

Roadmap to a Sustainable Waste Management Future Subcommittee Meeting

Los Angeles County Department of Public Works
900 S. Fremont Ave, Alhambra CA 91803
Conference Rooms B & C

Thursday, April 13, 2017
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

MEETING SUMMARY

Welcome and Introductions

Vanessa Olivas, Public Works

- Attendees were welcomed and participants introduced themselves.
- Attendees were informed about Public Works Environmental Programs Division's Spring Cleaning efforts. Environmental Programs Division at Public Works is gathering unneeded office supplies and items from each staff to offer it to others in the Division, Department, County Departments, and lastly to approved non-profit organizations in that specific order pursuant to the County Surplus Program.

Meet Each Need with Dignity (MEND) Tour Summary

Armando Aguilar, Public Works (Presentation begins on slide [#3](#))

- MEND welcomed members of the Roadmap to visit and tour their facility in Pacoima, CA.
- MEND is a non-profit organization, founded in 1971 by a group of volunteers working out of their garages to fight poverty. Today it operates a modern facility that serves an average of 37,000 people a month.
 - With dignity and respect, powered by volunteers, MEND's mission is to break the bonds of poverty by providing basic human needs and a pathway to self-reliance.
- When someone comes in to the facility seeking assistance, they conduct a needs assessment to determine their level of need. They have people lined up every day before they open.
- When they designed their new facility, they did not want it to look like a shelter, so the first floor was designed to look like a shopping mall. Their clothing department, for example, is built to look like a storefront.
- Job training programs are provided to teach job skills, English classes, math and science tutoring for kids, as well as general learning for adults, such as computer skills or sewing classes.
- Their food bank serves about 20,000 people a month, both on site and through 67 partner organizations. Boxes of nutritious food are passed out to families and bags are passed out to single homeless individuals. They emphasize fresh foods over processed food.

- Their Food Rescue Program rescues over 200,000 pounds of food per month, most of it coming from local stores, farms, distributors, individuals and churches. They pick up daily from stores like Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, Albertsons, and Ralphs.
- Their Health Center run by volunteer health professionals provides medical, dental, and vision care. Their dental lab provides all kinds of dental care. Other health services provided include:
 - diabetes care
 - acupuncture
 - chiropractic
 - prenatal care
 - women's health, amongst others
- They have a home garden program for kids called Seed to Supper, where they teach kids about gardening and cooking using the fresh veggies and herbs they grow.

Los Angeles County Food Donation Program

Larissa Yu, Public Works (Presentation begins on slide [#8](#))

- The Food Donation and Recovery and Outreach Program, also known as Food DROP, connects businesses in the County unincorporated communities (CUC) with food recovery agencies.
- Why Food DROP? Laws such as AB 1826 and SB 1383 require a reduction in organic waste being sent to landfills and require edible food be recovered for human consumption.
- Food waste is the most prevalent material in the CUC waste stream, making up 17%, or 128,000 tons a year.
- 1 in 7 people are food insecure and 47,000 persons are homeless in L.A. County.
- Food DROP and Waste Not OC are similar in that they connect businesses to food recovery organizations, they train and recognize donors and create an online database of nearby food recovery organizations. They differ in that Waste Not OC partners only with Food Finders in the cities of Anaheim and Orange, while Food DROP partners with over 60 agencies and is open to all businesses in the CUC.
- Public Works is taking the lead on this effort, partnering with Public Health, the Los Angeles County Food Redistribution Initiative (LACFRI), the Roadmap Working Group, food recovery agencies and business associations.
- Food DROP has identified and surveyed food recovery agencies and businesses in L.A. County that we can partner with. Outreach materials and a website are being developed.
- Why is the program only in the CUC and not Countywide? Public Works has jurisdiction over businesses in the CUC, so we are focusing on these, at least for the planning stages. Businesses in cities can use our toolkits and resources if they want to donate food, however.
- Should food donation be incentivized?
 - There is a tax write-off for food donation. Businesses can quantify how much food they donate for tax purposes.
 - Window decals could serve to recognize businesses for their donations and for shopper awareness. However, it would require a system for renewing the decals and some donors may drop off because they improved their logistics and have less excess food to donate.
 - Recognize food donors on the Smart Business website.

- Wholesale produce markets throw way large amounts of food. Sometimes food packaging is not in compliance and can't be sold, but it can be donated. Educate inspectors to provide options to businesses other than throwing food away.
 - Inspectors don't always discuss these options because of politics, language barriers.
 - Contact cities' chambers of commerce to help spread information.
- How to transport food from businesses? Waste Not OC has a partnership with taxi services. Partnerships with ride sharing services like Uber/Lyft?
- Many CUC businesses are restaurants. Where can we take prepared food? Not all food donation organizations take prepared food.
 - Missions and shelters can take prepared food for the homeless.
 - Possible partners are the homeless initiative, Department of Public Social Services, churches.
- Alternatives to food donation discussed:
 - App called BuffetGo allows people to purchase uneaten buffet food for cheap instead of throwing it away.
 - In some jurisdictions food placed out in a buffet line cannot be donated. For example, in Las Vegas excess food is taken to pig farms.
 - In Hawaii, the County government invested in providing carts to businesses to make it feasible for them to take leftover food to pig farms. What can we do to help? Can we invest in trucks, refrigerators, etc.?

Breakout Sessions

- County Unincorporated Communities and Regional/Countywide – Source Reduction and Reuse
 - Reuse – CUC Strategy 1 Initiative A, CUC Strategy 3 Initiative D, R/C Strategy 3, Initiative D
 - Map out existing infrastructure for reuse type stores to see what already exists and identify if there are areas where there is a need for the County to fill in the gap
 - Support existing infrastructure, such as non-profits to continue providing these reuse/recovery services
 - Bicycle trade/repair shops are starting to pop up that teach people how to fix their bikes
 - i. Bicycle Kitchen, Eco Village, Heliotrope, Biker Wave
 - Repair cafes
 - Develop or support an app like Donors Choose where people place items on the app specifically for schools to take from
 - i. Can also use LACoMAX
 - ii. LA Shares
 - Food DROP – CUC Strategy 1 Initiative D, CUC Strategy 4 Initiative A, CUC Strategy 4 Initiative B, R/C Strategy 1 Initiative C
 - How to engage businesses
 - i. Attend conferences that those types of businesses are likely to attend
 - ii. Chambers for Associations – outreach materials, events
 - Marketing

- i. Demonstration project/press release – This is what food donation looks like – include visuals of kitchens that are donating
 - a. Animation or recipient/family testimonials - This is who you are helping – include students, peers, families, mentally disabled, physically disabled patrons
- County Operations – Tools for increased diversion
 - Discussed need and identified obstacles for improving diversion, especially of organic waste
 - Confirm that Department Facility Managers have open communication with their respective Department Recycling Coordinators and update each other of solid waste recycling and other diversion policies and practices.
 - Place bin signage of acceptable organic waste at individual County facilities. (Strategy 4, Initiative B3)
 - i. Will vary among facilities (even of the same department) due to hauler's local operational methods
 - Check with hauler to voluntarily educate staff at customer facilities about acceptable items for collection bins. (Strategy 4, Initiative B3)
 - Consider amending Facility Ancillary Services Master Agreement (FASMA) and departmental landscaping contracts to include outreach/education of facility customers about acceptable material per facility or geographic area at start of contract and when there are changes to acceptable materials. (Strategy 4, Initiative B3)
 - Consider amending Internal Services Department (ISD) and departmental janitorial contracts to require the vendor to reuse trash bags when minimal dry trash is collected and consider relocating waste bins from individual employee stations to cluster groups of employees to reduce the use of plastic trash liners, which makes up a large amount of total waste generated at County facilities per past County waste assessments. (Strategy 1, Initiative A1)
 - Consider having the Recycling and Surplus Programs provide outreach to department facilities and employees by developing a quarterly or annual facility report - dashboard of estimated weight of waste generated per employee compared to actual weight of material/product diverted through recycling services, including organic waste recycling, and surplus programs. (Strategy 2, Initiative B1)
 - Consider having the Recycling and Surplus Programs websites post overall Countywide reports on weight of waste generated per employee compared to actual weight of material/product diverted through recycling services, including organic waste recycling, and surplus programs. (Strategy 2, Initiative B1)
 - Next Steps
 - Public Works to send email reminder for subcommittee members to submit their list identifying more obstacles for improving diversion, especially of organic wastes.
 - Public Works to send Tier 1 and Tier 2 facility organics recycling letters to all Roadmap Workgroup participants for further outreach of organic waste recycling at County facilities.
 - Public Works to draft baseline report on results from initial Countywide Facility Survey (which will be conducted every five years) to relay to Roadmap Workgroup

/ Board of Supervisors and Department heads / facility managers to identify percentage of departments with room for improvement based on their responses to the Facility Survey. Based on the survey:

- There's a great need for rethinking the physical layout and operational flow to accommodate waste diversion
 - Great participation in paper recycling
 - Great participation in CRV container recycling
 - Great need for diversion of nontraditional recyclable items such as mattresses, uniforms, shoes, etc.
- Outreach and Education – County Food Donation Program and Expanded Beverage Container Recycling Program
 - Bring Your Own Flyer was distributed to Roadmap participants as well as Department Recycling Coordinators.
 - Attendees confirmed they received the flyer that was sent to all Roadmap participants. However, they did not receive it from their Department Recycling Coordinator. It was noted that one of the attendees was a Department Recycling Coordinator that does not recall receiving the email. We will look into this and resend the flyer to Department Recycling Coordinators if necessary.
 - Draft County Food Donation Program brochure was reviewed and discussed. The following comments were provided
 - Add County logo to the brochure cover in addition to the Public Works and the Public Health logos.
 - Add “businesses in” to the cover so it reads: Food Donation and Recovery Outreach Program for Businesses in LA County’s Unincorporated Communities
 - Trim down the *How to Safely Donate* section. Another option could be not to include details on the brochure but to refer the reader to the Public Health website to get the details.
 - Include a phone number in addition to the Public Health LACFRI website for those that prefer to make a call.
 - For Step 2 of “Getting Started” add that the opportunity described in this step is only for businesses in unincorporated communities of Los Angeles County.
 - Lastly, the white/grey font against the orange background is difficult to read.
 - The Expanded Beverage Container Recycling Program outreach flyers were distributed for review and comment but due to time constraints were not discussed. Participants were asked to provide any comments to the flyers via email.

Next Steps and Open Discussion

- A representative from each subcommittee provided a brief summary of their subcommittee’s discussions.

The next Subcommittee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 8, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

County Operations	
Carlos Zimmerman	Beaches and Harbors
John Allen	Child Support Services
Tim Frost	Children & Family Services
Beda Sasis	DPSS
Candelaria Rodarte	Internal Services
Lois Giron	Internal Services
Maribel Diaz	Internal Services
Wendy Mercado	Internal Services
Michelle Hochstein	Probation
Chris Sheppard	Public Works
Nick Morell	Sanitation Districts
Angelica Gunderson	Public Works - EPD
Arlene Morales	Public Works - EPD
Clark Ajwani	Public Works - EPD
Nilda Gemeniano	Public Works - EPD
Patrick Holland	Public Works - EPD

CUC and Regional/Countywide	
Tom McKenzie	Arts Commission
Maurice Pantoja	Public Health
Habib Kharrat	Sanitation Districts
Armando Aguilar	Public Works - EPD
Kawsar Vazifdar	Public Works - EPD
La Salle Duong	Public Works - EPD
Larissa Yu	Public Works - EPD

Outreach and Education	
Ken Pellman	ACWM
Leigh Behrens	City of Long Beach
Daniel Dela Cruz	Public Health
Isaura Capell	Public Health
Tranette Sanders	Public Works - EPD
Vanessa Olivas	Public Works - EPD