

February 22, 2022

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

Re: Revised Refuse and Recycling Ordinance

Honorable Mayor and Council Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this Ordinance. My name is Belle Cole and I write today as Chair of OFA Marin and on behalf of the Marin Biomass Project. I want to commend the Staff Report. I also support the points made in Sustainable San Rafael's letter.

What caught my attention the most was this statement from the 2020 CalRecycle report on SB 1383 because it aligns with what I want to tell you about the Marin Biomass Project.

([www2.calrecycle.ca.gov](http://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov) › Publications › Download)

"By significantly reducing the amount of organic waste sent to landfills, we can lower one of the top sources of methane contributing to climate change, maximize landfill life spans, and transform organic waste into value-added resources like compost, biofuel, and electricity. Doing so will contribute to our state's economic health by creating jobs and strengthening the circular recycling economy within our state."

The Marin Biomass Project fits within this overall vision. It is one of five pilot projects selected by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research to address biomass feedstock barriers, aggregation, and utilization. The award in support of the Marin Biomass Project is for \$500,000.

As you know, the Project is an endorsed solution of Drawdown Marin. The Project's Biomass Study will analyze the wide range of existing and potential pathways for processing biomass and converting it into useful products in ways that are both economically sound and ecologically responsible. It will do so in a collaborative manner that helps build cooperation among the public and private stakeholders that oversee and operate the biomass utilization economy, so that optimal solutions can be quickly and sustainably implemented.

Specific Study deliverables will be of great value to Marin cities like San Rafael. They: confirm biomass feedstock amounts and characterization; identify the most promising biomass utilization pathways; provide both an economic analysis of the feasibility and economic development potential of each biomass pathway, and an analysis of the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and carbon sequestration potential of each pathway. The Study will recommend pathways, practices, and infrastructure for improving biomass conversion in Marin, and their potential applicability elsewhere in the urbanized coastal region of California.

Marketable uses of biomass to be explored include compost, mulches, and biochar for use on local gardens and agricultural landscapes; pyrolysis/gasification for electricity, biochar, and/or

hydrogen; increased anaerobic digestion of organics for electricity and soil amendments; and diversified wood products, among others.

The Marin Biomass Collaborative brings together dedicated, diverse, experienced professionals committed to developing actionable solutions. It will operate as a coalition of stakeholders meeting regularly and consulting widely with others.

We look forward to including you and working closely over the two-year period it will take to complete the Study.

Sincerely,

Belle Cole, San Rafael