



## AUSTIN RESOURCE RECOVERY DEPARTMENT

### M E M O R A N D U M

**TO:** Mayor and Council Members

**FROM:** Ken Snipes, Director  
Austin Resource Recovery

**DATE:** March 29, 2021

**SUBJECT:** **Staff Response to Resolution 20201001-061**  
**RE: Austin Resource Recovery Staff and Resumption of Regular Services**

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This memorandum provides a summary of the progress Austin Resource Recovery (ARR) and the Human Resources Department (HRD) have made addressing the directives of City Council Resolution 20201001-061.

On 5 October 2020, City Council approved Resolution No. 20201001-061 directing the City Manager to review current compensation and training practices and explore opportunities to improve ARR operator retention, compensation, and satisfaction.

In addition, the resolution directed the City Manager to determine the feasibility and timeline for resuming regular ARR services that are currently suspended or scaled back, stating that the City Manager should err on the side of employee safety and should not resume such services if it is determined that any services pose a true risk to our employees.

#### ***Regarding ARR Operator Retention, Compensation, and Satisfaction***

##### *Progress to Date:*

Staff provided HRD several requests for alternative pay structures. HRD completed a comprehensive compensation analysis (attached) that evaluated the proposals through the lens of sustainability. ARR and HRD collaborated and reached the following agreements to allow ARR better retention of its operators:

- For new hires:
  - Temporary employees' initial compensation will increase from \$15.00/hour to \$16.00/hour
  - Temporary employees' compensation will increase an additional \$1.00/hour after they receive a CDL license to \$17.00/hour
  - If hired as a Trainee, compensation will increase to \$17.38/hour
  - If hired as an ARR Operator, compensation will increase to an entry of \$18.82/hour as a result of the above pay increases
  - The eligibility to promote from initial hire to ARR Operator has been condensed from 2 years to 1 year of CDL driving experience
  - The eligibility to promote from initial hire to ARR Operator Sr. has been condense from 3 years to 2 years of CDL driving experience

- For equity, all current temporary employees will increase \$1.00/hour increase to match the \$15.00/hour to \$16.00/hour increase that new hires will be receiving.
- Employees up to ARR Crew Leaders will receive a \$1.00/hour increase to account for their CDL gained.

*Next Steps (30 days):*

- Staff will implement all hourly compensation and stipend increases
- ARR will resubmit a request for a \$1.00/hour CDL stipend for CDL Class A employees who operate Class A equipment

*Next Steps (6 months):*

ARR will document and analyze the impact of the financial incentives. If no substantial improvement occurs, ARR will reengage HRD.

***Regarding Resumption of Regular ARR Services***

*Current Services:*

- Solid waste and recycling services were never disrupted due to the pandemic
- Brush collection has resumed
- Compost collection began city-wide
- The Recycle and Reuse Drop-off Center has reopened for drop-off recycling on an appointment basis

*Proposed timeline for resumption of all services:*

ARR has resumed all services to pre-pandemic standards with the exception of residential street sweeping and the reopening of the Recycling Center to walk-ins. Brush and bulk collection has been impacted by Winter Storm Uri and ARR is currently concentrating on the collection of storm debris.

- Proposed reopening date of Recycle and Reuse Drop-off Center is when City and County health professionals determine that Austin-Travis County's COVID-19 risk is Stage 1.
- Proposed date to resume residential street sweeping is 1 May 2021
- Proposed date to resume bulk collection is 12 April 2021

If you have any questions, please contact me at [Ken.Snipes@austintexas.gov](mailto:Ken.Snipes@austintexas.gov).

**CC:** Spencer Cronk, City Manager  
Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, Deputy City Manager  
Shannon Jones, Interim Assistant City Manager