



County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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JOHN A. FANTHAM
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

AGENDA: January 26, 1999

January 20, 1999

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, California 95060

SUBJECT: MARKET DEVELOPMENT FOR RECYCLED YARD WASTE

Members of the Board:

As your Board is aware, one component of the County's comprehensive strategy to divert materials from disposal in the Buena Vista Landfill is a green waste recycling program. This includes collection of yard waste through the Waste Management franchise and self-haul drop-off of yard waste and woodwaste at the landfill. In 1995 and 1996 your Board authorized a demonstration program to help establish a market for this recycled material with the local agricultural industry. Recent figures from the County's green waste recycling vendor show that over 2800 cubic yards per month are sold for use in agriculture. Other sales have been for biofuel (wood chips burned to generate electricity) and landscaping uses.

The California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) has recently issued a request for proposals for projects to demonstrate beneficial end uses of compost or mulch made from municipal green waste. Funds are available on a matching basis for entities to contract with the state to demonstrate and promote beneficial uses of this material. We believe it would be prudent to strengthen and expand the landscaping market for the County's product, uncomposted municipal green waste mulch, by taking this opportunity of state assistance.

Staff is drafting a proposal which entails a four member partnership of the County, UC Cooperative Extension, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and Organics Recycling Anonymous (ORA), a local green waste recycling consultant. The following benefits would be highlighted: weed suppression, water conservation, and erosion control. UC Cooperative Extension would conduct experiments at its research facilities in Salinas on weed content and plant pathogens in this mulch product. NRCS would provide technical advice and outreach assistance and ORA would work with County staff on landscaping demonstrations and outreach.

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Demonstrations would take place at various locations around the county, including park sites in the unincorporated area and in the City of Scotts Valley, at Dominican Hospital and at the County Detention Facility in Watsonville. County staff would serve as contract manager.

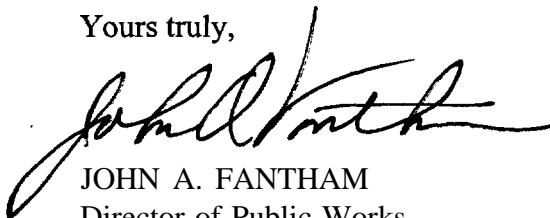
We are researching use of approximately 12,000 square feet of the County-owned parcel directly behind the UC Cooperative Extension Office building on Freedom Boulevard in Watsonville because its proximity to the Extension Offices makes it easier to manage the maintenance, monitoring and public visitation of the research plots. This 60-foot by 210-foot area would be used for weed suppression research for about 18 months.

Project proposals are due January 29, 1999. A draft of the proposal will be placed on file with the Clerk of the Board by January 22, 1999, and a final copy will be filed by January 29, 1999. The project, if awarded, would begin March 1999 and continue through March 2001. The estimated cost of the project is about \$150,000 with half, or about \$75,000, coming as in-kind contributions from the project partnership. Actual County contributions would amount to approximately \$32,000 in staff time, travel and material costs over the two year period. The remaining in-kind match would come from labor and materials supplied by the other partner members. The final cost will be determined after the CIWMB reviews and approves the project scope of work and budget. Sufficient funds exist in the respective County budgets for anticipated current fiscal year expenses.

If the CIWMB accepts the County's proposal, the CIWMB will offer the County a contract to carry out the project. This contract must be accompanied by a resolution from your Board authorizing execution of this agreement. Therefore, if the County is successful with this proposal, we will return to your Board with a resolution authorizing the Director of Public Works to execute the CIWMB agreement and with proposed agreements with the project partners spelling out project responsibilities and compensation arrangements for each party.

It is therefore recommended that your Board authorize submittal of a proposal to conduct a research and demonstration project on beneficial uses of uncomposted municipal green waste mulch for landscaping.

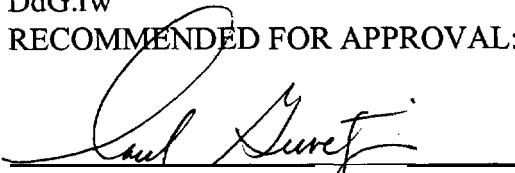
Yours truly,



JOHN A. FANTHAM
Director of Public Works

DdG:rw

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL:


for County Administrative Officer
copy to: Public Works, Solid Waste Division

MDFR