

# Portland Haulers Association

Testimony to Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission

*Residential Solid Waste and Recycling Rates*

April 30, 2019

**Introduction** - Good afternoon Chair Schultz and members of the Commission.

I am Beth Vargas Duncan, Regional Director for Oregon Refuse and Recycling Association (ORRA). In that capacity I am representing the Portland Hauler's Association (PHA) today, whose members provide the residential solid waste and recycling collection services within Portland.

- Every hauler providing residential collection service in Portland is a member of the PHA
- PHA members work cooperatively with the city's Bureau of Planning and Sustainability staff to provide modern and efficient waste collection services that include garbage, recycling, at reasonable rates – as noted through the recent rate review process.
- PHA members also work collaboratively with BPS staff and other stakeholders to advance opportunities for more diversity in the waste management industry.

## **Rate Review Process**

- Every year Portland residential service haulers engage in a robust rate review process and the haulers work cooperatively with the city's Bureau of Planning and Sustainability staff to provide detailed financial information.
- The city's rate consultant reviews the financial information and rates to determine cost of service and projects cost for the coming year. The haulers and city staff collectively discuss the calculations and projections to try to ensure accuracy for both the haulers and the ratepayers.
- PHA believes the rate review and setting process is fair with the right balance of independent review and transparency to assure reasonable rates for the haulers for their service and to the Portland customers they serve.

**Background** - PHA greatly appreciates the city's expedited rate review action last year in response to the recycling market issues. The systemic impact on the market caused recycling costs to rise at record levels. As you know, the haulers lost a significant amount of revenue in a short period of time because of the sudden shift in market and your action was critical to stabilizing rates today in a still volatile system. Not every State or local jurisdiction in other parts of the country were as quick to respond and it is causing further disruption as a result.

The conditions are still depressed in the recycling market values and Oregon DEQ in collaboration among processors, haulers, local governments, and other stakeholders, continues to identify methods to control costs, maximize the recycling of material, and educate customers about "recycling right."

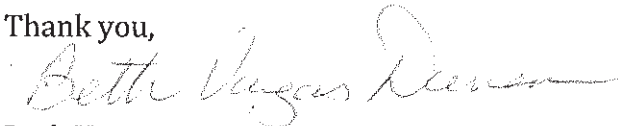
**Today** – We support the rate adjustments city staff presented. PHA agrees it is important to encourage customers to right size their garbage carts for the needs of their family. This is particularly important as we respond to the recycling market changes and continue to educate customers in order to reduce contamination in the recycling stream as part of our efforts to maximize recycling.

**Call to action** – Oregonians continue to lead the nation in recycling and addressing recycling market challenges. Now is the time to improve even more and seek the latest information on what is recyclable and what should not be in the recycling cart; everyone can reduce, reuse and recycling right.

For many decades, PHA haulers have demonstrated a strong commitment to providing excellent service to the residents of Portland while also producing sustainable results and consistent operational safety. We look forward to partnering with the city in the future and PHA appreciates that opportunity to serve Portland.

I am happy to answer any questions.

Thank you,



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