



# CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

## COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

**AGENDA DATE:** October 27, 2015

**TO:** Mayor and Councilmembers

**FROM:** Environmental Services Division, Finance Department

**SUBJECT:** Foodscraps Composting Partnership With Downtown Santa Barbara

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council receive a report from the Environmental Services Manager regarding the City's composting partnership with Downtown Santa Barbara.

### **DISCUSSION:**

In 1989, the State adopted the Integrated Waste Management Act, which required all jurisdictions to divert at least 50% of their waste from landfill disposal. To comply with this law, the City commenced curbside recycling and greenwaste service and worked with MarBorg to construct a facility to process and divert construction and demolition debris. A 2009 study of the City's remaining trash found that the foodscraps and soiled paper represented the largest remaining category of waste (30% by weight) disposed in the business sector. Landfilled organics not only occupy precious remaining airspace, but also generate methane, a potent greenhouse gas. For these reasons, the City initiated collection of source-separated foodscraps from food-serving businesses in November 2009.

There are approximately 500 food-generating businesses and schools in the City. Among this group, approximately 215 subscribe to foodscraps collection. Once collected by MarBorg, the City's franchised waste hauler, the organic material is transported to Engel and Gray in Santa Maria, where it is transformed into a nutrient-rich compost and applied to farms and vineyards throughout the County. The City diverts more than 3,100 tons of foodwaste from landfill disposal each year.

Approximately 150 of the 500 food-generating businesses in the City are members of the Downtown Santa Barbara business improvement district. Establishing new diversion programs at food-generating businesses located in the downtown corridor poses two

primary challenges. The first challenge is accommodating the large volumes of trash, recycling, and foodscrap that these businesses generate, as well as siting separate bins to house the materials on space-constrained premises. The second challenge is reaching decision-makers to promote the benefits of the foodscrap composting program.

Environmental Services has a long history of working with Downtown Santa Barbara members, with 30% currently participating in foodscrap composting. This 30% represents the businesses with ideal conditions for implementing such a program: ample enclosure space to accommodate an additional waste stream and responsive, on-site decision-makers. In 2015, the remaining businesses face significant challenges to foodscrap program implementation.

Recently, however, Downtown Santa Barbara offered their assistance, which has proven invaluable in reaching the more challenging businesses. Specifically, Downtown Santa Barbara distributed foodscrap collection recruitment materials to its food-generating members; connected Environmental Services staff with decision-makers at the businesses; and, consistent with its own sustainability goals, encouraged members to divert foodscrap from landfill disposal. The efforts of Downtown Santa Barbara enable Environmental Services' outreach team to be more effective, putting them in direct contact with business owners and managers, who have already been introduced to the basics of the program.

All foodscrap collected in the City are made into compost by Engel and Gray. The compost is then re-applied to farms and vineyards in the County to help grow new food. Downtown Santa Barbara has also found a way to "close the loop" within its own borders. At the end of summer, the landscape beds that line State Street are worn down by foot traffic, Fiesta confetti, and, in recent years, by drought stress. For this reason, earlier this month Downtown Santa Barbara applied Engel and Gray compost to rehabilitate the landscape beds, many of which are located in front of the very food-generating businesses that supplied the foodscrap as feedstock for the compost.

#### **BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:**

There are no financial or budgetary impacts to the City as a result of this action.

#### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:**

The City collects and diverts approximately 3,100 tons of source-separated foodscrap from landfill disposal each year. A substantial portion of this material is collected by restaurants, cafes, and other eateries located in the Downtown Santa Barbara district. When organic material decomposes in a landfill in the absence of oxygen, methane, a greenhouse gas twenty-one times as potent as carbon dioxide<sup>1</sup>, is produced. As a

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<sup>1</sup> Landfilling of Waste - California Air Resources Board  
<http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/waste/landfillingofwaste.pdf>

result, methane from landfills represents about one (1) percent of the statewide greenhouse gas emission inventory<sup>2</sup>. Oxygen-rich aerobic composting of foodscraps produces a fraction of the greenhouse gas emissions that result from landfill disposal. For this reason, foodscraps composting is listed as one of the City's carbon emission reduction strategies in the City's Climate Action Plan<sup>3</sup>.

Foodscraps composting also contributes to the overall diversion rate of businesses and schools in the City, accounting for 10 percentage points of the current 34% diversion rate.

**PREPARED BY:** Matthew R. Fore, Environmental Services Manager

**SUBMITTED BY:** Robert Samario, Finance Director

**APPROVED BY:** City Administrator's Office

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> City of Santa Barbara Climate Action Plan, September 2012

<http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/services/planning/erd/resource/cap.asp>



## CITY TRASH AND RECYCLING

# FOODSCRAPS COMPOSTING PARTNERSHIP WITH DOWNTOWN SANTA BARBARA

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City Council Meeting – October 27, 2015

# BACKGROUND

## Why Foodscraps Collection?

- Diversion Potential
  - In 2008, Business Sector diversion
  - Organic Material is the largest component of City's waste stream
- Landfilled Organics use of valuable airspace and generate methane
- Protect the Market Value of Recyclable Materials
- Composting Fees Lower than Disposal Fees

# BACKGROUND

## What Happens to the Foodscraps?

- Foodscraps Collected by MarBorg
- Delivered to Engel and Gray Composting Facility in Santa Maria
  - Served the City since 2008 pilot program
  - Foodscraps blended with other organics to make market-grade compost
  - Applied to Parks, gardens, landscapes, and farms



# BACKGROUND

## Progress to Date

- 500 food-generating businesses and schools in the City
  - 150 are members of Downtown Santa Barbara
  - 53 Downtown Santa Barbara members subscribe to foodscraps collection
  - 215 Foodscraps Subscribers Citywide
  - 285 Remaining Citywide

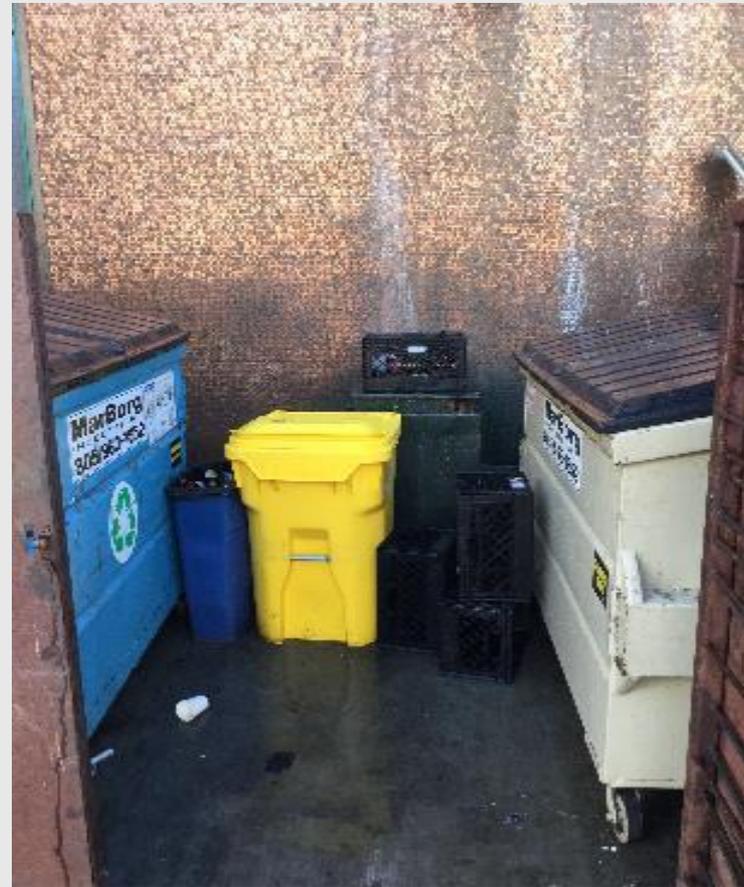


# CHALLENGES TO BUSINESS SECTOR

## Diversion in the downtown area

- Lot Space
- Enclosure Space
- Trespassing into waste enclosures by others
- Lack of Sunday Service
- Safety – limits collection times
- Multiple customers sharing waste containers
- **Getting to the Right Decision Maker**

# SPACE CONSTRAINTS



# SOLVING SPACE CONSTRAINTS



# TRESPASSING INTO WASTE ENCLOSURES



# LARGE GENERATORS SHARING SPACE



# DECISION MAKER HIERARCHY

Position	Availability	Authority	Role
Staff	During business hours	Minimal	Can pass on outreach materials & information
Supervisor	Often present	Limited	Considers program basics, recommends to manager
General Manager	Often unavailable	High	Evaluates program details, may authorize
Owner	Rarely available	Final	Can direct staff to participate, directly benefits from savings



# PARTNERSHIP WITH DOWNTOWN SANTA BARBARA

- City staff began working with Downtown Santa Barbara in September 2014 to recruit new foodscraps customers
- Foodscraps Collection aligns with Organization's broader sustainability goals:
  - Mail Recruitment Flyer to Members
  - Pair outreach staff to specific decision-makers at target business

# PARTNERSHIP WITH DOWNTOWN SANTA BARBARA

- Results:
  - Maintain historical capture rate despite more difficult customers (30%)
  - More than 3,100 tons of foodscrap diverted Citywide in 2015
  - Overall, foodscrap collection accounts for 10% points of the Business Sector's 34% diversion rate
  - Supports carbon emission reduction strategies in City's Climate Action Plan
  - City complies with new statewide organics mandates including AB 341 and AB 1826



# TRANSFORMING FOODSCRAPS INTO COMPOST

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Engel and Gray Compost – Santa Maria, CA

Collection



Compost  
Sales



Composting  
Manufacturing





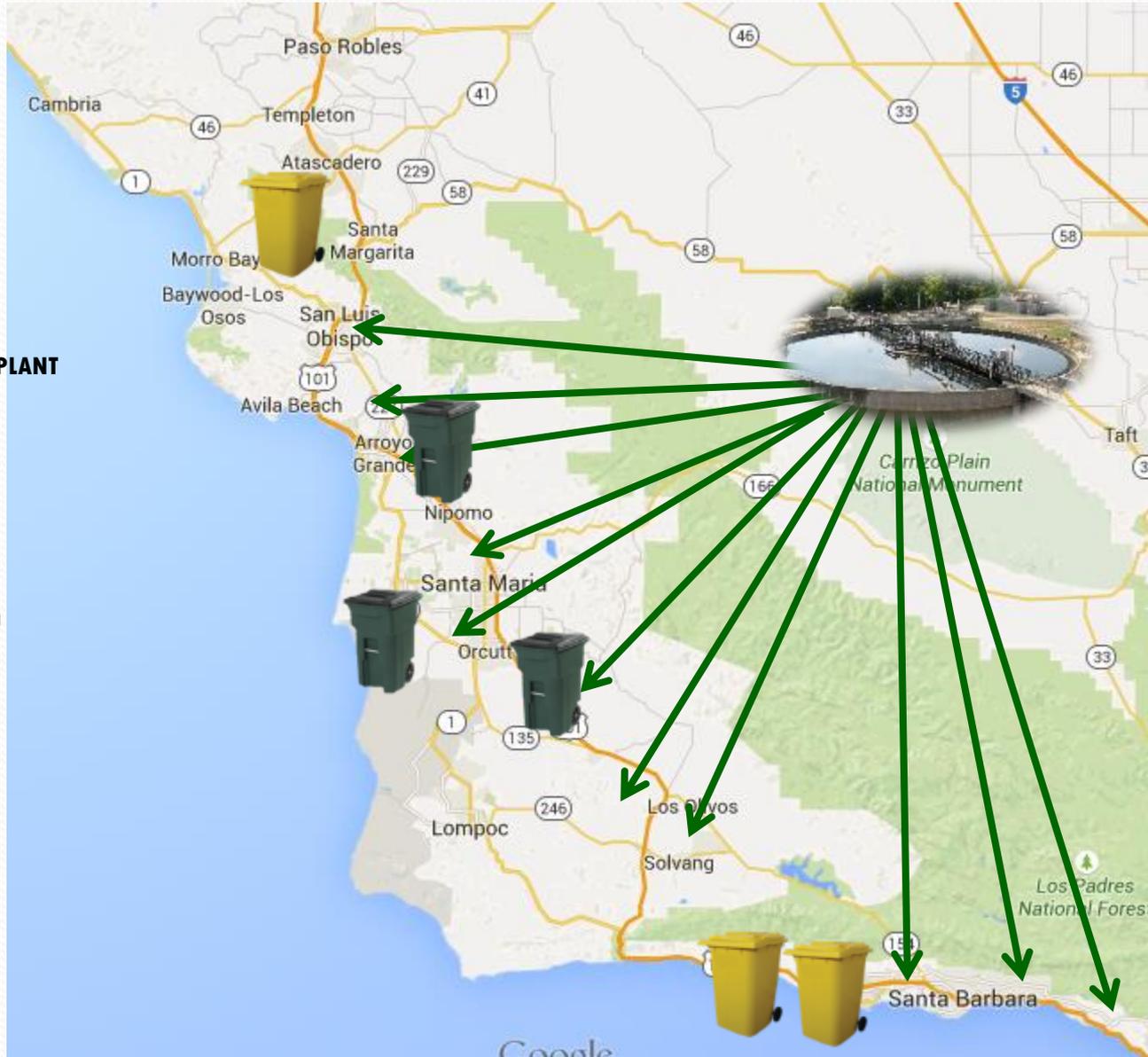
**WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT**



**Greenwaste Collection**



**FOODWASTE COLLECTION**



# Regional Compost Facility

 40 Acre Site

 Organic Feedstock

 Permitted to handle 400,000 yds year

 Windrow facility



# Matching Feedstocks



# Composting is a Process



You do not want Hiccup's

23 years of Compost Experience Helps

# Many Facets to Compost Use

# AG

## Homeowner



## Contractors



# Parks



# Community Promotion



# School Gardens



# Completing the Cycle

Collection • Composting • End Use



# Thank You



*We appreciate Building Healthy Soil with you!*





# DOWNTOWN SANTA BARBARA

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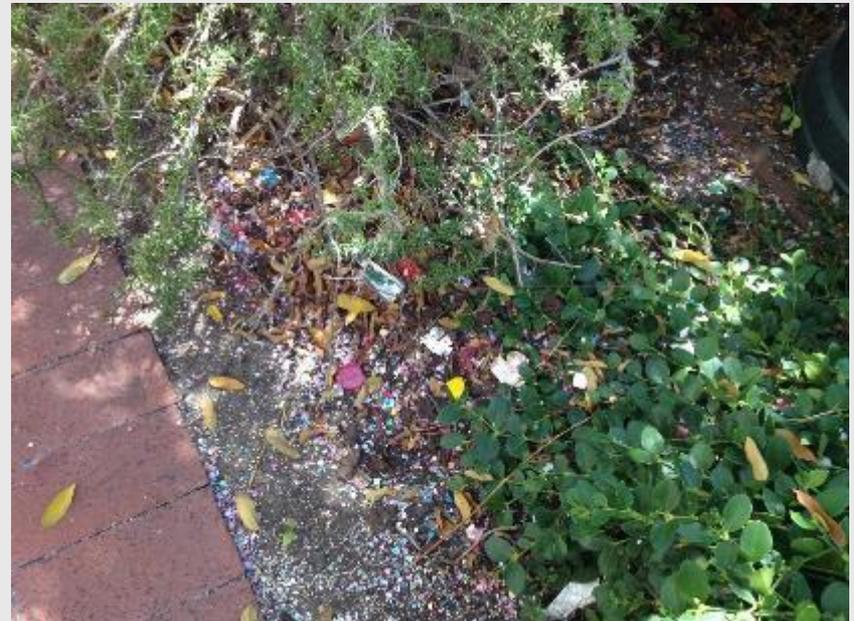
## Downtown Santa Barbara

- 30+ year partnership – City of Santa Barbara Parks & Recreation contracts with Downtown Santa Barbara to provide daily maintenance on State Street – includes cleaning, landscaping, and management of the Flag Program.
- Downtown Santa Barbara’s 8-person maintenance crew works daily to keep the streets clean and the plants healthy, helping to make downtown safe and user-friendly.
- **Challenges** to the work include **the impacts of a dense, urban environment**, including **cigarette butts, Fiesta confetti, and other types of litter** – in addition to the **drought** and **wear and tear on plants from foot traffic** and **public urination**.



## Downtown Santa Barbara Cleaning & Landscaping

- Following Fiesta in August 2015, Downtown Santa Barbara's maintenance crew began the process of "deep cleaning" the plant beds on State Street – raking confetti and removing dead plant material to minimize the impact on the landscape.
- The impacts of Fiesta were significant



# Downtown Santa Barbara Cleaning & Landscaping (cont.)



## Downtown Santa Barbara Cleaning & Landscaping (cont.)

- After litter, confetti, and dead plant material were removed, plant beds received an application of Engel & Gray compost mixed with mulch.
- Postponing application of bark until next spring, due to anticipated rains.



# Compost Applied



# Planting Begins



**DOWNTOWN**  
SANTA BARBARA

## Budget Impacts – Downtown Santa Barbara

- Substantial commitment of maintenance crew labor to complete post-Fiesta deep clean, composting, and replanting.
- To date, approximately \$2,000 – \$3,000 has been spent on new plant material and supplies.





# Questions?