

# Boulder County Zero Waste Funding 2013

FORM C

## *Project Summary & Narrative*

**Project Name:** City of Lafayette / Boulder County Public Health Business Zero Waste Program

### ***Project Summary***

**Briefly summarize (2-3 sentences) the specific purpose for which you are requesting funds.**

The City of Lafayette and Boulder County Public Health Business Environmental Sustainability Team (BEST) are requesting funding to educate the Lafayette business and commercial community about the cost savings and environmental benefits associated with Zero Waste sustainability initiatives. This effort supports Boulder County's 2010 Zero Waste Action Plan and its "Short-Term Education & Policy" initiative to "provide free waste audits for businesses."

### ***Project Narrative***

Please provide responses to the following items relative to your proposed project. Use no more than two pages, single-spaced, double-sided (two sheets of paper, four sides total) for your proposal narrative, with the sections sequentially numbered and titled as indicated below.

#### **1. Agency or Business Overview**

*Briefly describe the purpose and primary activities of your organization or business, your geographic area of operations and the primary source of financial support for your organization.*

The City of Lafayette is a municipality located in eastern Boulder County with a current population of approximately 26,000. The City provides fire and police protection, street maintenance, water reclamation and treatment, parks and recreation facilities and programs, municipal court, planning and building functions, library services, and other services to its residents. Lafayette's primary source of financial support is local sales tax revenues. The total City budget for 2012 is \$20,837,277 (at this time, the 2013 budget has not been finalized).

The City of Lafayette has hired an outside contractor, Sustainability Consultant Stacy Lambright, to work on its sustainability goals and programs. If this project is funded, Stacy will be the lead contact and project coordinator for the City of Lafayette.

The City of Lafayette will partner with BEST, which has been providing one-on-one advising to businesses in Boulder County since 1995. Through their one-on-one advising services, they have been able to assist businesses in achieving their environmental sustainability goals in Zero Waste, energy efficiency, and water quality and conservation. Through the "Partners for A Clean Environment (PACE)" certification program, it offers recognition to businesses that achieve certain standards within the three areas mentioned above.

#### **2. Statement of Need**

*Identify the issue, or need that your project seeks to address.*

The City of Lafayette has not had sufficient staffing or funding available to work more closely with local businesses to encourage sustainability initiatives. In comparison, the cities of Boulder and Longmont have had substantially more gains in local businesses participating in PACE certification and EnergySmart due to the availability of more money to fund such programs in those communities.

The City of Lafayette is requesting funding for BEST and Sustainability Consultant Stacy Lambright to increase Zero Waste initiatives at local, East County businesses within the City of Lafayette. This is a project that addresses an action item identified in the Boulder County 2010 Zero Waste Action Plan. This project is designed to help Boulder County achieve the initial goal of increasing waste diversion for the county as a

whole to 75% or better by the year 2018, and ultimately to the goal of eliminating waste (i.e. achieve Zero Waste or "darn near") by 2025.

### **3. Project Description**

a) *Describe the project for which funds are requested, including program design, relevant tasks and activities.*

Traditionally, the focus of waste reduction and Zero Waste in the City of Lafayette has targeted the residential and public sector with Lafayette's forward-thinking shift in 2007 to a curbside, single-stream "Pay-As-You-Throw" system for its 5,277 single-family homes. This program alone doubled Lafayette's residential recycling rate from 12% to 28%. Additionally, since 2006, Lafayette has led the way in festival waste diversion by establishing Zero Waste efforts at its popular Peach and Oatmeal Festivals, reaching over 90-98% waste diversion at the events.

The City is poised to engage and invite the business community to look at their waste disposal practices and encourage them to become community leaders in Zero Waste in their offices, restaurants, stores, facilities, and commercial properties. The Boulder County Zero Waste funding will allow us to inspire the commercial sector to help our community as a whole; increase the cost-efficiency of our local, publicly supported recycling facilities and programs; show how increased recycling and composting efforts will save energy, water, and natural resources; reduce air and water pollution; reduce the damage caused by extracting resources from the environment; and reduce the need for landfill facilities.

Sustainability Consultant Stacy Lambricht will provide in-kind hours to attend local business-related meetings and events with the City of Lafayette Chamber, Downtown Action Committee, Lafayette Old Town Association, and the Rotary Club. She will utilize this time to inform businesses of the program and promote the free assistance available to them and the value of becoming a PACE Zero Waste-certified business. Any interested businesses will be forwarded to BEST for immediate follow-up.

BEST will identify candidates for Zero Waste initiatives through leveraged funds from the Keep It Clean Partnership and EnergySmart program. Staff has already identified and established connections with local businesses during 2012 EnergySmart energy assessments and Keep It Clean Partnership (KICP) stormwater and pollution prevention advising. Staff will continue their outreach for these programs in 2013, making this an opportune position to discuss Zero Waste. This is a dynamic way to blend all sustainability issues for businesses into one concise package, thus eliminating the redundancy of overlapping phone calls to obtain interest from businesses.

BEST will take the expertise they have gained working with the City of Boulder and Longmont businesses and implement that in the City of Lafayette's program. BEST will do this by providing one-on-one advising services to businesses in Lafayette to help them increase their diversion rates through creation of recycling programs, organics collection programs, or just by improving on their existing diversion programs.

Once a business has expressed interest in the program, BEST will conduct an initial assessment and waste audit of their current practices by doing site visits. If a business is determined to be close to a 70% diversion rate, BEST staff will use hauler data when available to determine a diversion rate. If that data is not readily available, businesses will be set up with the tools to complete a two-week, self-conducted waste audit. The audit is volume-based and done using visual assessment of the waste/recycling/organics bins. Once complete, BEST will calculate a diversion rate to be used as a baseline number, and results will then be evaluated and reviewed with the business. Findings will be compiled into an implementation plan with prescriptive measures that will help the business move towards a 70% or greater diversion rate.

Once the important project goals and timelines have been identified for the business, BEST will assist the business with implementation of a successful Zero Waste diversion program. BEST knows from experience that the next steps of implementation are crucial for follow-through and to ensure effective, long-lasting programs that create a shift in behavior and a positive position for the business.

Businesses will be offered assistance with reviewing vendor quotes, providing necessary signage for recycling and composting bins, training employees on recycling and composting programs, and providing information on incentive programs such as the Boulder County Zero Waste coupon and other resources to help businesses reach their goals.

Businesses that achieve a 70% or greater diversion rate will be eligible for PACE Zero Waste certification.

The benefits to a business will not only be potential cost-savings, heightened employee and customer morale and appreciation, but businesses will be recognized on the City of Lafayette's website and poised to be a Green Business Award winner, which is a highly recognized community program established by the Lafayette Energy Sustainability Action Committee. In addition, businesses will be identified on the Boulder County PACE website.

b) *Indicate program goals, target audience and outcome objectives.*

The goals of the program are to inspire and motivate Lafayette businesses to reduce waste and achieve a 70% or more diversion rate. Businesses that adopt sustainability initiatives in the workplace:

- Keep 70% or more of their business's waste out of landfills.
- Increase efficiency by learning how to reduce waste in the workplace.
- Attract employees and customers by engaging in environmental business practices.
- Lead by showing everyone with whom they do business how to help protect our environment.

We hope to prove that participation in this program will show local businesses these benefits. Through this grant program, we hope that more and more businesses will want to become PACE Zero Waste-certified, thus assisting the City of Lafayette and Boulder County with goals outlined in the Boulder County Zero Waste Action Plan. Boulder County Resource Conservation and Sustainability Office will be able to use our program experience and evaluation metrics for measurable steps outlined in the plan.

We anticipate completing approximately 30 to 40 leveraged site visits to identify businesses that are interested in learning more about waste reduction and Zero Waste. BEST has retained a list of businesses that were contacted for EnergySmart and will utilize the list of contacts for this project. We will be thrilled if 40 businesses were able to move to the next steps, but we know oftentimes businesses are truly interested, but due to timing or budgetary constraints, implementation may not be possible.

Our goal then is, of these 30 to 40 businesses, we will meet with 24 businesses for free one-on-one advising services. Depending on the initial assessment, a business could be asked to do self-tracking for two weeks of their waste disposal in order to get a comprehensive look at what the business is truly generating. A report of recommendations and next steps will then be generated for the business.

From these 24 businesses receiving the one-on-one advising services, BEST has set a realistic goal of identifying 4 Lafayette businesses as being eligible for PACE Zero Waste certification (70% waste reduction or more).

c) *List any applicable permits, licenses, or insurance coverage that must be secured for this project.*  
None will be needed.

d) *Will this project move forward if the County does not fund it?*  
Unfortunately, not at this time and another funding source will need to be identified.

e) *Could you execute this project if it is not fully funded?*  
There may be an opportunity to do a quick assessment and promote the Boulder County Zero Waste coupon while staff is initiating EnergySmart or Keep It Clean Partnership assessments. Sustainability Coordinator Stacy Lambright will encourage City of Lafayette businesses to initiative sustainability practices at local business meetings and events.

**4. Project Timeline**

*Present an implementation schedule for the project. Indicate probable starting and ending dates and significant milestones.*

The project will start in mid-January, and a list of businesses to target will be identified. The one-on-one advising services will continue throughout the year, and PACE certifications will happen as applicable.

**5. Project Evaluation and Accountability**

*Indicate how program performance will be monitored and measured and how you will determine the success of the project.*

All data will be tracked in the BEST database. The success of the program will be determined by reaching our goals of reaching out to 30 to 40 businesses to gauge interest in the program, conducting 24 free waste assessments at local businesses and recommending 4 businesses for PACE Zero Waste certification.

Diversion rates will be documented and specific waste reduction, recycling, and composting metrics will be applied to the diversion rates.

BEST will also include barriers that businesses have to engaging in these action items and implementation. This information will be useful for Boulder County if they want to extend their work and vision in the Zero Waste Action Plan of targeting business waste reduction practices and goals.

**6. Cost Effectiveness**

*Describe why the project is an efficient use of public funds and resources.*

Funding this program will be an efficient use of public funds and resources because it addresses the county's action items in the Zero Waste Action Plan and will assist in reaching the county's targeted waste reduction goals. In addition, it helps a sector of the county that has not been able to conduct this kind of programming to date.

**7. Cooperative Efforts**

*Describe any cooperative or collaborative efforts with other organizations functioning in the target area. List other project participants and indicate how resources are shared and service duplication avoided.*

We have provided letters of support for this program from Western Disposal Services and the City of Boulder's Local Environmental Action Division.

**8. Long-Term Self-Sufficiency (for continuing or on-going projects)**

*Discuss how the project will become financially viable and self-sustaining after the expiration of the current Zero Waste Funding. How will future expenses be met? Indicate whether you anticipate requesting future support for this project from the County.*

Our goal is to show that businesses in the City of Lafayette will support and embrace sustainability initiatives. We hope to build on the success of this project by promoting the businesses that initiated waste reduction programs through the City's Green Business Awards and website. If we can prove the success and benefits of the program, we will discuss potential funding opportunities to the Lafayette City Council. If funding is unlikely through City funds, we will need to look to outside sources for future funding.