



**DATE:** May 10, 2018

**TO:** Planning & Organization Committee/Recycling Board

**FROM:** Tom Padia, Deputy Executive Director

**BY:** Kelly Schoonmaker, Program Manager

**SUBJECT:** Bay-Friendly Rated Landscape Update

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## **SUMMARY**

The Bay-Friendly Rated Landscape system recognizes excellence in sustainable landscape design, construction and maintenance. Administered by ReScape California (formerly the Bay-Friendly Landscaping and Gardening Coalition), it applies to public, commercial, institutional and multifamily landscape projects, providing a flexible, systematic framework for creating healthy, drought-tolerant and environmentally sound landscapes. At the May 10 meeting, Lakshmi Gunanayagam, Program Manager at ReScape California, will present an overview of the Rated Landscape program.

## **DISCUSSION**

ReScape California recently launched Version 4 of the Bay-Friendly Rated Landscape system (“Rated Landscapes”). Version 4 is the first significant update to the Rated Landscapes since 2008. Updates include many new best practices recommended by local sustainable landscape experts. Additional revisions ensure that projects earning the Bay-Friendly Rating will meet and exceed requirements of the updated California Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELO).

With the update complete, ReScape CA is expanding implementation of the Rated Landscapes throughout the Bay Area, working with cities to adopt policies similar to those adopted in Alameda County that incentivize or require landscape projects to achieve the Bay-Friendly Rating. As part of this regional launch, ReScape CA is developing a stakeholder committee, reaching out to cities, and giving presentations on the benefits of Rated Landscapes to organizations in the Bay Area.

In addition to simplifying code compliance, Rated Landscapes save water, keep waste out of landfill, reduce pesticide and fertilizer use, and help slow climate change. Since 2005, 76 rated projects have been completed, totaling over 339 acres, with the following results:

- 78 million gallons of water saved annually
- 184,246 tons of construction waste diverted from landfills

- Up to 5,002 tons of avoided greenhouse gas emissions

Currently, 28 Rated Landscape projects are in the planning, design or construction phase, 24 of which are in Alameda County. StopWaste has supported the Rated Landscapes by providing grants and technical assistance to Rated Landscape projects in Alameda County, providing over \$250,000 in grants since 2005. As of Fiscal Year 2018-19, StopWaste will no longer offer grants, but will continue to offer technical assistance for Rated Landscapes. This change is largely due to the growth of the program, but also because grantees have found the technical assistance more valuable than the grants themselves.

For more information on Rated Landscapes, visit: <https://rescapeca.org/rated-landscapes/>

### **RECOMMENDATION**

This item is for information only.