



## City of Sacramento City Council

915 I Street, Sacramento, CA, 95814

[www.CityofSacramento.org](http://www.CityofSacramento.org)

**Meeting Date:** 6/26/2012

**Report Type:** Staff/Discussion

**Title:** Solid Waste and Recycling Division Business Plan Recommendations and Implementation

**Report ID:** 2012-00446

**Location:** Citywide

**Recommendation:** Pass a Resolution 1) approving the Solid Waste and Recycling Division (SW Division) 2012 Business Plan; 2) approving the proposed language for a potential ballot measure repealing Measure A, for use if the City Council determines at a subsequent time to call such a measure to the ballot; and 3) directing staff to report back to Council in December 2012 with an implementation plan.

**Contact:** Steve Harriman, Intergrated Waste General Manager, (916) 808-4949, General Services Department

**Presenter:** Steve Harriman, Intergrated Waste General Manager, (916) 808-4949, General Services Department

**Department:** General Services Dept

**Division:** Office of the Director

**Dept ID:** 13001021

**Attachments:**

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**City Attorney Review**

Approved as to Form  
Janeth D. San Pedro  
6/21/2012 9:42:47 AM

**City Treasurer Review**

Reviewed for Impact on Cash and Debt  
Russell Fehr  
6/7/2012 10:25:58 AM

**Approvals/Acknowledgements**

Department Director or Designee: Reina Schwartz - 6/20/2012 12:35:47 PM



## Description/Analysis

**Issue:** On March 20, 2012, SW Division staff presented the 2012 Business Plan to the City Council. The plan recommends the following changes to the City's residential solid waste collection services:

1. Shift the curbside recycling program from weekly to every-other-week collection;
2. Implement year-round containerized yard waste collection on a weekly basis for all City residential customers;
3. Provide Loose-in-the-Street (LITS) yard waste collection service for all City residential customers in November, December, and January; and
4. Restore the Appointment Based Neighborhood Cleanup Program from February through October, which was suspended in FY2009/10 for budgetary reasons.
5. Increase the staffing and equipment dedicated to the illegal dumping cleanup program with additional funding identified by staff in the Business Plan process.
6. Finally, based upon public comments received during the outreach process, staff recommends adding a pilot "dump coupon" program allowing residents to deliver up to 5 cubic yards of waste to the Sacramento Recycling and Transfer Station at no charge to the resident.

**Policy Considerations:** The implementation of the proposed year-round containerized yard waste collection program for all City residential customers requires the repeal of Measure A, an initiative ordinance passed in 1977, which prohibits the City Council from requiring containerized yard waste collection. Voter approval of a ballot measure repealing Measure A would provide the City Council the discretion to establish, by ordinance, mandatory containerized yard waste collection service. If Measure A is not repealed, the current yard waste hybrid collection system will continue whereby each City resident may choose between containerized or LITS yard waste collection service, and it is unlikely that all the proposed changes described above and outlined in the SW Business Plan could be implemented.

Staff seeks Council input and approval in concept of the proposed language for a potential ballot measure repealing Measure A, which is attached as Exhibit A to the Resolution.

Finally, the implementation of the proposed programs will require several revisions to City Code, including the provision of collection services for nonresidential properties, and the definitions, exemption allowances, minimum service requirements, and collection frequencies for the residential yard waste program.

### Environmental Considerations:

**California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):** The Environmental Planning Services Manager has determined that the recommended actions are exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, which exempts approval of an activity where there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment. If the City Council determines at a subsequent time to call to the ballot a measure repealing Measure A, the passage of such measure and the implementation of a

year-round containerized collection for yard waste would lessen the environmental effects associated with the City's current yard waste collection services, because it would reduce the number of vehicles used to collect the same yard waste materials currently being collected through the hybrid system.

**Sustainability Considerations:** Implementation of the proposed residential solid waste programs is consistent with the Sustainability Master Plan goal to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and lower the City's carbon footprint by reducing the number of collection vehicles. The implementation of the recommended service level changes will reduce carbon emissions generated by the City's solid waste fleet by an estimated five percent, fuel consumption by 83,000 gallons, and truck miles by 87,000 annually on City streets.

**Commission/Committee Action:** Over the past several months, SW Division staff has worked with the City Council Solid Waste Ad Hoc Committee, comprised of Councilmembers Angelique Ashby, Steve Cohn, and Darrell Fong, who have provided review and guidance on the business plan. In addition, the Sacramento Regional Solid Waste Advisory Committee and the Environmental Commission of Sacramento both received staff presentations and provided letters of support for the business plan (Attachment 5). Finally, staff has sought input on the proposed business plan from numerous neighborhood associations, focus groups, an on-line survey, and a comment blog. A list of outreach presentations is included in Attachment 4, a summary of the focus groups and survey results are included in Attachment 6, and a summary of comments received at community meetings is included in Attachment 7.

**Rationale for Recommendation:** In 2002, the City introduced the single stream residential curbside recycling program on a bi-weekly collection schedule. In an attempt to increase participation and recycling tonnage, the program shifted to weekly collection in 2006. Despite the increased frequency of collection, recycling tonnage increased by less than 10 percent over the past six years. Staff therefore recommends a switch back to biweekly recycling in an effort to save over \$1 million annually in operational costs.

In 2004, the City introduced containerized yard waste collection to select areas of the City on a voluntary basis. Between 2004 and 2010, the SW Division delivered yard waste cans to approximately 103,000 households within the City. Currently, less than 12,000 households continue to subscribe to the LITS program. The results of the current hybrid system include significant confusion among residents about the program, numerous illegal piles of yard waste on City streets creating aesthetic and safety impacts, inefficiency in collection operations, and the need under the California Constitution (Proposition 218) for a significant rate increase for current LITS customers to maintain current service levels.

The benefits of the proposed yard waste program with weekly containerized collection throughout the year and citywide LITS collection in November, December, and January include the following:

- Improved appearance of City streets and neighborhoods;
- Reduced yard waste in gutters and storm drains;
- Consistent citywide yard waste collection program for all customers;
- Simplified billing and customer service functions;
- Increased efficiency in yard waste collection operations;
- Citywide LITS service during heavy leaf-fall season;
- Cleaner and safer bicycle lanes; and

- Reduced vector and mosquito control issues by reducing standing water in gutters and storm drains.

The proposed SW Business Plan includes the return of the Neighborhood Cleanup Program from February through October. This very popular program, suspended in 2010, will allow residents to schedule one appointment per year between February and October for the collection of large items like appliances, furniture, e-waste, large yard waste, and other bulky items that will not fit in a garbage or yard waste can. The return of the Neighborhood Cleanup program is intended to improve customer service and reduce the level of illegal dumping in the City.

One of the comments posted on-line and received at outreach meeting with residents was that one appointment offered between February and October for the appointment based neighborhood cleanup program was insufficient. Staff therefore recommends a pilot dump coupon program as a method of providing additional disposal service to residential solid waste customers. Under the proposed pilot program, residents may request a dump coupon from the 311 call center allowing them to deliver up to five cubic yards of material to the Sacramento Recycling and Transfer Station at no charge to the resident. The City would then reimburse USA Waste of California for the corresponding tip fee.

Finally, staff was successful in securing additional funding for the illegal dumping collection program. On May 10, the Solid Waste Authority Board approved an increase in franchise fees paid by commercial waste haulers from 8% to 10%. This additional funding will provide an estimated \$400,000 annually to the City for the program. The FY13 illegal dumping program therefore includes two crews funded by the increased franchise fees (\$400,000), revenue from sale of recyclables from the City curbside recycling program (\$200,000), landscape and lighting funding (\$100,000), and gas tax (\$100,000).

**Financial Considerations:** If Measure A is repealed by City voters and the proposed program changes are implemented, residential solid waste customers will see no change in their overall monthly solid waste bill for three years, through June 30, 2015. Current LITS customers, however, will see a reduction of \$3.36 on their monthly solid waste bill.

If Measure A is not repealed by City voters, SW Division staff will seek direction from the City Council to make service level adjustments for LITS collection service. As fewer customers receive LITS collection service, the disparity in cost between containerized and LITS increases significantly. As the individual green waste piles become increasingly scattered throughout the City, the crews and vehicles must travel further distances between piles, resulting in more fuel and more time expended for collection. Maintaining existing LITS service levels will necessitate a significant increase in the current monthly rate of \$13.71 to a range of \$30-\$40 per month. This is to cover the cost of the service, as required under the California Constitution. Regardless of whether Measure A is repealed or not, the SW Division will proceed with a rate adjustment process to ensure that monthly charges for garbage, recycling, yard waste, and street sweeping services accurately reflect the costs to provide each of these services.

SW Division staff are currently reviewing the monthly rate for additional yard waste cans and developing a monthly rate for additional recycling cans requested by City residents. The proposed monthly rates for additional cans will likely fall in the range of \$2.00 to \$3.00 and will be presented to the Utilities Rate Advisory Commission and the City Council in early 2013.

**Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD):** Not applicable.



**Background**

**Yard Waste Program History**

- September 27, 1977** City residents passed an initiative ordinance, Measure A, prohibiting mandatory containerization of yard and garden refuse (yard waste) materials.
  
- August 6, 2004** The City Council adopted City Code revisions establishing the Voluntary Containerized Collection Service Program for yard waste materials. Under the program, residential property owners in the City who qualify for the Program may switch to containerized yard waste collection service from loose-in-the-street collection.
  
- October 2004 – October 2010** Delivery of yard waste containers to 103,000 households in all neighborhoods in the City.



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## Attachment 2

### Key Dates for the 2012 Solid Waste of Business Plan

<b>April 2011</b>	Department of Utilities (DOU) Operational Efficiency and Cost Savings Audit recommended the creation of the business plan
<b>March 20, 2012</b>	Proposed business plan presented to the City Council. Staff is directed to seek input from the community on the business plan. A three-member City Council ad hoc committee is also created, to provide input on the business plan implementation process.
<b>June 26, 2012</b>	SW Division staff requests City Council approval of the business plan.
<b>July 24, 2012</b>	If City Council determines to call measure repealing Measure A to the ballot, last day for Council to adopt a resolution placing the Measure A repeal on the November 6, 2012 ballot.
<b>November 6, 2012</b>	Measure A repeal vote.
<b>Winter 2013</b>	SW Division to present new solid waste collection rates to the Utilities Rates Advisory Commission (URAC). Overall rates for individual households will not increase, but some adjustments will likely be needed among the different services (garbage, recycling, yard waste and street sweeping) to ensure accurate reflection of the costs to provide each of the different services.
<b>February 2013</b>	SW Division to present the City Code updates required to implement the business plan to the City Council's Law and Legislation (L&L) Committee
<b>March 2013</b>	SW Division staff to request approval of updated City Code.
<b>June 2013</b>	Yard waste cans to be delivered to remaining Loose-in-the-Street (LITS) customers.
<b>July 1, 2013</b>	Projected implementation date for new services.



## Attachment 3

### **Text of Measure A, adopted September 27, 1977:**

“BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO.”

Section 1. Yard and Garden Refuse; deposit and collection.

That yard and garden refuse deposit and collection shall be conducted consistent with Sections 19.401 et seq. of the Code of the City of Sacramento (Ord. 3685, Section 4, effective 6-24-76) to the end that mandatory containerization of yard and garden refuse shall not be required in the City of Sacramento.

Section 2. Yard and Garden Refuse; deposit and collection voter approval.

That the ordinance enacted pursuant to Section 1 above shall not be repealed or amended except by a vote of the majority of the electors of the City of Sacramento at any municipal election.



**Commissions and Neighborhood Associations**

The Solid Waste and Recycling Division staff presented the 2012 Business Plan to the following organizations:

<b>Neighborhood Association</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>District</b>
North Laguna Creek Neighborhood Association	March 21, 2012	8
Sacramento Regional Solid Waste Advisory Committee	April 3, 2012	Citywide
Focus Groups Crocker and Crocker	April 10 and 26, 2012	Citywide
South Land Park Neighborhood Association	April 12, 2012	5
Environmental Commission of Sacramento	April 16, 2012	Citywide
Town Hall Meeting at Kennedy High School	April 19, 2012	7
Southgate Meadows Neighborhood Association	May 10, 2012	8
River Park Neighborhood Association	May 10, 2012	3
Valley View Acres Neighborhood Association	May 16, 2012	1
Colonial Village Neighborhood Association	May 23, 2012	5
Tallac Village Neighborhood Association	May 23, 2012	6
Utilities Rate Advisory Commission	May 23, 2012	Citywide
Midtown/Downtown Town Hall Meeting	May 31, 2012	4
East Sacramento Improvement Association	June 4, 2012	3
Tahoe Park Neighborhood Association	June 4, 2012	6
Ben Ali Community Association	June 6, 2012	2
Hagginwood Community Association	June 6, 2012	2
McKinley Park Neighborhood Association	June 6, 2012	3
Woodlake Neighborhood Association	June 6, 2012	2
Oak Park Neighborhood Association	June 7, 2012	5
Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates	June 8, 2012	Citywide
Rental Housing Association of Sacramento	June 13, 2012	Citywide
Robla Community Action Committee	June 13, 2012	2
College/Glen Neighborhood Association	June 14, 2012	6
Gardenland/Northgate Neighborhood Association	June 14, 2012	3
East Sacramento Preservation Committee	June 16, 2012	3
Land Park Community Association	July 18, 2012	4
South Pocket Neighborhood Association	June 20, 2012	7



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## Attachment 5

### Letters of Support

The Solid Waste and Recycling Division received the following letters of support for the 2012 Business Plan proposed service changes.

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***SACRAMENTO ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION***

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*Marjorie Namba, Chair*  
*Diana Parker, Vice Chair*  
*Andrea Leisy*  
*Jason McCoy*  
*Robert Bailey*  
*Dana Curran*  
*George "Buzz" Link*  
*James Ching*  
*Mark White*

*A JOINT COMMISSION APPOINTED BY:*  
*County of Sacramento*  
*City of Sacramento*  
*City of Isleton*  
*City of Folsom*  
*City of Galt*

May 15, 2012

Mr. Steve Harriman  
Integrated Waste General Manager  
City of Sacramento Solid Waste and Recycling Division  
2812 Meadowview Road  
Sacramento, CA 95832

RE: 2012 BUSINESS PLAN

Dear Mr. Harriman:

Thank you for your presentation to the Sacramento "Environmental Commission (SEC) on April 16, 2012. The Commission voted unanimously to support the proposed 2012 Business Plan for the Solid Waste and Recycling Division of The City of Sacramento's Department of Utilities.

The Commission support the stated goals to stabilize rate for three years; the reduce customer confusion, fuel consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, and truck miles driven on City streets; and to improve public education and outreach regarding solid waste disposal and the appearance of City streets.

The SEC strives to promote its vision of environmental quality, conservation, public health, and sustainability throughout the County. The proposed 2012 Business Plan is consistent with our vision.

Again, we would like to state the Sacramento Environmental Commission (SEC) supports your 2012 Business Plan.

Sincerely,



Marjorie M. Namba  
Chair

MMN:vmk

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(916) 875-8584

10590 Armstrong Avenue, Mather, CA 95655

sec@saccounty.net

**SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE & AB 939 LOCAL TASK FORCE  
SACRAMENTO CITIES & COUNTY**

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**Integrated Waste  
Management Plan  
Elements**

Public education  
Source reduction  
Recycling  
Composting  
Transformation  
Materials recovery  
Resource recovery  
Marketing  
Storage of refuse  
Storage of recyclables  
Waste storage  
Waste collection  
Waste transfer  
Waste processing  
Waste disposal

**Members**

Sacramento County  
Cities:  
Citrus Heights  
Elk Grove  
Folsom  
Galt  
Isleton  
Rancho Cordova  
Sacramento

April 9, 2012

Mr. Steve Harriman, Integrated Waste General Manager  
City of Sacramento Solid Waste and Recycling Division  
2812 Meadowview Road  
Sacramento, CA 95832

Subject: SWAC Support for City of Sacramento Solid Waste and Recycling  
Division Business Plan

Dear Mr. Harriman:

The Sacramento Cities/County Advisory Committee (SWAC) took considerable interest in your presentation at our April meeting on the City's 2012 Solid Waste and Recycling Division Business Plan. The SWAC adopted a motion, by unanimous vote of those members present at its April 3rd meeting, to authorize the SWAC Chairman to send a letter of support for the business plan.

In particular, the SWAC recognizes and supports the stated plan goals to reduce customer confusion, meet customer needs, improve public education and outreach, improve the appearance of streets, reduce fuel usage and GHG impacts, and stabilize rates.

On behalf of the SWAC, I am pleased to provide this letter of support and wish you and the City success in implementing the plan.

Sincerely,



Steve Peterson, Chairman  
Sacramento Cities / County Solid Waste Advisory Committee

cc: SWAC Members, staff

**Mission:** SWAC shall act as the AB 939 Local Task Force and advise the Sacramento Regional Solid Waste Authority, the County of Sacramento Board of Supervisors and the city councils of the cities of Citrus Heights, Elk Grove, Folsom, Galt, Isleton, Rancho Cordova, and Sacramento on all matters relating to the County of Sacramento Integrated Waste Management Plan and all its elements.



**City of Sacramento's Solid Waste and Recycling Division  
Proposed Service Changes and Measure A  
Research and Stakeholder Input Summary  
June 14, 2012—FINAL**

This summary aggregates the results from qualitative and quantitative research and input regarding the proposed solid waste service changes that would keep rates stable for three years and a likely vote on a November ballot measure to overturn Measure A to allow the City of Sacramento to mandate containers for yard waste. The research and data collection includes the following components:

- Online web survey with 1,050 respondents
- Three focus groups consisting of 30 total participants
- A telephone survey with questions about services changes
- Online blog with questions and comments from website visitors

**Conclusions**

The research findings indicated a strong majority of residents were in favor of the proposed service changes if it meant no rate increase for three years, a small minority of residents were not in favor of those changes and a smaller percentage were unsure.

The primary reason for not supporting the recycling service change was the concern that residents had too much recycling for every other week pickup. In the focus groups, some residents had solutions to deal with too many recyclables for one container such as getting a second container, partnering with neighbors who don't fill their own container or filling their container differently. There was significant confusion about recycling services. Many didn't know they could have more than one container or different sizes were available. There was also confusion about what's allowed in the recycling containers.

The primary reason for not supporting the change to yard waste service was the desire by loose-in-the-street customers to maintain the service because they have too much yard waste for a container and the three months of December – February of loose-in-the-street pickup would not meet their needs. In a qualitative, random-sample telephone survey conducted in late 2011 asked a few questions about service changes and rates. In that survey, about half the residents who only use loose-in-the-street said nothing would prevent them from switching.

However, there were some residents who were adamant about keeping the current loose-in-the-street program because they have too much yard waste, don't have room for another container or feel that it's the right of Sacramentans to have street pickup and not be forced to use a container. In

one focus group, participants were willing to pay over two times their current rates to maintain the service.

The primary reason for residents to favor the proposed changes is the benefit of no rate increase for three years along with the return of the neighborhood cleanup program. Secondary reasons include reduction of clogs and contaminants in storm drains, improving pedestrian and cyclist safety and making streets cleaner and more attractive.

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## I. Online Survey

The City of Sacramento's Solid Waste and Recycling Division posted an online survey on CleanerStreets.com to gain input and insights from customers on the proposed change of services, vote on Measure A and overall satisfaction level with services.

### Methodology and Results

The survey was posted on CleanerStreets.com on March 23, 2012. This report includes responses from March 23 through June 14. Unlike a random sample survey, an online survey is self selecting which means participants choose whether or not to take the survey. A self-selecting survey draws interested participants and is not as statistically valid as a phone survey where a random sample of the total population is obtained.

Through June 14, 1,050 surveys were completed. Relative to percentages, the online survey was skewed towards loose-in-the-street customers with about 25 percent of respondents currently without a container compared to 7 percent of Sacramento's total customer base with no containers.

Below is a list of major online survey findings:

### Recycling Service Change

- 72.6 percent of respondents supported a change to every other week recycling if it meant no rate increase for three years. 21.4 percent said they didn't support the change and 6 percent were unsure or needed more information.
- 46.7 percent of respondents said one container would always meet their needs while 36 percent said one container would sometimes meet their needs. 15.1 percent said one container would never meet their needs.

### Yard Waste Service Change

- 71.9 percent of respondents said they have a container for yard waste. 27.3 percent said they don't have a container.
- 62.1 percent of respondents supported mandatory containerized yard waste if it meant no rate increases for three years while 29.5 percent opposed mandatory containers and about 8.5 percent were not sure or needed more information.

- When asked whether the proposed changes with three months of loose-in-the-street yard waste pick up would meet their needs, 58.9 percent of respondents said yes while about 32.4 percent said no.

### **Neighborhood Cleanup Change**

- 88 percent of respondents were in favor of bringing back the neighborhood cleanup program for bulky items such as old appliances, furniture and large yard waste. 3.7 percent were opposed to the service change and 8.3 percent were not sure.

### **Overall Support of Solid Waste Service Changes**

- When asked about the service changes in total and based on benefits of the program, 58.5 percent of the respondents were in favor, 29.1 percent were not supportive and 12.4 percent were not sure or needed more information.

### **Support to Overturn Measure A**

- When it comes to the likelihood that respondents would vote to approve a November ballot measure to overturn Measure A and allow the City of Sacramento to mandate containerized yard waste for everyone, 66.3 percent of respondents said they were very likely or somewhat likely to vote yes. 30.1 percent would vote no and 3.6 percent were unsure.

### **Satisfaction with Sacramento's solid waste services**

- Respondents were overwhelmingly satisfied with Sacramento's garbage, recycling and yard waste services. 39.5 percent were very satisfied, 41.2 percent were somewhat satisfied, 12.3 percent were somewhat unsatisfied, 6.2 percent were very unsatisfied and 0.8 percent were not sure. These satisfaction levels skew to the negative compared to the statistically accurate telephone survey previously done which ranked satisfaction levels higher.

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## **II. Focus Groups**

The City of Sacramento's Solid Waste and Recycling Division held three focus groups in April 2012 to determine the opinions, perceptions and levels of understanding of customers about proposed service level changes, a potential rate stabilization program and potential reinstatement of a former service program. Specifically, the topics included changing recycling from weekly to every other week, reinstating the neighborhood clean-up program and moving all customers to containerized yard waste cleanup with loose-in-the-street cleanup only November-January. The topic of Measure A potentially being placed on the November 2012 ballot was also discussed.

### **Methodology and Results**

Participants were asked a series of questions for approximately 90 minutes. Focus groups are a qualitative research method, not quantitative. In other words, the findings cannot be generalized across the broader population like a phone survey or other quantitative methods. However, the findings provide excellent insights into perceptions that drive behaviors and opinions. Focus groups generally yield different results from group to group which is why it is important to conduct several groups as opinion leaders, group dynamics and group makeup will develop different outcomes.

Screening criteria were developed to ensure representation from the areas where the city was seeking more information and the overall population base within the city. It also helped produce participants who engaged in discussion with the issues and interests being represented. Thirty residents participated; 20 in two general population groups and 10 in a group comprised mostly of loose-in-the-street customers.

Overall, the proposed service changes were fairly well received when they were unveiled in their entirety. The participants with loose-in-the-street were the most vocal and had the strongest concerns about changes to the yard waste program. They had different reasons based on their different situations but basically felt that they had too much yard waste for a container and three-months of street service was not enough or the months selected were not sufficient. The negativity about losing loose-in-the-street seemed to be reflected in the program changes overall and they were equally expressive about losing the weekly recycling program. These participants overall were willing to pay up to two times their current rates to keep their loose-in-the-street pickup to comply with Prop 218.

Most of the participants favored changing recycling service from weekly to every other week. However, there were concerns by about half the participants that they might have too much recycling for every other week and that may result in some recyclables in the garbage container. Others said planning could solve the problem by using neighbor's containers or holding it until the next pickup.

The focus groups clearly demonstrated confusion and misunderstanding about solid waste services and schedules especially about yard waste services and neighborhood cleanup services and whether the services was still in existence.

Below is a list of major findings from the focus groups:

### **Recycling Service Change**

- Overall, participant reactions were mixed but their comments were more positive than negative about the service level change when they considered it as part of the rate stabilization plan. The strongest theme throughout the focus groups was keeping rates stable even though this service would be reduced.
- One group was more strongly negative. They did not agree with losing this service and generally felt that keeping rates the same -- but cutting service in half -- was almost like doubling the rate. Other groups were mixed and felt it largely depended on family size and amount of recycling each week. For those with minimal recycling, the change of service was positive. Those with a lot of recycling said didn't see how they could fit in more into their container. They felt that they may end up putting recycling in the garbage container if they don't have room in their recycling container.
- Other discussions focused on circumstances such as heavy use around the holidays and large families that generated a lot of recyclables each week. A few people said they could manage a decrease in service by working together in the neighborhood and "sharing" containers, packing

containers differently or taking recycling to a recycling center. Many participants expressed the need for more education about services and solutions.

### **Yard Waste Service Change**

- Of the three groups, the loose-in-the-street group had the biggest concerns about the potential for losing this service. Specific concerns ranged from too much overall yard waste for a container to concerns about street pickup only during November through January. Many participants strongly wanted spring and fall street pick-ups as well saying they had significant leaves outside the proposed three-month window of street service. They strongly wanted the program to stay as it is currently offered.
- The loose-in-the-street group seemed willing overall to pay more for their service with almost all saying they would accept more than double their current rates in order to comply with Prop 218 rather than lose the weekly service. It was difficult to stay on the topic of rate increases because the topic of the months selected (November-January) dominated the discussion.
- Focus groups of primarily containerized yard waste customers liked the change to all containerized service because it created cleaner, more attractive streets and provided safer conditions for cyclists and pedestrians. The reduction in storm drain clogs was another reason for moving containerized yard waste, according to a few participants. There was confusion about the specifics of the eight-time pick up each year and three months would bring clarity. There was some concern about what to do with extensive yard waste outside the three-month period because of spring pruning and leaves in November and March. Some participants pointed out that it would require better planning and possible use of the neighborhood cleanup program for extensive yard waste.
- Most containerized yard waste customers considered the proposed change to be cleaner and safer. They felt people would adapt to change and that people with bigger yards should be willing to change behaviors to accommodate having a large yard.

### **Neighborhood Cleanup Change**

- Almost everyone expressed excitement, except most of the loose-in-the-street participants, about the return of the program. They felt this would be a big offset to rate stabilization, losing weekly recycling and not having the fall and spring loose-in-the-street pick up program. There remained a lot of confusion about the current and past program.

### **Support to Overturn Measure A**

- No one in the loose-in-the-street group was willing to repeal Measure A because of either the months selected or there was no way to handle all the yard waste. The general population groups had most participants leaning toward voting to repeal Measure A, citing safety issues, consistency of the program and desire for cleaner streets. Some who did not want to repeal the measure stated that their pile didn't negatively affect anyone. They stated that they had a large yard and need loose-in-the-street to accommodate excessive yard waste.

## **Message Testing**

The most highly ranked messages, which were asked at the end of the focus groups, were:

- Keeps rates at current levels for three years
- Improves safety of neighborhoods and streets
- Allows return of neighborhood cleanup program
- Improves air quality
- Helps the city be more efficient by having everyone on the same program

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## **III. Previous Telephone Survey**

In a City of Sacramento 2011 Solid Waste Survey, a number of questions were asked about recycling and yard waste service changes and rates which were relevant to understanding resident's feeling on proposed service changes now.

### **Methodology and Results**

The telephone survey was a random sample of 400 respondents yielding a plus/minus 5 percent margin of error creating a statistically valid sample size. The survey included residents who use containerized yard waste and those that only have loose-in-the-street pickup. The results clearly indicated that residents would accept a decrease in service for both recycling and yard waste pickup if it meant rates would not go up.

Below is a list of the most notable findings.

- 65.5 percent of respondents said they would be willing to have recycling picked up every other week rather than weekly if that meant no increase in rates. 37.8 percent said they were not willing.
- Of the respondents with just loose-in-the-street service, 35.2 percent were not favor of containerized yard waste because they have too much waste for one container. 7 percent said they didn't have room in their yard for another container, 5.6 percent said they didn't know they could have a container and 52.1 percent none of the reasons would prevent them using a yard waste container.
- 63.8 percent were in favor bringing back neighborhood cleanup while 36.3 percent said they were not in favor.
- Regarding the current eight pre-scheduled loose-in-the-street yard waste pickups for customers with yard waste containers, 68.5 percent never use the service and 19.1 percent use it twice a year and 24.7 percent didn't know it existed.

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#### IV. Online Blog with Questions and Comments

A blog was added to the CleanerStreets.com website on March 23, 2012. Its purpose was to allow visitors to ask questions, comment on proposed service changes and enter into dialogue with others. This forum was provided to allow residents to have the opportunity to comment, share ideas and ask questions as long as the posts were on topic and not obscene.

#### Methodology and Results

As with many blogs of this type, comments skew to the negative based on providing a forum for ardent opponents to share their concerns, complaints and issues. As of the writing of this report, the website blog received about 250 comments.

Below is a list of prominent discussion threads from the blog.

- Many comments focused on the concern that the proposed November through January loose-in-the-street pickup would not be sufficient. Themes focused on concerns that tree trimming and pruning do not coincide with the November through January pickup dates proposed in the plan.
- Every other week recycling pickup comments generally focused on concerns that they fill their recycling container every week and have too much for every other week pickup. There was also discussion about the waste stream and that the city should be encouraging people to recycle more and possibly change garbage collection to every other week and garbage collection to bi-weekly.
- Most comments were in favor of the appointment-based neighborhood cleanup program. Residents felt this would help clean up their neighborhoods and help them handle hard-to-dispose of waste.
- Those that were in favor of the proposed plan primarily appreciated the city's efforts to stabilize rates.
- There were a fair amount of comments/concerns about the "city's trees." Residents felt the trees in front of their homes that were planted by the city create a large amount of yard waste. They do not feel they should need to "deal with it" but the city should and having a container makes the problem worse since they won't be able to adequately dispose of the yard waste.



**Summary of Comments from Outreach Efforts**

This section summarizes, by theme, the comments and ideas received by City staff from the public through:

- focus groups
- the online survey
- neighborhood meetings
- the comments on the CleanerStreets.com web site
- public committees

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Response</b>
<p><i>Containerized yard waste will not work at my house because the can is too small for the quantity of material generated by my yard.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed program includes citywide loose-in-the-street yard waste collection in November, December and January during the heavy leaf-fall season. The proposed program also includes <i>weekly</i> containerized yard waste collection year-round.</li> <li>• The combination of the seasonal loose-in-the-street program and the year round containerized program provide a significantly higher level of yard waste service than any of the surrounding jurisdictions in Sacramento County, which provide only every-other-week containerized yard waste collection. These other jurisdictions have very successful yard waste collection programs that provide adequate service for homeowners.</li> <li>• The proposed program also includes the return of the appointment based neighborhood cleanup program. Residents may schedule an appointment for the collection of large items between February and October, including large quantities of yard waste generated from major pruning or other landscaping projects. Additional yard waste containers, offered at a reduced price, are also available for customers who wish to have extra weekly capacity.</li> <li>• Leaves and grass clippings fit easily into a yard waste can. Prunings and branches need to be cut into smaller sizes to maximize space in the cart. Some residents with large yards use chippers to reduce the size of branches and prunings prior to placement in the can.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Why should I be required to clean up leaves from City Street Trees?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City code requires property owners to maintain their properties, including maintenance easements where City</li> </ul>

	<p>trees are planted. It is the responsibility of property owners/tenants to keep all trees on their property, including trees located in an easement dedicated to the public, trimmed and maintained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The City operates a street sweeping program that cleans asphalt surfaces and gutters in the public right of way where leaves fall.</li> <li>• City Street Trees are a benefit to the property owners, as they increase property values, provide shade during summer months, and contribute to the aesthetics of City neighborhoods.</li> </ul>
<p><i>I am physically unable to move my garbage, recycling, and yard waste cans to the street on collection day.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Solid Waste and Recycling Division has a program to assist elderly and disabled residents with the retrieval of trash, recycling, and yard waste containers from their property on collection day. Residents may call 3-1-1 (916-264-5011) to request an application for the service.</li> <li>• The Solid Waste and Recycling Division is also evaluating smaller yard waste cans for residents who have trouble moving larger cans.</li> </ul>
<p><i>There is no room for a yard waste can on my property.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It can be difficult to accommodate three cans for garbage, recycling and yard waste on some properties. The Solid Waste and Recycling Division offers 32, 64 and 96 gallon garbage cans, and is considering a smaller yard waste can for customers with limited storage.</li> <li>• Other jurisdictions in the region and throughout the state have three-can systems and residents have successfully organized the storage of containers in their garages or backyards / side yards.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Bi-weekly recycling may cause recyclables to be thrown away in the trash.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This may be true. However, the increase in recycling tonnage when the City switched from bi-weekly to weekly collection in 2006 is approximately 8.5% per year.</li> <li>• The switch to bi-weekly recycling will save over \$1 million per year in operational expenses, reduce 87,000 vehicle miles and save 83,000 gallons of fuel.</li> <li>• Space in a can may be saved by breaking down boxes and other bulky product packaging. Additional recycling cans are available for those who may need them.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Why can't garbage be collected bi-weekly instead of recycling?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Garbage is required to be collected weekly to comply with state law and city codes.</li> </ul>
<p><i>We support the proposal to keep current solid waste rates</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Solid Waste and Recycling Division has developed the proposed package of programs in order to maintain</li> </ul>

<p><i>constant for three years.</i></p>	<p>current customer rates for three years. Many residents live on a fixed income and the local economy is struggling, so a rate increase would not likely receive community support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current LITS customers would actually see a rate decrease of \$3.36 per month.</li> </ul>
<p><i>We support bringing back the appointment based neighborhood cleanup program.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bringing back the neighborhood cleanup program is intended to reduce illegal dumping and increase customer service.</li> <li>• The program may be used for large quantities of yard waste from February through October.</li> </ul>
<p><i>One bulky item appointment between February and October is not sufficient.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based upon feedback received during the outreach process, staff recommends a pilot dump coupon program. This would allow each customer to request a coupon to deliver waste to the Sacramento Recycling and Transfer Station at no charge.</li> <li>• Staff would monitor the performance and results of the pilot program and report back to the City Council after the first year.</li> <li>• A coupon program has no impact on collection operations, however the City will reimburse USA Waste of California for the tip-fees.</li> </ul>
<p><i>The College Glen Neighborhood Association presented the following alternative proposal:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>3 weeks per month of containerized yard waste collection;</i></li> <li>- <i>1 week per month of Loose-In-The-Street yard waste collection;</i></li> <li>- <i>A coupon program that would allow 1 large item collection by City crews or 2 deliveries by the resident of large items to the Sacramento Recycling and Transfer Station;</i></li> <li>- <i>Monthly street sweeping directly after LITS collection</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to current estimates, the CGNA proposal would increase operational expenses by approximately \$3.6M in the first year compared to the proposed programs.</li> <li>• The four week rotation for yard waste collection would result in significant confusion among residents.</li> <li>• A significant number of yard waste piles would be deposited on City streets between monthly LITS collection as there would be no incentive for residents to use the yard waste can.</li> </ul>



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## RESOLUTION NO.

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

### **APPROVE BUSINESS PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS; BALLOT MEASURE LANGUAGE TO REPEAL MEASURE A; AND AUTHORIZE PLACEMENT OF THE MEASURE ON THE GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT**

#### **BACKGROUND**

- A. In April 2011, the Department of Utilities (DOU) Operational Efficiency and Cost Savings Audit recommended that the Solid Waste and Recycling Division (“Division”) implement a new business plan to address recommendations outlined in the audit and additional potential efficiencies and service changes.
- B. The Division engaged industry leader HFH Consultants to assist with developing a strategy that includes specific service recommendations, including adjusting residential collection service levels to make operations more efficient and maximize service with minimal rate changes.
- C. In an effort to make operations more efficient and maximize service with minimal rate changes, the Division presented the 2012 Business Plan to City Council on March 20, 2012, with the following changes to the residential solid waste collection services: year-round weekly containerized yard waste collection service, with loose-in-the-street (LITS) collection citywide only during leaf season (November-January); appointment-based Neighborhood Cleanup Program (February-October) to provide one large item collection annually per household; and bi-weekly curbside recycling collection service.
- D. In order to fully implement all of the proposed changes described above, voter approval of a ballot measure repealing Measure A would be required.
- E. Since 2004, the City’s Solid Waste division has offered containerized yard waste collection to select areas of the City on a voluntary participation basis. Some of the benefits of containerized yard waste collection include lower cost to the customer due to the reduced number of vehicles needed for collection and reduced accumulation of yard waste in storm drains.
- F. Over 103,000 customers currently subscribe to the voluntary containerized yard waste collection program.
- G. Implementation of all of the proposed program changes outlined in the 2012 Business Plan will allow the overall monthly solid waste rates to remain constant for three years, through June 30, 2015.

**BASED ON THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE BACKGROUND, THE CITY COUNCIL RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:**

- Section 1. The 2012 Solid Waste and Recycling Division Business Plan, attached as Exhibit B, is approved.
- Section 2. The proposed language for a potential ballot measure repealing Measure A, as set forth in Exhibit A, is approved.
- Section 3. Staff is directed to report back to City Council in December 2012 with an implementation plan.
- Section 4. Exhibits A and B are part of this Resolution.

**Table of Contents:**

- Exhibit A: Ballot Measure Language
- Exhibit B: 2012 Solid Waste and Recycling Division Business Plan



**MEASURE XXX**

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**Relating to the deposit and collection of yard and garden refuse in the City of Sacramento.**

Shall the ordinance enacted by voter approval of Measure A at the City of Sacramento municipal election on September 27, 1977 be repealed, which would then allow the Sacramento City Council to require yard and garden refuse to be placed into containers for collection?

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**Full Text of Measure XXX**

**AN ORDINANCE ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO REPEALING THE ORDINANCE ENACTED BY THE ADOPTION OF MEASURE A ON SEPTEMBER 27, 1977, RELATING TO THE DEPOSIT AND COLLECTION OF YARD AND GARDEN REFUSE IN THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO**

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:

**SECTION 1.**        Repeal of Measure A.

The ordinance enacted by the adoption of Measure A at the City of Sacramento municipal election on September 27, 1977, relating to yard and garden refuse deposit and collection and prohibiting mandatory containerization of yard and garden refuse in the City of Sacramento, shall be and is hereby repealed.

**SECTION 2.**        Purpose and Intent.

The purpose and intent of repealing the ordinance enacted by the adoption of Measure A at the City of Sacramento municipal election on September 27, 1977 is to allow the City of Sacramento to implement a Citywide containerized yard waste collection program combined with a seasonal loose-in-the-street yard waste collection program, and a large item collection program.



**EXHIBIT B**

**2012 Solid Waste and Recycling Division Business Plan**

	<b>Current Services</b>	<b>Proposed Services</b>
Garbage	Weekly	Weekly
Recyclables	Weekly	Biweekly
Containerized yard waste collection	Weekly on subscription basis <i>(103,000 customers)</i>	Weekly Citywide <i>(100% of customers)</i>
Loose-in-the-street (LITS) yard waste collection	Periodic on subscription basis <i>(12,000 customers)</i>	Citywide November, December and January
Neighborhood Cleanup Program	Suspended	February thru October Appointment based
Pilot "Dump Coupon" Program	N/A	One coupon per year for up to 5 cubic yards of free disposal at Transfer Station <i>(limit 5,000 in first year)</i>
Public education	Limited and not well defined	New focused approach