



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: COUNTY MANAGER: OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

File #: 21-019

Board Meeting Date: 1/5/2021

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: 4/5ths

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors
From: Carolyn Bloede, Director, Office of Sustainability
Subject: Establishing a community composting program at the Phoenix Garden and an edible food recovery program at Samaritan House and authorizing a transfer of funds to support the implementation of CA SB 1383

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommendation to:

- A) Adopt a resolution authorizing an amendment to the agreement with Fresh Approach to establish and operate a new community composting hub at the Phoenix Garden and to provide public education and outreach about composting, increasing the agreement amount by \$119,048 to an amount not to exceed \$431,678; and
- B) Adopt a resolution authorizing an agreement with Samaritan House to provide services increasing the capacity and infrastructure for grocery rescue and redistribution and other elements of food waste reduction in their service area as part of the Edible Food Recovery Program as required under CA SB 1383, for the term of January 5, 2021 through June 30, 2023, in an amount not to exceed \$978,952; and
- C) Approve an Appropriations Transfer Request (ATR) appropriating \$600,000 from Non-General Fund General Reserves and \$498,000 from Non-General Fund Capital Reserves to Services and Supplies and Other Charges to fund these SB 1383 programs.

BACKGROUND:

According to the US Environmental Protection Agency, 20 percent of the municipal waste stream in this country is food. Not only is this a waste of valuable resources, organic material decomposing in the anaerobic conditions of a landfill generates methane, a green-house gas (GHG) 30 times more potent than carbon dioxide in trapping heat. In San Mateo County alone, supermarkets, grocery stores, wholesalers, and caterers generate an estimated 36 million pounds of excess edible food per

year. Meanwhile, 30 to 40 percent of San Mateo County residents are food insecure, the experience of having a limited or uncertain ability to acquire nutritionally adequate foods, according to San Mateo County Health.

The State of California has acted to address GHG emissions and food insecurity through CA SB 1383. The new legislation will become effective January 1, 2022, and by 2025 it will require a 75 percent reduction in organics waste disposal, including a 20 percent state-wide reduction in edible food in the waste stream. In order to achieve these goals, jurisdictions will be required to develop comprehensive organics waste recycling systems and establish Edible Food Recovery Programs. The County of San Mateo has been proactive in both areas through its programs to address climate change and ongoing preparation for CA SB 1383 implementation.

The Office of Sustainability (OOS) has been actively developing, testing, and funding program strategies to increase compost collection, education, and food waste reduction throughout the county for many years. These programs include a network of forty community gardens, residential backyard composting subsidies for household composting and vermicomposting, a permaculture garden located on County land in an urban zone, financial support for an urban agriculture garden and community composting facility, and involvement in multiple franchise agreements that make curbside organics collection available to many communities within the County's unincorporated areas.

The County created an Edible Food Recovery Program in February 2020 by approving agreements with Second Harvest of Silicon Valley (Resolution #077216), Pacifica Resource Center (Resolution #077217), and Nuestra Casa of East Palo Alto (Resolution #077218) to recover and redistribute excess food from supermarkets, wholesalers, caterers, and other commercial edible food generators as required under CA SB 1383 and an agreement with Fresh Approach (Resolution #077219) to develop and deliver workshops and curriculum to educate the public on how to waste less food.

DISCUSSION:

Creating robust edible food recovery projects and organics diversion systems in compliance with CA SB 1383 will require continuous partnership development and investment.

Amending the agreement with Fresh Approach will enable the organization to establish a community composting hub at the Phoenix Garden and provide additional composting outreach and education. These services will generate high-quality finished compost, spread awareness of the importance of composting, make participating in composting programs more accessible throughout the central bayside area of San Mateo County, and support County efforts to comply with CA SB 1383.

The agreement with the Samaritan House will establish the organization as a partner in the County's Edible Food Recovery Program. In their capacity as a core service agency, Samaritan House will work to expand grocery rescue and redistribution and other edible food recovery efforts, decrease food insecurity, and support County efforts to comply with CA SB 1383.

The County of San Mateo is a leader in California in implementing CA SB 1383 because of the proactive approach the County has taken to develop edible food recovery projects and organics diversion programs. This agreement, agreement amendment, and an appropriations transfer request will allow the County to continue pursuing innovative approaches to address food insecurity, reduce GHG emissions, and comply with CA SB 1383.

County Counsel has reviewed and approved the agreement, amendment, and resolutions as to form.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no net County cost. All costs will be funded entirely by revenue from the County's AB 939 fee, which is levied on all waste disposed of within the county and is designated specifically for waste reduction programs. The amendment with Fresh Approach increases the amount of the agreement by \$119,048 and does not extend the term. The term of the agreement for Samaritan House is from January 5, 2021 to June 30, 2023 for an amount not to exceed \$978,952. Approval of the Appropriations Transfer Request will appropriate funds in the amount of \$600,000 from Non-General Fund General Reserves and \$498,000 from Non-General Fund Capital Reserves to Services and Supplies and Other Charges to fund these SB 1383 programs.