



MEMORANDUM

To: Zero Waste Advisory Commission

From: Cathy Gattuso, ZWAC Organics Management Committee Chair and
Sam Angoori, P.E. Interim Director, Austin Resource Recovery (ARR)

Subject: Universal Recycling Ordinance Committee 2016 Summary

Date: February 3, 2017

The purpose of this memo is to summarize actions of the Universal Recycling Ordinance (URO) Committee of the Zero Waste Advisory Commission (ZWAC) for calendar year 2016 as required by current bylaws.

Background

The URO Committee was created in 2009 as part of the original development process of the Universal Recycling Ordinance, which was adopted by Council in 2010. The URO Committee remained active through two amendment processes in 2012 and 2014.

The URO Committee is intended through bylaw, to review the URO and to hold meetings with stakeholders as they develop recommendations to Council to fully implement the URO throughout the city, city facilities, and public spaces.

Status

The Universal Recycling Ordinance continues to be implemented across the city and is anticipated to be fully implemented by 2018, with over 10,000 of the smallest properties and businesses becoming affected over the next two years. The URO currently affects 6,200 multifamily and commercial properties within the City. Of these properties, 95% have reported recycling access for tenants and employees. Additionally, organics diversion requirements began in 2016, with 200 of the largest businesses with food permits (such as a grocery stores) ensuring organics diversion access for employees.

Austin Resource Recovery's Business Outreach Team continues to impact the community by providing education, resources, rebates, and cooperatively working with business and multifamily properties to meet the requirements of the ordinance. In 2016, education, outreach, and willingness of the community to participate resulted in 1% [17 of 1,239] of deficient properties or businesses being referred to Austin Code for enforcement.

Next Steps

The URO Committee met one (1) time, in December 2016. This meeting was the first meeting of the committee since 2014 and was introductory in nature, with a review of bylaws, an ARR staff briefing of the Universal Recycling Ordinance, and committee discussion on goals for the upcoming calendar year.

The URO Committee indicated an interest in exploring the following issues in 2017:

- a) food recovery and connecting businesses to non-profits;
- b) review capacities and overflowing containers at multifamily properties;
- c) inviting businesses to communicate ordinance challenges; and
- d) “front of house” recycling for businesses.

The URO Committee will continue to monitor and provide recommendations regarding the ongoing implementation of the ordinance.