

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: **RECYCLING PROGRAM**, Agreement between the City and RecycleRewards, Inc. (known as RecycleBank®) to increase Resident Recycling Participation (Director of Public Works).
REPORT: 1433-16
ADVICE: Approval

BACKGROUND

Before that Board is an agreement with RecycleRewards, Inc. (known as RecycleBank®), to increase recycling rates. The Director of the Department of Public Works proposes that the City enter into a 10-Year Agreement with RecycleRewards to increase participation in the City's recycling program. RecycleBank is a rewards and loyalty program that financially rewards households for recycling. In New Haven, RecycleBank expects to save the City \$580,000 annually and reward each household up to \$400 per year in points that can be spent at local and national businesses. The partnership will enable the City to implement single stream recycling and provide citizens with new smaller 48 gallon trash carts out of the trash diversion savings generated by RecycleBank. Over the course of the 10-year period, the City stands to realize \$1.8 million in diverted savings, pay for \$1.5 million worth of new 35,000 48 gallon trash carts, and to retrofit its existing 96 gallon carts for the anticipated increase in single stream recycling. Recycling totes would be fitted or retrofitted with RFID tags to allow tracking and weighing of waste. The average weight of annual household recyclable materials is expected to be increased from 266 pounds to 750 pounds per household per year; although savings accrue at lower amounts. The financing is complicated, but necessitated by the goal of keeping regular trash hauling free, while incentivizing increased recycling volume, and making it easier by moving to single stream recycling.

The Aldermanic committee heard this matter on October 15, 2009. Chief Administrative Officer Robert Smuts and Public Works Director (and also Director of the Municipal Solid Waste Authority) John Prokop presented the matter in a handout and representatives of Recycle Bank were also available for questions.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

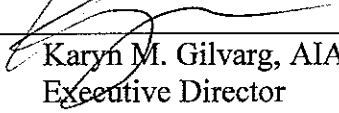
The fees for the incentive based recycling program are a percentage of the gross savings from avoided trash disposal fees by participating households. The percentage is calculated based upon the then current disposal tip fee of \$70.40 per ton in the first year. If there are no avoided trash disposal fees savings from the program, then no payment shall be made by the City to RecycleRewards. In years 1-5 RecycleBank will receive 100% of the gross savings (while paying for all the new totes), and in years 6-10, the City receives 100% of the same gross savings. During years 6-10 the City would pay a flat program administration charge annually of \$6 per participating household. RecycleBank would be responsible for technical training and support for the weighing, identification and data management systems, reporting, marketing with local/regional vendors, and education of the New Haven community on the recycling program.

The Department of Public Works is responsible for administering the City's recycling program as laid out in Article I, Sec. 120-13 of the Code of Ordinances. In soliciting a proposal from RecycleRewards Department Director John Prokop is seeking a system that will be profitable to the City as well as environmentally sound and beneficial to the City's residents who participate. It appears that these goals have been met with this ambitious proposal. Educating citizens about the program and promotion of the benefits was a concern of the aldermen at the hearing and will be key to its success, an extensive series of mailings and outreach, including through children in the school system, is planned.

ADVICE

The Agreement between the City and RecycleRewards is in the best interest of the City, promotes increased recycling and makes it simpler as well as rewarding for citizens and the Commission recommends approval.

ADOPTED: October 21, 2009
Edward Mattison
Chair

ATTEST: 
Karyn M. Gilvarg, AIA
Executive Director