

14-0274

MOTION

INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY & GENERAL SERVICES

FEB 28 2014

By April, 2014, Council-controlled City departments, with the assistance of the Information Technology Agency (ITA), will complete the upgrade of desktop computers from Windows XP to Windows 7 after Microsoft's cessation of support of Windows XP SP3 and Office 2003. Thousands of computers are scheduled for upgrade.

Consistent with the City of Los Angeles' commitment to Zero Waste, we should embrace a resource management approach that emphasizes reducing waste creation, reuse whenever possible, and recycling materials from equipment that cannot be reused. When our solid waste is reduced or materials are reused, this source reduction effort means the material never enters the waste stream.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), electronic waste or e-waste is the fastest growing municipal waste stream in America. E-waste refers to electronic products nearing the end of their "useful life." Computers, however, can be reused and refurbished -- even at the end of their "useful life." Currently, City computers are salvaged for component parts that are ultimately recycled. This process takes place outside of the City and no effort is made to refurbish working units.

Refurbishing and recycling e-waste can also create local jobs. The Coalition of American Electronics Recyclers says that national restrictions on e-waste exports could create 42,000 direct or indirect jobs with a total payroll of over \$1 billion. In Los Angeles, we are currently doing very little to incentivize the local development of electronics refurbishing and recycling entities as job creators.

In January 2014, the Information Technology Agency (ITA), issued a PC Salvage Survey for Digital Inclusion to all city departments requesting them to provide an estimate of the number of computers the department will salvage during this calendar year. The preliminary data from this survey would allow the city to explore the possibility of redirecting PC computers from being salvaged and leveraged for a digital inclusion program.

A Digital Inclusion program would strive to bridge the City's well-chronicled digital divide by providing free computers to low income families who have completed no-cost mandatory training courses in basic computer literacy skills and by providing computers to non-profit and community organizations serving disadvantaged communities. A Digital Inclusion program would also provide job-training and career opportunities to program participants that refurbish the equipment, by providing them skills to become competitive in new labor markets

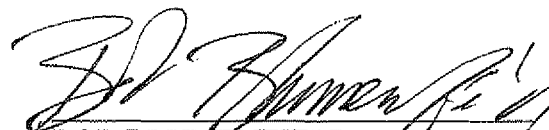
A large number of what is labeled as "e-waste" is actually not waste at all. According to the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), computers not discarded and refurbished for continued use are not identified or regulated as hazardous waste. Continued use refers to computers that are continuing to be used for their intended purpose. Likewise, computers that are donated for continued use as computers are not identified as hazardous waste. Continued use of computers no longer used by City Departments is possible through a refurbishment program.

A Digital Inclusion program removing City-owned computers from the solid waste stream for reuse in the community would reduce our e-waste footprint, help bridge the technology gap in disadvantaged communities, provide localized workforce development, create local jobs and establish a best practice model for the future for maximizing usage of the electronic resources the City no longer intends to use -- but that have continued use potential.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Information Technology Agency, with the assistance of the City Administrative Officer, the Department of General Services, the City Attorney and the Bureau of Sanitation, be directed to report with recommendations for instituting a Digital Inclusion program which would divert computers the City no longer intends to use to non-profit organizations which can refurbish the equipment for dissemination to non-profit organizations serving disadvantaged communities and low-moderate income families and work source centers while also providing job-training and career opportunities.

PRESENTED BY:


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