



Memorandum

MONTEREY REGIONAL WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

DATE: May 16, 2022
 TO: Felipe Melchor, General Manager
 FROM: Zoë Shoats, Director of Communications
 SUBJECT: SB 1383 Edible Food Recovery - Pilot Grant Funding Opportunity, FY 21-22 Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board approve the proposed distribution of funds originally allocated for FY 21-22 edible food recovery toward the SB 1383 Edible Food Recovery - Pilot Grant Funding Opportunity, FY 21-22. Recipient local food rescue organizations have been prioritized based on the findings of the capacity survey conducted in 2021.

BACKGROUND

By 2025 SB 1383, California's Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Strategy (SLCP), targets rescuing 20% of unused edible food from being disposed and connecting it with food programs for people to eat.

The District's TAC has been working collaboratively for approximately two years planning for various aspects of SB 1383. The regulation has a significant impact on each member jurisdiction in meeting the goals set under these regulations. The Board approved a MOU between MRWMD and its member jurisdictions for SB 1383 Shared Costs in June 2021. Within the approved shared costs as outlined in Exhibit A Detailed Activities & Costs FY 2021-2022, \$50,000 was allocated toward Edible Food Recovery capacity building via "donations to local food recovery organizations." Consistent with these previously approved activities and costs, the following distribution of those allocated funds is recommended at this time (FY 2021-2022 funds related to the Edible Food Recovery task).

DISCUSSION

During 2021 Blue Strike Environmental, on behalf of Salinas Valley Recycles (SVR), conducted outreach via phone and email to conduct a food recovery capacity survey amongst food pantries throughout Monterey County. The goal of the survey was to identify organizations involved in the local edible food collection and distribution system operating within Monterey County, and determine where, if any, gaps in collection and distribution capacity existed. This survey also served as an integral part of the region's SB 1383 Edible Food Recovery Capacity Planning Assessment completed in December 2021.

The survey outreach was conducted using a list of 95 identified food pantry organizations in Monterey County. Of the 95 organizations, 22 were closed and 25 no longer distribute food; of the confirmed 48 operating at the time of the survey, 40 organizations (83%) completed and submitted the capacity survey. The data collected gave the region insight into individual organization's overall capacity to collect, store, and distribute edible food to their local community. The survey also identified challenges these organizations are experiencing in their ability to recover and distribute more food, especially relevant as SB 1383 aims to increase recovery of edible food. According to survey results, 62% reported refrigerated storage as a limitation, 59% reported frozen storage as a limitation, and 30% reported dry storage as a limitation. Additional challenges reported by food rescue organizations included staffing (41%), donation sourcing (41%), transportation (32%), and variety in donations and floor space (3%).

SVR shared survey findings with District staff and member jurisdictions through the TAC.

The District saw the opportunity to participate collaboratively with SVR to utilize the findings of this capacity survey and the SB 1383 Edible Food Recovery Capacity Planning Assessment to inform allocation of Edible Food Recovery capacity building funding. During the first quarter of 2022, Blue Strike Environmental worked with MRWMD and SVR to outline a funding strategy to distribute shared costs allocated to increasing edible food recovery capacity throughout the region through the proposed SB 1383 Edible Food Recovery Capacity Building Pilot Grant Opportunity. This funding aims to help food recovery organizations increase their edible food recovery capacity in line with the goals of SB 1383. The 40 organizations that responded to the capacity survey were ranked based on six criteria. These criteria included:

1. Overall recovery capacity, based on reported pounds per month;
2. Overall distribution capacity, based on reported number of individuals served per month; and
3. Overall organizational responsiveness and engagement during the capacity survey outreach.

In addition, the prioritization considered survey responses related to: (4) types of food accepted (especially prepared foods); (5) reported current infrastructure levels; and (6) service limitations reported.

Based on these six factors, 14 organizations were prioritized to submit applications to be considered for FY 21-22 pilot grant funding. Based on these criteria, these organizations are believed to have the highest potential to immediately utilize funding to increase edible food recovery capacity in the region, and to provide valuable feedback to inform future potential funding cycles. These prioritized organizations received the pilot grant funding opportunity application package on Wednesday, April 27, 2022, and have until Monday, May 23, 2022, to submit their application in order to be considered for funding. A list of prioritized organizations is presented as Attachment A.

This year's pilot program findings will help to inform next year's program and we anticipate a \$60,000 donation to be allocated next fiscal year, pending Board and member agency council approvals.

Once an organization is awarded grant funding, applicants must track and report project results.

Results will be summarized in a final report due by December 31, 2022:

- Accounting and documentation for actual expenditures made in line with approved grant funding
- Quantification of increased capacity in the form of numbers of pounds of food collected, pounds of food distributed, individuals served, meals served, square feet of storage, etc.
- Changes in disposal: reduced disposal of spoiled food, increased/added organics collection service
- Other results and outcomes related to the approved project scope

MRWMD is working in collaboration with SVR on this funding opportunity to maximize the number and funding allocations to be distributed to responding applicants. A total of \$100,000 is allocated to this effort, with each waste district contributing \$50,000 on behalf of their member agencies. Applicants are eligible to apply for \$1,000 to \$20,000 per application; anticipated average award size is estimated as \$5,000 to \$10,000. Eligible expenditures are focused on equipment or infrastructure to increase applicant edible food recovery capacity, such as but not limited to commercial grade refrigerators and freezers, as well as materials or supplies to increase safe food recovery, preparation, preservation (canning, vacuum sealing, jamming, etc.), handling, storage, and/or transportation of food donations to/from donating parties and audiences served and related activities. Other eligible expenditures include staffing, vehicles or transportation (including refrigerated vehicles), maintenance, and upgrading or installation of equipment to increase safe food handling capacity. The full application package is presented as Attachment B.

As of Friday, May 13, 2022, Blue Strike has spoken with 13 of the 14 prioritized organizations and 12 have stated that they plan to submit an application. Two applications have already been submitted, and Blue Strike Environmental will continue to follow up with the remaining organizations throughout the application term.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

1. Approve distribution of SB 1383 MOU Shared Costs allocated to Edible Food Recovery capacity building as donations to local food recovery organizations for FY 21-22 to the responding applicants, prioritized based on the results of the 2021 Capacity Survey; and
2. Empower the General Manager, with District staff, to issue grant award funds to responding entities prior to June 30, 2022.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact related to this request is that it distributes previously allocated funds as approved by MRWMD for FY21-22 budget plan, consistent with the MOU between MRWMD and Member Jurisdictions for SB 1383 Shared Costs (June 2021).

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends the Board's consideration and approval of the planned \$50,000 distribution of funding to Edible Food Recovery and the local recipients identified in the selection process. The TAC will continue to meet monthly and staff members will make recommendations to the boards they serve for action as needed.

ATTACHMENT A

List of prioritized organizations:

1. BACS - Share Center
2. Boys & Girls Club of Monterey County
3. Children Country & Lives
4. City of Marina Parks & Recreation
5. Dorothy's Kitchen
6. Epiphany Marina
7. Loaves & Fishes
8. Meals on Wheels
9. Salvation Army Salinas
10. Salvation Army Sand City
11. Salvation Army Soledad
12. Shoreline Church
13. Veterans Transition Center
14. Victory Mission

ATTACHMENT B

Application Package

1. [SB 1383 Edible Food Recovery Program - Pilot Grant Funding Opportunity Summary, FY 21-22](#)
2. [SB 1383 Edible Food Recovery Program - Pilot Grant Funding Opportunity, FY 21-22](#)
3. [Blank W9](#)