

13 US Cities Have Nuclear Weapon Free Investments and/or Contracts 1978 - 2022

Arcata, CA, USA

Arcata passed an Ordinance in **1991**, declaring Arcata a nuclear free zone and **prohibiting investments in and contracts** with nuclear weapons producers. A “Nuclear Weapons Free Zone and Peace Commission” was created to give the City advice on investments and contracts.

<https://www.dontbankonthebomb.com/city-guide/>

Accordingly, the purpose of this ordinance is to establish the City of Arcata as a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in which work on nuclear weapons, and the storage or transportation of nuclear weapons is prohibited or appropriately restricted.

This ordinance’s further purpose is to minimize the City of Arcata’s contracts for and purchases of the products and services of nuclear weapons contractors, and to phase out investments of public funds in nuclear weapons contractors, within the constraints of state and federal law.

<https://www.nuclearban.us/arcata-ca-nfz-ordinance/>

Berkeley, CA, USA

The City of Berkeley declared itself in **1986** to be a Nuclear Free Zone and prohibited, under the Nuclear Free Berkeley Act, any work on nuclear weapons, **contracts** with companies working on nuclear weapons, and **investments** with those companies from taking place within the City of Berkeley.

<https://www.dontbankonthebomb.com/city-guide/>

A. **Contracts.** The City of Berkeley shall grant no contract to any person or business which knowingly engages in work for nuclear weapons, unless the City Council makes a specific determination that no reasonable alternative exists....B. **Investments.** The City of Berkeley shall refrain from making any new investments in businesses that knowingly engage in work for nuclear weapons or the components of nuclear weapons. Within two years of the adoption of this act, the City of Berkeley shall divest itself of all such investments currently held by it (including pension funds).

<https://berkeley.municipal.codes/BMC/12.90.070>

Burlington, VT, USA

The Burlington, Vermont City Council passed a resolution on July 12, **2021** that would keep the city from **investing** in weapons manufacturers and requests that the Burlington Employees’ Retirement System divest from any weapons manufacturing companies if any assets are currently invested.

https://www.codepink.org/burlington_divest_victory

Cambridge, MA, USA

The Cambridge City Council decided in **2016** to go on record **opposing investing funds** from the Cambridge Retirement System in any entities that are involved in or support the production or upgrading of nuclear weapons systems.

[Policy Order #68, 2016](#)

<https://paxforpeace.nl/news/overview/city-of-cambridge-agrees-to-divest-us-1-billion>

<https://www.dontbankonthebomb.com/city-guide/>

Charlottesville, VA, USA

Charlottesville City Council passed a resolution in **2022 to divest its general operating fund** from weapons and fossil fuels. It also sketched out a plan to establish new policies for its **retirement fund** that will include divestment from weapons and fossil fuels and also possibly commitments to more ethical investing aimed at positive social impacts.

<https://worldbeyondwar.org/divesteville/>

Corvallis, OR, USA

On Monday, November 7, **2022**, the Corvallis City Council unanimously passed a resolution to prohibit the city from **investing in** companies which produce weapons of war.

<https://www.codepink.org/passed-corvallis-or-signs-resolution-to-divest-from-weapon-manufacturers>

New York City, NY, USA

NYC passed a Resolution 976 in **12/2021**, calling on the New York City Comptroller to instruct **the pension funds** of public employees in New York City **to divest** from and avoid any financial exposure to companies involved in the production and maintenance of nuclear weapons, reaffirming New York City as a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone, and joining the ICAN Cities Appeal and calling on the United States to support and join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. This stands to impact approximately \$475 million of the \$266.7 billion fund.

Resolution 976 further reaffirmed NYC as a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone, supporting an earlier City Council resolution that prohibited the production, transport, storage, placement, and deployment of nuclear weapons within NYC.

https://www.icanw.org/new_york_city_joins_ican_cities_appeal#:~:text=Resolution%20976%20calls%20upon%20the,of%20the%20%24266.7%20billion%20fund.

Northampton, MA, USA

Northampton Mayor David Narkewicz issued an executive policy order in **2019** establishing a city policy barring, to the extent practical and permitted by law, Northampton **from investing in and contracting with** nuclear weapons companies.

[Executive policy order, 2019](#)

<https://www.dontbankonthebomb.com/city-guide/>

Oakland, CA, USA

The #11478 Ordinance of **1992** dictated that the City of Oakland should “refrain **from making any investments in stocks, bonds, securities, or other obligations issued by nuclear weapon makers** and make every reasonable effort to enter into sole source contracts and sole source purchases with persons not designated as nuclear weapons makers.”

[Oakland Nuclear Free Zone Ordinance, 1992](#)

<https://www.dontbankonthebomb.com/city-guide/>

<https://www.nuclearban.us/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/oak042285.pdf>

Ojai, CA, USA

[Resolution No. 18-10, 2018](#)

The City Council declared the City of Ojai a nuclear-free zone in **2018**, embraced the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, supported the Back from the Brink Campaign recommendations to decrease the risk of nuclear war and committed to nuclear weapon free investments and contracts.

<https://www.dontbankonthebomb.com/city-of-ojai-california-moves-to-divest/>

San Luis Obispo, CA, USA

In just 6 months, grassroots activists in San Luis Obispo, CA succeeded in divesting their city from the war machine. In August **2020**, thanks to the hard work of passionate local organizers, San Luis Obispo City Council **voted 5-0 to divest from weapons manufacturers**.

<https://www.codepink.org/slodivest2020>

Santa Barbara, CA, USA

On 18 June **2019**, the city of Santa Barbara, California [officially endorsed](#) the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (UN Ban Treaty) and (the Back from the Brink Resolution guidelines) and opposed investment of city resources in companies associated with nuclear weapon production.

<https://www.dontbankonthebomb.com/santa-barbara-california-adds-its-voice-against-nuclear-weapon-investments/>

Takoma Park, MD, USA

[The Takoma Park Nuclear Free Zone Act, 1983](#)

The Act prohibits production of nuclear weapons as well as facilities, equipment, components, supplies, or substance used for their production; requires that the City develop a socially responsible investment policy, specifically addressing any **investments** the City may have or may plan to have in industries and institutions which are knowingly and intentionally engaged in the production of nuclear weapons; and, **prohibits the City from granting any award or contract** to a nuclear weapons producer or purchasing or leasing products produced by a nuclear weapons producer.

<https://www.dontbankonthebomb.com/city-guide/>

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Direct or Primary Investments

Except for US Treasury Bonds, most of the cities above are excluding direct investments in companies that manufacture nuclear weapons such as the *Don't Bank on the Bomb* “Hall of Shame” companies.

<https://www.dontbankonthebomb.com/nwproducers/>

Oakland and Berkeley have shifted most of their investments from US Treasury Bonds to Federal Agency Issues (80% in the case of Oakland) e.g. Federal Farm and Home Credit/Loan Banks, because they are not defense related, just as secure and slightly more profitable.

Communication with Stephen Walsh, Controller, City of Oakland | Finance Department

Berkeley stated in its 2022-7 Investment Policy Report that “the City’s policy is to prefer investments in U.S. Agency securities because of their generally higher yields and generally socially preferable uses, such as housing loans or student loans, versus investments in Treasury securities with their association with nuclear weapons. *Berkeley Investment Policy 2022-7.*”

California law (CA Gov. Code 53600) limits investments/equities held by cities/counties because of the 1994 Orange County bankruptcy. This limits the opportunity of cities to invest in nuclear businesses even if they were so inclined.

Communication with Edward D. Reiskin, City Administrator, City of Oakland

Communication with Stephen Walsh, Controller, City of Oakland Finance Department

Cities in California and Massachusetts have had difficulty divesting their pension funds in nuclear weapons, because their funds are linked to their States’ Pension Funds e.g., California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS).

NYC was successful in divesting its pension funds, because it, not the State of New York, controls the Fund investments.

Indirect or Secondary Investments

It has been more difficult to exclude involvement with financial organizations that indirectly finance nuclear weapon producers such as banks, insurance companies and mutual funds.

In Europe, there are many banks and investment funds that have committed to nuclear weapon free investments.

In the US, a small number of banks/financial institutions are on the *Don't Bank on the Bomb (DBB)* "Hall of Fame" list and have met DBB's rigorous standards re. exclusion of investments in nuclear weapons:

Don't Bank on the Bomb (DBB) "Hall of Fame"

Domini (U.S.)

Green Century (U.S.)

Harrington Investments, Inc (U.S.)

Zevin Asset Management (U.S.)

Don't Bank on the Bomb (DBB) "Hall of Fame" Runners-Up list.

Azzad Asset Mgmt (U.S.)

Figure 8 (U.S.)

Parnassus Investments (U.S.)

<https://www.dontbankonthebomb.com/2019-hall-of-fame/>

The Amalgamated Bank in NYC, the largest union-owned bank in US, has also committed to nuclear weapon free investments. It adheres to the following principles.

1. In our Commercial Banking business, we do not currently engage in treasury management for any weapons manufacturers.
2. We do not currently lend any money to these kinds of companies.
3. The Bank does not invest any of its own money into weapons manufacturers.

<https://www.amalgamatedbank.com/blog/divesting-warfare>

Communication with Alyn Ware in 2020 and Anthony Donovan in 2018-2019

Restricting Contracts to Companies NOT Involved in Nuclear Weapons Production

Berkeley, Oakland and Takoma Park have 30- 40 years of experience in limiting contracts to companies with no nuclear weapons involvement

Berkeley

Berkeley has a Nuclear Free Zone Disclosure Form which contractors must sign which affirms that neither it nor its parent nor any of its subsidiaries engages in work for nuclear weapons or anticipates entering into such work for the duration of its contract(s) with the City of Berkeley.

<https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/2022-02/NuclearFreeForm.pdf>

Oakland

The Oakland City staff do not vet each contractor, but require potential contractors sign a form stating they comply with its nuclear weapons free contract policy. See Schedule P below.

Communication with Edward D. Reiskin, City Administrator, City of Oakland

Communication with Stephen Walsh, Controller, City of Oakland Finance Department

Schedule P – (Nuclear Free Zone - Ordinance 11478 C.M.S.)

- I declare under penalty of perjury that I have read Ordinance 11478 C.M.S. titled “An Ordinance Declaring the City of Oakland a Nuclear Free Zone and Regulating Nuclear Weapons Work and City Contracts with and Investment in Nuclear Weapons Makers”, as provided on the City’s website, see “footnote” below I certify that my firm conforms with the conditions as defined in Ordinance 11478 C.M.S.
 - I declare that my company is **NOT** in compliance with Ordinance 11478 C.M.S., but my proposal/bid should be considered because
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Takoma Park

In Takoma Park MD, the recipient of a City contract, award or purchase order must certify to the City Clerk by a notarized statement that it is not knowingly or intentionally a nuclear weapons producer.

9/2018 Communication with Jay Levy, Chair of Takoma Park Nuclear Free Zone Committee

<https://www.codepublishing.com/MD/TakomaPark/#!/TakomaPark14/TakomaPark1404.html#14.04.050>

Exemptions to Contracts

Berkeley

The Berkeley City Council (upon the advice of the Peace and Justice Commission) has granted waivers or exemptions for contracts with entities that have at one time been involved with nuclear weapons production e.g. to University of CA for help developing a cleaner transportation system and to 3M for help designing a new self-checkout system at the public library.

Oakland

Oakland’s [anti-nuclear ordinance](#) usually bars companies involved in designing and building nukes from doing business with the city. Oakland has exemptions to its contracts policy built in for federal and state government and Port of Oakland and for cases “in which no reasonable alternative product or service exists, or that additional costs would exceed \$10,000.00 or 5% of the cost of the service provided by the nuclear weapons maker, whichever is less.”

<https://www.nuclearban.us/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/oak042285.pdf>

In 2018, Oakland city staffers recommended that the council waive the prohibition for AECOM, an engineering company that has been involved in designing and manufacturing nuclear weapons components, “due to the fact that the company, and its URS subsidiary, have been involved with the 23rd Avenue Bridge project since 2003 and finding another firm to do the technical work would be difficult.”

<https://eastbayexpress.com/nuclear-weapons-maker-to-receive-extra-420600-to-help-repair-oakland-bridge-2-1/>

Takoma Park

Takoma Park MD has avoided contracts with nuclear weapon related businesses, but has made compromises when necessary. For example, the City and County police and fire department employees

all needed to use the same radio communication system. The system chosen by the County was made by Motorola which was on list of banned companies. But because it was an issue of public health/welfare the City overrode the “no nuke” provision.

9/2018 Communication with Jay Levy, Chair of Takoma Park Nuclear Free Zone Committee

Monitoring Compliance

Berkeley has a *Peace and Justice Commission* to advise the Berkeley City Council and the Berkeley Unified School Board on “all matters relating to the City of Berkeley’s role in issues of peace and social justice, including, but not limited to the issues of ending the arms race, abolishing nuclear weapons, support for human rights and self-determination throughout the world, and the reallocation of our national resources so that money now spent on war and preparation of war is spent on fulfilling human needs and the promotion of peace.”

<https://berkeley.municipal.codes/BMC/3.68.070>

Oakland specified in its 1992 Nuclear Free Zone Ordinance that two public hearings before the City Council were to be held in the first year and one public hearing each year thereafter “to evaluate implementation of and compliance with the ordinance. “

<https://www.nuclearban.us/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/oak042285.pdf>

The city also publishes its investment policy yearly, re-affirming its compliance with NFZ ordinance.

<https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/investment-policy.pdf>

In NYC, the 2019 Nuclear Free Zone bill created an advisory committee to examine nuclear disarmament and issues related to recognizing and reaffirming New York city as a nuclear weapons-free zone. The committee would be chaired by the head of a Mayoral Office or Agency. The remaining six members of the committee would be representatives with a demonstrated knowledge or experience of nuclear policy, advocacy or activism.

([Int. No. 1621](#)).

https://www.icanw.org/new_york_city_joins_ican_cities_appeal#:~:text=Resolution%20976%20calls%20upon%20the,of%20the%20%24266.7%20billion%20fund

Takoma Park has had a *Nuclear Free Zone Committee* since 1983; it does not make policy decisions but advises City re. investments in/contracts with nuclear weapon producers. The city has also hired a consultant to advise it on socially responsible investments.

9/2018 Communication with Jay Levy, Chair of Takoma Park Nuclear Free Zone Committee

Profitability of Socially Responsible Investment Funds

Socially responsible investment funds that exclude fossil fuel companies, weapons manufacturers and meet good social governance standards return just as good a return on investment as other funds, if not better.

<https://www.ussif.org/performance>

In October 2007, the [Demystifying Responsible Investment Performance](#) report issued by the United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI) analyzed 20 influential pieces of

academic work and 10 key broker studies exploring links between different approaches to responsible investment and investment performance. This comprehensive review found that SRI investment strategies are competitive with non-SRI strategies from a performance standpoint.

https://www.unepfi.org/fileadmin/documents/Demystifying_Responsible_Investment_Performance_01.pdf

Many major studies reviewed by RBC GAM found a clear correlation between strong sustainability business practices and company performance.

<https://www.rbcwealthmanagement.com/en-eu/insights/does-socially-responsible-investing-hurt-investment-returns>

Addendum for City of Madison Alders

Primary Investments - US Treasury Bonds

Our City Finance Director Dave Schmiedicke assured us that the City of Madison has no direct investments in nuclear weapons production except for US Treasury bonds. He reports they are secure and liquid.

Can we ask the City to begin moving its money from US Treasury Bonds to Federal Agency Issues?

Secondary Investments - Banking

The US Bank in Minneapolis is the “cleanest of all the dirty shirts” according to Mr. Schmiedicke and our former treasurer and is the only bank in the Midwest able to handle the high volume of financial transactions by Madison and the state of Wisconsin.

Takoma Park Md activists advocated for a switch from Sun Trust Bank to Sandy Springs Bank just outside of Takoma Park because it had no investments in nuclear related industries. The City was reluctant to change its banking because it would cost a lot of money, namely the salary for 6 months of a City staff person’s efforts to change 23 different functions that Sun Trust now does for the City.

Can we continue searching for a bank that can handle volume of business that Madison requires and that commits to nuclear weapon free investments? Can we talk with US Bank in the meantime?

Contracts

Mr. Schmiedicke mentioned that putting restrictions on contracts can narrow our choices in terms of vendors e.g., uniform vendors for city. Our finance director suggested we limit restrictions to contracts of up to \$100,000 to prevent onerous paperwork for city staff.

Can we develop a simple process for vendors/contractors to affirm they have no involvement with Don’t Bank on the Bomb Hall of Shame companies by filling out a form as they do in Berkeley, Oakland and Takoma Park?

To streamline process and make the work easier for city staff, we have listed exemptions for Federal, State and County gov contracts in the Back from the Brink Resolution as well as situations in which there is no viable, cost effective alternative?

Other Divestment Updates from Code Pink

In Philadelphia, activists continue their push to divest the city's pension fund from nuclear weapons, and the movement grows every month. The Divest Philly coalition is organizing to demand the Pension Fund divest from nuclear weapons! Help this effort by [taking action now](#) and [sign your organization](#) on to the campaign to join the coalition. You can also contact Cody@codepink.org or Greta@worldbeyondwar.org to join their action teams.

In Chicago, activists are demanding that the Municipal Employees' Annuity and Benefit Fund come clean about the fund's investments, which have shown to have been invested in weapons companies in at least the recent past. So far, all communications with the City and the Fund staff have been met with a complete lack of transparency, and it is past time that the City release this legally public information. [Sign the petition](#) to divest the City and reach out to get more involved.

Corvallis Oregon activists continue their efforts to pass a divestment resolution with City Council.

Portland Oregon activists continue their campaign to insert International Human Rights language into the City's business procurement process to prohibit companies involved in occupation and war being awarded contracts. Other organizations have banded together to demand the City end its practice of using Federal police equipment and training, especially after a summer of terror inflicted on local activists by Federal troops. Help this effort by [signing the petition](#) and stay tuned for an online event to take further action in early January!

There is much to celebrate for city divestment victories in 2020, but there is still so much work to do! https://www.divestfromwarmachine.org/divest_digest_december_2020#:~:text=2020%20had%20some%20major%20municipal,to%20divest%20from%20weapons%20manufacturers.