



Highlights from Phase II Stakeholder Engagement Meetings in San Carlos
Proposed Mandatory Commercial Recycling Ordinance
January 2010

Overview and Findings

Three stakeholder meetings were held on January 7, 13 and 20, 2010 to discuss a potential mandatory commercial and multi-family residential recycling program in the City of San Carlos. A total of 36 people attended, representing 13 businesses, 2 haulers, 1 resident, 7 city personnel, 1 chamber of commerce member, and 1 non-profit organization.

Representatives from the San Carlos Chamber of Commerce and the City of San Carlos gave a brief overview of the background and process. Rethink Waste used a PowerPoint presentation to cover context, goals, relevant data, rationale, key decision points, recommendations, and questions. The event elicited useful comments from and discussions with attendees about particulars of the proposed mandatory recycling ordinance.

Overall, no attendee spoke against the concept of mandating commercial recycling at the local level. Several attendees spoke in favor of a shorter or no phase-in period than proposed, while several spoke in favor of the proposed phase-in period.

Outreach

Outreach activities conducted by Rethink Waste, the City and the San Carlos Chamber of Commerce for the stakeholder meetings included flyers, emails, an advertisement and a press release. The goal was to inform as many local businesses as possible about the upcoming event and to encourage their attendance and participation. Rethink Waste developed a webpage to host information gathered and developed regarding the mandatory commercial ordinance process that was linked to and advertised by the City through its web site headlines and eNotify email features. Over 1,300 flyers were distributed, approximately 1,500 emails were sent to businesses, one full page advertisement was developed and purchased, and a press release was distributed to 5 local papers, of which two wrote stories announcing the meetings.

Meeting notices were sent by email in late December and mid-January to various organizations, such as the City and the Chamber of Commerce, asking them to forward the meeting information to their members and to link their web site to the Rethink Waste Commercial Recycling Ordinance web page. Additionally, flyers were distributed to key locations within the same time frame.

The information in Table 1 summarizes outreach channels used in publicizing the stakeholder meetings. The number of emails distributed, articles written or websites hosting information may not be complete, because organizations did not necessarily respond or respond with complete information regarding the outreach assistance that they provided.

Table 1. City of San Carlos Outreach Mandatory Recycling Ordinance Stakeholder Meetings			
Flyers Distributed	Quantity	Emails Sent	Quantity
San Carlos City Hall (Asst. City Manager)	150	San Carlos City Hall (Asst. City Manager)	1
San Carlos City Staff (Code Enforcement)	15	San Carlos City Staff (Code Enforcement)	1
San Carlos Library	100	Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC)	1
Main City Park (Burton Park) - Youth Center	70	Economic Development Partnership	1
San Carlos Adult Community Center	50	San Carlos Chamber Members, Executive Committee & Staff	800
San Carlos Chamber Staff	30	San Carlos Pulse of Business	1
San Carlos Chamber Newsletter	800	San Carlos Green Committee	600
Sustainable San Mateo County	100	San Carlos Young Entrepreneurs	1
Information on Website		Sustainable San Mateo County	1
San Carlos City Website		Harbor Industrial Association	40
San Carlos Chamber Website		Rotary Club	1
Rethink Waste Website		San Carlos Lions	1
Sustainable San Mateo County		San Carlos Kiwanis	1
Institute for Local Government			
Press Release Sent		Institute for Local Self Government	2
Daily Journal	Full page black & white ad ran on 12/30/09. Article ran in the 1/7/10 newspaper.	SAMCEDA	1

Daily Post		BOMA	1
Daily News	Article ran in the 1/7/10 newspaper.	BNI San Carlos	1
Examiner		Republic Services	2
Chronical		Recology	2
Peninsula TV and Millbrae TV		List of attendees from Summer 2009 stakeholder meetings	28

Speakers

The following people were the primary speakers at the stakeholder meetings:

Gary Fazio, Past President of the San Carlos Chamber of Commerce and employee of Kelly-Moore Paints, welcomed attendees at the January 7th and 13th meetings.

Brian Moura, Assistant City Manager for the City of San Carlos, provided local context and background at the January 7th and 20th meetings.

Cliff Feldman, Recycling Programs Manager for Rethink Waste, presented meeting goals, relevant recycling data, ordinance rationale, key decision points, staff and consultant recommendations, and questions intended to elicit audience discussion on key points.

Goals of Stakeholder Meetings

The goals of the stakeholder meetings were to:

- a. provide information and clarity on the proposed mandatory commercial recycling ordinance;
- b. gain an understanding of attendees' questions and concerns.

The following main topics were covered:

- Why is the City of San Carlos developing a proposed mandatory commercial recycling ordinance?
- What is the current level of recycling in the city?
- What are the drivers from local and State of California perspectives for mandating recycling?
- Who would be affected by the ordinance, and who would not?
- When would the ordinance take effect?
- How would the ordinance be enforced?

January 7, 2010 Meeting Information

Attendance

Twenty-two people attended the meeting, including representatives from 9 businesses and 1 hauler, along with 1 resident, 3 City personnel, 1 City Council member, 1 Chamber of Commerce, and 4 Rethink Waste representatives. Table 2 below is a list of attendees and their organizational affiliation.

Table 2. San Carlos Stakeholder Meeting January 7, 2010 Attendance List	
Name and Company	Name and Company
Tracie Bills, Rethink Waste Consultant	Kathy Lavezzo, PG&E
Cliff Feldman, Rethink Waste	Jennifer Hill, REI
Steve Sherman, Cascadia Consulting	Albert Schlacker, San Carlos Resident
Brian Moura, City of San Carlos	Tom Davids, Intero Real Estate
Sheryl Pomerenk, Chamber of Commerce	Joe Vitangeli, Accurate Mailings
Monica Devincezi, Rethink Waste	Kathleen Gallagher, CSG
Mark Weiss, City of San Carlos	Suzanne Emerson, Emerson Environmental
Gary Fazzio, Kelly-Moore Paints	Anne Louise Rice, San Mateo County Transit District
Tammy Delbene, Recology	Christine Boland, City of San Carlos
Gino Gasparini, Recology	Sally Mitchell, Law Offices of SEM
Karen D. Cochran, PG&E	Randy Royce, San Carlos City Council

Questions from Attendees

1. Will there be incentives for smaller accounts to participate? *Yes, the more you recycle and the less trash service you have, the lower the potential cost. Recycling is available at no additional charge.*
2. No additional cost for trash, but is there a savings? *Yes, if you can reduce your trash service level. You need to check your recycling bins for fullness and see if people are actually using the program.*
3. Is there an additional pull charge for organics? *No, and it's a reduced rate from trash service.*
4. Is the receptacle provided for organics at no charge? *Yes.*
5. Will you provide internal organics containers? *Yes.*
6. What is estimate of what the recycling rate might go to?
 - o *Cliff: Mid 40% is feasible, we're now at 24% for commercial. We'd like to get another 3,000 tons per year out of the 11,000 tons total each year.*
 - o *Steve: Seattle (which has mandatory recycling) increased by 10% in a short period of time, mostly through education and outreach, rather than the imposition of fines.*
7. Will plastics recycling be broadened, by type? *Yes, we will broaden the range of materials that will be collected.*
8. PG&E would like to have a simple system for our employees and to be able to place all plastics in the bin if it has a number, will this be a probability?

- *Cliff: Rethink Waste agencies (including San Carlos) will be going to single-stream, meaning one container for cardboard, mixed paper, cans, bottles, some scrap metal and plastics.*
 - *Monica: It is a double-edged sword. Rethink Waste wants to make sure that what is collected has viable markets.*
9. What will be done for education and training? *Rethink Waste will partner with Recology on a commercial outreach program, so that tools and resources and knowledge go to employees.*
 10. Most of trash in San Mateo County goes through the transfer station? *A large portion of it does and additional cities might join. Currently more than half already do.*
 11. Will you provide recycling containers? *Yes, if you subscribe to recycling service.*
 12. If we want to start composting, is that service available? *Yes.*
 13. How is the recycling program funded? *The City is a part of the Rethink Waste JPA. Revenue generated from recycling helps to offset the trash cost. The more revenue we get from recycling, the easier to tamp down the trash cost.*
 14. Will this be in effect for the new hauler? *Yes. For the current hauler, it won't affect them. The new hauler is contractually obligated to participate.*
 15. How do you plan on enforcing random audits? *All businesses have to subscribe to garbage service. The hauler is out there every day. It's an incentive for the hauler to do more recycling and they will give Rethink Waste a heads-up. The generator will get some technical assistance, maybe just a brochure explaining costs and benefits, maybe one-on-one in person technical assistance.*
 16. Is recycling going to be made easier with the new hauler? *Yes. Single stream is easier.*
 17. Deskside containers, is there a cap on the number you can provide to businesses? *We're in the business of recycling. There's no cap, technically. We'll do what makes sense.*
 18. Will this program include the unincorporated part of San Carlos?
 - *Brian: The Harbor Industrial area is part of San Mateo County. 60% of the area is part of San Carlos, 40% is part of San Mateo County and will be covered under the County's franchise. Unless you are within City limits the ordinance does not apply to you.*
 19. Why will this take so long to implement? Why 4 years? Give us feedback. *There are no plans for the residential sector for mandatory recycling. Audience member: that's stupid. They should participate.*
 20. Would it help to print up material in languages other than English? *Yes, that's part of our campaign.*
 21. On Slide 14, City business registration—what is the cost to independent haulers? *Haulers already need to have a regular business registration.*
 - *Brian: We need to figure out who keeps the records. We're leaning toward the hauler keeping the records of who is recycling well.*
 - *Cliff: This is to protect you as a business, since the hauler can show us that you are recycling well.*
 - Cliff: Does anyone represent the smaller business tier? Do you think we should include or exclude small businesses? *Reponses: Ultimately it should be rolled out across the board. Go after biggest nuggets first. It's not a question of equity it's simply the right thing to do. It may be harder for small businesses.*
 22. Could small businesses work together, as a cluster, to have shared service? *Yes. 2 cubic yard threshold of garbage service volume per week still would apply.*
 - *Steve: Customers with as much as 2- 96 gallon garbage containers collected 2 times per week would be excluded from the ordinance.*

- *Cliff: Rethink Waste wants to help achieve high rates of recycling, mainly through education, outreach, and technical assistance, not enforcement actions.*
- *Tammy: Recology will be checking recycling bins for level of contamination. If you start putting garbage in the recycling or organics bin, the customer will be dealt with. Comment: Start at the 2 CY threshold, don't even bother with having a 4 CY threshold.*

January 13, 2010 Meeting Information

Attendance

Seventeen people attended the meeting. Table 3 presents a list of attendees and their affiliations.

Table 3. San Carlos Stakeholder Meeting January 13, 2010 Attendance List	
Name and Company	Name and Company
Tracie Bills, Rethink Waste Consultant	Kathy Lavezzo, PG&E
Cliff Feldman, Rethink Waste	Tim Belinghagm, PG&E
Steve Sherman, Cascadia Consulting	John Agius, PG&E
Gary Fazzio, Kelly-Moore Paints	Felix Lopez, PG&E
Keith Hussinger, Kelly-Moore Paints	Mitchell Kirk, PG&E
Tammy Delbene, Recology	Ron Chase, L-3 Communications
Gino Gasparini, Recology	Paula Borges, City of Palo Alto
William Turner, Hiller Museum	Pat Potter, San Carlos Green
Bernie Mellott, Hiller Museum	

Questions from Attendees

- Why not start organics from the outset? *Public education value—we want to focus on recycling first. We will encourage customers to start organics service, but it wouldn't become required until later.*
- Why a four-year ramp up? It seems too slow. *Enforcement needs to be manageable. So we want to go step-wise. But if the City wants to go faster, it could conceivably.*
- Who is the current hauler? *You have Allied.*
- What is the recycling blitz? *Recology, the new hauler, will visit every customer in the service area that doesn't recycle or that could recycle more in the second half of the year. Starting July 1.*
- When does new contract start? *July 1*
- What does “recycling at no additional cost” mean? *If you start to recycle, your garbage bill won't go up. If you reduce your trash service level, your bill could go down.*

- Will the 25% discount be in effect for organics for San Carlos? *To be determined.*
- Do we pay for recycling through our existing rates or is it free? *It's part of the rates. Revenue from the sale of recyclables offsets the cost of the system. We also avoid cost of sending the recyclables to Ox Mountain Landfill.*
- Where do compostables go? *Allied's facility in Milpitas.*
- Will Rethink Waste direct Recology to where the material goes? *No, Recology brings the material to Rethink Waste transfer station and then we move the material to wherever we decide.*
- Does Ox Mountain have a methane recovery system? *Yes, but perhaps 15-20% yield in the best of these systems.*
- What's a reasonable goal for commercial sector diversion, seeing that we're at 24% now? *At least 50%.*
- What do you think about proposal? *Kelly Moore — this looks like a really good proposal.*
- Will there be a focused marketing program? *Yes. Recology will have a huge staff to do outreach and education and technical assistance.*
- Are there customers in the less than 2 cubic yard category that recycle? *Everyone should recycle. We agree. We're not sure that we want to do the enforcement for small customers, however.*
- How many small businesses have recycling? *We can develop that information.*
- Is there a good example of recycling? *Kelly Moore saved over \$14,000 per month over past 18 months off trash service. We were throwing away lots of plastic buckets. We asked supplier to re-work it. The supplier shreds the plastic now, and sells it to China. We reduced waste by 80%.*
- If you have pizza boxes, what to do with it? *If food-soiled, compostable. Otherwise, recycled in mixed paper.*
- Is the 25% differential set in place for 2011? *Not yet. City will determine, at end of 2010.*

January 20, 2010 Meeting Information

Attendance

Although nine people attended the meeting, none were local businesses. The low turn out for this event may have been the result of severe weather, as well as being the last stakeholder meeting. Table 4 lists attendees and their affiliations.

Table 4. San Carlos Stakeholder Meeting January 20, 2010 Attendance List	
Name and Company	Name and Company
Tracie Bills, Rethink Waste Consultant	Susan Caudill, City of Palo Alto
Cliff Feldman, Rethink Waste	Wendy Hediger, City of Palo Alto
Monica Devincezi, Rethink Waste	Andrea Rodriguez, Allied Waste
Brian Moura, City of San Carlos	Yvette Madera, Allied Waste
Jeannene Minnix, Rethink Waste	

Questions from Attendees

The discussion centered on City activities and framework for ordinance enforcement.

- How will you enforce this ordinance? *Technically it is the City, however Rethink Waste will work with the hauler to ensure businesses will recycle properly.*
- How will you enforce if the recycling is contaminated? *The hauler will do periodic checks and work with the businesses to ensure compliance.*
- How will costs be covered if hauler must go back to collect contaminated recyclables as garbage? *A premium charge will be assessed to businesses.*

I. Conclusions

The stakeholder meeting process for the City of San Carlos was conducted in two stages, with two primary purposes in mind: a. topic introduction and education stage: Summer 2009; b. detailed recommendations stage: January 2010. Each stage was useful, and helped to move the process toward a greater understanding of needs and issues as identified by the business community and broader commercial sector. Through this process, whether through simply being informed of stakeholder meetings or participating in them directly, the San Carlos commercial sector has increased its awareness of the need to reduce solid waste and increase recycling and has been accorded multiple opportunities to discuss the topic of mandatory recycling in the presence of other commercial sector attendees and City and Rethink Waste staff.