



**CITY OF GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA
REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL**

AGENDA ITEM

Report: City of Glendale's Response to 2019-2020 Report by the Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury re: Cutting Down on Food Waste

1. Resolution Approving the City of Glendale's Proposed Response Letter to the Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury re: Cutting Down on Food Waste

COUNCIL ACTION

Item Type: Consent Calendar

Approved for October 27, 2020 **calendar**

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

Submitted by:

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Prepared by:

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Reviewed by:

Michele Flynn, Director of Finance

Michael J. Garcia, City Attorney

Approved by:

Roubik R. Golanian, P.E., Interim City Manager

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council approve the proposed response, authorize the Mayor to sign, and direct staff to submit, the attached response letter to the to the 2019-2020 Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury Report: "A DIET FOR LANDFILLS: Cutting Down on Food Waste".

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

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)).

The Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury consists of 23 members and a number of designated alternates that are sworn in for a 12-month period. The primary function of the Civil Grand Jury is to investigate county, city and joint-power agencies. The Civil Grand Jury acts in an oversight function by examining the operations of various government agencies within Los Angeles County. To carry out this function, the Civil Grand Jury is divided into committees, each of which concentrates on certain areas under investigation. These committees visit facilities, meet with officials, and develop recommendations for improving government operations. No later than the end of its term the Grand Jury is required by law to submit a final report of its findings and recommendations to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court.

On July 31, 2020, the Los Angeles County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) issued a report entitled “A Diet for Landfills: Cutting Down on Food Waste” (Report), a copy of which is attached to this report as Exhibit A. In the Report, the Grand Jury made several recommendations to increase food waste recycling and organic waste diversion rates. According to the Grand Jury Report, the methodology used to determine the recommendations included:

- 1) visiting landfills and other related facilities,
- 2) interviewing waste management experts,
- 3) conducting in-person and phone interviews, site visits and research into a number of the 88 cities in the County to assess food waste collection services available,
- 4) conducted on-site visits to the trash areas of some buildings in the County that generate a large amount of food waste, and

5) researched cities in the United States and in other countries that are separating and recycling food waste.

The Report contains 14 recommendations and directs the City of Glendale, along with 87 other cities in Los Angeles County, to respond to Recommendations 1.1, 1.3, 1.8, and 1.14. A response to all recommendations in a Civil Grand Jury report is required by California Penal Code Sections 933(c), 933.05(a), and 933.05(b) within 90 days following the release of the report to the public, and no later than October 30, 2020. In responses to findings, respondents are directed to either agree or disagree, state whether the recommendation has been implemented, has not yet been implemented, whether the recommendation requires further analysis, or will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable, with an explanation therefor. The Civil Grand Jury's recommendations and the City's proposed responses are as follows and fully set forth in the City's proposed response, attached to this report as Exhibit B.

Recommendation 1.1: Each of the 88 cities, and the County's unincorporated areas, should establish a weekly food waste drop-off center. The center can be at a farmer's market, such as the one held each Thursday near Los Angeles City Hall, or at another appropriate site. City and County officials can arrange for the food waste collected to be taken to a nearby facility for recycling, or can establish contracts with organizations such as the Los Angeles Community Garden Council or landscaping companies for composting.

City's (proposed) Response: The City disagrees with the recommendation of establishing weekly food waste drop-off centers and will not be implemented because it is not warranted and is not reasonable. Residents are unlikely to walk or drive their food waste over to a neighborhood drop off center thereby resulting in minimal diversion, possible contamination, and expenditure of City resources that are already designated for more effective programs. While the City supports a backyard composting program (in 2019, the City held four composting workshops which had a total of 150 attendees), and hosts four neighborhood gardens, weekly food waste drop-off centers are not likely to divert much food waste.

The City of Glendale intends to focus its resources on implementing SB 1383 food waste diversion requirements by January 2022; namely that collection of food waste diversion will be required of all residences, multi-family properties, and covered commercial generators. Collecting from commercial and residential generators is more likely to be

more effective than regional drop-off centers.

Recommendation 1.3: County and city officials should create an incentive program for residents and businesses to separate food waste. This could be in the form of a gift card to a local grocery store/farmer's market, or a discount on a solid waste fee. For example, in the City of Santa Barbara, 150 businesses (restaurants, grocery stores, coffee shops, etc.) have signed up for the City's Foodscrap program, and can save several hundred dollars a month off their trash collection fee.

City's (proposed) Response: The City of Glendale disagrees with the recommendation and will not be implemented because it is not warranted and is not reasonable. Starting in January, collection of food waste will be required of all residences, multi-family properties, and covered commercial generators under SB 1383. Since food waste diversion is mandated by law, no incentives are necessary. The City is required by the State to have organic waste recycling systems in place by January 2022 and begin enforcement actions of the systems beginning January 2024 and is currently revising its Municipal Code to this effect. The City does have a Green Business Certification Program that gives recognition and a small financial award for implementing green practices.

Recommendation 1.8: County officials should modify contracts with food vendor companies that are inside County facilities, such as the Hollywood Bowl, the Arboretum, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and cafeterias located at County hospitals, to include food waste separation and recycling. Especially at the Hollywood Bowl, which draws more than 17,000 people for most of its summer concert events, has several food options onsite, and traditionally draws large pre-concert picnicking crowds, implementing a food waste recycling program can be part of a public education campaign.

City's (proposed) Response: The City does not disagree with this recommendation; however, the City of Glendale will not implement this recommendation as it pertains to County facilities. The City of Glendale cannot comment on practices within County facilities. Under SB 1383, there are specific food waste and edible food recovery requirements for events and venues. The City intends to adopt these requirements for events and venues as part of a regulatory overhaul planned during 2021.

Recommendation 1.14: Elected officials in the County and cities should adopt the

11 suggestions in the March 2018 Countywide Organics Waste Management Plan and express support for the need to increase capacity and site and build new facilities to handle organic waste.

City's (proposed) Response: The City intends to implement (if not already implemented) many of the suggestions from the Countywide Organics Waste Management Plan to the extent they align with State law mandating organics recycling.

As to the suggestions from the Countywide Organics Waste Management Plan, the City's proposed response to all 11 suggestions are fully set forth in the Exhibit B.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1: Council may adopt and approve the proposed response to the report by the Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury.

Alternative 2: Council may amend any portion of the proposed response to the report by the Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury, and may adopt any such amended response.

Alternative 3: The City Council may consider any other alternative not proposed by staff.

CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE

Not Applicable.

EXHIBITS

Exhibit A - 2019-2020 Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury Report entitled, "DIET FOR LANDFILLS: Cutting Down on Food Waste"

Exhibit B - City's Proposed Response to Grand Jury Report