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To: Mr. Joey Hejnowicz, Administrative Analyst, Ms. Gloria Hurtado, Deputy City Manager, City of Santa Rosa

From: R3 Consulting Group and SCS Engineers

Date: December 11, 2018

Subject: Summary of Focus Groups Memorandum (Task 2.3)

Introduction

As a part of the City of Santa Rosa's (City) commitment to community engagement as a central theme of the Zero Waste Plan (Plan) development process, two focus groups were conducted. The purpose of the focus groups was to gather input from the Santa Rosa community on behalf of the City and solicit feedback on various communication strategies, industry terminology, and gain valuable insight from residents about what zero waste and waste reduction means in the community.

The Project Team, including R3 staff (R3) and SCS Engineers, prepared various methods of extracting information from participants during the focus groups as well as received feedback via email from participants after the groups. Topics discussed during the focus groups were broken down into nine exercises:

- Understanding Terminology
- Title for the Plan
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Access to Waste Information
- Plan Logo Feedback
- Reuse Directory
- Flyer Feedback
- Calendar Feedback
- Promotional Material Feedback

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Approach

The Project Team conducted two, one-hour focus groups on October 16, 2018 at the City of Santa Rosa’s conference room from 3-4pm and 6-7pm. The afternoon and evening times were chosen to give residents the opportunity to attend despite work or other obligations. Focus group attendees were recruited from the Santa Rosa Zero Waste Community Survey. The survey asked responders that were Santa Rosa residents to provide an email if they were interested in participating in a focus group. The Project Team then reached out to over 200 residents and received confirmation from 24 residents that they would attend an in-person focus group.

However, on the day of the focus groups some confirmed residents did not show up. The first focus group had eight attendees and the second focus group had seven attendees, for a total of fifteen participants. A consent form was given and signed by every participant to share their responses with the City. A PowerPoint presentation was given to each focus group which guided participants through a series of exercises and questions to solicit their feedback. This included an overview of sustainability, resource recovery, and zero waste, potential title for the Plan, feedback on a potential logo, and frequently asked questions. Each exercise was recorded by one of the Project Team members or recorded by the participants themselves on forms provided and retained by the Project Team for analysis. Below are the combined results of the nine exercises conducted during the two focus groups.

Demographics

Both focus groups were quite different in the types of residents that came and participated. The first focus group, held in the afternoon, had a significantly older demographic of participants. In the evening, the second focus group had more variety in the ages of participants. Table 1 below shows the average age of each focus group.

Table 1: Average Age of Focus Groups

Focus Group	Average Age
Afternoon	64
Evening	48
Total	56

Participants were also asked if they spoke any languages other than English. About half reported that they spoke at least some Spanish as well three participants citing German, French, and Russian as additional languages spoken.

The results of these focus groups are representative of the overall age group of the participants themselves. More information regarding the overall demographics of the City are included in the Summary of Existing Policies Programs and Facilities and Population and Commercial Growth Projections memorandum.

Exercise 1: Understanding Terminology

The first exercise of the focus group was to gauge the participants understanding of the key terms “Sustainability”, “Resource Recovery”, and “Zero Waste” as shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Understanding of Terms

	Sustainability			Resource Recovery			Zero Waste		
	Widely Known	Not Controversial	Vague	Specific	Not Controversial	Not Widely Known	Widely Known	Specific	Controversial
Confirm	13	9	10	9	11	11	4	5	4
Object	1	5	3	3	1	2	5	3	3

The respondents confirmed that the term “sustainability” is widely known, somewhat controversial and vague. The majority of respondents stated that the term “resource recovery” is specific, not controversial, and not widely known. The respondents were split in stating that the term “zero waste” is widely known, specific and controversial.

Exercise 2: Title for the Plan

Building off of the first exercise, the second exercise of the focus group was to identify a title for the Plan using the key words discussed in Exercise 1. Participants were given a handout to tie a primary title, including one of the three key terms identified above, and a subtitle with another one of the key terms. The same term was not included in both the primary title and subtitle to eliminate redundancy.

Of the fifteen respondents, all but two selected the term “zero waste” to be included in the title of the Plan. Seven respondents selected “The Santa Rosa Sustainable Futures Master Plan: Forging a Path to Zero Waste” as the title of the Plan, while five respondents selected “The Santa Rosa Zero Waste Master Plan: A Path to Sustainability” as the title of the Plan. One respondent suggested a hybrid title of “The Santa Rosa Zero Waste Master Plan: A Path to Sustainable Waste Management”. Another respondent suggested “The Santa Rosa Resource Management Master Plan: A Path to Zero Wasted”. Almost all of the respondents stated the terms “Zero Waste” and “Sustainable” should be part of the Plan’s title. Based on input from the focus group, community engagement, and R3 recommendations, The City chose, *The Santa Rosa Zero Waste Master Plan: A Path to Sustainability*, as the Plan’s title.

Exercise 3: Frequently Asked Questions

The third exercise of the focus group was to determine if a waste related frequently asked questions (FAQ) section of the City’s website be useful and what questions should be considered. The questions proposed by participants in the focus groups for an FAQ webpage are listed in full in Appendix A.

Of the 15 respondents that provided frequently asked questions, the vast majority of questions were related to placing the right items in the recycling and composting bins, or wondering how to recycle certain items. There is a clear opportunity for providing more information to Santa Rosa residents on how to correctly recycle and compost as well as linking information that has already been developed by the City’s franchised waste hauler, Recology, and the City’s Joint Powers Authority, SCWMA. Many

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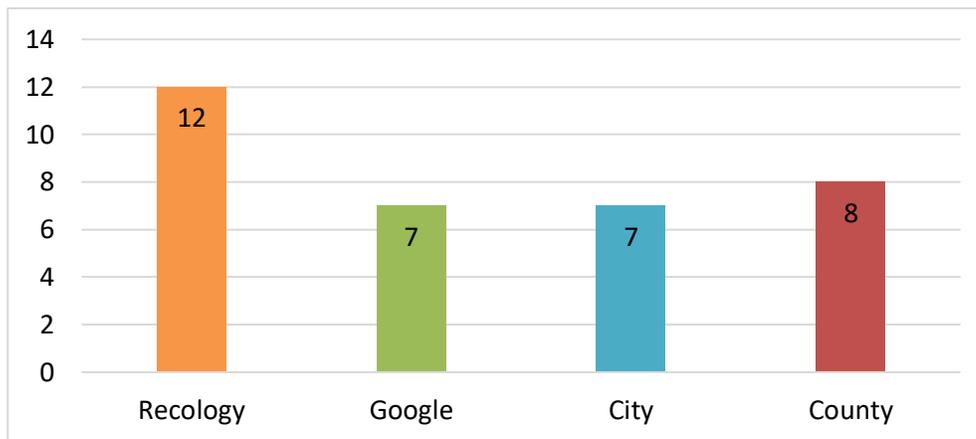
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participants were surprised to hear that the vast majority of the questions posed were already answered in resources provided by these two waste partners.

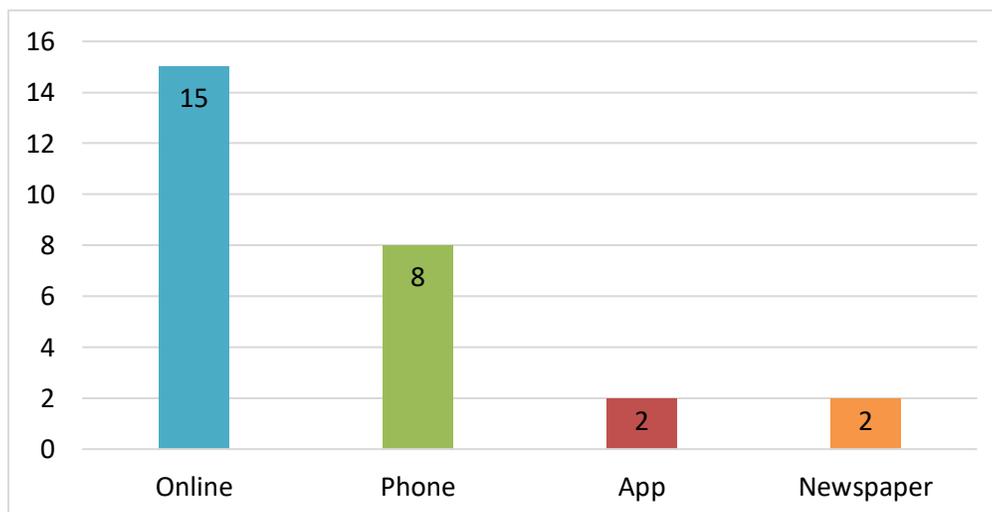
As part of this exercise, respondents were asked who they would contact if they had a question on trash, recycling and organics collection. Figure 2 below shows that most of the 15 respondents selected multiple sources for obtaining answers to their material management questions and the majority of respondents would contact Recology if they had a question related to trash, recycling, and organics collection. These results also suggest that providing the same information on multiple sources may be important to provide adequate access to answers residents may have.

Figure 2: Contact for Material Management Questions



In addition, respondents were asked their preferred method for obtaining information, shown in Figure 3 below. Most of the respondents selected multiple methods for obtaining information and the majority prefer gathering information from the internet. This result, similar to the previous question regarding materials management, shows the benefit of providing information in a variety of formats.

Figure 3: Method for Gathering Information



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Exercise 4: Access to Waste Information

The purpose of the fourth exercise was to gauge how residents receive information regarding waste and community information in general. The results of this exercise can be used by the City in future waste reduction campaigns to ensure that the campaign is effective and reaching most residents.

Figure 4: Specific Websites Used to Receive Waste Related Information?

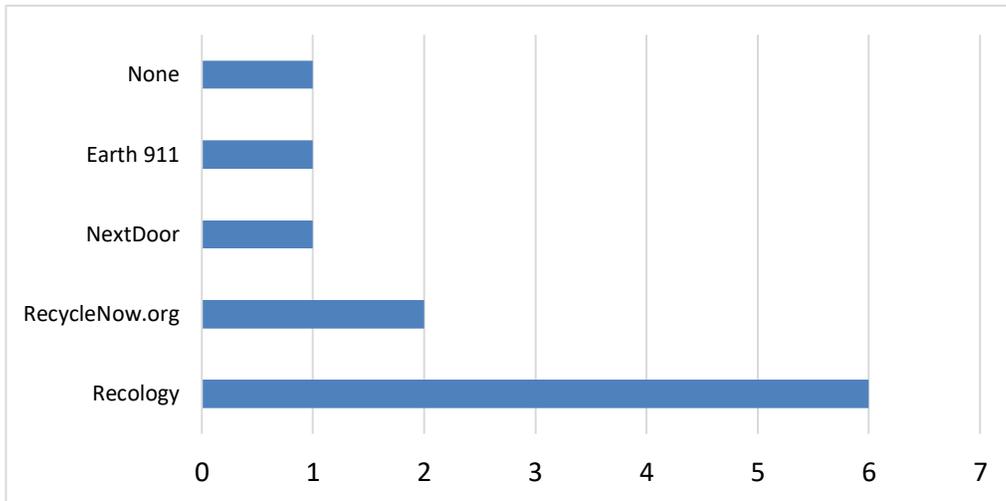
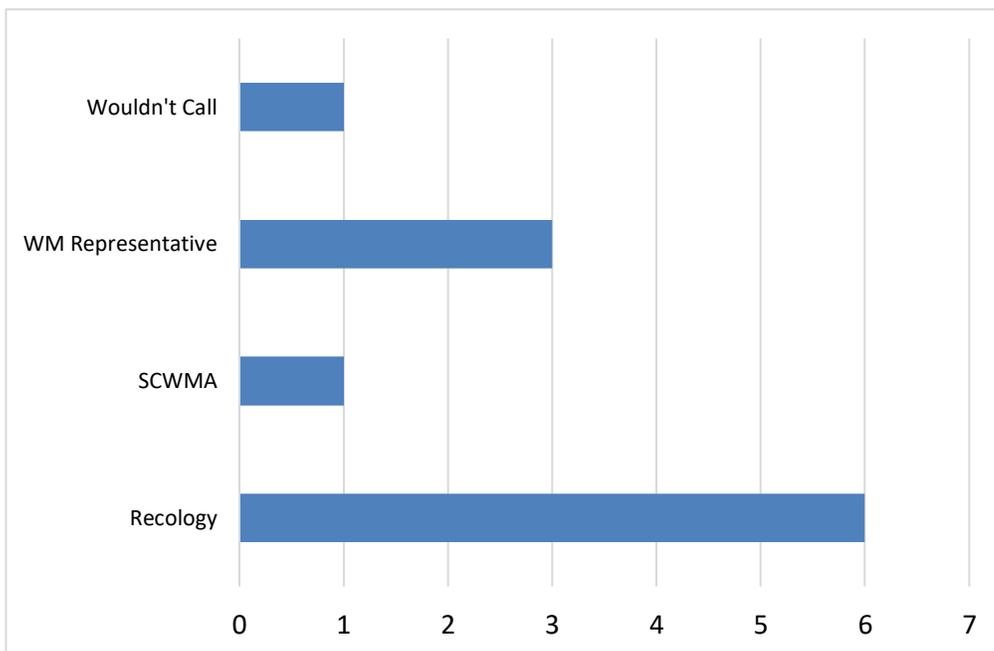


Figure 5: Who would you call about waste?



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Figure 6: Who would you call at the City of Santa Rosa?

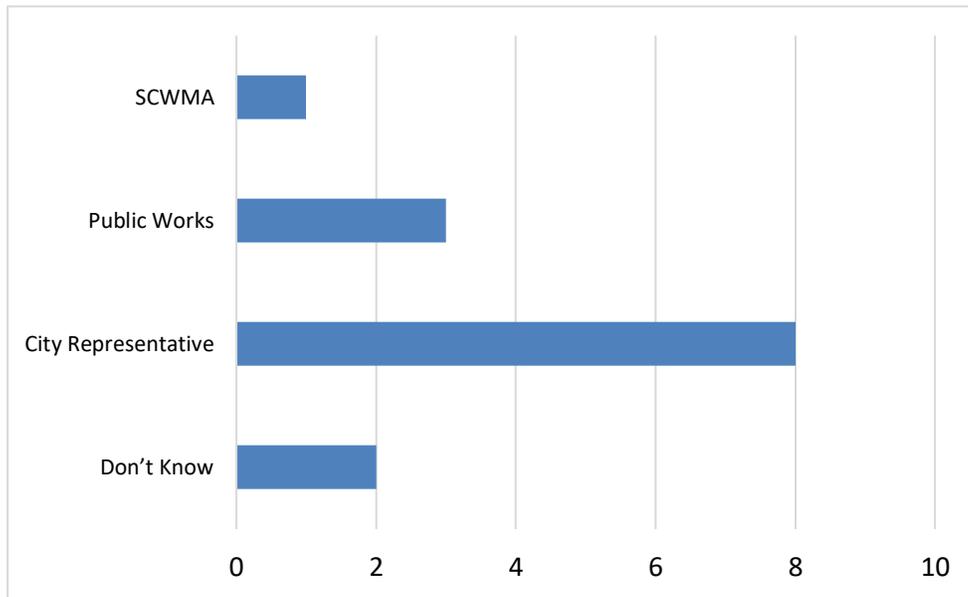
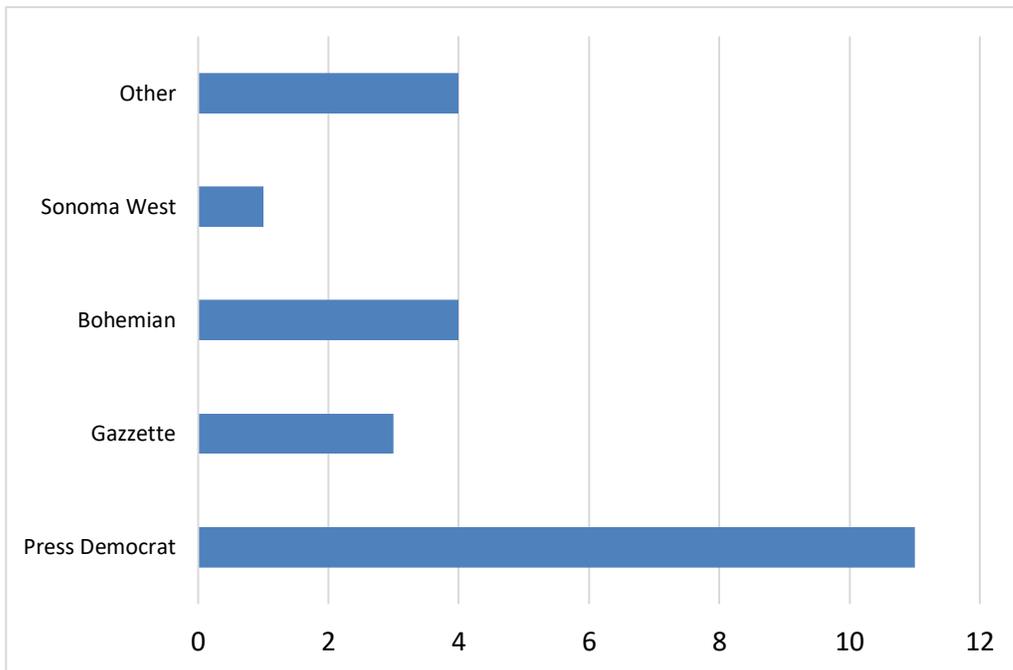


Figure 7: What Newspaper do you read?



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Figure 8: Would you use an app to track waste collection schedule/events?

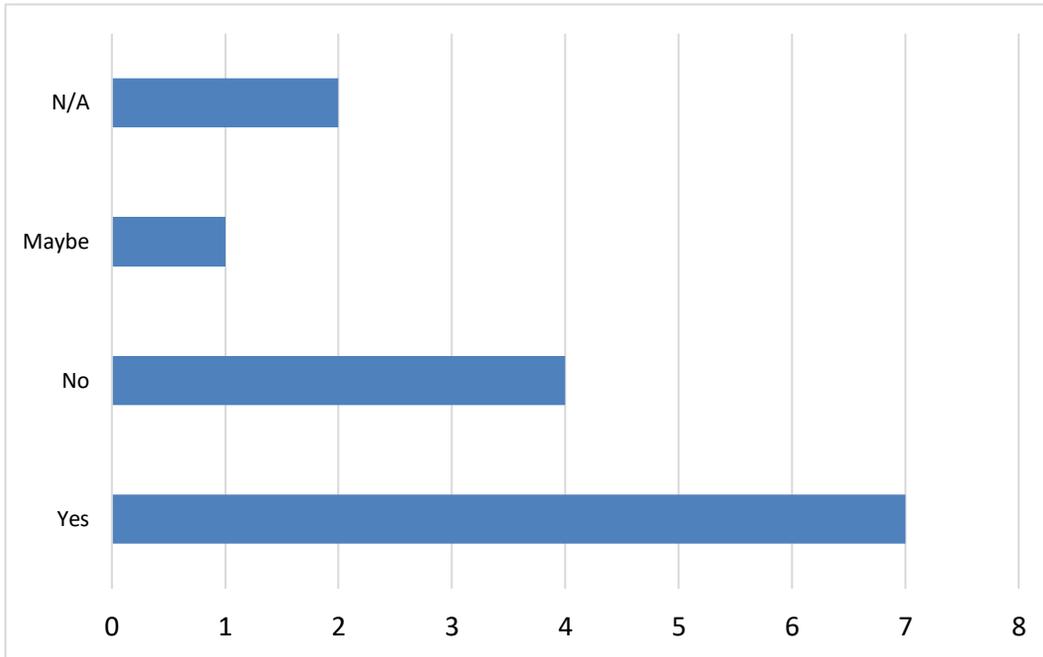


Figure 9: Would you use an app to look up what material goes in what bin?

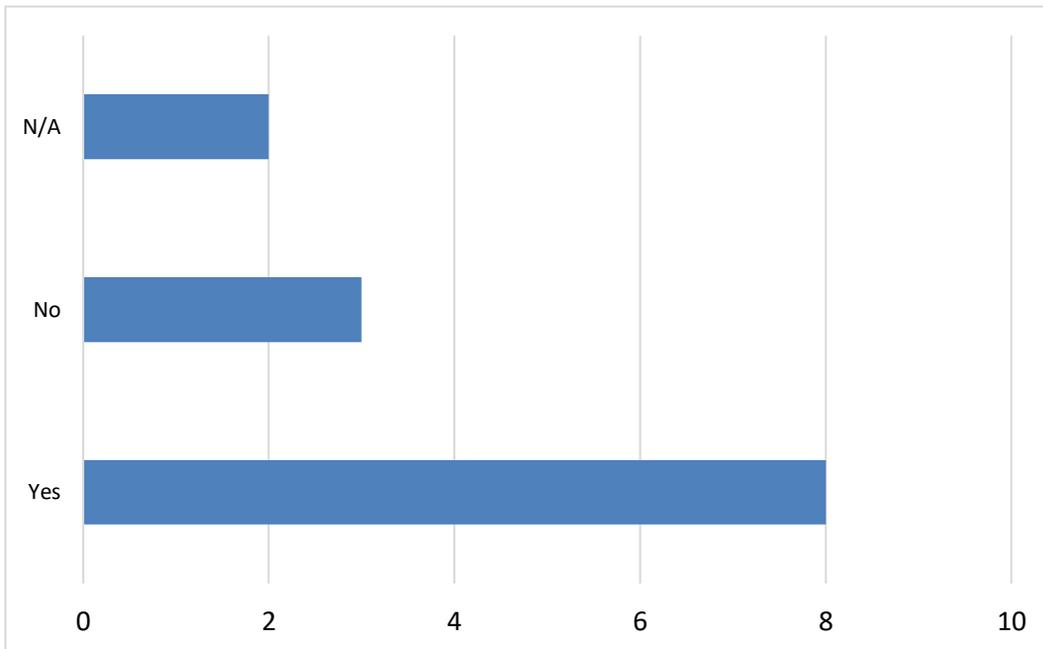
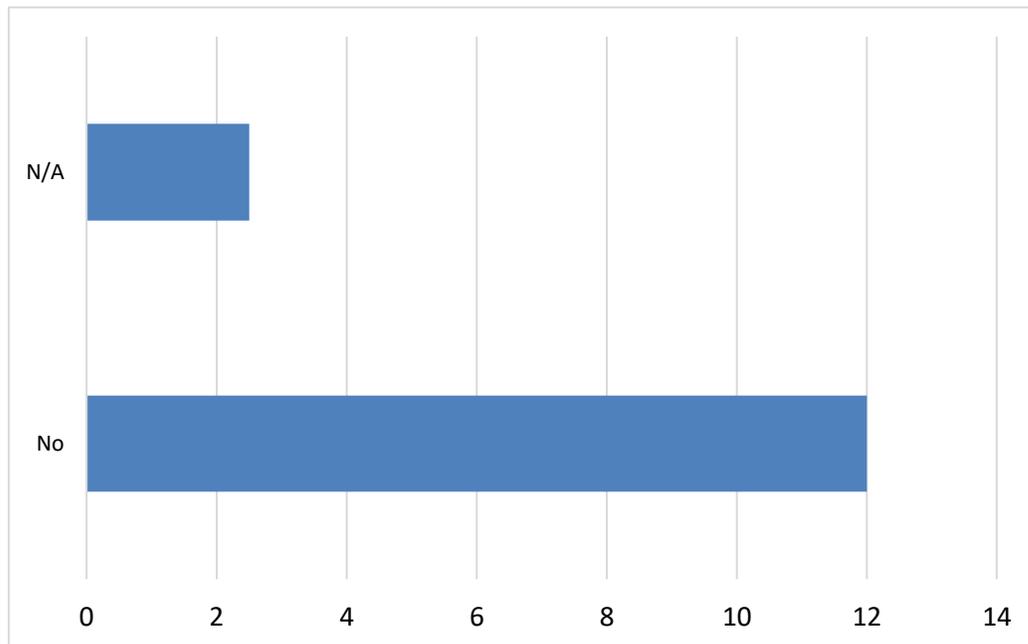


Figure 10: Did you know Recology already has an app?



Please note the Recology app is associated with the address of the account holder. For single family residents and commercial businesses that pay their Recology bill themselves, the app will display the collection days. However, if a resident lives in a multi-family complex and does not pay their own solid waste bill, the app is not applicable.

Exercise 5: Plan Logo Feedback

A sample logo was presented to the first focus group. Due to time constraints in the second focus group, the logo was not presented. Figure 11 was shown to the focus group for feedback. This logo design was chosen by City staff to represent the Plan. The logo was received with mixed reviews for the following reasons:

Table 2: Logo Feedback

Pros	Cons
Pathway to the recycling arrows	Did not associate Santa Rosa with the City's logo/rose
Tag line with logo preferred	Graphic too vague
Suggest putting rose in same location as City's logo	Green looks black from a distance
Overall favorable logo with modifications	Preferred other logo examples



Figure 11: Proposed Logo

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The Project Team has taken the feedback from the focus groups to work with the City and revise the logo to be clearer and representative of the project and its goals.

Exercise 6: Reuse Directory

A draft reuse directory was presented at the focus groups with a favorable response. Participants appreciated the directory and underscored the need and importance of a directory for the community. An online menu version along with a printed brochure is preferred. Information on fees or revenue for donating items is recommended. It was suggested a directory be established for food recovery and gleaning. Other recommendations are as follows:

- Identify where clothes that are beyond repair can be brought
- Information on where to repair items
- Provide specificity regarding type of clothing accepted (i.e. Plato's Closet, Crossing the Jordan)
- Map the Santa Rosa reuse stores
- Include information on bike repair shops

The Project Team will use these recommendations to revise the directory for the final version. The reuse directory could then be made available to residents via the City's website or circulated to residents another way.

Exercise 7: Flyer Feedback

R3 prepared a Zero Waste at Work Flyer, Zero Waste at Home Flyer, and Zero Waste Kitchen Flyer. The flyers were very positively received by the participants. Below are some suggestions to the flyers' content:

- Have statistics (i.e. amount of paper wasted in an office)
- Use cotton bags for produce storage
- Minimize the number of food storage tips
- Include wrapping presents with recycled paper
- Put information on a magnet or in an app
- Provide list of produce to buy
- Attendees liked the aesthetics of the flyers
- Attendees like how the flyers address a problem and provides a solution
- Offer the flyers in Spanish as well
- Include information on the Eco Challenger (NWEI.org)



Figure 12: Sample flyers

R3 will use the suggestions and input listed above to revise the flyers before submitting to the City. The flyers could then be used as printed information or online resources for City to provide to residents on their website.

Exercise 8: Calendar Feedback

The concept of a community calendar of events related to trash, recycling, and organics was positively received and suggested to be posted on the City's website. In addition, it was recommended the information be available on a mobile device with email reminders. Participants were eager to recommend events that they would find useful to see on the calendar including shredding events, hard to recycle materials events, and medication disposal events, and others.

Exercise 9: Promotional Material Feedback

The intention of this exercise was to collect information on various promotional materials or "swag" items that could be used by the City for future waste events. Suggestions were provided by respondents with the preference of materials that are sustainable and have multiple uses. Suggested swag items by participants include:

- Compost bucket
- Functional swag (One participant received a bucket from Santa Rose Water Department years ago and still uses it)
- Reusable straws
- Seeded paper
- Reusable produce bags
- Reusable utensils

This information is useful to the City if there were to be a campaign to promote the Plan in general or the implementation of a Plan strategy.

Appendix A: Full List of Participant Proposed FAQ's

- How can I prevent waste by not buying containers that become waste?
 - List which materials go in the correct bin.
- Who manages waste, recycling, and composting, and makes decisions on it?
- Where to send items to be reused?
- Who picks up items that are illegally dumped?
- What happens after I place the bins on the street? What can I recycle/compost?
- How can I get composting at my work?
- Where do I take used batteries?
- Where do I take old medication?
- How do I compost starched utensils and coffee cups?
- What items go in the recycling bin?
- Which items go in compost, recycling, or trash?
- How do I get my store to create less waste?
- How can I be a better steward?
- What changes are occurring with "x" in waste?
- What is accepted in the compost bin/recycling bin for tricky items like coffee cups?
- What to do with hard to recycle/special items like paint, mattresses, furniture, electronics?
- How to advocate for zero waste/packaging legislation (e.g. who do I contact to get a Styrofoam ban in place and voice my support)?
- What constitutes the largest volume of waste?
- What can be done "upstream" to eliminate the sources of waste (plastic bottles)?
- Who manufactures the most product that ends up as waste?
- Where to recycle/reuse? What bin? Can I reduce the fee if I put out few cans?
- What happens after I place the bins on the street?
- What can I recycle/compost?
- How can I get composting at my work?
- Where does the majority of the waste come from?
- What can I do to have the biggest impact?
- What regulations are already in place for waste management?
- What constitutes the largest volume of waste?

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- What is recyclable? Where do I go to recycle something? What do I do with something that is not recyclable?
- What goes in the bins? How can I recycle waste food if I do not have enough green waste to use the green bin?
- Where can I recycle lightbulbs, batteries, etc.?
- What items are recyclable in SR?
- Is trash pickup pushed back for certain holidays?
- What is or isn't recyclable?
- What is recyclable? Where can I recycle certain items? How much will it cost?