



TO: Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Lewis T. Griffith, P.E., Division Manager, Solid Waste Management *MPS*
Michael P. Slevin III, P.E., Director, Environmental Services
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Resolution - Extending the Recycle Reset Special Project of Limited Duration – November 2, 2021
DATE: October 8, 2021

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

A resolution authorizing the extension of the Recycle Reset Special Project of Limited Duration through December 2022, to extend existing project positions and continue focused education and outreach around waste reduction, recycling contamination issues, and continue the implementation and monitoring of changes to the residential recycling system related to glass recycling.

BACKGROUND:

This Department’s Recommendation is Based On: The Recycle Reset Project was designated a special project of limited duration by Resolution No. 40461 from November 2019 through December 2021. The resolution authorized additional project positions to assist with the implementation of changes to the residential recycling system and provide focused education and outreach around waste reduction, recycling contamination issues, and how the changes affect our customers. Due to delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and a need to adapt outreach and education strategies to work with social distancing and virtual mediums that impacted the implementation schedule, the planned education and outreach strategies are still in progress and require additional time. In addition, the Recycle Reset Project team secured grant funding that will supplement the Recycle Reset education surcharge revenue to provide funding through 2022.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

One of the primary education strategies of the project is the Recycling Ambassador program, which focuses on active community residents of Tacoma who are willing to undergo training to become recognized by the City as Recycle Reset Ambassadors, to help share information and promote recycling in their communities. The Recycling Ambassador trainings to date have been conducted in English, Spanish, and Russian. Additional trainings are planned in English, Spanish, Russian, and Asian/Pacific Islander languages that would extend into 2022. The project also included development of curriculum targeting primary school children, which has been added to the EnviroChallenger program to provide waste reduction and recycling education in Tacoma schools.

Staff also designed a customer survey for the new glass recycling drop-off locations conducted in the summer of 2021. Staff was able to preliminarily gauge the carbon emissions associated with customers driving to the drop-off locations, but plan to gather additional data to determine any geographical gaps in service. This will help to determine the assumed usage and location needs of a South End drop-off location in the future.

2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility:

Recycling education materials were created in collaboration with community members for English, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese, Khmer, and Korean languages to ensure equitable access to recycling information for residents that do



not read English. The Recycling Ambassador trainings are being lead with equity as a guiding principle and are being conducted with community partners within the Russian, Spanish, and Asian/Pacific Islander communities, to provide better information and access for customers with language barriers and to build trust between the City of Tacoma and its residents in these communities. Staff continues to build community capacity and trust by identifying trained community members who would be interested in partnering with Staff to conduct future trainings in their community.

Civic Engagement: *Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity*

Increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.

Livability: *Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity*

Improve access and proximity by residents to diverse income levels and race/ethnicity to community facilities, services, infrastructure, and employment.

Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).

Recycle Reset education and outreach is specifically developing informational materials and trainings to serve residents within racial/ethnic communities that have had historically less access to clear, understandable, and relevant recycling education, information, and services. The focus of the education and outreach is to increase awareness of opportunities to reduce waste, the importance of reducing contamination in recycling, and decreasing food waste, all of which will help reduce carbon emissions from the generation and disposal of waste. Through programs like the Recycling Ambassadors Program, staff can continue to build relationships within the community while building capacity and knowledge of our services. Through this capacity and relationship building, staff will further trust among residents and help to reinforce the belief that they are able to have a positive impact on their community.

ALTERNATIVES:

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Do not extend project	Reduced costs	Incomplete education and outreach campaign; loss of current relationships/trust between staff and community groups



EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

We are tracking the number of participants who complete the Recycling Ambassador trainings. To date, eight multilingual trainings with 78 total participants have been completed. An additional 36 trainings are planned between October 2021 and the end of 2022.

A customer survey was conducted by staff with customers at the glass drop-off locations in 2021. A follow-up survey will be conducted in 2022. The survey includes a qualitative evaluation of customer satisfaction, a quantitative evaluation of the volume of glass recycled, and provides data to estimate the carbon benefits and impacts of the glass drop-off collection system.

A summary report of the recycling education efforts and the customer survey results can be provided to the City Council in the 4th quarter of 2022.

STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:

The Environmental Services Department recommends extending the Recycle Reset Project through the end of December 2022. The staffing needs to support ongoing recycling education and outreach will be evaluated in the 2023-24 biennial budget cycle.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Fund Number & Name	COST (CC/WBS/ORDER)	OBJECT	Cost Element	Total Amount
1. ES Solid Waste Fund 4200	514360		5110455	\$590,992.00
TOTAL				\$590,992.00

What Funding is being used to support the expense?

The Recycling Education surcharge collected 2020-2023.

Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium's current budget?

YES

Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?

YES

Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?

NO

Will the legislation change the City's FTE/personnel counts?

NO