



Staff Report

File #: REPORT 20-0634, Version: 1

Honorable Mayor and Members of the Hermosa Beach City Council
Regular Meeting of October 13, 2020

**APPROVE RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY
REPORT ENTITLED “A DIET FOR LANDFILLS:
CUTTING DOWN ON FOOD WASTE**
(Environmental Programs Manager Douglas Krauss)

Recommended Action:

Staff recommends that Council:

1. Approve the response letter to the Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury report entitled “A Diet for Landfills: Cutting Down on Food Waste;” and
2. Authorize the Mayor to sign the letter on behalf of the City of Hermosa Beach.

Executive Summary:

The Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury released a report entitled “A Diet for Landfills: Cutting Down on Food Waste” and asked local jurisdictions for responses to a number of suggested programs and actions designed to improve organics recycling. The City drafted responses to these items and staff recommends Council’s approval of these responses prior to submitting them to the Grand Jury.

Background:

In the State of California, civil grand juries are authorized to “investigate and report upon the operations, accounts, and records of the officers, department, functions, and the method or system of performing the duties of any such city or joint powers agency and make such recommendations as it may deem proper and fit.” (Cal. Penal Code 925(a)).

On July 8, 2020, the Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury pre-released its report entitled “A Diet for Landfills: Cutting Down on Food Waste” (the “Report”) via mail addressed to Mayor Mary Campbell (**Attachment 1**). The report was released to the public July 31, 2020. The Report addresses the Civil Grand Jury’s investigation into the condition of organic waste disposal in the region. This investigation was inspired by recent challenges in the recycling market as well as a host of State legislation mandating the recycling of organics.

The City has been taking a number of steps to achieve compliance with these organics recycling mandates. In September 2019, the City approved new trash service rates that provide for free

organics recycling service for commercial customers. Implementation of this program included site visits to every affected commercial customer, including multi-family properties, to educate tenants and staff on proper organics recycling practices. As of September 2020, all residential customers are able to recycle organics as well.

Discussion:

The City's response to the Grand Jury report references the many efforts the City is making to increase organics recycling (**Attachment 2**). The City's response is mostly positive to the suggestions in the report. The report suggests such things as: implementing a mandatory organics recycling ordinance, monitoring of organics recycling service and tonnage, increased education, and changes to waste franchise agreements. The City is currently implementing many of these items (i.e., residential organics service, monitoring service, and education) and is in progress on others. For instance, the City is working with CalRecycle to develop a mandatory recycling ordinance and has just received the final draft language to help complete this. The report suggested such things as a public food waste drop off container. Because all customers in Hermosa Beach have convenient, curbside organics recycling service options, a public drop off option is not necessary, but is something the City can explore in the future.

Should Council approve the responses, the City would submit them to the Grand Jury and continue with its efforts to implement a comprehensive organics recycling program. This would include continued collaboration with the County, CalRecycle and our franchised waste hauler to implement the programs necessary to achieve this goal

Past Council Actions

Meeting Date	Description
September 10, 2011	Approved new rate structure to facilitate organics recycling program

General Plan Consistency:

This report and associated recommendations have been evaluated for their consistency with the City's General Plan. Relevant Policies are listed below:

Sustainability and Conservation

Goal 6. Hermosa Beach is a low or zero-waste community with convenient and effective options for recycling, composting, and diverting waste from landfills.

Policies:

- **6.1 Franchise agreements.** Ensure waste franchise agreements and program offerings provide progressively higher rates of waste diversion.
- **6.2 Food waste collection.** Ensure food waste collection is available and convenient for all

residents, businesses, and organizations.

- **6.10 Evaluate recycling and waste diversion opportunities.** Periodically evaluate and consider new opportunities to achieve greater waste diversion rates.

Fiscal Impact:

There are no fiscal implications associated with the recommended action.

Attachments:

1. Letter to Mayor
2. Response to Grand Jury

Respectfully Submitted by: Douglas Krauss, Environmental Programs Manager

Noted for Fiscal Impact: Viki Copeland, Finance Director

Legal Review: Mike Jenkins, City Attorney

Approved: Suja Lowenthal, City Manager