

# MEMORANDUM

January 5, 2018



From: The University of Arkansas Sustainability Council Executive Committee  
To: Chancellor Joseph Steinmetz  
Via: Provost Jim Coleman

Subject: Zero Waste Goal Realignment Recommendation

As you are aware, the U of A has an established goal of 90% diversion (U of A definition of "zero waste") from landfill by 2021. Diversion refers to the avoidance of landfill disposal by finding alternative disposal methods for portions of the waste stream, including recycling, re-use, and composting strategies. Aversion, on the other hand, is defined as decreasing landfill waste by minimizing waste generation on the front end. Aversion can be achieved through responsible purchasing decisions and can often save money. We take this ambitious goal very seriously and continue to evaluate the challenges and opportunities related to an efficient waste management strategy.

After healthy debate, we recommend modifying the 2021 benchmark to 50% diversion from landfill as both an achievable goal and a respectable increase from our current diversion rate of approximately 30%. In the Spring of 2017, the City of Fayetteville committed to increase their current 18% diversion rate to a 40% diversion rate by 2027. Their initial goal was 80% diversion by 2025, but that goal was reframed after they learned more from their work with Kessler Consulting. To align with the City's goal, the members of the committee agree that we should adopt an additional goal of 70% diversion by 2027. The attendees also agree that we should reestablish our final goal of 90% diversion to 2040, which aligns with our Universities Zero Carbon Emissions statement. A schedule for achieving those goals can be found in Table 1.

The proposed zero waste benchmarks were unanimously approved by the U of A Sustainability Council Executive Committee and key stakeholders from across campus at our July meeting are:

2021: 50% diversion from landfill  
2027: 70% diversion from landfill - to align with City of Fayetteville's 2027 diversion goal  
2040: 90% diversion from landfill - to align with the U of A carbon neutral goal

The upcoming 2021 goal will require continued commitment from Athletics, Housing, Education & General, Chartwells, the Greek System, and the Union. We are writing to request your support of these commitments and look forward to further discussion at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Johnson".

Mike Johnson  
Associate Vice Chancellor  
U of A Facilities Management

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Marty Matlock".

Marty Matlock  
Executive Director  
U of A Office for Sustainability

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Trent Scaccia".

Trent Scaccia  
Director of Sustainability  
Associated Student Government

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Boles".

Eric Boles  
Director  
U of A Office for Sustainability

Table 1. A tentative schedule to take the University of Arkansas from the 2017 diversion rate of 29% to the goal of 80 to 90% diversion by 2040.

		Aversion Programs	Diversion Programs	Landfill Reduction Target
Phase 1	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with City of Fayetteville on “Waste Not. Use Less” campaign</li> <li>• Greek Life Sustainability Scorecard program</li> <li>• Renegotiation and consolidation of the University’s recycling and solid waste contract, which will include waste audits, data collection, and previously unavailable recycling services</li> <li>• Expand on the UA sustainable procurement policy</li> <li>• Expand Housing’s Leave Green campaign which donates items to non-profits</li> <li>• Formalize data collection practices to capture previously missed data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the availability of resident hall recycling through Pepsi partnership</li> <li>• Continued implementation of the Chartwells food waste composting program with the City</li> <li>• Promote e-waste recycling through partnership with Washington County Environmental Affairs</li> <li>• All outdoor trash receptacles need to be paired with recycling</li> <li>• Require office recycling bins to be serviced weekly by custodians</li> <li>• Standardize waste/recycling receptacle color/size/orientation across campus</li> </ul>	<b>34%</b>
	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement food recovery programs in most Greek houses</li> <li>• Standardize the waste audit strategy for campus, and have Waste Management conduct the audits, per new contract</li> <li>• Razorback Food Recovery is in all dining halls, including Athletics and Greek</li> <li>• Focus on aversion tactics that will help prevent unnecessary purchasing and waste</li> <li>• Hire a Zero Waste Program Director as a staff position</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gameday Challenge expanded to other sports</li> <li>• Expand e-waste recycling program through more infrastructure</li> <li>• Embed recycling in new student orientation</li> <li>• Help City expand their capacity to compostable foodservice products</li> <li>• Require recycling and trash receptacles to be collocated</li> <li>• Require Greek houses owned by the UA to implement recycling</li> </ul>	<b>40%</b>
	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formalize zero waste event programs as a requirement for ASG funding</li> <li>• Standardize zero waste signage across campus to build support for the goal</li> <li>• Incentivize paper reductions through policies</li> <li>• Remove non-essential glass products from campus</li> <li>• Greek Life Sustainability Scorecard is adopted by all houses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand composting programs beyond dining halls</li> <li>• Update all waste audits across campus</li> <li>• Build appropriate diversion strategies with all campus vendors during contract negotiations</li> <li>• Recycling education campaign to promote new systems to students, faculty, and staff</li> </ul>	<b>45%</b>
	2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a solid zero waste framework within every department at the University of Arkansas.</li> <li>• Renegotiation of the UA’s waste disposal contract as an effort to get more support from our waste services provider</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish robust recycling programs in all resident halls</li> <li>• Partner with the City and hopefully NWA on a recycling solution for our region</li> <li>• Update recycling and composting standards for campus</li> </ul>	<b>50%</b>

Phase 2	2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish formal zero waste procurement measures that are integrated into the UA procurement system</li> <li>• Smarter education campaigns on the benefits of zero waste</li> <li>• Significant reductions of paper, electronic forms of documents are the default</li> <li>• Expand reuse programs on campus to dramatically decrease the amount of office supply spending within departments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use waste audits as a tool to identify next programmatic changes</li> <li>• Properly gauge the University's level of diversion, then find the areas that are lacking in zero waste efforts to correct any remaining deficiencies</li> <li>• Composting/recycling/trash systems are always collocated on campus, and meet all UA design standards</li> </ul>	<b>70%</b>
Phase 3	2040	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow a continuous improvement framework to guide policy decisions while moving closer to Zero Waste</li> <li>• Change in the diversion rate after this point will take a considerable amount of effort, resources, and change to the infrastructure of the University</li> <li>• Implementation of an essentially paper free campus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All recycling/waste/composting standards have been adopted campus wide</li> <li>• Embrace emerging technologies</li> <li>• Use a continuous improvement framework to identify new opportunities as they arise</li> </ul>	<b>90%</b>