



# MATTRESS RECYCLING

**Zero Waste Advisory Commission**

**April 8, 2015**

Natalie Betts

Recycling Economic Development Liaison

City of Austin

# Mattress Recycling: History

2

- Contract: April 2013- April 2014
- Two bidders: Goodwill (\$277,800) and Central Waste and Recycling (\$752,000)
- Pickup price, \$5.00, and recycling price, \$12.00 = \$17.00 per piece
- Experience did not match solicitation estimates
  - Expected 8,200 mattresses & 8,200 box springs
  - Received 3,802 units total
- Volume inconsistent month to month
  - Lowest month: 234
  - Highest month: 1,097
- 9% of mattresses set out were not able to be picked up due to being buried under other materials, significantly soiled or infested, or shredded
- Goodwill opted not to renew the contract at the end of the contract term

# Challenges

3

- Labor intensive
- Contamination
- Consistency
- Collection infrastructure
- Commodities: steel, foam, wood, fiber
  - Processing of steel required depends on location of end markets
  - Wood is challenging to recycle due to age of wood, nails, and staples
  - Fiber type and quality variations

# Mattress Recycling in the U.S.

4

- 30+ mattress recyclers in U.S.
  - Most are non-profits, a few for-profit enterprises
  - Processing fees between \$5-\$50 per unit
- Mattress Recycling Legislation
  - California, Rhode Island, and Connecticut
  - Point of sale fee to fund mattress recycling programs
  - Promoted by Mattress Recycling Council, industry-created non-profit organization

Source: National Recycling Coalition Sustainable Materials Management Webinar, November 18, 2014

# Mattress Recycling in Austin

5

- Entrepreneurial opportunity, either for-profit or within a non-profit
- Austin Materials Marketplace to identify commercial sources of mattresses
- Future collection infrastructure upgrades could enable Pay As You Throw and/or better pricing structure for mattress recycling

# Other Presenters

6

- Houston Furniture Bank Presentation
  - Board Vice Chair, Larry Cress
  - Oli Mohammed, Executive Director
- Redeuces Presentation
  - Derek Sinns, Founder