As mayor, I will establish a separate unit for waste prevention in the Department of Citywide Administrative Services to oversee the operations of the government’s buildings and facilities. The bureau will be responsible for waste prevention and environmentally responsible procurement, on the rationale that recycled and responsibly produced products embody a waste-prevention component. Programs such as this can and will result in significant savings and result in the establishment of revenue streams of their own. It is, therefore important to demonstrate fiscal responsibility by doing as much as possible via reorganization within the administration.

Funds for waste prevention coordinators will have to be found while, at the same time establishing a revenue stream as quickly as possible. The most likely candidate for this is the bigger better bottle bill. A case must be made in Albany that its passage is crucial to these initiatives. I will also immediately begin working with the City Council on Pay As You Throw (PAYT) mechanisms; especially with the institutions that receive ‘free’ refuse collection from the City, in order to generate revenue from modest charges for targeted waste streams. Given how little has been done to date in this regard, it seems that much could be accomplished with an initial investment of a few million dollars for staff, provided they will have the support of the administration in putting their recommendations into effect.

**Miller** - Recycling and waste prevention are the right thing to do, both from an environmental and financial point of view, which I think is great for the city. As Mayor, I will not waver from my support for waste prevention and I will continue to encourage and promote waste reduction initiatives. One of the first, and most basic, steps I will take as Mayor is to better educate New Yorkers on how and what to reuse and recycle. Ensuring that New Yorkers understand how to reuse or organize materials and have access to recycling bins both at home, work and school will be one of my top priorities. As Mayor, I will also consider the options of tax-based incentives that reward maximum waste prevention efforts. A progressive and creative “Pay As You Throw” type of program that offers New Yorkers a tax credit equal to the amount that they pay now for garbage services, in place of the current system

that encourages waste by not offering any economic incentive to reduce waste, is one initiative I will consider as Mayor.

**Weiner** – Yes, I will make waste prevention a priority. While I never make budget decisions in a vacuum, I will work to ensure that waste prevention gets the resources it needs to make a substantial impact on the City’s trash load.

**4. Reuse**

The current SWMP inadequately supports reuse - a sustainable waste management strategy second only to waste prevention. Reuse diverts still valuable goods from the waste stream —by just putting them in someone else’s hands. Each year there are more than 700,000 tons of reusables in NYC’ waste stream. Exporting valuable goods at large cost to the City makes no sense, when those goods can alleviate poverty, aid our cash strapped schools and non-profit organizations, while also creating jobs. The City needs to increase its reuse capacity by supporting existing and emerging reuse programs with funding and technical assistance. Other communities have effective municipally supported reuse centers - the City should develop similar facilities. As Mayor would you seek to develop reuse for NYC? (Answer Yes or No.) Be specific as to how you would establish a robust reuse infrastructure that is comparable to that of recycling or why you wouldn’t support such a system.

Do the Mayoral Candidates support Zero Waste?	Bloomberg	Ferrer	Fields	Miller	Weiner
Reuse	<b>Partial YES</b>	<b>Partial YES</b>	<b>Partial YES</b>	<b>Partial YES</b>	<b>YES</b>

**Bloomberg** - Along with recycling and waste prevention, I believe that the City should encourage the reuse of materials whenever possible. Currently, the DSNY’s BWPRR supports and the City provides funding for a number of successful reuse programs, which my Administration hopes to expand as part of our Solid Waste Management plan. These include:

- **Wa\$teMatch**-This program links companies looking to get rid of materials with those who have a use for them. Currently servicing the manufacturing sector, NY Wa\$teMatch intends to expand to serve other business sectors such as the hospitality, healthcare and property management sectors. NY Wa\$tematch also will continue to pursue opportunities to assist local manufacturers to meet the demand for locally manufactured green building products.
- **Materials for the Arts**-This program gathers materials from companies that no longer need them, and distributes them to artists and educators that do. In the process, it removes hundreds of tons of waste from the sanitation system.
- **NYC Stuff Exchange**- This program promotes reuse outlets throughout the City. At this time, information about this program is only available by telephone, but DSNY plans to reach additional segments of the City by establishing a website as a companion service to the existing phone-based system.

In spite of these efforts, because a fundamental underpinning of our solid waste management strategy is the desire and need to reduce the number of trucks on City streets, the City currently has no plans to establish a reuse program infrastructure. Reducing the number of trucks on City streets will have enormous environmental benefits and will improve the health and well-being of City residents, particularly those in the neighborhoods that have been unduly burdened by the City’s land-based waste transfer system. For these reasons, we believe that adding another collection vehicle route to pick up reusable goods would run counter to our objectives.

**Ferrer** - Yes. I think reuse is an important goal. I would use my position as mayor to encourage manufacturing and industrial businesses to reuse materials. It is important that our city reuse valuable materials to ensure that we make the most of the materials that are available to us.

**Fields** – Yes - Reuse runs counter to our ‘disposable’ culture. Flea markets are a wonderful illustration of the ‘counterculture’ of how items gain rather than lose value as they are passed down and on. Reuse will become part

of our culture only through grassroots outreach and education. As mayor I will use the Community Assistance Unit in my office to help with the permitting of flea-market and other reuse events in neighborhoods, and establish a cohort of coordinators working out of both the mayor’s office and the community boards to formulate targeted programs and identify storefronts as candidates for reuse and reclamation centers. Coordinators will have to master agency coordination between Sanitation, Buildings, Finance, EDC, and Consumer Affairs to name a few, in order to begin to establish a community infrastructure for reuse. Revolving loan programs are also excellent revenue and economic-development mechanisms that support local enterprise. Much work has been done regarding finance and funding of initiatives, and I will turn not only to my agencies but also to the Comptroller, IBO and the Fiscal Policy Institute, among others, for good advice.

**Miller** - During my tenure as City Council Speaker, I have been a major supporter of reuse efforts in order to prevent waste and re-distribute resources. In 2000, I was a primary supporter of a bill that encouraged the procurement of environmentally preferable and socially responsible building materials, such as recycled products and reclaimed wood, leading the way in efforts to implement reuse policies and create reuse markets throughout the City. As Mayor, I will continue to promote the economic benefits and environmental necessities of reuse by setting guidelines for reuse with the diverse number of contractors the city does business with.

**Weiner** - Yes, I am supportive of efforts to establish places where New Yorkers can exchange reusable goods. I will ensure that opportunities to trade and or donate usable good are ample for residents of all five boroughs.

**5. Organics/Composting**

Organics make up about one quarter of the City collected waste stream and a similar percentage of the commercial putrescible waste stream. This is more than 6,000 tons per day of material while current organics programs (existing leaf and Christmas tree collections, etc.) only divert about 135 tons per day. There is therefore large untapped potential to increase our recycling rates and save millions of dollars in export costs. Other communities have seen their recycling rates jump with the addition of organics collection and composting. Do you support developing additional facilities and programs to divert this material from landfilling/incineration and would you be willing to take on the challenge of finding suitable sites to manage this material in and/or near the City? (Answer Yes or No.) If so, please describe what strategy you might use for the development and siting of compost facilities over the next four years.

Do the Mayoral Candidates support Zero Waste?	Bloomberg	Ferrer	Fields	Miller	Weiner
Organics/Composting	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>Partial YES</b>

**Bloomberg** - I believe that reducing the volume of the City’s waste stream is important and that this goal can be achieved in part through diverting organic waste from landfills. To this end, we plan to evaluate and potentially pursue anaerobic digestion technologies that have sophisticated up-front materials recovery to separate organic waste, and are able to be net generators of energy. There is potential for successful application of this strategy at the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center where there is a large concentration of organic waste. We are currently evaluating the feasibility of this technology and its potential for use and expect the study to be complete in the fall.

In addition, regarding organic waste, DSNY is also seeking revisions to recycling regulations to require residents to set out leaves for curbside collection in paper bags, instead of in clear plastic bags as is currently required. Paper bags are highly effective because they are compostable, while plastic bags are a serious contaminant and must therefore be opened and screened out of the compostable material. Switching to paper bag set-out has the potential to substantially reduce composting operating costs and increase the overall effectiveness of the program.

**Ferrer** - Yes. I support additional programs to divert organics from landfills or incineration, and I believe it is possible to find suitable sites to manage this material. I will look to divert organics to facilities that already exist in the City, such as the Botanical Gardens and parks facilities. If required, I will identify locations that are suited for new composting facilities.

**Fields** - Yes – I see composting primarily in a homeowner context. It makes no sense that the lawns and vegetation around people’s homes is not fed back into the earth rather than carted away as common refuse. Organic matter should not, if possible, be removed from the food chain that produced it. I wholeheartedly support the encouragement of individual composting and will put in place educational and incentive programs to keep organics recycling through the nutrient cycle.

Composting on a larger, institutional scale requires greater political will and effort because of the space requirements and the misunderstanding of compost, as well as the fear of smells, insects and vermin. The obvious agency for the modeling of large-scale programs is the Department of Parks and Recreation, but parks are not the only sites to be considered. In fact, Department of Corrections that has had the greatest success in this area on Rikers Island. Care must be taken in confronting the issue of alienation of parkland when considering siting of facilities.

The issue of putrescible trade waste has been a contentious and knotty issue. I proposed a pilot program for the restaurants on Restaurant Row for the use of commercial food-waste disposers (FWD) as a way of dealing with the public-health issue of rat infestation. The Department of Environmental Protection has resisted this proposal, and debate continues on the effects of widespread use of FWD on our water quality. Barring that, composting could be an excellent alternative to the problems presented by heavy, wet food waste that draws vermin, fouls our streets with greasy residue and is a financial burden to restaurants and supermarkets. I will investigate the feasibility of a large-scale composting operation sited in strategic locations throughout the City to minimize vehicle miles for transport.

**Miller** - As the cost-effectiveness of recycling becomes increasingly accepted, even by erstwhile opponents like Mayor Bloomberg, the fight to increase recycling has become a question, not of convincing people to recycle, but instead one of the nature of our recycling infrastructure. As Mayor, I will work to make our system more cost-effective and comprehensive by committing to long-term contracts with recycling companies rather than short-term contracts with less efficient waste removal companies. In addition, we should work to reduce the amount of organic material that we put in landfills and increase composting efforts. I will ensure funding for and expand the existing programs run through the City botanical gardens, which help to promote small scale on-site composting. I will also focus on increasing the number of those specific types of composting sites that are exempt from permit requirements in order to avoid unnecessary bureaucracy and help the city make a speedy transition to composting.

**Weiner** – Yes, I will aggressively pursue every opportunity to reduce New York City’s waste, and composting will be among the possibilities I will explore.

**6. Community-Based Planning & Initiatives**

Many city agencies have responded to calls to be more inclusive in their planning efforts and to involve citizens as plans are being created, as opposed to simply notifying citizens once plans have been adopted. In addition, other cities and counties tap into the wealth of community-based knowledge and experience by actively engaging the public in the design and implementation of programs. In some cases the government even contracts with non-profit groups to carry out programs. Do you see a role for the public in planning for waste management, including zero waste programs? (Answer Yes or No.) Please describe how you would support community-based planning as well as engage communities in zero waste programs.

Do the Mayoral Candidates support Zero Waste?	Bloomberg	Ferrer	Fields	Miller	Weiner
Community-Based Planning & Initiatives	<b>Partial YES</b>	<b>Partial YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>Partial YES</b>

**Bloomberg** - I believe in open, transparent government and in public participation. To develop the Draft SWMP, which includes the reactivation of the City’s Marine Transfer Stations as waste containerization facilities, the Administration met with every City Councilmember as well as a number of community and environmental groups, including the Natural Resources Defense Council, the New York City Waste Prevention Coalition, the Organization of Waterfront Neighborhoods, Sustainable South Bronx, the Hudson River Park Trust and the League of Conservation Voters.

**Ferrer** – Yes. Democracy thrives on transparent government allowing citizens to play an active role in their government. Mike Bloomberg has too frequently relied on backroom deals rather than community discussion. As Mayor, I will ensure that the public plays a role in the planning for waste management. Local Law 19 establishes this role for the public through Solid Waste Advisory Boards in the five boroughs as well as Citywide Recycling Advisory Boards. I will support these boards so that the planning process is both transparent and inclusive of the public.

**Fields** - Yes – This question goes to the heart of my vision of governance for the City. Many of the difficulties the current administration has encountered with the implementation of policies and plans have been a result of the failure to engage those affected early on and during ongoing development and implementation. The restructuring of the education system is an example. As Manhattan borough president, I have seen first-hand the role of the community boards as the grassroots arm of City government. The community’s interests are also often represented by issue-oriented associations and organizations, all of whom deserve a seat at the table when programs and initiatives are being developed. That way, communities and groups do not have to engage in unnecessary naysaying when plans are presented. Time spent in planning avoids time and resources wasted later on litigation and other forms of resistant delay. As mayor, I will convene task forces for various aspects of zero waste initiatives, and members will sit at the same table as agency heads and representatives as well as engineers. I have found a wealth of technical expertise in the community, as evidenced, for example, by the community-board responses to large and complicated environmental impact statements. The other indispensable piece of planning is community education. The deputy mayor for zero waste will bring the agencies together with community-based organizations to confer on existing problems and solicit input on solutions, to which agencies could bring to bear expertise and an understanding of feasibility in the context of City government. This will help replace resistance and obstacles with coalition building and the exercise of political will.

**Miller** - I have always advocated the benefits of incorporating community-based groups and organizations into planning efforts. Whether it has been working to increase affordable housing, rights for the disabled or improving the city’s schools, efforts for change are successful only with the support of the surrounding community. For example, the success we had with preserving the Mitchell-Lama buildings would have been impossible without the support of the fifty different community groups that all worked to back our efforts to maintain these 25,000 units of affordable housing.

**Weiner** – Mayor Bloomberg has instituted a top-down system at City Hall that does not welcome community input, or allow residents to affect decisions about their neighborhood. I will always seek input from the community.

**7. Jobs/Economic Development**

More than simply a program for managing waste, zero waste can also be a powerful driver for private sector job creation and local economic development. According to the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, collection of recyclables, manufacturing of goods from recyclables, and reuse create anywhere from ten to several hundred more jobs for every one job at a transfer station, landfill or incinerator. These “green collar” jobs are an untapped opportunity for the City to revitalize its manufacturing sector, create better than living wage jobs, reduce the high rates of joblessness in low-income communities throughout the city, and transition workers from declining industries. Increasingly around the globe, and in various cities and counties throughout the country, governments have set aside land (in the form of Recycling Industrial Parks) or provided resources and technical assistance to support the growth of recycling, remanufacturing and reuse businesses. NYC has the choice to continue to send dollars out of the City when it pays to export garbage or to invest dollars locally in zero waste programs. As Mayor, would you provide funding and technical assistance to zero waste businesses, seek to establish Recycling Industrial Parks in New York City and support other initiatives to spur the growth of zero waste industries? (Answer Yes or No.) Please explain your answer.

Do the Mayoral Candidates support Zero Waste?	Bloomberg	Ferrer	Fields	Miller	Weiner
Jobs/ Economic Development	<b>Partial YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>

**Bloomberg** - The development of new and emerging technologies can create jobs and I support using the development of recycling technologies for this purpose. The Hugo Neu facility in South Brooklyn will create over 100 permanent jobs and 160 construction jobs along the Brooklyn waterfront. In addition, the reactivation of the Staten Island Rail Road and the creation of ExpressRail Staten Island, a \$26 million ship-to-rail facility at the Howland Hook Marine Terminal that will allow the Staten Island container terminal to transport containerized cargo on and off its property by rail for the first time, will greatly assist Visy Paper’s operations.

**Ferrer** – As Mayor, I will support initiatives that spur the growth of zero waste industries. These industries don’t produce waste, are better for the environment and, for the most part, save the city money. Where possible, I would certainly push for programs that at once drive economic development, private sector job creation and the growth of zero waste businesses.

**Fields** - Yes – In supporting the cross-harbor rail freight tunnel, I realized that anticipated growth of freight coming into the NYC region is tremendous, but the same is not true for goods leaving the region. There is talk of using the tunnel for the shipment of rail cars filled with solid waste back out of the region. Congressman Nadler sees the construction of the tunnel as an opportunity to re-grow manufacturing in the region. Manufacturing jobs provided the base for social and economic mobility for millions of Americans in the post-WW II era. We have seen manufacturing disappear from the region as the result of firms’ seeking the least-regulated environments here and, as a consequence of globalization, abroad. There is promise in using the mountain of goods that come into the region as a kind of ‘natural resource’ for the re-growth of manufacturing here. We have an opportunity to turn dross into gold, beginning on the microeconomic level by supporting local business initiatives in reuse and re-manufacturing centers. On a larger scale, I see reuse as a way to involve brownfield reclamation, building deconstruction, job-training programs, and independent curbside collection in innovative ways to create a new industry of reuse. This is an area in which tax breaks and subsidies can bring real savings and investment returns to the City, especially given the ever-increasing per-ton costs of collection, transport and landfilling and incineration.

**Miller** - As Mayor I will support the business of zero waste management because I understand its potential as a major job resource for New Yorkers. I will fund and promote initiatives in the waste reduction industry through increased collaboration between local Economic Development Corporations and the Department of Sanitation. Over the past year, I have worked closely with the Industrial Retention Network and the Industrial & Technology Assistance Corporation to study and highlight the cutting-edge green industry. From green buildings to green roofs to products using recycled materials, markets in green products are the wave of the future. As Mayor, I’ll lead New York to take advantage of this opportunity for progressive economic development. I will also continue my practice of providing comprehensive job training and placement programs that give New Yorkers the tools they need to meet the demands of city jobs.

**Weiner** - Yes, I will work to establish Recycling Industrial Parks. And I will support every effort to reduce waste that makes economic and environmental sense for hardworking New Yorkers.

**8. City Procurement**

The City purchases millions of dollars worth of goods and services every year. Its purchasing power is a powerful motivator for companies and contractors to improve the environmental performance and features of the products and services they offer. The federal government, cities and states around the country have passed strong environmental procurement legislation specifically to close the recycling loop and to encourage waste reduction, reuse and composting, sending the right signals to the market and ultimately reducing the waste stream. Environmental purchasing can also enable the City to purchase the least toxic products, thus protecting workers and the public from the use of toxic substances. Strong City procurement legislation has been stalled for many years in the City Council with little support from administrative agencies and the Mayor. Would you seek to pass a strong environmental procurement bill as Mayor? (Answer Yes or No.) Please explain your answer.

Do the Mayoral Candidates support Zero Waste?	Bloomberg	Ferrer	Fields	Miller	Weiner
City Procurement	<b>NR</b>	<b>Partial YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>Partial YES</b>	<b>Partial YES</b>

**Bloomberg** - DSNY's BWPRR has put together an Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Guide to help government agency purchasing officers evaluate the life-cycle costs of many items in order to incorporate the total environmental costs and benefits.

In terms of procurement not specifically related to recycling, Local Law 6 of 1991 requires that 80% of all non-emergency light duty vehicle purchases be alternative fuel vehicles. I am proud to report that in 2004 we exceeded that mandate, as 89% of such new vehicle purchases were for alternative fuel vehicles. The City has the largest hybrid vehicle fleet in the nation, currently including 3,301 alternative fuel vehicles. 197 additional hybrid Toyota Prius cars were purchased in Fiscal Year 2004, bringing the City fleet total of these vehicles to 834. The City has also purchased \$116,000 of the alternative fuel ethanol, \$205,170 of compressed natural gas, and \$3.2 million of ultra low sulfur diesel fuel.

In 2003, the City adopted Local Law 77, which mandated the use of ultra low sulfur diesel fuel in non-road vehicles owned or contracted by the City. The law also requires the use of best available technology, such as particulate traps and catalytic converters, to further reduce tailpipe admissions. Under this administration, the City has made a great deal of progress towards limiting emissions from its fleet, including both on-road and non-road vehicles. Here are some examples:

- The Department of Parks & Recreation currently uses alternatively fueled vehicles for daily maintenance of the City's parks and playgrounds. In addition, Parks now uses ultra low sulfur diesel fuel for all diesel vehicles. Parks also operates 275 electrical "GEM" cars and the Department has incorporated 55 hybrid vehicles into its fleet, with 22 more to be added in 2005.
- The Department of Education has received funding from both the New York Power Authority and the New York State Research and Development Authority to convert its school bus fleet to ultra low sulfur diesel fuel, and install filters on the buses. Already, over 50% of fuel used for buses is ultra low sulfur diesel fuel and 1500-2000 school buses are scheduled to have filters installed.
- The Department of Transportation has secured over \$60 million in federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds for Fiscal Years 2005-2008, \$30 million of which will be used for such programs as the Private Fleet Alternative Fuel Program and the Municipal Fleet Alternative Fuel Program.
- The Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) has also taken steps for the increased utilization of alternatively fueled taxi cabs. TLC will continue to work with the NYSERDA and DOT to review, develop and offer incentives and rebates for alternative fuel vehicles. The City looks forward to an expanded market and will work with vehicle manufacturers and the taxicab industry to determine which vehicles would be suitable as a New York City taxicab.

Particular attention should be paid to the efforts of the Department of Sanitation, which has aggressively sought to incorporate clean technologies into its vehicle fleet. All of DSNY's diesel vehicles currently utilize clean-diesel engines and 210 vehicles, primarily light-duty cars and street sweepers, can operate using Compressed Natural Gas (CNG). Recently, as part of an agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency, the City contracted with a vendor to design and build a municipal CNG fueling station in Woodside, Queens. By the end of Fiscal Year 2006, over 1400 diesel sanitation vehicles will be equipped with advanced exhaust after-treatment technologies. In addition, DSNY has put into service a new generation of "environmentally friendly" mechanical sweepers designed to minimize and control the amount of "fine" airborne particles generated during the sweeping operation. Sanitation has purchased 89 new PM10 sweepers, which operate on ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel, utilize a diesel oxidation catalyst and a clean-diesel engine. All future purchases will be PM10 compliant.

The Department is also exploring utilizing new hybrid technologies. Last year, the DSNY joined the Hybrid Refuse Truck Working Group, sponsored by Calstart/Westart, which is working to accelerate the commercialization of hybrid drive system technologies in refuse trucks, as well as any others that can utilize the technology. This year, the Department signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Shurepower to participate in a hybrid-hydraulic refuse-collection truck demonstration project that will be funded by NYSERDA. DSNY has also recently entered into discussions with Enova Systems to explore the development of a hybrid-electric refuse-collection truck.

Finally, I recently signed a series of bills that will make City procurement policies even more environmentally-friendly. This June I signed a series of bills that will:

- Require the City to purchase the cleanest vehicle possible for its intended use and to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide by July 1, 2010.
- Require the City to purchase ultra low sulfur diesel fuel and install emission control devices on its diesel-powered vehicles.
- Require the City to purchase cleaner garbage trucks, install emission controls on the existing fleet and use ultra low sulfur diesel fuel.
- Require the City to contract for cleaner school buses, have school bus providers install emission controls on their existing fleet and use ultra low sulfur diesel fuel.

The majority of the provisions of these bills simply codified the policies that my Administration had put into place, thereby ensuring that the great progress we have made so far will not be rolled-back in the future and our work to improve the environment for all New Yorkers will continue unabated.

**Ferrer** – I believe environmental procurement legislation is important. As Mayor, I will support cost effective, reasonable steps to effect sensible change in our city’s procurement policies.

**Fields** - Yes – I do not to understand the reluctance of this and past administrations to institute environmental procurement policies. Perhaps it had to do with concern that costs will rise or the lack of assured suppliers, but manufacturers are responding to the call for sustainably and responsibly produced goods. Just as the MTA can create a new market for a type of bus or rail car, so can the City, with its enormous purchasing power, create new markets in responsibly produced goods.

**Miller** - Throughout my career, I have been an outspoken proponent of environmentally responsible purchasing. In 1999, I pushed legislation barring the City from using wood poached from rainforests, such as repairing park benches with the wood and on board walks. The bill would have barred the city from buying lumber not certified by the Forest Stewardship Council as coming from responsibly managed forests. In 2000, I was a primary sponsor of a bill that would require the City to use a third-party forest certification procedure, with a separate chain of custody certification in order to enable the City to ensure it is purchasing wood from responsibly managed forests. In 2002, I addressed the City’s policies on energy purchasing when I released a 10-point energy efficiency plan requiring the city to purchase energy-using products with an Energy Star label whenever feasible; asked the state to suspend the city sales tax on all Energy Star products for one month in order to encourage more Energy Star purchases. As Mayor, I will continue this unwavering support for environmentally and socially responsible purchasing in order to ensure that our waste reduction efforts are articulated not only through legislation and rhetoric but also through the money and funds we use to hire outside contractors and plant companies.

**Weiner** - Yes, I will demand that City agencies work to purchase goods and service that are environmentally friendly.

***Over 40 organizations participate in the NYC Zero Waste Campaign. Contributors to this candidate questionnaire include: Consumers Union, Green Worker Cooperatives, Lower Eastside Ecology Center, Municipal Arts Society, Natural Resources Defense Council, NYC Waste Prevention Coalition, Reuse Alliance, Sierra Club-NYC Group.***

The NYC Zero Waste Campaign can be reached by phoning Timothy J.W. Logan at 718-208-8864 or Barbara Warren at 845-754-7951.