



Memorandum

TO: TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

FROM: John Stufflebean

SUBJECT: RECYCLE PLUS TRANSITION UPDATE

DATE: 05-08-07

Approved

Date

5/9/07

RECOMMENDATION

Accept this update on the 2007 Recycle Plus Hauler Transition.

OUTCOME

Staff will provide Transition Update Reports to the Transportation & Environment Committee on a monthly basis, in both written and oral formats, throughout the Recycle Plus contactor transition period. Council Information Memoranda may be provided to Council more frequently should key issues develop between the regular reporting periods.

BACKGROUND

New contracts for Recycle Plus garbage, recycling, yard trimmings and street sweeping services for single-family service in Districts A and C were approved by Council in November 2006. Six-year agreements have been executed with Garden City Sanitation, California Waste Solutions and GreenWaste Recovery for services beginning July 1, 2007.

ANALYSIS

Staff will provide monthly status reports to the Transportation & Environment Committee through fall 2007, supplemented by additional Council Information Memoranda as needed. The third Transition Update Report has been agendaized for discussion at the Transportation & Environment Committee meeting scheduled for May 21, 2007. This report will be presented orally, with appropriate staff on hand to address any Committee concerns.

Staff is coordinating with new and continuing Recycle Plus haulers to prepare for the July 1, 2007 service transition. A major focus for the May 21st report will be outreach and education

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efforts, highlighting details from the Information Memorandum that was released to Council on May 8, 2007. In addition, the report will include ongoing updates about hauler coordination, facility and permitting issues, truck and equipment status, worker retention, Integrated Billing System (IBS), and customer service staffing.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Recycle Plus transition reports will be posted on the City's web site in advance of the Transition and Environment Committee meetings.

COORDINATION

This memorandum was coordinated with the Department of Public Works/Office of Equality Assurance, the City Attorney's Office, and the Information Technology Department.

COST IMPLICATIONS

Not Applicable

BUDGET REFERENCE

Not Applicable

CEQA

Not a project.



JOHN STUFFLEBEAN
Director, Environmental Services

Attachment

For questions, please contact Jo Zientek, Deputy Director, Integrated Waste Management Division, at (408) 535-8557.



Distributed on:
SENT TO COUNCIL: _____

MAY 09 2007

Memorandum by City Manager's Office

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: John Stufflebean

**SUBJECT: RECYCLE PLUS TRANSITION -
COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

DATE: May 8, 2007

Approved

Date

5/08/07

INFORMATION

During Council's deliberations on proposed modifications of the Municipal Code and administrative citations related to residential solid waste programs and other issues (April 3, 2007; Item 2.7), staff was asked to provide additional information on outreach plans for the cart contamination fee, Recycle Plus Transition, and ongoing educational efforts to encourage proper separation of materials into the proper carts. This memorandum responds to those requests, and updates will be provided periodically in the Manager's Weekly Reports and at meetings of the Transportation & Environment Committee.

Findings – 2007 Recycle Plus Customer Satisfaction Survey

Goodwin Simon Strategic Research conducted telephone interviews with 607 adult respondents between March 3 and 6, 2007. This included 306 residents of single-family homes and 301 residents of multi-family households. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Highlights of the results include:

- **Recycle Plus** – Overall, 86% of San Jose residents have a favorable opinion of Recycle Plus, including 50% with a “very” favorable opinion and 36% with a “somewhat” favorable opinion. Only 8% have an unfavorable opinion, and just 6% say they are unfamiliar with the program or cannot otherwise answer the question. In 2003 and 2005, 88% of residents had a favorable opinion.
 - Homeowners are more satisfied than renters (87% compared to 79%).
 - Residents in smaller multi-family complexes are more satisfied than those in larger complexes (81% compared to 66%).
 - Those who say they recycle 75% or more of what they could are more satisfied than those who recycle less (85% favorable compared to 77%).
 - Among single-family households, 74% are satisfied with yard trimmings collection while only 51% are satisfied with street sweeping (but there has been no increase in dissatisfaction – again, the neutral category has expanded).

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- **Community Education** – Nearly three-fourths (71%) of single-family households agree that the city does a good job of explaining how to recycle.
 - But only 51% of multi-family households agree, mainly due to lack of a direct avenue of communication with tenants. That is being corrected (see below).
- **What to Recycle** – Only 27% reported being unsure of what was recyclable, compared to 45% in 2005. This improvement has been achieved by redistributing the Recycling Guides to all physical addresses (not just billing addresses) in San Jose including single- and multi-family households. Two-thirds of the City has received the Guides (May and December 2006) and the final third will be accomplished in winter 2008.
 - Multi-family households cite these other barriers to recycling more: not a high priority, 22%; lack a good sorting system inside the home, 33%; and not convenient in my complex, 30%.
- **Recycling Guides** – Among single-family households, two-thirds have a copy of the Recycling Guide. Of those, 84% say it is useful.
- **Direct Mail** – 83% prefer to receive information through direct mail or bill inserts compared to 8% for newspapers and 6% for the web.

These and other findings will be addressed during preparation and implementation of communications plans for special and ongoing Recycle Plus campaigns. The next survey will be in 2009 (biennial cycle).

Outreach – Proposed Cart Contamination Fee (\$15)

An outreach plan for application of this new fee will be finalized once operational issues have been agreed to by City staff and representatives of the three affected haulers – GreenTeam, California Waste Solutions and Garden City Sanitation. At a minimum, however, the notification process would be targeted (rather than citywide) and would include multiple trilingual outreach pieces, phone call(s) and direct mail letter to any residential household placing significant amounts of garbage in their recycling carts. For example, each household would need to receive at least four (4) trilingual non-collection notices, which explain what is wrong. In addition, the resident would be given the opportunity to appeal the contamination fee based on a number of yet-to-be-determined criteria (such as contamination by passerby, etc.). Finally, the proposed fee of \$15 is set not to be a penalty, but to recover the actual operational cost of a second trip by Garden City Sanitation to collect the contaminated recycling cart as garbage.

Recycle Plus Transition Outreach

Preparations with new and continuing hauler outreach staff have been underway for some time, as an adjunct to joint meetings on operational issues and plans. In previous Transitions, we have

learned that it's more effective to provide the public with somewhat shorter lead times – otherwise, they could begin making changes too soon or forget the start date. Highlights of key elements of the Transition outreach plan and timeline follow. All haulers, including Norcal, are participating with the City in funding for these activities.

- **Spring 2007 Curbside Courier bill insert (March/April)** – Introduced the new haulers effective July 1 and the basic changes that customers would experience (separate trucks for garbage and recycling and consequently new collection times).
- **20 Community Meetings (May/June)** – Fifteen presentations will be regular meetings of SNI groups and five will be sponsored by ESD. City and hauler staff will be involved in each meeting. Translation in Spanish and Vietnamese will be provided via the use of headsets as needed. Aim is to provide influential groups with information about the Transition and to begin a longer-term dialogue to address cart contamination.
- **Trilingual Direct Mail Brochure (Mid-June)** – All 156,000 single-family households (physical, not billing addresses) in Service Districts A and C will receive a mailer entitled “New Trucks, New Times, New Team!” Content will include information on service changes effective the week of July 2, what to do in the event that collection delays or other service issues arise during the first 1 – 3 weeks after start-up, and how to avoid cart contamination. The aim is to manage public expectations and reduce unnecessary calls to the City’s Customer Contact Center since collections may be delayed while drivers are learning new routes and new trucks. Specifically, as in previous Transitions, the public will be asked to leave carts out until collected – up until 6 pm on the day following their normal collection day (including Saturdays). Route supervisors and ESD staff will be driving the routes to assist drivers in making sure all routes are covered and cleared.
- **GreenTeam Outreach** – Since there could be some confusion among residents in Service District B or in multi-family households citywide, GreenTeam is considering whether to deliver a postcard or letter to its customers to confirm no service changes. Otherwise, we will emphasize that as a talking point during media outreach.
- **Media Outreach (June-July)** – News releases, media advisories, interviews and fact sheets will be undertaken once we’re closer to actual Transition start-up. Print, broadcast and wire service outlets will be contacted and ethnic/community media included. City Council offices will be copied on releases and fact sheets.
- **Website (June-July)** – As outreach materials are produced or updated, they will be placed on the ESD website, with particularly important information linked to the City’s homepage.
- **Truck Signs (July)** – All four companies are participating in the design of new truck signs, some generic and some specific to their vehicles (garbage, recycling, yard trimmings, street sweepers). The basic theme is that partnership with the community is the key to overall program success. The reverse sides of the signs can be used for specialized messages at certain times of the year, such as for holiday tree recycling.

- **Customer Contact Center** – This outreach plan has been coordinated with the Contact Center, which is bringing aboard additional staff to assist in responding to public inquiries. Telephone scripts are being reviewed for necessary changes.

Continuing Education on Recycling

As stated above, findings from the 2007 Survey will be used to develop communications plans for special and ongoing Recycle Plus campaigns. Currently, hauler and City staffs have agreed to or are discussing the following:

- **Neighborhood Outreach** –City and hauler staff intend to mount a higher-profile face-to-face campaign to reach neighborhood associations and other community organizations that can help us improve awareness of the negatives associated with recycling cart contamination (ranging from worker and community safety to declines in the value of recycling commodities). Building on information obtained from these meetings and certain community events, additional neighborhood outreach will be planned and conducted.
- **Recycling Guide** – Staff has been re-distributing an updated version of the 2002 Recycling Guide (available in English, Spanish and Vietnamese) to all single- and multi-family households. Two-thirds of San José has received their Guides and a third mailing is set for this winter.
- **Curbside Courier** – This twice-annual newsletter provides a collection of short items and tips related to recycling, garbage, yard trimmings and street sweeping.
- **Bill Inserts** – Inserted in the bi-monthly customer bills, these deal with special topics that arise during the year or which are seasonal in nature. There is also room on each bill statement for very brief messages of special importance – frequently used to promote new features such as online assistance, paying bills by phone, etc.
- **Bill Messages** – Each billing statement allows 20 to 35 words to be displayed. Generally these messages involve new features such as bill paying online or by phone, the Healthy Neighborhood Venture Fund, etc. Messages must fit with the two-month billing cycle.

We would be pleased to provide additional information on request.



JOHN STUFFLEBEAN
Director, Environmental Services Department

For more information, call Lindsey Wolf, Environmental Communications Manager, at (408)535-8554.