

October 20, 2020

Kevin Brazile, Presiding Judge  
Los Angeles Superior Court  
Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center  
210 West Temple Street, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room 11-506  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
[civilgrandjury@lacourt.org](mailto:civilgrandjury@lacourt.org)

Re: City of Redondo Beach Response to Grand Jury Report entitled “A DIET FOR LANDFILLS: Cutting Down on Food Waste”

Honorable Judge Brazile:

On July 8, 2020, the Los Angeles County Grand Jury issued its report entitled “**A DIET FOR LANDFILLS: Cutting Down on Food Waste**” (the “Report”). In the Report, the Grand Jury identifies a number of challenges agencies face in their efforts to divert organic waste from landfills. At the conclusion of the Report, the Grand Jury requested a response from the City of Hermosa Beach (“City”) to Recommendations 1.1, 1.3, 1.8, and 1.14. The City of Redondo Beach provides the following responses to these Recommendations in accordance with Penal Code §933.05.

**Recommendations:**

*1.1 Each of the 88 cities, and the County’s unincorporated areas, should establish a weekly food waste drop-off center. The center can be at a farmer’s market, such as the one held each Thursday near Los Angeles City Hall, or at another appropriate site. City and County officials can arrange for the food waste collected to be taken to a nearby facility for recycling, or can establish contracts with organizations such as the Los Angeles Community Garden Council or landscaping companies for composting.*

The City disagrees with this recommendation, as there are other avenues that aim at food waste reduction within the City. The City’s residents and businesses currently have a number of convenient organics recycling options that make a drop-off center unnecessary. The City amended its solid waste franchise agreement with Athens Services on July 1, 2019 and included an option for organic waste service to the commercial customers. Furthermore, the City established a residential organics program in 2011 that allows residential customers to place food waste in their green organics cart. This service is included in the overall cost for residential customers and there is a \$25 charge per cart/per month for commercial customers. As part of the City’s efforts to ensure compliance with the State organic waste mandates of AB1826, SB1383 and AB827, all customers will be required to subscribe to organics service. Currently the City is working in conjunction with Athens Services to subscribe City businesses, as well as providing outreach and education

on the various State organic waste mandates. Therefore, all residential and commercial customers have a viable organic waste disposal option that the City believes makes a weekly food waste drop-off center unnecessary. Nevertheless, the City will monitor the behavior of customers; and, if need be, look into the feasibility of including a food waste drop off center into the franchise agreement.

**1.3** *County and city officials should create an incentive program for residents and businesses to separate food waste. This could be in the form of a gift card to a local grocery store/farmer's market, or a discount on a solid waste fee. For example, in the city of Santa Barbara, 150 businesses (restaurants, grocery stores, coffee shops, etc.) have signed up for the city's Foodscrap program, and can save several hundred dollars a month off their trash collection fee.*

This recommendation requires further analysis. Residential customers receive free organics recycling, which is an incentive in itself to separate food waste. Furthermore, the City along with Athens Services sends out educational material that speaks to the importance of separating food waste, and the City offers free compost countertop bins for residents to utilize. With regards to the Commercial customers, the City's organics recycling fee is one of the lowest in the region. Furthermore, Athens Services visits all commercial customers and recommends "right fitting" their bins based on their waste characterization. This could include downsizing the disposal bin for a larger recycling bin, which is included at no cost, and adding organics recycling for a small cost. Athens Services also offers educational training on best practices in order to best utilize the organics recycling receptacles. The City's Public Works Department will focus on implementing comprehensive organics recycling systems to maximize organics diversion and participation as mandated by state laws AB 1826 and SB 1383. However, the City staff will explore potential incentive programs and analyze their implementation feasibility.

**1.8** *County officials should modify contracts with food vendor companies that are inside County facilities, such as the Hollywood Bowl, the Arboretum, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and cafeterias located at County hospitals, to include food waste separation and recycling. Especially at the Hollywood Bowl, which draws more than 17,000 people for most of its summer concert events, has several food options onsite, and traditionally draws large pre-concert picknicking crowds, implementing a food waste recycling program can be part of a public education campaign.*

The City agrees with the recommendation's suggestion that food waste recycling at large events is important, however, the City has no authority over County facilities. The City hosts a variety of large events annually, including a music festival, fairs, and other special events. The City actively adheres to the requirements of AB2176 (large venue and large event recycling) and reports its compliance annually to CalRecycle. Any events which may be considered large by the City are required to detail their sustainability plans and coordinate with Athens Services to ensure organic recycling service options are provided. The City has no permanent large venues.

**1.14** *Elected officials in the County and cities should adopt the 11 suggestions in the March 2018 Countywide Organics Waste Management Plan and express support for the need to increase capacity and site and build new facilities to handle organic waste.*

1. *Commercial Recycling Ordinance. Adopt an ordinance with requirements for businesses and haulers to achieve specified recycling requirements (if not already in place). Includes system to quantify recovery, monitor compliance with requirements and methods for enforcement action as necessary.*

The City has not yet implemented this recommendation but will do so in the near future. The City is working with CalRecycle to craft an Ordinance that will codify the mandatory organics recycling requirements of AB1826 and SB1383. This ordinance will be adopted before January 1, 2022, the effective date of SB 1383. City Staff is currently working on an informal plan that will be submitted to CalRecycle and the commercial recycling ordinance will be a part of the plan. This Ordinance will mandate organics recycling for all customers as well as monitoring and education activities to ensure compliance with CalRecycle's mandates.

2. *SFR Recycling Ordinance. Adopt an ordinance establishing organic collection requirements on properties not subject to AB 1826 including but not limited to single-family residential (SFR) dwellings and multi-family residential dwellings with 2-4 units. Includes system to quantify recovery, monitor compliance with requirements and methods for enforcement action as necessary.*

The City has not yet implemented this recommendation but will also do so in the near future. The City is working to craft an ordinance that will codify mandatory organics recycling requirements. This Ordinance will include mandatory organics recycling programs for all commercial and residential customers.

3. *Self-Haul Standards. Establish standards or requirements for self-haul (landscapers and other qualified providers) to meet recycling requirements. Includes reporting requirements and audit procedures to ensure minimum standards are being met as well as licensing requirements.*

The City has not yet implemented this recommendation but will in the near future by including equivalent language in an Ordinance that will codify the mandatory organics recycling requirements of SB1383. Currently, anyone who claims to self-haul must obtain an exemption from the City through Athens Services and provide details on the self-hauling material and location that it is self-hauled. With regards to regulating self-haul landscapers the City would find that requirement burdensome with limited staff to manage the logistics of establishing such a system.

4. *Flow Control. Flow control to direct material collected to qualified processing or composting facilities.*

The City is currently implementing this recommendation. The City already has language in its franchise agreement that ensures maximum diversion and composting of organic waste. The agreement requires the hauler to take green waste to a facility that ensures maximum diversion and is compliant with all state mandates including future requirements of SB 1383.

5. *Contract Modification. Modify existing contract or establish a new trash collection contract or franchise to include specified recycling requirements. Such action may include contract language modifications, separation of commercial/multi-family collection into separate contract(s), extension of existing contracts or franchises or qualified licensing. Should include provisions for quantifying recovery, reporting compliance and enforcement actions.*

The City is currently implementing this recommendation. The City has language in its franchise agreement currently that ensures maximum diversion and composting of organic waste. The City approved an amendment to the franchise agreement in July 2019 that strengthened the language on organic recycling in line with the requirements of SB1383 as mentioned above.

6. *Exclusive Commercial Hauling. Establish new trash collection contracts or franchises with commercial or other exclusivity clauses and specified recycling requirements. Should include provisions for quantifying recovery, reporting compliance and enforcement actions.*

The City is currently implementing this recommendation. The City's franchise agreement operates as an exclusive agreement for both residential and commercial customers. This assists in ensuring maximum diversion and composting of organic waste. Moreover, annual reporting requirements also include detailed information on tonnage and facilities used for organic waste processing. This was codified in July 2019 with an amendment to the City's solid waste franchise agreement with Athens Services.

7. *Source Separated Organics Collection. Modify existing contract or establish a new trash collection contract or franchise to require the hauler to provide separate collection of organic waste to entities (i.e., residential and commercial) that generate organic waste and deliver the material to a qualified organics recycling or composting facility. Should include provisions for quantifying recovery, reporting compliance and enforcement actions.*

The City agrees with this recommendation and has implemented it in its current franchise agreement; and will be included in any amendments or new agreements.

8. *Wet/Dry Collection. Require the hauler to provide 2 or more separate bins for wet/dry commercial collection system in which the contents of certain bins are delivered to a materials recovery facility with organics extraction technology. Should include provisions for quantifying recovery, reporting compliance and enforcement actions.*

The City currently offers all customers source-separate collection of organics using dedicated organics containers. The City does not see a need for wet/dry separation at this time. Furthermore, all commercial trash bins are sorted at a materials recovery facility. The City will monitor commercial needs and work with its waste hauler to gauge feasibility of this recommendation before considering implementation of any changes to this existing service.

9. *Incentives. Provides incentives for participation in organics collection by implementing subsidies to offset the incremental costs of collection, separation and processing of organics to the degree necessary to change behavior and establish a successful base program. Should include provisions for quantifying recovery and reporting compliance to maintain eligibility for incentives.*

This recommendation requires further analysis. Residential customers receive free organics recycling, which is an incentive in itself to separate food waste. Furthermore, the City and Athens Services send out educational material that speaks to the importance of separating food waste, and the City offers free compost countertop bins for residents to utilize. With regards to the Commercial customers, the City's organics recycling fee is one of the lowest in the region. Furthermore, Athens Services visits all commercial customers and recommends "right fitting" their bins based on their waste characterization. This could include downsizing the disposal bin for a larger recycling bin, which is included at no cost, and adding organics recycling for a small cost. Since customers only pay for disposal bins, the downsizing could net a decrease in cost while improving recycling of all materials.

*10. Education Only. No change to contracts but educate businesses to comply with the law. Includes business compliance monitoring and identification of resources that would be made available to businesses to ensure compliance and build program support.*

The City agrees with this recommendation and has implemented it. Education and outreach are essential components of the City's waste program. This program includes: site visits, distribution of education materials, and more. Site visits performed by the waste hauler monitor contamination levels and proper usage of containers as well as training for staff. These site visits are required annually for all organics customers. Educational materials are available in City facilities, distributed to customers by the waste hauler via mail and in-person, and provided to the public at special events and through digital media.

*11. On-Site Management. Provide businesses with guidance/assistance in the implementation of scalable on-site organics management aggregation methods and available technologies.*

The City agrees with this and has implemented it. As mentioned above, the waste hauler is required to annually visit each organics recycling customer to provide education and training. This includes contamination monitoring, offering a variety of container and service types, and training to customers and staff.

Please feel free to contact the City's Senior Management Analyst, Jesse Reyes, for additional information. He can be reached at 310-318-0686 x4151 or [jesse.reyes@redondo.org](mailto:jesse.reyes@redondo.org).

Sincerely,

William C. Brand  
Mayor

cc: City of Redondo Beach City Council  
Joe Hoefgen, City Manager  
Michael W. Webb, City Attorney  
Judith Krimmel, Foreperson