

Initial Review of Current Programs and Identification of Opportunities in Other Programs

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INITIAL REVIEW OF CURRENT PROGRAMS AND IDENTIFICATION OF OPPORTUNITIES IN OTHER PROGRAMS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this document is to share the findings of our team's initial review of gaps and opportunity for the three green business assistance programs offered by the City of Portland's Bureau of Planning and Sustainability including Recycle at Work, BEST Business Center and Portland Composts!

Information was gathered and reviewed from program personnel of these three programs in addition to other sustainability and recycling business assistance program resources from websites and interviews with other program managers. Initial gaps and opportunities have been identified and will be evaluated more extensively in the next phases of work on this project.

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM PROGRAM PERSONNEL

Our team conducted interviews with sixteen program managers, specialists and partners to review internal understanding of what is working well and what could be better within the programs.

Program managers, specialists and partners provided **consistent responses** in six key areas:

- All personnel have a clear understanding of the programs' goals and services.
- All staff members are mission-driven and provide high-quality customer service within their role of program delivery.
- The programs are assistance-focused and response-oriented with success resulting directly from face-to-face relationship building and customization of services to fulfill participant needs.
- Program materials including the sustainability guide, recycle boxes, posters and stickers are requested and well received by participants.
- Engaging outreach for businesses with non-English speakers is needed.
- The programs need a systematic approach for engaging businesses and ensuring that businesses complete the programs, gather performance data and provide feedback on their program experience.

Program managers, specialists and partners provided **varied responses** in five key areas:

- The program brand was described differently with tension between a friendly versus no-nonsense or direct approach.
- Personnel are not aligned on how to best communicate the business recycling requirement and agreed that most businesses do not know about this requirement.
- Staff members were unclear on how to measure the success of business participants in the programs and their own performance in delivery of the programs.
- Staff members had varied ideas on who and how to target businesses or sectors for the highest impact results.
- There were varied responses on the process for ongoing engagement of businesses through to completion of the program and how to keep certified businesses engaged.

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM REVIEWING CURRENT MATERIALS AND PROCESS

After a preliminary review of the three programs, our team has identified some initial categories of opportunities to explore in program process, outreach, brand and messaging:

- Metrics and data collection to communicate success
- Intake and outtake surveys to establish baseline performance and resulting performance
- More fully developed plan for outreach strategies
- Definitive communication about business recycling requirement
- Checklists of business requirements and action items
- Business to business interactions
- Levels of participation and recognition
- Messaging to target decision-makers and change agents
- Outreach to address non-English speaking audiences
- Website with clear action items and supporting resources

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM OTHER PROGRAMS

After a review of online resources and interviews with program managers of other business assistance programs in sustainability and recycling, our team has identified some initial categories of opportunities for improvement:

- Better utilization of business leadership organizations
- Tiered participation levels to engage diverse business needs
- Checklists that clearly define and determine specific actions for green businesses
- Targeted trainings for executives and management
- Tools to collect program performance data from participants
- Use of waste haulers as data collectors for performance data
- Annual report with metrics demonstrating the performance of the program and the performance of individual program participants
- Better success stories and case studies with quantitative performance metrics such as cost savings, energy and water use reductions, and reduced carbon emissions
- Better use of online resources to provide compelling and detailed information
- Use of media in outreach
- Use of targeted campaigns

NEXT STEPS

Opportunities for these three business assistance programs identified at this initial stage in our research will be evaluated, added to and prioritized based on current and potential business participant needs expressed in responses to our online survey, interviews and facilitated discussions.

The best practices and materials identified by our team from other sustainability and recycling business assistance programs will be highlighted in the next steps of our research and will provide valuable insight into our team's recommendations for the integration of these three programs.

PART I: INITIAL REVIEW OF RECYCLE AT WORK PROGRAM AND OTHER BUSINESS RECYCLING PROGRAMS

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM RAW PROGRAM PERSONNEL

Our team conducted interviews with sixteen program managers, specialists and partners to review internal understanding of what is working well and what could be better within the program. Personnel were asked to provide feedback on their role, the program services, business participants, process flow, brand, outreach and how the program evolves in response to changing needs.

Recycle at Work Program Gaps Identified During Interviews

Program Managers

- The program works hard with mixed results with big business. Likely engaging the wrong target.
- Chain retail is a challenge given locations in multiple jurisdictions.
- Managers describe the brand personality differently with tension between a friendly versus no-nonsense or direct approach.
- Participants who are motivated only by compliance are difficult to serve.
- The compliance message is still not clear and enforceable.
- The program needs a more systematic approach.
- Everyone needs proof of results.

Program Specialists

- For large businesses, the program is targeting the wrong person. The participant is motivated, but not knowledgeable and has no delegated authority.
- Nearly all businesses do not know the business recycling requirement exists.
- Specialists share the recycling requirement only to get management's attention.
- Difficult to engage managers of chain retail stores.
- The property manager is often the barrier to helping serve interested businesses.
- Some businesses are requesting a peer cohort in which to participate.
- Currently there is no way to work with non-English speaking businesses except sharing a brochure.

Program Partners

- Need to engage property managers and operations and facilities managers.
- Target property management with clear messages about compliance and service.

WHAT WE LEARNED ABOUT CURRENT RAW PROGRAM DESIGN

Overall, our team found that the Recycle at Work program must provide online, self-guided assistance (including how-to resources and action-oriented checklists) to the general population of businesses where setting up a recycling program is easy and face-to-face assistance (including onsite visits, consultations and direct

engagement) for targeted participants who are high leverage generators and who may have more difficulty setting up appropriate recycling programs due to the complexity or size of the organization.

Our team has performed an initial review of Recycle at Work program resources that describe the program's history, design, target audience, key messages, goals, process and outreach strategies. After this preliminary review, our team has identified some initial opportunities for improvement to explore in program design and flow:

Intake Survey to Establish Baseline Recycling Performance

There are too many entry points to participation (inquiry, website, site visit, progress report, request for materials, etc.) without a clear redirect to an intake survey and when necessary, an onsite visit to engage the Five Easy Steps. Some of the program entry points miss the opportunity to establish a baseline of performance or an initial assessment of current waste handling and recycling. An intake survey could be helpful for establishing recycling baseline performance from which to measure improvement and success. This survey would also allow businesses to select the level of services they would prefer and a preferred timeline: request for materials, onsite waste assessment, consultation on recycling best practices, selection of a waste hauler, employee recycling training, presentation to management, waste prevention education, etc. This survey could be completed online or onsite. The survey would identify where businesses are starting and move them forward through the program on a regular schedule.

Checklists of Business Requirements and Action Items

It is unclear how the existing tiered program services or process differ to appeal to target audiences including small business, large generators, recycling-rich sectors and under-served communities. Providing checklists for each targeted audience participant with minimum requirements and additional considerations would help businesses to clearly define their action items and goals, clarify focus areas for an onsite visit, determine steps for improvements and encourage ongoing involvement in bettering their recycling practices. Establish a clear process and timeline for each business to become certified and follow up on their progress.

Metrics and Data Collection to Communicate Success

The program goals are clearly stated and support City and region wide master plans such as the Climate Action Plan and the Portland Recycles! Plan. The majority of program goals do not have a matching quantitative performance metric that can be measured each year to determine program and participant progress and success. These annual metrics could include simplistic reporting such as the number of businesses newly certified, with number of businesses that recently completed progress reports, the number of businesses that the program provided trainings to, the number of businesses that received onsite consultations, the number of businesses that that received program materials, etc. Metrics could also be more outcome based and include reporting on volumes of waste, individual business recycling rate and reductions in total waste. This information could be captured in a combination of a business intake survey, progress report, follow up survey and waste volume reporting by waste haulers.

WHAT WE LEARNED ABOUT CURRENT OUTREACH AND BRANDING

The brand identity of the Recycle at Work program is focused on the availability of free resources, assistance and tools for businesses to implement recycling programs. Additional messages include the environmental and economic benefits associated with recycling. Information about the recycling ordinance, compliance and enforcement are noticeably absent in materials about Portland’s mandatory business recycling program. Website visitors are not apt to find these details unless they are purposefully seeking them out.

The external brand perception is that Recycling at Work is easy, it’s the right thing to do and there is free assistance available but it is not a mandated requirement. There is a professional, consistent look and feel to program materials and website, with the Recycle at Work, Metro and BPS logos present.

The City of Portland’s Recycle at Work website mimics the Metro Recycle at Work site, which can be confusing for businesses and makes it challenging to emphasize the BPS/City of Portland brand. Educational materials and how to guides (in multiple languages) are easily located on the website, however the web text is only available in English.

Our team has performed an initial review of Recycle at Work program outreach, branding and communications and has determined the following opportunities for improvements:

Definitive Communication About Business Recycling Requirement

Clear and definitive communication about the mandatory business recycling requirement and its connection to City, region and state goals is recommended. Our team believes that this can be achieved while maintaining the assistance-driven characterization of the program. Clear messaging such as “all Portland businesses are required to recycle paper, cardboard, plastic, metal and glass,” “all Portland businesses must complete an annual recycling program progress report,” and “all Portland businesses must be ready to present their recycling program and system to the City upon request.” Post the recycling ordinance online, as text and as a PDF attachment. Explain the compliance and enforcement process and policy, even if enforcement does not involve fines or penalties. Establishing and communicating a larger fine (~\$1,000) for non-compliance after three non-compliant progress inspections will encourage compliance, reporting of compliance and participation in the assistance program.

Business to Business Interactions

Business participants could benefit from an online business recycling practices forum, educational workshops, listserv or network where they get to complete the Five Easy Steps of the Recycling at Work program together, share ideas on best practices and trouble shoot perceived challenges. Moving through the Five Easy Steps on a schedule as a group could improve participation and increase the number of businesses completing the program while requiring less program staff time. This type of interaction can provide participant motivation and raise the interest and performance bar of participating businesses.

More Fully Developed Plan for Outreach Strategies

Each outreach strategy is clearly communicated on a high level. More fully develop each outreach strategy to include an outline of the methodology and timeline for outreach, prioritized businesses and business associations for initial contact and follow up, staffing assignments of responsibility within each strategy, more face-to-face presentations and workshops at business events, a clear communication about the business recycling requirement, quantitative performance metrics for the outreach and for the targeted audience response, and a plan for reporting on the results of the outreach and streamlining methodology based on results.

Messaging to Target Decision-Makers and Change Agents

The program typically engages a champion who is often in a support role. The program could require the champion to name and engage contacts that are decision-makers and change agents within the business. For medium to large businesses, decision-makers and change agents would be facilities or operations managers. Specialists could also target regional managers, even though they may not be located within the City of Portland, for businesses with multi-jurisdictional chains. Target property managers with clear messages about compliance and services, especially those with tenants that have not been supported in meeting the business recycling requirement. Engage commercial tenants directly. Engage waste haulers and janitorial services as partners in a train-the-trainers accreditation process so that they can educate their business customers on the steps and services offered by the Recycle at Work program. Finally, unify outreach messages and terminology by using the vocabulary and interests of decision-makers and change agents at businesses that are already motivated and referring other businesses to the program. Use more videos, searchable databases such as online green business directories, and social media (Facebook, Twitter, blogs, YouTube, Flickr, etc.) to expand your reach and make websites more interactive.

Outreach to Address Non-English Speaking Audiences

In addition to providing materials in other languages, there is a need to do in-person outreach in other languages and through partnerships with bi-lingual businesses. Options include hiring bilingual staff, partnering with service organizations and enlisting bilingual volunteer outreach workers.

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM OTHER BUSINESS RECYCLING PROGRAMS

Our team reviewed online resources and conducted interviews with program managers of other business recycling assistance programs to identify opportunities in program delivery for the Recycle at Work program. The following programs were reviewed:

- City and County of Honolulu, HI – Mandatory Recycling and Waste Reduction Program
- City and County of Sacramento, CA – Mandatory Recycling and Waste Reduction Program
- City of San Francisco, CA – Mandatory Recycling and Waste Reduction Program
- City of Seattle, WA – Mandatory Recycling and Waste Reduction Program
- City of Gresham, OR – Recycle at Work Program
- City of Santa Monica, CA – Non-Mandatory Recycling and Waste Reduction Program
- City of New York, NY - Mandatory Recycling and Waste Less Campaign
- City of San Diego, CA – Mandatory Recycling and Waste Prevention Campaign
- City of Austin, TX – Mandatory Recycling and WasteSmart and Waste Reduction Assistance Program

After reviewing these programs, the following program elements were **standard across all programs**:

- Programs are a division of or sponsored by a City's Solid Waste Department or Environmental Services Department. Two are non-profits funded by the departments and utilities.
- Free recycling assistance and education is offered including clear steps for process in setting up a recycling program.
- Programs use the City recycling rate (ranging from 38% to 72%) and landfill diversion rate to communicate the overall success of their programs.
- Identified business recycling rates are below and in some cases well below, the City recycling rate, indicating opportunity for improvement.
- Other mandatory recycling programs provide clear communication that recycling is required for businesses or commercial entities on websites and in program materials and provide links to the mandatory recycling ordinances and benefits.
- Enforcement of the mandatory business recycling requirements vary widely, but the most successful programs (those with the highest number of compliant businesses and the highest recycling rates) offer free recycling assistance, perform onsite compliance inspections, provide opportunities (up to three) for becoming compliant, and fine (up to \$1,000) businesses who are still not in compliance. Enforcement (fines, penalties) is exceptionally rare when regular onsite visits are planned from the beginning.
- Cities that have mandatory recycling don't tend to offer recycling certification, awards or other recognition. These Cities do tend to offer waste prevention or sustainability awards.
- Recycling program web pages often link recycling efforts to other city/county/state waste prevention efforts, zero waste campaigns, or sustainability assistance programs.
- Programs are utilizing online comment forms, surveys and social media such as Facebook, Twitter, e-newsletters and videos to make websites more interactive and accessible.
- Messaging and campaigns are beginning to focus on waste prevention education and assistance.
- The environmental services or solid waste department logo is typically used and many websites are text heavy. Those that include videos, links, comment forms, and printable materials are the most useful and informative.

After a review of online resources and interviews with program managers of other business recycling assistance programs, our team has identified some initial categories of opportunities for improvement, based on best practices summarized below:

City and County of Honolulu, HI – Mandatory Recycling and Waste Reduction Program

- Estimated 28% recycling rate
- Clear messaging about mandatory recycling with annual inspections and enforcement
- Inspects businesses required to recycle each year, provides assistance to non-compliant businesses and can suspend business licenses
- Offers a successful annual Tour de Trash to show off successful business recycling programs
- Business-to-business peer consulting for setting up recycling system and for buying recycled content products
- Provides waste audit worksheets to use when setting up a business recycling program
- Opala Vision videos to teach children about recycling that starts immediately upon opening the website

City and County of Sacramento, CA – Mandatory Recycling and Waste Reduction Program

- Estimated 64% recycling rate with franchised hauling
- Clear messaging about mandatory recycling, free assistance, inspections and enforcement: “recycling is the law” and “recycling means good business.”
- Inspects businesses required to recycle each year and can suspend business licenses
- Has three simple recycling steps, with more detail provided for each step: organization, education and implementation
- Provides separate online information for food service establishments

City of San Francisco, CA – Mandatory Recycling and Waste Reduction Program

- Estimated 75%+ recycling rate with franchised hauling
- Operates the recycling and waste prevention programs within the context of a zero waste effort
- Clear messaging about mandatory recycling and composting, free assistance and enforcement with a mandatory recycling link on the homepage and a prominent icon on the main program page
- Provides detailed case studies that include quantified financial, environmental or waste reduction benefits
- Easy to navigate website with lots of high quality and useful materials to view and download and use of social media, including YouTube, Flickr and videos; links to related interactive green maps and searchable databases

City of San Diego, CA – Mandatory Recycling and Waste Prevention Campaign

- Estimated 64% recycling rate with franchised hauling
- Clear messaging about mandatory recycling, free assistance, inspections and code enforcement; some messages connect recycling at work to recycling at home
- Provides sample letters for businesses to modify and use to explain recycling requirements to tenants
- Fine of \$1,000 for businesses who are still not in compliance after three inspections
- Leverage the code enforcement team but enforcement is exceptionally rare when regular onsite visits are planned from the beginning
- 14 offices for waste enforcement with 2 FTE for businesses and 2 FTE providing recycling technical assistance and 20,000 businesses served per year

- Require regular volume reports from city certified haulers and if a business uses a non-certified hauler or self hauls they are responsible for reporting
- Stand for Less Waste Reduction Campaign to promote waste prevention

City of Seattle, WA – Mandatory Recycling and Waste Reduction Program

- Estimated 51% recycling rate
- Clear messaging about mandatory recycling, free assistance, inspections and enforcement
- Provides detailed case studies that include quantified financial, environmental or waste reduction benefits. “Are there dollars in your dumpster?” handout speaks directly to business’ desire to save money.
- Website visitors can easily find employee education materials to print, including bathroom stall fliers
- Provides multiple warnings for non-compliant businesses, haulers will not remove trash bags with visible recyclables and businesses are fined \$50 for non-compliance
- Measurable program outcomes are displayed online: CO2 reduced, dollars saved, tons of waste prevented, etc.

City of Santa Monica, CA – Non-Mandatory Recycling and Waste Reduction Program

- Estimated 68% recycling rate
- Business recycling is not mandatory but encouraged and free assistance is offered
- Several pending ordinances to ban plastic food to-go containers, single use carry-out bags and waste cooking grease/oil
- Online recycling survey for new and interested businesses

City of New York, NY - Mandatory Recycling and Waste Less Campaign

- Estimated 34%+ recycling rate
- Clear messaging about mandatory recycling, free assistance, inspections and enforcement
- The NYCWasteLess campaign was started in 2004 to get New Yorkers to recycle more and waste less. The NYCWasteLess website provides educational materials a WasteLess events calendar, a stuff exchange program and lists vendors that provide recycled products
- Business recycling ordinance is easy to find, with embedded hyperlinks for additional info about compliance and penalties
- Partnered with the City College of New York and NYC Materials Exchange Development Program to offer WasteMatch, a free waste brokerage service
- Website visitors can translate the website into other languages and map diversion rates by community/neighborhood
- NYC encourages businesses to advertise and publicize their successes using sample marketing tools provided

City of Gresham – Mandatory Recycling Program

- Clear messaging about mandatory recycling, free assistance and inspections
- An assisted compliance approach is currently being used. After two years, the City will evaluate its success with this approach and consider more stringent compliance/enforcement procedures
- Gresham uses a volunteer Knock and Talk program to engage apartment tenants and explain the recycling requirements

City of Austin, TX – Mandatory Recycling and WasteSmart and Waste Reduction Assistance Program

- Estimated 30% recycling rate with proposal for franchised haulers
- Clear messaging about mandatory recycling, free assistance and inspections based on complaints
- Serve 450 businesses per employee per year in responsive, assistance-driven services
- Mandatory business recycling serves City Zero Waste Plan
- Require regular volume reports from city certified haulers and if a business uses a non-certified hauler or self hauls they are responsible for reporting
- Planning to start direct engagement of facilities with large square footage based (drawn from tax reports)
- Waste Reduction Assistance Program provides a free waste assessment and recommendations for setting up a recycling system and reducing waste
- WasteSmart recognizes local businesses that reduce, recycle waste and buy recycled products

Opportunities identified from other recycling programs at this initial evaluation will be added to and prioritized based on current and potential business participant needs expressed in responses to our online survey, interviews and facilitated discussions.

The best practices and materials identified above by our team from other recycling business assistance programs will be highlighted in the next steps of our research and will provide valuable insight into our team's recommendations for the integration of these three programs.

PART II: INITIAL REVIEW OF BEST BUSINESS CENTER PROGRAM AND OTHER SUSTAINABILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM BEST PROGRAM PERSONNEL

Our team conducted interviews with sixteen program managers, specialists and partners to review internal understanding of what is working well and what could be better within the program. Personnel were asked to provide feedback on their role, the program services, business participants, process flow, brand, outreach and how the program evolves in response to changing needs.

BEST Business Center Program Gaps Identified During Interviews

Program Managers

- For large businesses BPS is targeting the wrong person. The participant is motivated, but not knowledgeable and has no delegated authority.
- Chain retail is a challenge given locations in multiple jurisdictions.
- Managers describe the brand personality differently.
- Everyone needs proof of results.
- Need for a consistent, systematic approach.

Program Specialists

- Program works when we are working with the owner, harder when with a manager or assignee.
- Large businesses are difficult to progress with only a champion. Unless there is executive sponsorship, this is targeting an interested party, but not a responsible party.
- No way to work with non-English speaking businesses.
- Chain retail is challenging because it crosses jurisdictions.

Program Partners

- Some did not know what it was, but mostly there was a consistent understanding of BEST, but very different language used to describe it. Examples:
 - *Your way of getting an audit to become more sustainable and making more money.*
 - *BEST – I get a little confused. Consulting service to help with resource conservation efforts.*

WHAT WE LEARNED ABOUT CURRENT BEST PROGRAM DESIGN

Our team has performed an initial review of BEST Business Center program resources that describe the program's history, design, target audience, key messages, goals, engagement process, and outreach strategies. After this preliminary review, our team has identified some initial opportunities for improvement to explore in program design and flow:

Levels of Participation and Recognition

The levels of participation and recognition in the program are confusing on the website and in the program materials. Distinguishing the Climate Champions and BEST Awards would be helpful in addition to determining a timeline for the business sustainability certification or recognition. Climate Champions could be more of a tiered recognition program demonstrating businesses that had completed the minimum business sustainability requirements for participation in the BEST Business Center program and BEST Awards could represent only the businesses who are already Climate Champions and who have gone above and beyond the minimum business sustainability requirements. BEST Awards are recognized with a public ceremony and press release celebrating their accomplishments. Our team recommends that interested businesses sign a letter of commitment when they enter the program and negotiate a timeline for completion in the program with regular onsite visits along the way. These businesses could then be added to a current year “in progress” listing on the BEST Business Center website.

Metrics and Data Collection to Communicate Success

The program goals are clearly stated and easy to report on; however, there is not a clear method for businesses to report on their progress and success in terms of annual quantitative performance metrics. These would be more outcome-oriented metrics including energy and water usage, business transportation travel, cost savings, employee participation in alternative modes of transportation, etc. These metrics could be incorporated into participant success stories, annual reports and program brochures. This data could be collected through an online reporting website and could be incorporated into the Climate Champion and BEST Award applications.

WHAT WE LEARNED ABOUT CURRENT BEST OUTREACH AND BRANDING STRATEGY

Input received during program design focus groups conducted in 2007 led to the creation of key messages and brand identity for BEST. Key messages let businesses know BEST is a one-stop shop that provides free assistance and involvement can allow businesses to be more profitable and get recognition for going green. Materials have a consistent look and feel and are easily identifiable with the BEST logo. The BEST website and outreach materials have an inviting, friendly, non-governmental feel that enforces the message of assistance but it does not contain detailed, business specific information.

Our team has performed an initial review of the BEST Business Center program outreach, branding and communications and has determined the following opportunities for improvements:

Business to Business Interactions

Business participants could benefit from an online forum, educational workshops, listserv or business sustainability network where they get to complete the BEST Business Center program process together and share ideas on best practices. Moving through the program on a schedule as a group or cohort could improve participation and increase the number of businesses completing the program with less program staff time. This

type of interaction can provide motivation to and raise the interest and performance bar of participating businesses.

Messaging to Target Decision-Makers and Change Agents

The program must engage contacts that are decision-makers and change agents within the small and medium-sized business. For medium to large businesses, decision-makers and change agents would be facilities or operations managers. Specialists could also target regional managers, even though they may not be located within the City of Portland, for businesses with multi-jurisdictional chains. Finally, unify outreach messages and terminology by using the vocabulary and interests of decision-makers and change agents at businesses that are already motivated and referring other businesses to the program. Use more videos, searchable databases, and social media (Facebook, Twitter, blogs, YouTube, Flickr, etc.) to expand your reach and make websites more interactive.

Checklists of Required Business Action Items

Many resources and partners are listed on the website but there is a need for a clear path or sample list/guide of action items that businesses will follow similar to the guidance document for Climate Champions for participation in the program. Providing a clear certification process or checklists for each targeted audience (by sector such as professional services and hospitality) participant with minimum business sustainability requirements for action items and additional considerations would help businesses to clearly define their action items and goals, determine steps for improvements and encourage ongoing involvement in bettering their sustainability practices. Establish a clear process and timeline for each business to become recognized and follow up on their progress. Also determine how long the recognition will last and what they need to do to get re-approved for recognition.

Website with Clear Action Items and Supporting Resources

The BEST website is professional and graphically designed. Web content should clearly help a first time visitor understand the purpose of the program, the tangible benefits to their business, and the process to get involved. There needs to be a compelling reason for a business to get involved. The website does a good job of providing links to other local and regional sustainability organization and programs, but the supporting information should reach deeper in the subject matter and provide more details. More background information/resource documentation could be added to connect sustainability subjects to specific City/state goals. Checklists (as described in the section above) should also be available online as web text and as a printable PDF.

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM OTHER BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMS

Our team reviewed online resources and conducted interviews with program managers of other business sustainability assistance programs to identify opportunities in program delivery for the BEST Business Center. The following programs were reviewed:

- City of Santa Monica, CA Sustainable Works Program
- City of Sacramento, CA Sustainable Business Program
- City of Boston, MA Sustainable Business Leadership Program
- City of Gresham, OR GREAT Businesses
- City of Fort Collins, CO Climate Wise
- City of San Francisco, CA Green Business Program
- City of Salt Lake City, UT e2 Business Program
- City of Seattle, WA Resource Venture
- Minnesota Waste Wise

After reviewing these programs, the following program elements were **standard across all programs**:

- Majority of programs established in the last six years or grew out of a Pollution Prevention awards program and was established in the last fifteen years.
- Programs have regulatory partners and deep, regular relationships with business association (Chamber of Commerce and Visitor's Bureau) partners.
- Businesses take on average six months to complete the program.
- Number of businesses completing the programs was 10 – 40 per employee per year for new programs and as high as 200 for established programs like the Sacramento Sustainable Business Program.
- Most programs target small and medium sized businesses that are independently owned.
- Program services are assistance driven and include energy, water, waste and recycling, purchasing, green building, transportation and pollution prevention.
- General resources describing process, program requirements, sustainability best practices are available online and most programs also have specific materials for sectors (offices, retail, restaurants, grocery stores and hotels).
- Most of the programs incorporate quantitative performance metrics (including cost savings, carbon reductions, energy and water savings, number of participants, etc.) in participant success stories or in annual reports for the program.
- Program messaging emphasizes that the program provides free assistance and cost savings.
- Many logos and tag lines incorporate the terms sustainability and/or business. Some include the name of the city.
- Websites and materials are generally more sophisticated than the recycling and solid waste sites. Green is a dominant color on many websites.
- Most programs are offering a certification or recognition-based program with checklists to demonstrate completion or level of participation.
- Many of the programs offer ongoing, regular workshops and program managers are starting to incorporate the delivery of the programs into more business-to-business interaction.
- Many innovative programs are planning to expand and offer their services regionally.

After reviewing program resources and completing interviews, our team identified programs that **excel in an aspect(s) of program delivery** for BPS program staff to consider as an opportunity for improvement:

City of Santa Monica, CA – Sustainable Works Program

- 10 businesses served per employee per year with \$90 K budget and 2 FTE
 - Onsite assistance and education in addition to green business certification
 - Special project funding through Community Partners and consistent roll-out of sustainability assistance programs to residents, businesses and students
 - Utilization of business leadership organizations, such as the Chamber of Commerce and Visitor's Bureau, for membership and business benefits
 - Using California Green Business Program checklist templates for certification and collecting simple quantitative self-reported metrics from the checklists
 - Program branding as government program for certification and as non-profit for greening business assistance program
 - Charging for green business certification and free assistance for business greening program
 - Green Living Sustainability Workshops once a week
 - Tag lines and messages include "Save money and the environment" and "It makes good business sense!"
- Green businesses are messaged as business leaders

City of Sacramento, CA – Sustainable Business Program

- 200 businesses served per employee per year with \$1 M budget and 5.5 FTE
- Onsite assistance and sustainable business certification by category area
- Serves the largest number of businesses per year and expanding regionally
- Serve many federal government offices
- Recognition and award-driven program (from Pollution Prevention awards)
- Local resource guide highlighting local business assistance in greening operations
- Certification done by BEREC, a mediator between regulatory agencies and businesses, by aspect such as energy, water, recycling etc.
- Website lists certified businesses by certification year and indicates which programs they've achieved (Water Smart, Energy Conservation, etc.)
- Involved with Harold Robinson Radio "Going Green" radio show and represent program at green exhibitions and tradeshow regularly

City of Boston, MA – Sustainable Business Leadership Program

- 40 businesses served per employee per year with 1.5 FTE
- Onsite assistance and sustainable business certification
- Program manager meets face-to-face with businesses once a month to track progress and provide assistance and education
- Businesses move through the program as a cohort and they will be introducing business-to-business mentoring
- Sustainable Business Network (BALLE) provides and drives this program so they already have buy-in of most established business leaders in community who sell the program by word-of-mouth
- Sustainable Business Network (BALLE) looking to replicate this program in other cities

- Advisory Board of community business leaders

City of Gresham, OR – GREAT Businesses

- 133 businesses served per employee per year with 1.5 FTE and 80 total certified businesses and 120 businesses pledged to certify
- Onsite assistance and GREAT business certification
- Gresham’s GREAT business assistance pledge program is educating businesses about recycling requirements and waste prevention. The goal is to certify 200 businesses (10% of city businesses) by end of year.
- Social marketing campaign exceeded targets
- Utilization of business leadership organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce

City of Fort Collins, CO – Climate Wise

- 10 - 15 businesses served per employee per year with 200 total business membership with \$75 K budget and 3 FTE
- Onsite assistance and monthly education/workshops and face-to-face time
- Business Advisory Committee and tiered business membership/participation with tiered recognition that moves them forward year after year
- Business participant metrics for annual reporting with 78% of businesses reporting using an online tool named myClimateWise
- Tag lines and messages include “Climate Wise, Business Smart”
- Program metrics displayed in annual report - outstanding
- Top 50 Innovative Government Program by Harvard University

Bay Area, CA Green Business Program

- Serves over 1,800 businesses per year
- California Green Business Program Network - program template rolled out for several bay area counties and cities
- Most comprehensive educational resources and marketing toolkits including video resource guides for each sustainability category
- Compliance guides by industry

City of Salt Lake City, UT e2 Business Program

- Serves up to 100 businesses total
- Goal setting example on the business application
- Uses Utah Jazz Green Team athletes to promote interest in recycling and energy reduction
- Link between business and residential e2 Programs, Environmentally and Economically sustainable (e2) Citizen program

City of Seattle, WA Resource Venture

- Program serves 800 businesses per year
- Not a comprehensive business sustainability assistance program, focus is on energy and waste

- Utilization of business leadership organizations – founded by the Chamber of Commerce and now partnered with local utilities
- Offers most comprehensive rebates and incentives for energy and water reduction technologies
- Free cart recycling program
- Excellent case studies showing participant performance metrics including cost savings and energy reductions
- Provides a nice online visual that quantifies tons of waste recycled, gallons of water conserved a day, spill kits distributed, dollars saved and metric tons of CO2 emissions reduced

Minnesota Chamber of Commerce – Minnesota Waste Wise

- Program serves about 100 business per year and does outreach to over 4,000 businesses
- Program serves tiered business membership where the tiers represent different levels of access to technical assistance, workshops and business forums
- Minnesota Chamber of Commerce sponsors the program and provides access to business advisory boards and forums
- Not a comprehensive business sustainability assistance program, focus is on energy and waste
- Success stories with quantitative performance metrics in annual report – outstanding

Opportunities identified from other comprehensive business sustainability assistance programs at this initial evaluation will be added to and prioritized based on current and potential business participant needs expressed in responses to our online survey, interviews and facilitated discussions.

The best practices and materials identified above by our team from other sustainability business assistance programs will be highlighted in the next steps of our research and will provide valuable insight into our team’s recommendations for the integration of these three programs.

PART III: INITIAL REVIEW OF THE PORTLAND COMPOSTS! PROGRAM

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM PROGRAM PERSONNEL

Our team conducted interviews with sixteen Portland Composts! program managers, specialists and partners to review internal understanding of what is working well and what could be better within the program. Personnel were asked to provide feedback on their role, the program services, business participants, process flow, brand, outreach and how the program evolves in response to changing needs.

Portland Composts! Program Gaps Identified During Interviews

Program Managers

- Office composting is infrequent and difficult to implement. Has low return for program investment.
- Chain businesses are problematic due to multiple jurisdictions and hauling offerings.
- Food courts consistently have too much contamination - need standard compostable food dishes.
- Transfer of food waste is the bottleneck.
- Role of PC not clear in context of other programs.
- Need proof of results.
- Need systematic approach.

Program Specialists

- Office composting is infrequent and difficult to implement. Has low return for program investment.
- Chain businesses are problematic due to multiple jurisdictions and hauling offerings.
- No way to work with non-English businesses.

Program Partners

- Inconsistent description of program.

Resulting Opportunities

- Office composting could be handled as a small side offering of other programs - RAW or integrated.
- Need regional specialist to support food chains that cross jurisdictions.
- Need to work with development of transfer station infrastructure so that the program can be scaled up.
- Design a systematic progressive program that takes business where they are at and offers to gently move them forward on a regular schedule.
- Request utility account access to review billing for data sources. Specialists then could develop a baseline and track post intervention performance from these records.
- Office composting assistance could be provided in the form of quarterly workshops so that assistance is provided to highly motivated parties with a small investment of time from staff.
- Need ability and time for specialist to support food chains that cross jurisdictions with direct engagement to regional operations managers.
- Need to do in-person outreach in other languages
- Work with partners to describe the program with more consistency.

WHAT WE LEARNED ABOUT PROGRAM DESIGN

Portland Composts! is the least developed program in its current operation. Our team believes that this program should be a subset of the recycling program.

WHAT WE LEARNED ABOUT CURRENT OUTREACH AND BRANDING STRATEGY

There appears to be a high level of interest with a relatively small portion of the restaurant sector in Portland. According to staff, participants are likely to be already tied into the local, organic, green community and they are motivated by doing the right thing for the environment, their business, the community and their customers.

Outreach consists mainly of word of mouth and new participants frequently learn of the program from colleagues or other businesses. There is a Portland Composts! website that has information about how to set up a program and provides tips. Easy to understand posters and how to guides are provided for businesses to display near garbage, recycling and composting areas to remind their customers how to dispose of “waste.”

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM OTHER COMPOSTING PROGRAMS

San Francisco has a mandatory composting (and recycling) program for all businesses and residents. This is the first large-scale, urban program to collect food scraps. The city’s goal is to divert more materials from the landfill and help achieve the goal of zero waste. Messages focus on the goal of zero waste, diverting materials from the landfill, saving money on disposal bills and putting recycling, compostables and trash in the right place. The website provides posters, fact sheets, case studies and background information on the zero waste initiative. Phone numbers are provided for people that need additional, free assistance to set up their program.

Many municipalities are not currently providing composting programs, although two provide voluntary services for businesses: Seattle and New York City. Seattle offers composting for businesses and has banned one-time use food containers that are not recyclable or compostable. They require that businesses collect and sort these containers to keep them out of the trash.

PART IV: WORKING TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED PROGRAM MODEL

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM PROGRAM PERSONNEL

Our team conducted interviews with sixteen Portland Composts! program managers, specialists and partners to review internal understanding of what is working well and what could be better within the program. Personnel were asked to provide feedback on their role, the program services, business participants, process flow, brand, outreach and how the program evolves in response to changing needs.

Integrated Program Model Gaps Identified During Interviews

Program Managers

- Multiple program names produce confusion and lower memory of program functions.
- Programs need to be streamlined.
- Summer and winter is a slow time of year for assistance but a good time for outreach.
- Unclear roles and duties for program managers and specialists.
- Compost program focuses on food business.
- Desire for participants to have an ongoing relationship with the integrated program.
- Unclear boundaries of programs with the program partners (BES, PGE, ETO etc.).
- Desire to incorporate equity/social sustainability.
- Must move assistance beyond downtown core.

Program Specialists

- No way to work with non-English speaking businesses.
- Desire for ongoing, progress and relationship with participants.
- Desire for focusing outreach on folks that will receive it, not chase the laggards.
- Need systematic cross training of specialists and managers.
- Not sure what businesses really need.
- Customers/participants can't follow how the program works.
- For larger businesses, the participants aren't in charge of operations, don't know what they are currently doing and don't know their vendors.
- Participants regularly need latest news on a subject.
- Need to focus on human behavior more.
- Emphasis should move away from recycling and into waste prevention.
- Cost analysis of implementation and savings would be helpful.
- Social sustainability should be included.
- Need a standardized process with regular review and goal setting.
- Need to include the climate impact of purchased items in supply chain.
- Need baseline of performance and ongoing performance tracking.

Integrated Program Model Gaps Identified During Interviews

Program Partners

- Switch from waste reduction to prevention.
- Show the business proposition.
- All government and non-profit programs need to align and identify gaps in service.
- Need regular coordination to serve regional businesses.
- Need to learn from each other what works.
- Need to integrate with local and other business communities.
- Fewer advertisements and more targeted outreach.
- Lead by example - no public recycling.
- Need to focus on performance

Resulting Opportunities

- One program name that represents all services. Design a systematic progressive program that takes business where they are at and offers to gently move them forward on a regular schedule.
- One program goal that discusses mandatory recycling as the very first step.
- One program specialist assigned to support the same business over time.
- One program specialist assigned to support businesses in each neighborhood (using the Planning Department map) over time, including neighborhood canvassing and introductions to non-participating businesses.
- One program specialist assigned as a "regional" specialist to target chains.
- Establish clear program boundaries and business referral flows with program partners and stay involved by meeting quarterly or providing representation at each other's staff meetings.
- Ensure the customer experience is streamlined and a program flowchart is provided to the participant with clear expectations about program offerings, participant action items and timeline.
- Ongoing cross training of staff for consistency in program delivery where managers go out on call with each specialist twice a year and specialists do the same with other specialists.
- Frame the program in business language and describe program as investment for the long term.
- Collect data and report on business participant performance using an intake survey and an outtake survey.
- Share emerging business change behaviors at staff meetings and update materials as needed.
- Utilize existing business networks to engage new businesses in the program.
- Lead by example with public recycling bins and public displays of the various City departments' participation in the program.
- Introduce social sustainability via integration of business with neighboring community and other communities of interest. Create a secondary focus on employee satisfaction with pay, benefits, office culture, professional development, etc.
- Use slow times (summer and winter) for concentrated outreach. Efforts during these months could connect to seasonal issues such as electricity and water use in the summers, energy efficiency in the winter.
- Partner more with existing business organizations and sponsor their events/use their channels for education and outreach.
- More recognition of successful participants.
- Need to do in-person outreach in other languages.

NEXT STEPS IN ACHIEVING AN INTEGRATED MODEL

The purpose of this document was to share the findings of our team's initial review of gaps and opportunity analysis for the three green business assistance programs offered by the City of Portland's Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) including Recycle at Work, BEST Business Center and Portland Composts!

BPS staff selected a combination of sustainability and recycling business assistance programs from around the country for our team to research via online sources in order to benchmark BPS' programs to others and highlight opportunities to achieve best practices and offer best materials and resources. Our team also conducted seven interviews with program managers of these other programs to find out more detailed information regarding their best practices that produced the highest business participation at the least cost to the program.

Information was gathered and reviewed from program personnel of these three programs in addition to other sustainability and recycling business assistance program websites and program managers. Initial gaps and opportunities have been identified and will be reviewed more extensively in the next phase of work on this project.

Opportunities identified from other green business assistance programs at this initial evaluation will be added to and prioritized based on current and potential business participant needs expressed in responses to our online survey, interviews and facilitated discussions.

The best practices and materials identified by our team from other sustainability and recycling business assistance programs will be highlighted in the next steps of our research and will provide valuable insight into our team's recommendations for the integration of these three programs.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR OTHER PROGRAM MANAGERS

Please describe your...

Program and offer of services

Number of staff and budget

Number of businesses served per year

Types of businesses served

Key questions...

Who handles compliance for green business certification, mandatory recycling, composting, etc.?

How is your program presented? (Technical assistance, enforcement, education, certification, etc.)

What are the key actions you expect businesses to take?

What are the key messages of the program? What terms and language are you using that businesses respond to?

How do you define and measure success for participants/businesses?

How do you see your programs evolving to serve participants in the future?

Who do you look to for innovation and new ideas?

Additional questions...

Do you track if businesses are implementing recommended changes? If so, how and when in the process?

What techniques do you use to keep businesses engaged over time?

What do you do to recognize businesses and why does it work well?

What types of materials are you providing?

Do you target certain sectors/industry types? If so, how and why?

What are the best marketing/advertising tools you've used to attract participation at minimal cost?

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW LIST

Category	Interview Contact and Information
Internal Program Managers	<p>Andria Jacob, Former BEST Program Manager, 303-877-4416</p> <p>Jill Kolek, BPS Department Head, 503-823-7590</p> <p>Megan Stein, RAW and BEST Program Manager, 503-939-1763</p> <p>Pam Neild, Project Manager and Creator of BEST, 503-823-0231</p>
Internal Program Specialists and Support	<p>Elle McKay, Data Management/Reporting, 503-823-7061</p> <p>Genevieve Joplin, Portland Composts! Program Specialist, 503-823-0232</p> <p>Jaimes Valdez, BEST Program Specialist, 503-823-7109</p> <p>Joycelyn Boudreaux, Communications Specialist, 503-823-3660</p> <p>Kim White, Recycle at Work Program Specialist, 503-823-5881</p> <p>Lindsey Maser, Customer Service, 503-823-7553</p> <p>Marlowe Kulley, BEST Program Specialist, 503-823-3919</p> <p>Paul DeBlock, Recycle at Work Program Specialist, 503-823-2069</p> <p>Pete Chism, Recycle at Work Program Specialist, 503-823-7652</p> <p>Yvonne Garcia, Recycle at Work Program Specialist, 503-823-7046</p>
Program Partners and Business Context	<p>Alison Cable, Metro, Recycle at Work Program Specialist and Waste Reduction Planner, 503-797-1640</p> <p>Alma Flores, City of Portland BPS, Economic Development Planner, 503-823-7801</p> <p>Babe O'Sullivan, Policy Coordinator, 503-823-9582</p> <p>Michael Armstrong, City of Portland BPS, Senior Sustainability Manager, 503-823-6053</p> <p>Spencer Moersfelder, Energy Trust of Oregon, Business Program Manager, 503-445-7635</p> <p>Steve Hoyt-McBeth, Portland Bureau of Transportation, Smart Trips Program Manager, 503-823-7191</p> <p>Steven Green, Portland Development Commission, Urban Development Project Manager, 503-823-3231</p>
Other Recycling and Waste Management Business Assistance Programs	<p>City of San Diego, CA – Mandatory Recycling and Waste Prevention Campaign Stephen Grealy, Waste Reduction Program Manager, (858) 573-1275, SGrealy@sandiego.gov</p> <p>City of Austin, TX – Mandatory Recycling, WasteSmart and Waste Reduction Assistance Program Keith Bible, Senior Waste Diversion Planner, (512) 974-6492, keith.bible@ci.austin.tx.us</p>
Other Comprehensive Sustainability Business Assistance Programs	<p>City of Santa Monica, CA – Sustainable Works Program Susy Borlido, Business Greening Program Director (and Green Business Certification Program), 310.458.8716 x2, SSB@sacberc.org</p> <p>City of Sacramento, CA – Sustainable Business Program Duane O'Donnell, Sustainable Business Program Manager, 916-649-0130, dodonnell@sacberc.org</p> <p>City of Boston, MA – Sustainable Business Leadership Program Emily Kanter, Program & Outreach Director, 857.998.7871, emily@sustainablebusinessleader.org</p> <p>City of Gresham, OR – GREAT Businesses Shaunna Sutcliffe, Recycle at Work and GREAT Business Program Manager, 503-618-2694, shaunna.sutcliffe@greshamoregon.gov</p> <p>City of Fort Collins, CO Climate Wise Wendy Serour, Business Outreach Specialist, (970) 416-2311, WSerour@fcgov.com</p>