

Annual Town Meeting 2022

Zero Waste Resolution
initiated by citizens from
Lexington Zero Waste Collaborative
LexZeroWaste.org

This resolution seeks to build on Lexington's history and commitment to sustainability, adopt the principles of zero waste and set goals for meaningful action to reduce waste in Lexington.

Town Actions re: Sustainability

- 2005 - Sustainable Design Policy for municipal buildings
- 2010 - Sustainable Lexington Committee is created
- 2013 - Climate Change Resolution adopted by Town Meeting
- 2016 - Community Choice Aggregation program to move the Town's electricity to 100% renewable energy.
- 2016 - **Lexington Public Schools contract for compost pickup in all nine schools.**
- 2018 - **BOS adopted the Sustainable Action Plan and Getting to Net Zero Emissions Plan.**
- 2019 - BOS & SC jointly approved an Integrated Building Design & Construction Policy for schools and all other town buildings.
- 2020 - Climate Emergency Resolution with call for regional collaboration

Sustainable Action Plan Advocates for Waste Reduction

“Promote programs to **reduce food waste** and support the adoption of **curbside composting** programs.”

“Establish programs to **reduce the use of toxic materials and the generation of waste**, and to **dispose of waste** using **low-GHG emission methods**.”

– Sustainable Action Plan (Adopted in 2018)

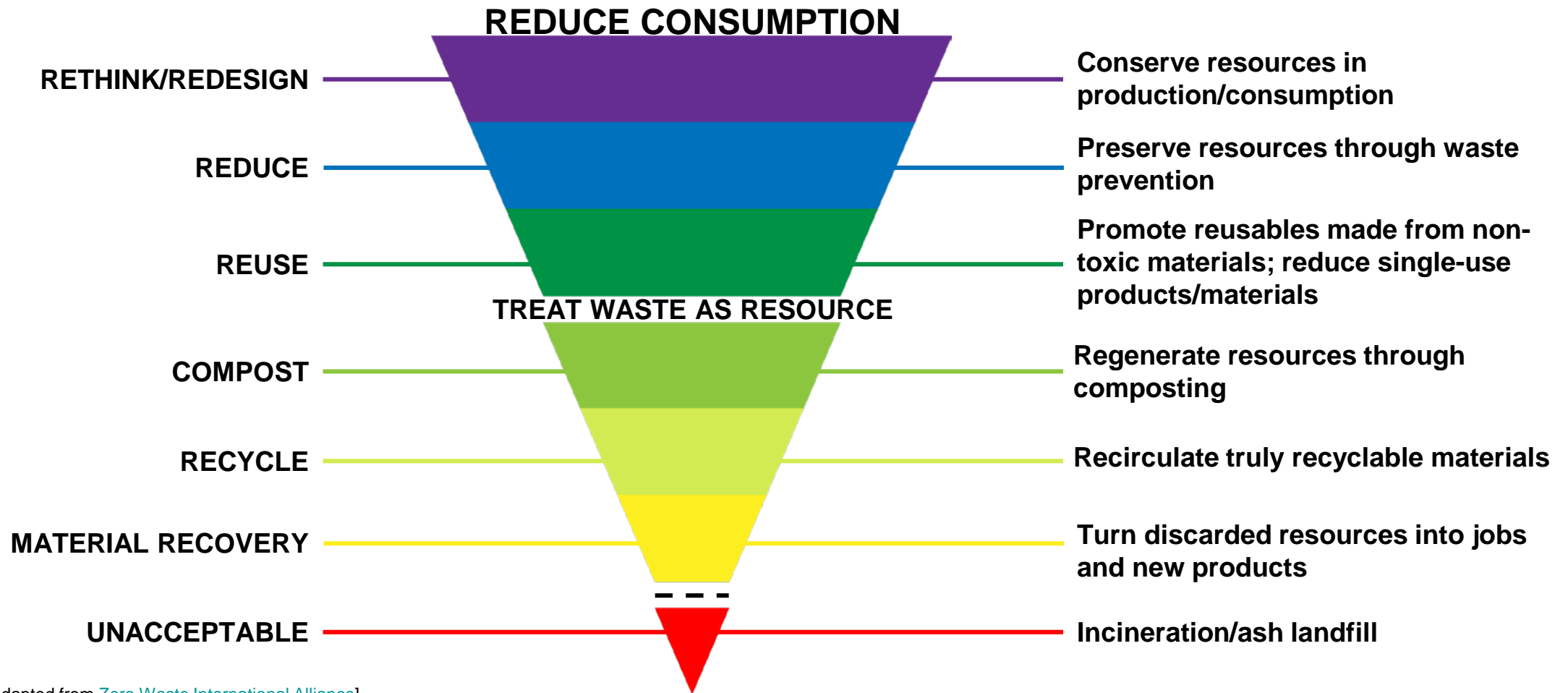
What is Zero Waste?

GETTING TO ZERO WASTE DOESN'T MEAN ACHIEVING ABSOLUTE ZERO.

We often say the goal is Zero Waste...or darn near. What this means is that you're committing to pursuing the goal of Zero Waste using three strategies:



Zero Waste Hierarchy



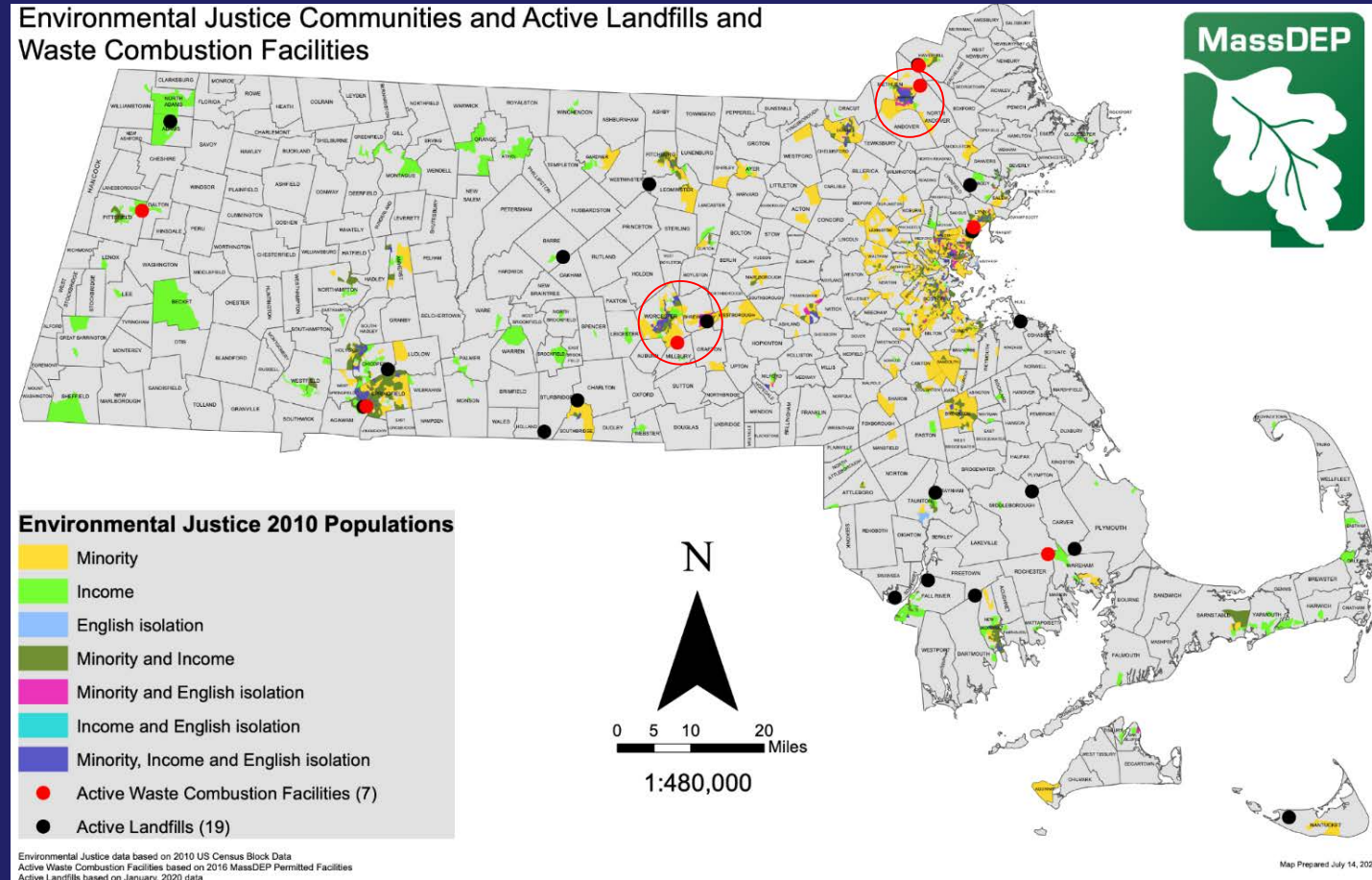
[Adapted from [Zero Waste International Alliance](#)]

Why Aim for Zero Waste in Lexington?

1. Environmental Justice
2. Environmental/Human health costs of incineration/ash landfill
3. Financial costs of incineration/ash landfill
4. Diminishing in-state landfill capacity; zero by 2028
5. Large compostable component in our trash

1. Environmental Justice

Environmental Justice Communities and Active Landfills and Waste Combustion Facilities

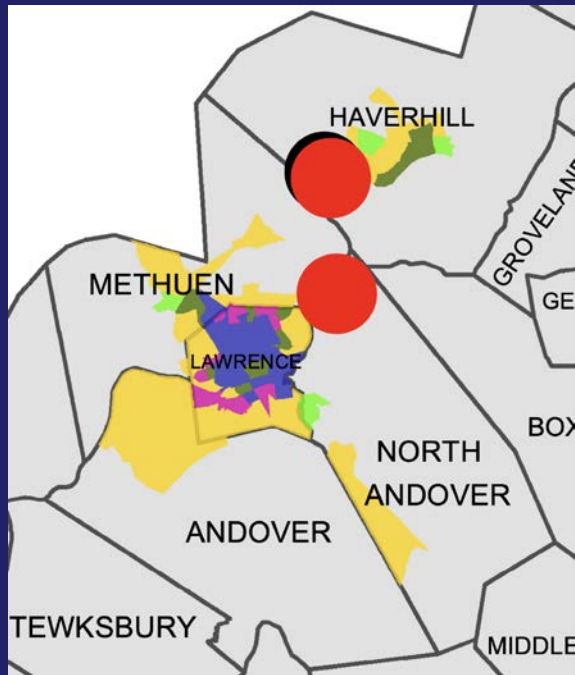


[Source: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/map-environmental-justice-communities-solid-waste-facilities-across-massachusetts/download>]

Where does non-recyclable household waste from Lexington go?

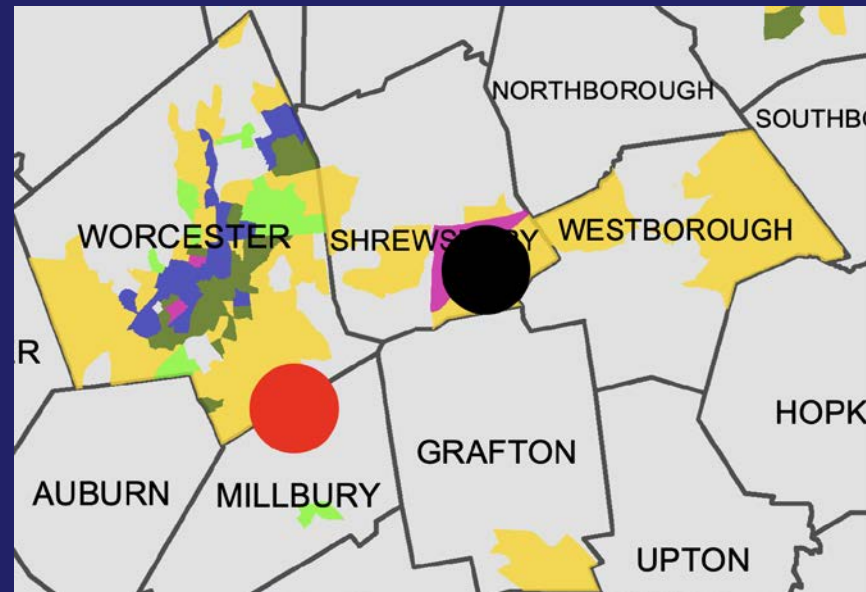
STEP 1:

Wheelabrator Incinerator, North Andover, MA



STEP 2:

Wheelabrator Ash Landfill, Shrewsbury, MA



Impacts on Environmental Justice Communities

Negative health consequences overrepresented among populations adjacent to waste facilities

- mortality
- congenital anomalies
- low birth weight

“Public health officers and decision makers should identify waste management policies to minimize their potential health impacts and their unequal distribution [on EJ communities]”

2. Environmental/human costs of incineration/landfill

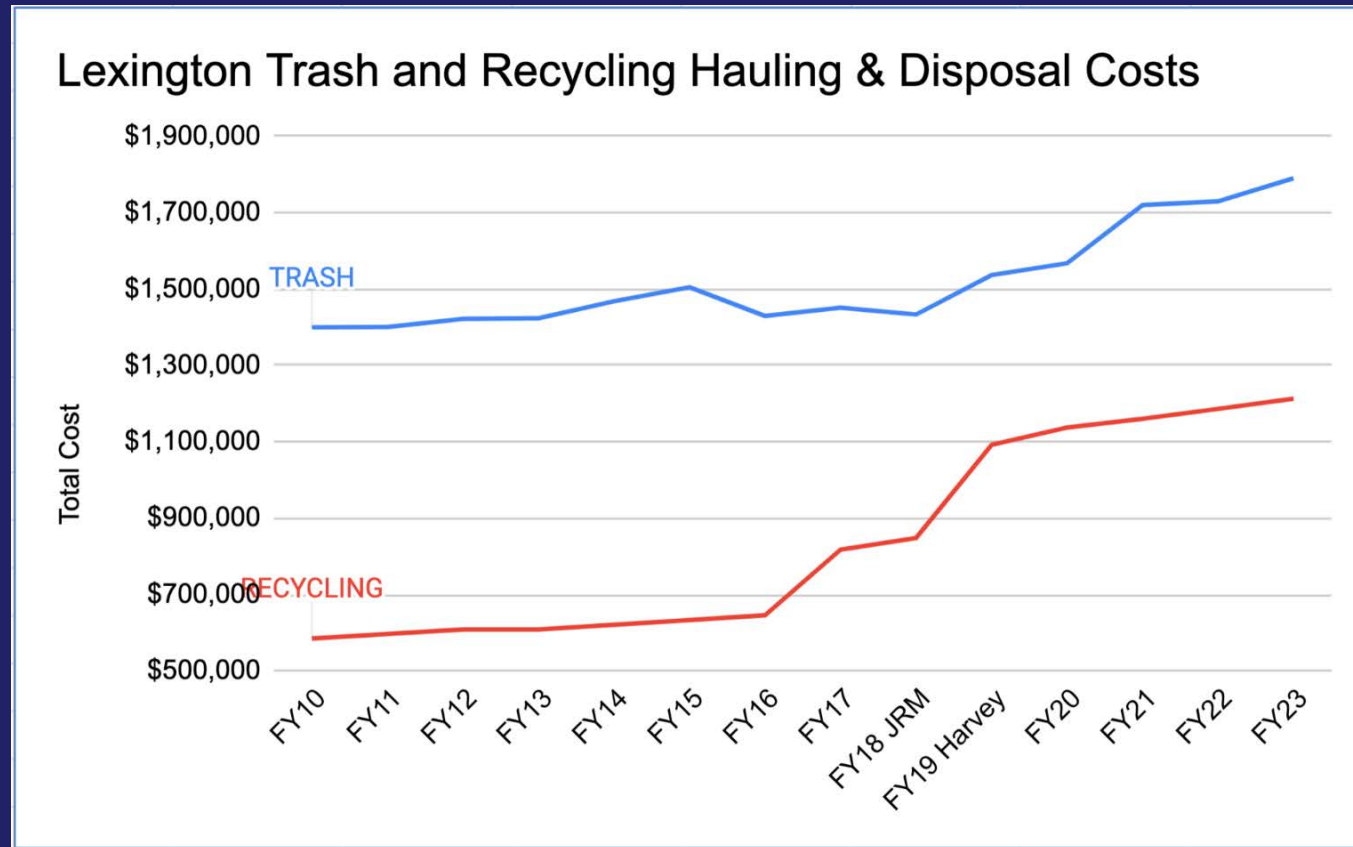
Incinerators release more toxic pollution than coal-fired power plants per unit of energy.

- 28 times as much dioxin (a known carcinogen);
 - 5 times as much carbon monoxide
 - 3 times as much nitrogen oxides
 - 6–14 times as much mercury;
 - nearly 6 times as much lead; and,
 - 70 percent more sulfur dioxides (toxic gases).
- higher rate of death from COVID-19 correlated with long-term exposure to particulate matter air pollution

[Source: [Harvard School of Public Health](#)]

[Source: Conservation Law Foundation, [“What’s Wrong with Burning our Trash, anyway?”](#), 2018]

3. Financial costs of incineration/ash landfill & recycling



4. Diminishing disposal capacity

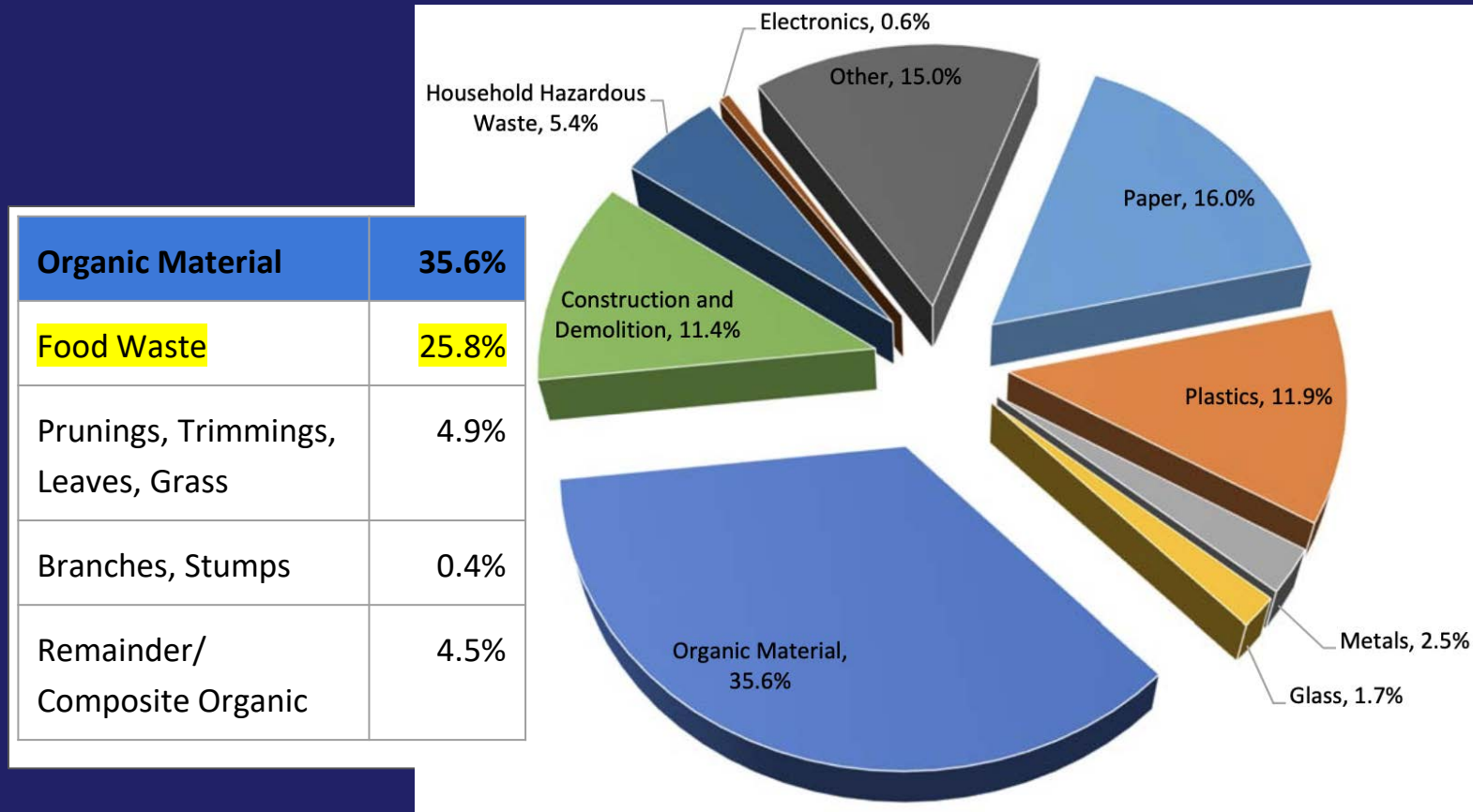
2030 Solid Waste Master Plan goal to reduce waste 30% by 2030 from 2018 baseline and 90% by 2050

Table 6: Ash Landfills Anticipated Capacity

Landfill	Projected Closure Year
Bondi Island*	2023
Carver Marion Wareham	2020
Ward Hill Neck	2021
Peabody	2025
Wheelabrator Saugus	2022
Wheelabrator Shrewsbury	2028

*Permit application in-house that would provide an additional 7-8 years.

5. Large Compostable component in our trash



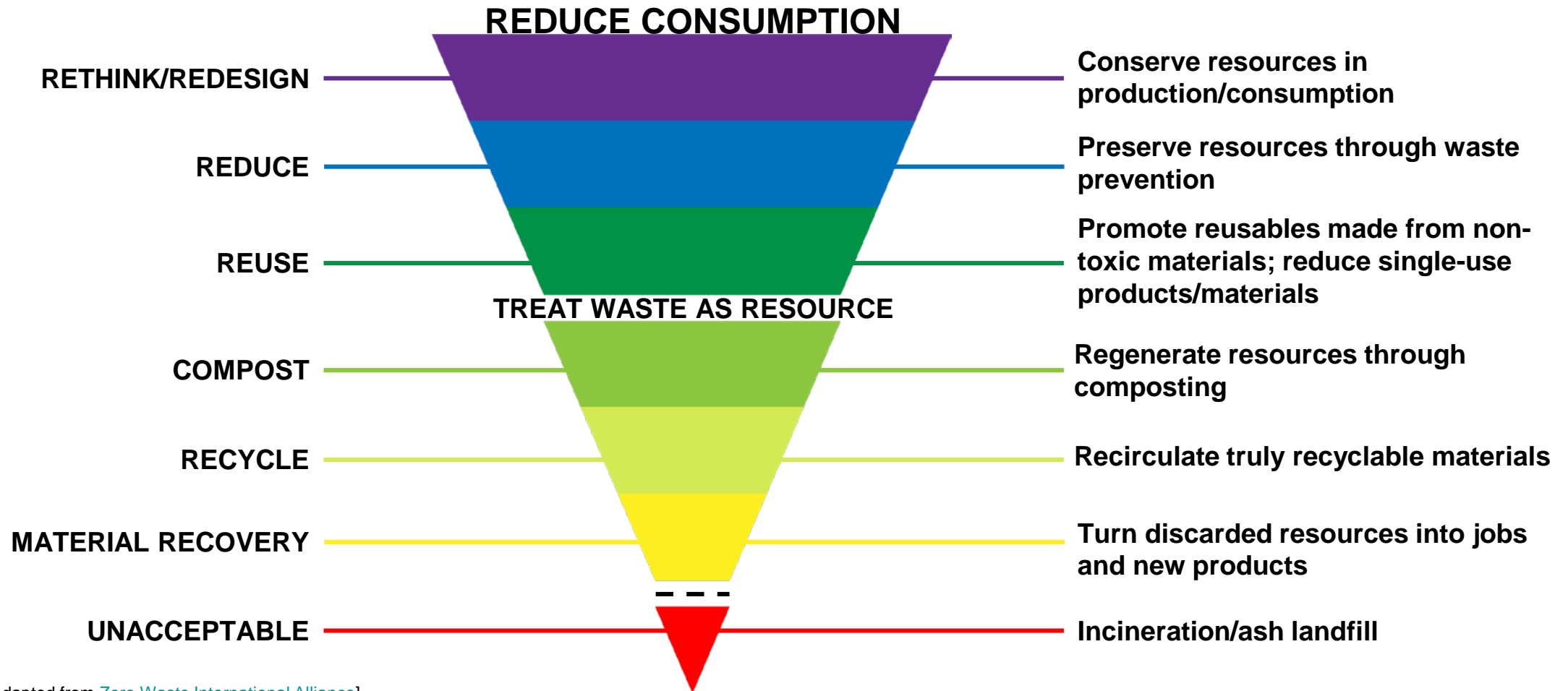
[Source: [2019 Waste Characterization Study, Wheelabrator North Andover, Inc.](#)]

Next Steps

Lexington Resolves to:

1. Adopt and model Zero Waste Principles
2. Meet or exceed 2030 Solid Waste Master Plan goals for waste reduction, including town-wide composting
3. Develop a Zero Waste Plan by 2023
4. Prioritize programs that minimize impact on environmental justice communities

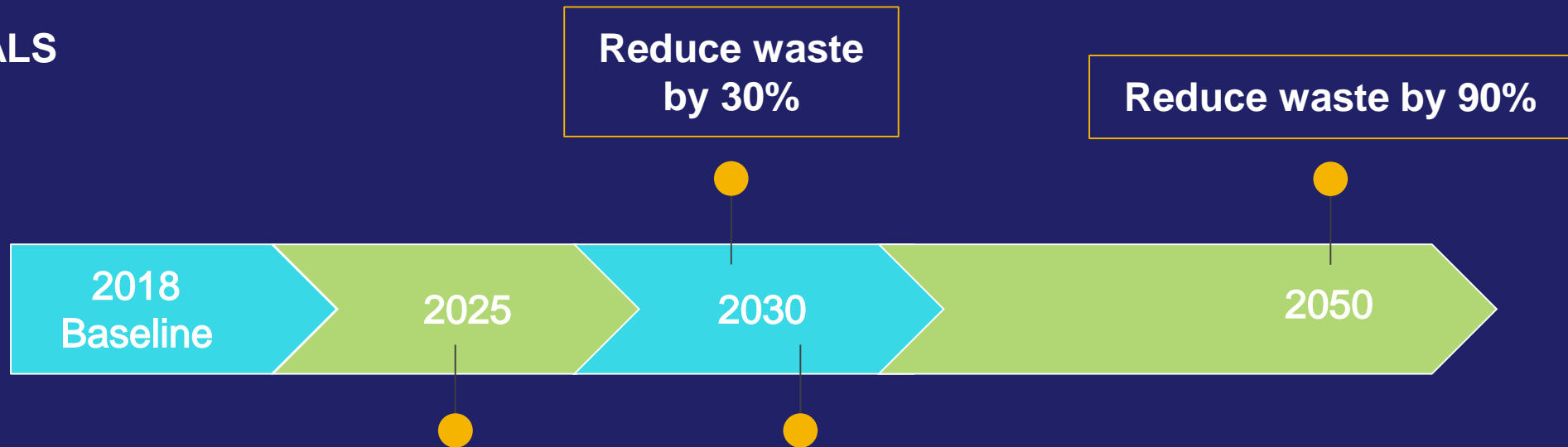
Adopt and model Zero Waste principles



[Adapted from [Zero Waste International Alliance](#)]

Meet or exceed State's 2030 Solid Waste Master Plan goals

STATE GOALS



RESOLUTION GOALS



Develop a Zero Waste Plan by 2023

Act on the Sustainable Action Plan that includes goals for reducing waste.

- assess current levels of resource use and waste generation;
- identify objectives for waste reduction;
- recommend short-, medium-, and long-term actions
 - policies
 - local and regional programs
 - infrastructure
 - education and community engagement



Minimize Impact on Environmental Justice Communities



[Image Source: [Conservation Law Foundation](#)]



[Image Credit: <https://unsplash.com/@rodlong>]

Please support this Zero Waste Resolution for Lexington



Advocacy Working Group

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