



January 29, 2010

The Honorable Gianni Alemanno
Mayor of Rome
Piazza del Campidoglio
00186 Rome
Italy

Dear Mr. Mayor:

Cities have become the center of global population; 2008 marked the first time in history that the majority of the world's population was found in cities. By 2050, the United Nations projects that 6.9 billion people – three-quarters of the world's population – will call urban areas their home. This concentration of population has placed cities at the forefront of addressing great environmental challenges such as pollution, waste and climate change.

Recognizing the growing importance and relevance of cities when it comes to addressing these challenges, I would like to invite you to San Francisco so that we might have direct conversations, in the spirit of mutual helpfulness, about ways in which our two cities might work together to care for the environment.

I think that there is a great deal that San Francisco can learn from Rome. And I think you might be impressed by some of our efforts here in San Francisco to address environmental concerns that have arisen in recent years. Among many of San Francisco's strategies, our Zero Waste policy might be of most interest to you.

San Franciscans imagine a world in which nothing goes to the landfills or incinerators. We are doing everything we can to make it happen in the residential, business, and city government sectors. Today, San Francisco recovers 72 percent of the materials it discards, bringing the city ever closer to its twin goals of 75 percent landfill diversion later this year, and bringing the city to zero waste by 2020.

While we are well on our way to our Zero Waste goals, ultimately we will need to look to best practices from other cities to achieve maximum resource efficiency and sustainable economic development when it comes to waste reduction and programs like energy, air quality and water.

I hope very much that it may be possible for you to accept this invitation to visit San Francisco, where it would give me and the members of my government the greatest pleasure to welcome him.

Sincerely,

Gavin Newsom
Mayor