

# MOUNTAIN VIEW RECYCLING resource

WORKING TOWARDS **ZERO** WASTE ■ SUMMER 2016

Special  
Update

## Proposed Residential Food Scraps Program and Collection Frequency Changes

**MANY OF YOU HAVE BEEN ASKING** when the City will offer a program for residents to divert food scraps (food and food-soiled paper) from the landfill. Following completion of a pilot, the City Council recently evaluated options for a citywide food scraps diversion program for *residents with curbside service (individual carts)*. Based on direction provided by the City Council at an April study session, staff is completing additional analysis and seeking community input before a final program is considered this fall.

### What type of food scraps diversion program is being considered?

Residents would place food scraps into their yard trimming carts. The mix of yard trimmings and food scraps (organics) would be composted at a commercial facility. In order to accommodate a program to collect food scraps, changes to the yard trimmings and garbage collection schedules are also being considered, with possible options for special wastes such as baby diapers and adult pads.

### Why are changes to the frequency of cart collection needed?

When food scraps are added, yard trimming carts must be collected weekly instead of every other week. To offset this increased collection, garbage carts would be collected every other week instead of weekly (a swap of the garbage and yard trimmings collection schedules). Approximately 35 to 45 percent of the waste in garbage carts is organic material. By moving the food scraps from the garbage cart to the yard trimmings cart, the garbage cart will be less full and can be collected less frequently.

*Continued on page 2*

### What are Food Scraps?

FOOD SCRAPS includes both food and food-soiled paper:

- All food products, such as fruit, vegetables, grains, meat, chicken, bones, dairy, nuts, seafood & shells
- Coffee and tea filters
- Paper egg cartons
- Paper plates and cups
- Take-out food boxes
- Paper towels, napkins
- Pizza boxes
- Paper bakery boxes and any other paper that has touched food



### How the residential food scraps program works

Using the same three carts (garbage, yard trimmings, recycling):

- Move food scraps to bigger cart—collected weekly
- Garbage is less full—collected every other week
- Recycling doesn't change

### We want to hear from you.

First, learn about the proposed residential food scraps program by reading this *Resource*.

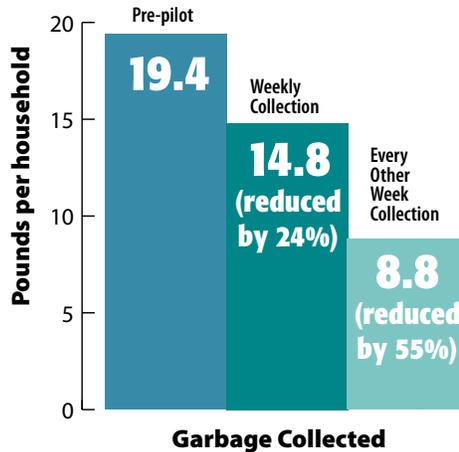
Then please go to the Open City Hall forum at [www.mountainview.gov/FoodScrapsSurvey](http://www.mountainview.gov/FoodScrapsSurvey) to take a short survey and leave comments. Or take the survey by email via [recycle@mountainview.gov](mailto:recycle@mountainview.gov).

# PROPOSED FOOD SCRAPS PROGRAM

## Why is the City Council interested in the option for every other week garbage collection?

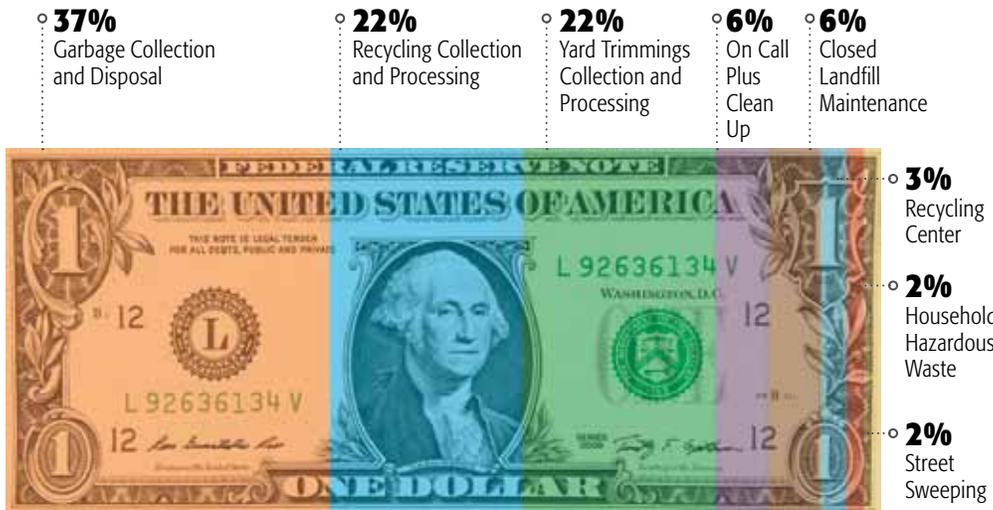
Because this option is the **lowest cost** and results in the **highest diversion** of food scraps. The results of a pilot program conducted at 980 homes located in Old Mountain View clearly indicate that when the garbage collection period is lengthened to every other week, more households place more food scraps in the yard trimmings cart each week.

Compared to pre-pilot levels, households on weekly garbage collection reduced their garbage by only 24% versus a 55% reduction for households on every other week collection.



## If the garbage collection schedule is changed, won't we be paying the same price for half the service?

No. On your utility bill, the "trash rate" is a bundled rate for collection and processing costs related to all three carts—not just the garbage cart. This rate also funds On Call Plus clean up services, closed landfill maintenance, street sweeping, household hazardous waste collection, two recycling centers, and a transfer station. In order to add the food scraps program, the collection frequency of the yard trimmings cart must be increased to weekly, and the additional costs could be offset by reducing the garbage collection frequency. Essentially, a food scraps diversion program can be added at very little cost simply by swapping the garbage and yard trimmings collection schedules.



## What each dollar of your utility "trash rate" pays for

If you don't have a yard trimmings cart, one would be provided. The standard sizes are 64- or 96-gallon carts for most homes.

A 24-gallon food scraps cart would be available for rowhouses and townhomes that don't produce yard trimmings.



## BENEFITS OF A FOOD SCRAPS PROGRAM

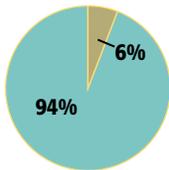
Removing food and paper from the landfill is one of the easiest ways to reduce our community's greenhouse gas emissions. When organic materials, such as leftover dinner salad and take-out food boxes, end up in a landfill, they don't break down like they would in nature or a compost pile. They decompose anaerobically (without oxygen), becoming the number one source of human-caused methane. Methane is now understood to be 72 times more potent than CO<sub>2</sub> over a 20-year period, meaning our landfills emit large amounts of greenhouse gases. Keeping food and paper out of the landfill gives these valuable resources a second useful life as compost for landscape growers.



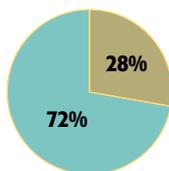
### How did residents in the pilot area like this program?

Most residents who answered the survey were satisfied with the food scraps program, but satisfaction was lower among survey respondents on every other week garbage collection (charts A and B). When asked just about the garbage collection schedule, less than 50 percent of respondents indicated they were satisfied (chart C). Those who provided comments indicated that diapers, pet waste and the inconvenience of missing a collection (and having to wait another two weeks for the next one) were of special concern. Possible solutions for these situations are being evaluated.

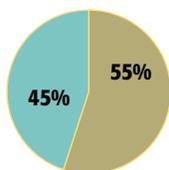
**A. Overall Food Scraps Program  
Weekly Garbage**



**B. Overall Food Scraps Program  
Every Other Week Garbage**



**C. Collection Schedule Only  
Every Other Week Garbage**



■ Satisfied  
■ Unsatisfied

### But what about pests and odors? And overflowing garbage carts?

During auditing in the pilot area, pests and odors were not identified as a significant problem. The few carts with strong odors or pests appeared to be from well-decayed fruit from backyard trees.

Overflowing carts were also not a significant problem. Garbage carts with lids open more than six inches were found in 7 percent of households with every other week collection, versus 3 percent of households with weekly collection. There was also a 2 percent increase in the number of extra garbage bags with paid stickers left next to the cart.

Cities that have already made the change to every other week garbage collection do not report increases in public health issues compared to weekly collection. These include the cities of Renton, Tacoma, and Olympia in Washington; Portland, Oregon; and Vancouver, Toronto and 35 other cities in Canada.

However, options are being evaluated for residents who participate in the food scraps and recycling programs, but still have more garbage than will fit in the cart with every other week collection. This might include optional weekly collection (for a fee) for residents with baby diapers, adult pads, or pet waste. Another option could be a new 48-gallon cart size, which would offer a more modest upsize option for those needing a little more capacity to hold two weeks of garbage. For occasional additional waste, extra garbage bag stickers could be used (sold at various locations for \$6).

### Why can't we just have all weekly collection services and the food scraps program too?

Weekly collection of the garbage, yard trimmings and recycling carts would result in a 10 percent rate increase (to pay for additional trucks, drivers and fuel), increased vehicle emissions and fuel consumption, and less landfill diversion. In addition, the food scraps program may require an additional rate increase of as much as 8% for processing and composting costs. A food scraps program that does not increase overall cart collections allows for increased diversion at the least cost.

### When will this new program start?

The starting date of the food scraps program will depend on the final action taken by the City Council in the fall. If approved, a food scraps program could be phased in by neighborhood starting in the early part of 2017.

## MORE INFORMATION

Detailed information about the pilot results and options considered by the Council can be found at [www.mountainview.gov/whatsnew](http://www.mountainview.gov/whatsnew).



**CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW**  
 PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
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## CONTACT US

**Garbage and Recycling  
 Collection Services**  
**Recology Mountain View**  
**(650) 967-3034**  
**RecologyMountainView.com**

- Missed pickups
- Service questions
- Clean up and bulky good collection services
- Business recycling
- Debris boxes
- Recycling Center

**Utility and Garbage Billing**  
**City Finance Department**  
**(650) 903-6317**

- Start, stop or change accounts
- Billing inquiries
- Extra Garbage tags

**Recycling and Zero Waste  
 Program**  
**Public Works Department**  
**(650) 903-6311**  
**MVrecycle.org**  
**recycle@mountainview.gov**

- Resource newsletter
- Recycling questions
- Event details

## MATTRESS RECYCLING – NOW FREE OF CHARGE!

California recently became the second state in the nation to adopt a statewide mattress recycling program. This program is operated by the nonprofit Mattress Recycling Council and funded, in part, by an \$11 mattress recycling fee collected by retailers on new sales.

Both the SMaRT Station® in Sunnyvale and the Mountain View Recycling Center located at 935 Terra Bella Avenue now accept mattresses (and box springs) free of charge. Any Mountain View resident can bring their mattresses to these facilities with proof of residency (driver's license, ID card and utility bill if needed to show current address). Residents eligible for the free On Call Plus Clean Up Program may continue to arrange for curbside collection of mattresses and box springs (and other bulky goods). Contact Recology at **(650) 967-3034** to check for eligibility and schedule an appointment.

**REFUEL YOUR FUN & SAVE!**

### Choose Refillables

Save Money & the Environment!

**The Problem -**  
Disposables\*

**The Solution -**  
Refillables

\* Disposable cylinders need to be taken to a household hazardous waste event for proper disposal. Go to HHW.org for information.

Don't see your favorite retailer listed below? Ask them to sell refillables!

**CHOOSE REFILLABLES!**

<p><b>Supported by:</b></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Funded by a grant from CalRecycle: </p>	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Hassett Ace Hardware - Palo Alto</b> 875 Alma Street Palo Alto, CA 94301 650-327-7222</p> <p><b>Stanford Outdoor Center</b> 285 Santa Teresa Street Stanford, CA 94305 650-736-7768</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>George's Fuel &amp; Auto Repair</b> 996 West Evelyn Avenue Sunnyvale, CA 94086 408-733-2221</p> <p><b>U-Haul - Mountain View</b> 62 West El Camino Real Mountain View, CA 94040 650-965-3151</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>Hassett Ace Hardware - Palo Alto</b> 875 Alma Street Palo Alto, CA 94301 650-327-7222</p> <p><b>Stanford Outdoor Center</b> 285 Santa Teresa Street Stanford, CA 94305 650-736-7768</p>	<p><b>George's Fuel &amp; Auto Repair</b> 996 West Evelyn Avenue Sunnyvale, CA 94086 408-733-2221</p> <p><b>U-Haul - Mountain View</b> 62 West El Camino Real Mountain View, CA 94040 650-965-3151</p>
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Visit **ReFuelYourFun.org** for a full list of participating retailers