TO:        HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL
FROM:      CITY MANAGER        DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS
DATE:     MARCH 20, 2006

SUBJECT: FIRST YEAR RESULTS OF CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION
DEBRIS REUSE AND RECYCLING PROGRAM

This is an informational report and no Council action is required.

DISCUSSION
The purpose of the attached report is to inform the City Council of the first year results of the City’s Construction and Demolition (C&D) Debris Reuse and Recycling Program (Program). In May 2004, City Council adopted Ordinance No. 4830 which added Chapter 5.24, Requirement to Divert Construction and Demolition Waste from Landfill to the Palo Alto Municipal Code. A program was developed to implement the requirements of the Ordinance.

The Program was implemented in November 2004 with a primary goal to help reduce the amount of C&D debris being disposed of in landfills. During Program development, it was estimated the Program would affect 500 projects, and divert 20,000 tons of C&D debris. In its first year, the Program affected 560 projects for an estimated 21,900 tons of C&D debris. The Program covered projects in 11 different building permit categories, ranging from residential home demolition to commercial building remodels.

Education and outreach for the Program includes web pages, an informational brochure, job site poster, Program participation signs, and project address cards for contractors. A Debris Management Plan form was created so applicants could calculate how much debris their project would generate and designate where they would take the debris for reuse or recycling, all prior to beginning the project. An approved list of C&D debris reuse and recycling facilities was established so permit applicants could simply pick from a list of facilities that could meet the requirements of the Program. A Sustainability Coordinator staff position, hired within the Planning and Community Environment Department and funded by Public Works Refuse Fund, was established at the Development Center to implement the Program and provide informational and technical assistance. The $225 fee charged to permit applicants, for projects covered by the Program, recovered staff position and Program costs.

The most common materials diverted from landfills were mixed C&D (e.g., wood, metal, gypsum board, concrete, etc. all mixed together), concrete, asphalt, and metal. Permit applicants for projects covered under the Program are required to submit receipts at the end of their project
indicating the weight of the C&D debris that they delivered to a reuse or recycling facility. During the first year of the Program:

- 158 of the 560 projects (28%) covered under the Program completed their project within the year;
- 37 of the 158 completed projects (23%) fully complied with the Program; and
- 353 projects (63%) covered under the Program are still in progress so they have not submitted documentation of their C&D debris diversion activities.

Projects mentioned above which were completed but did not submit receipts, are currently being addressed by the Sustainability Coordinator to bring them into compliance. Upon evaluation of the first year, the following adjustments are planned to increase compliance with the Program:

- Implement method of tracking completed demolition projects in Accela system. This will allow Sustainability Coordinator to follow-up on demolition projects in a timely manner.
- Create C&D sheet to be included with plan set. Including Program requirements on the plan set will notify the contractor at the job site of the Program requirements which they may not have been aware of if they were not responsible for preparing the Program paperwork.
- Development of standardized protocol of handling non-compliance cases including letters, phone calls and referral to Code Enforcement only as a last resort.

Considering that approximately 25% of Palo Alto’s waste being disposed in landfills is C&D debris, this Program will continue to play an important role.

ATTACHMENT
Attachment A: “City of Palo Alto Construction and Demolition Program Year One Review”

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