

**Quality and Productivity Commission**  
**33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program**  
**“Empowering Innovative Solutions”**

**2019 APPLICATION**

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):

**NAME OF PROJECT: FOOD DONATION AND FOOD WASTE RECYCLING INITIATIVE**

**DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION:** JANUARY 31, 2018

(Must have been fully implemented for a minimum of at least one year - on or before July 1, 2018)

**PROJECT STATUS:**  Ongoing  One-time only

**HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT?**  Yes  No



**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. State clearly and concisely what difference the project has made.

1 The Food Donation and Food Waste Recycling Initiative facilitates the donation of  
 2 edible food and the collection and recycling of non-edible food waste at businesses in  
 3 the unincorporated County areas as well as at County facilities and consists of several  
 4 components to provide a comprehensive solution to reduce food waste: The Food  
 5 Donation and Recycling Outreach Program (Food DROP), Pilot Commercial Food  
 6 Waste Recycling Program (Pilot), and the Scrape Your Plate Program. Food DROP  
 7 provides resources to businesses donating edible food and distributes recovered food  
 8 directly to residents. The Pilot allows businesses in to direct source-separated food  
 9 waste to the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts (LACSD) for recycling at no  
 10 additional cost. The Scrape Your Plate Program implemented the collection of source-  
 11 separated food waste from Public Works Headquarters for recycling by LACSD and  
 12 provides resources to assist other County Departments in implementing food waste  
 13 recycling programs. Food DROP has recovered almost 30 tons of edible food and the  
 14 Pilot and Scrape Your Plate have recycled over 1,500 tons of food waste for a total of  
 15 900 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent of emissions.

BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) = TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

<b>SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b> Public Works, 900 S Fremont Ave, Alhambra, CA 91803		<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (626) 458-5100
<b>PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME</b> Kawsar Vazifdar		<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (626) 458-3514  <b>EMAIL</b>
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> <small>(PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME)</small> Leslie Schenk 		<b>DATE</b> 6/24/19  <b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (626) 458-5946  <b>EMAIL</b> lschenk@pw.lacounty.gov
<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> Mark Pestrella 		<b>DATE</b> 6/27/19  <b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (626) 458-4001

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**1<sup>st</sup> FACT SHEET – LIMITED UP TO 3 PAGES ONLY:** Describe the **challenge(s), solution(s), and benefit(s)** of the project to the County. What quality and/or productivity-related outcome(s) has the project achieved? Provide measures of success **and specify assessment time frame**. Use Arial 12 point font.

**Challenge:**

Disposing organic waste such as food waste in landfills causes emissions of methane, a greenhouse gas (GHG) that is 72 times more potent than carbon dioxide in terms of atmospheric warming. According to the California Air Resources Board, reducing methane emissions provides immediate climate benefits. The County’s residents and businesses dispose an estimated 3.5 million tons of organic waste per year, partly due to having the largest shortfall in organics recycling infrastructure of any county in the state according to CalRecycle.

**Solution:**

Public Works implemented the Food Donation and Food Waste Recycling Initiative (Initiative) which consists of three main components to provide a comprehensive solution to reduce and recycle food waste: The Food Donation and Recycling Outreach Program (Food DROP), Pilot Commercial Food Waste Recycling Program (Pilot), and the Scrape Your Plate Program. Food DROP connects businesses in the unincorporated County with food recovery agencies to facilitate the donation of food to the 1 in 7 people in the County who are food insecure. For the food unsuitable to eat, Public Works developed a Pilot Commercial Food Waste Recycling Program and the Scrape Your Plate Program to collect and recycle food waste from businesses and County facilities.

To develop Food DROP, Public Works surveyed and visited over 200 food donation and recovery non-profits and selected 50 as partners. Public Works launched the FoodDROPLA.com website to provide resources to businesses donating food. Staff visited 150 large food generators such as restaurants and grocery stores and connected them each with 3 non-profits that best fit their needs. Public Works launched the “A Day Without Hunger” campaign in partnership with ESPNLA and the Los Angeles Lakers to promote Food DROP and raise issues around organics management and food insecurity through radio and social media. As part of the campaign, Public Works hosted several events to distribute recovered food to residents.

To develop the Pilot, workshops were conducted with waste haulers to inform them about their role in the program, including identifying and enrolling businesses and

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electricity. The Pilot program provides a \$60 per ton rebate to haulers for commercial food waste recycling. The rebate reduces the tipping fee paid by haulers to just \$10 per ton, making recycling food waste more cost-effective than paying an average cost of \$55 per ton to dispose food waste in a landfill in the County. Businesses do not pay to participate in the Pilot and save a substantial amount of money by reducing their trash collection services. Public Works provides credits to participating haulers to offset the amount they would pay in franchise fees. These credits are verified using weight tickets issued by LACSD. Contaminated loads exceeding LACSD's standards do not receive credits, motivating haulers to ensure that businesses are properly separating food waste for collection.

Public Works implemented the Scrape Your Plate program to collect food waste from its Headquarters (HQ), including the cafeteria kitchen and dining area, 20 breakrooms, and special events at Public Works HQ and field facilities. Public Works coordinated with its hauler to direct the food waste to LACSD for recycling. Public Works staff educated employees in person, by email, and through posted signs on how to separate food waste and avoid contamination to ensure it can be recycled.

Scrape Your Plate is the first food waste collection program implemented at any County facility. State law Assembly Bill 1826 (2014) requires large commercial solid waste generators, including businesses and County facilities, to sign up for organic waste recycling services, including food waste. However, AB 1826 does not include an enforcement mechanism to compel commercial generators to comply. Most generators in the state have not signed up for organic waste recycling services with no repercussions. Public Works worked with the Internal Services Department (ISD) to revise the Facility Ancillary Master Services Agreement (FASMA) for waste collection to allow County facilities to be able to easily comply. Senate Bill 1383 (2016) regulations will require all County facilities, businesses, and residents to receive mandatory organic waste collection services beginning in 2022. Customers in noncompliance will be subject to monetary penalties and jurisdictions such as the County that fail to enforce the regulations will be subject to significant fines. By establishing a food waste collection program, Public Works has provided a guide for other County facilities to help them comply with AB 1826 and prepare to comply with SB 1383. Using lessons learned from the Pilot, Public Works is developing strategies to help businesses and residents comply with SB 1383 and will require all commercial and residential waste haulers in the County to provide organic waste collection services by 2022.

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**Benefits (Worthiness of Award):**

The Initiative offers new avenues for edible food recovery to help combat the 1 in 7 statistic of people being food insecure. In addition, the Initiative enhances existing waste collection programs for businesses and County facilities by adding services for food waste collection and recycling that were previously not available. The Initiative also increases awareness and participation by businesses and County employees in food donation and food waste recycling programs. Last, the Initiative helps reduce emissions of GHGs such as methane.

The Initiative provides significant environmental and social benefits for the County. Food DROP has recovered almost 30 tons of edible food to feed hungry people. The Pilot and Scrape Your Plate have diverted over 1,500 tons of food waste. These efforts have prevented over 900 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent of emissions, which is comparable to removing over 190 passenger vehicles from the road for a year or conserving the annual energy consumption from over 18 homes.

The need to reduce GHG emissions from food waste is not limited to the County and will require other cities, counties, states, and countries to also take action. The Initiative promotes intergovernmental cooperation and coordination in addressing the shared problem of preventing and recycling food waste. The Food DROP website includes a toolkit to allow other jurisdictions to replicate the program. Other jurisdictions can replicate the Pilot using nearby organics recycling facilities and similar methods of funding, training, reporting, and verification. To allow other County facilities to replicate Scrape Your Plate, all contracted County facility haulers are now required to provide organics collection services upon request by any County facility at an extra cost. Public Works launched an organics recycling website ([dpw.lacounty.gov/epd/organics/](http://dpw.lacounty.gov/epd/organics/)) for County facilities, and subsequently, LAC+USC Medical Center initiated food waste collection.

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**Linkage to the County Strategic Plan – 1 page only.** Which County Strategic Plan goal(s) does this project address? Explain how. Use Arial 12 point font.

**Linkage to the County Strategic Plan:**

The Initiative supports *Strategy II.3: Make Environmental Sustainability Our Daily Reality* by providing a comprehensive and integrated approach to address the issue of food waste in the County. By preventing edible food from being wasted and recycling non-edible food waste, the Initiative also supports *Strategy II.3.4: Reduce waste generation and recycle and reuse waste resources* by developing a new recycling program to inspire the community to reduce, reuse, and recycle food waste, thereby increasing landfill diversion. By creating renewable energy from food waste, the Pilot and Scrape Your Plate support *Strategy II.3.2: Foster a cleaner, more efficient, and more resilient energy system* and utilize a new energy source. Overall, the Initiative supports *Strategy II.3.3: Address the serious threat of global climate change* by reducing GHG emissions from food waste and inspiring businesses and County facilities to take action to reduce and recycle food waste.

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**COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY):** If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. Please indicate whether these benefits apply in total or on a per unit basis, e.g., per capita, per transaction, per case, etc. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation. Use Arial 12 point font

**Cost Avoidance:** Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these are costs to the County or to other entities.

**Cost Savings:** A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these were expenditures by the County or by other entities.

**Revenue:** Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

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