



February 21, 2022

San Rafael City Council
14 Fifth Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901

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RE: Revised Refuse & Recycling Ordinance

Honorable Mayor and Council Members,

Lowering landfill methane emissions by requiring residents and businesses to properly dispose of organic materials in green carts is a significant step in the City's efforts to achieve its greenhouse gas reduction goals. Sustainable San Rafael congratulates the City for moving forward.

At last count, these emissions amounted to 4% of our community's greenhouse gas emissions, a relatively small portion of our contribution to climate change, but one that municipal regulation like this can dramatically reduce.

In addition to satisfying the requirements of the state's SB 1383, this ordinance implements a key strategy of the City's Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) for reducing GHG emissions 40% below 1990 levels by 2030. It is one of the six CCAP priority actions that you set last May for implementation this year.

The ordinance also makes good on commitments made when the Council certified the EIR for General Plan 2040 last summer and enacted its Climate Emergency Declaration last fall.

This ordinance is an example of the kind of careful, practical, systemic rule-setting needed to successfully guide our city through the climate crisis. In short, San Rafael residents can reduce our community's carbon footprint by over 9,000 tons a year just by properly taking out the trash.

We have staff a few suggested clarifications of the ordinance's language, without changing its substance:

- In Section 9.19.010, adding reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to the code's purposes.
- In Section 9.19.050, clarifying that proper disposal applies not only to green carts, but to recycling and garbage carts as well.
- In Section 9.19.110, clarifying that 20-ga garbage carts are still available per the City's franchise agreement.
- Chapter 9.19 title, retaining the current words "Refuse and Recycled Materials," rather than the proposed "solid waste," to convey the key concept that all materials need to be considered as resources, rather than waste.

Finally, we would like to note that the Marin Biomass Project has now been selected to receive \$500,000 from the Governor's Office of Planning and Research to develop Marin-specific recommendations for economically feasible, climate supportive means of processing and utilizing household, yard, and wildland organics once collected.

The Project, developed in collaboration with Drawdown Marin, the Marin Conservation Resource District, Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority, Organizing for Action, Sustainable San Rafael, Marin Conservation League, and others, stands ready to assist the City and MSS in their ongoing responses to SB 1383.

Thank you for your efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in San Rafael by all means within the City's powers, as we grapple with the ongoing emergency of climate change.

Sincerely,

William Carney
President

Copies:

Jim Schutz, Cristine Alilovich, Cory Bytof