



DATE: June 24, 2020
TO: WMA Board
FROM: Jennifer West, Program Manager
SUBJECT: Sustainable Landscapes in Alameda County - Final Report

SUMMARY

StopWaste's final *Sustainable Landscapes in Alameda County* report recognizes the commitment and achievements of our member agencies, local developers and landscape professionals to build healthy, climate change-resilient, sustainable communities. At the June 24 Board meeting, staff will share highlights of the report, released online this June.

DISCUSSION

StopWaste has worked for years with member agencies and other partners to encourage sustainable landscape design, construction and maintenance. Conventionally built landscapes typically require large inputs of water, chemicals and energy, and generate considerable waste, whereas sustainably built landscapes provide important ecosystem services, conserve water, and sequester carbon.

In Alameda County, 84 properties encompassing 370 acres have earned the ReScape Rated Landscapes label since the program's inception in 2005. The rating system, previously known as Bay-Friendly Rated Landscapes and now known as ReScape Rated Landscapes, is a mark of excellence for sustainable landscapes. The system is administered by ReScape California, a nonprofit that StopWaste helped create to broaden the impact of this work beyond Alameda County. Sustainability highlights of the completed projects include:

- 86 million gallons of water saved annually
- 17,168 tons of locally recycled compost and mulch applied
- 236,740 tons of construction waste diverted from landfills
- 11,800 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) avoided and 1,529 tons of CO₂e sequestered in soil

The *Sustainable Landscapes in Alameda County* final report is available online at stopwaste.org/landscapes.

After 15 years of providing technical assistance to member agencies, StopWaste is completing its planned transition of this work to ReScape CA and phasing out our own Landscape Services and Partnership project. As the final report reveals, there has been robust use of the ReScape CA Rated Landscapes qualification program as well as professional staff trainings and using sheet mulch to convert lawns to water efficient landscapes. The ReScape Rated Landscape program is well established in Alameda County after this effort. In addition, a comprehensive Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELO) Tool Kit was developed to improve enforcement of the state mandated ordinance in Alameda County, and the tool kit is available on the StopWaste website. The need for StopWaste to create more tools and to conduct outreach is low now that these tools are integrated into our member agencies' policies and practices. In addition, member agencies can use their Measure D funds toward Rated Landscapes and lawn conversion projects using sheet mulch.

Member Agencies can continue to access key tools developed by this program through these sites:

- ReScape CA Rated Landscapes and professional trainings for civic landscape design and maintenance professionals www.ReScapeCA.org
- WELO Enforcement Tool Kit www.StopWaste.org/WELO
- Climate change adaption measures www.StopWaste.org/WELO
- Lawn conversion using sheet mulch www.StopWaste.org/Landscape and www.LawntoGarden.org

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for information only.