

## **FCSG Statement on Environmental Health Section of Recommended 2013-14 Budget**

The Fort Collins Sustainability Group (FCSG) has reviewed the Environmental Health Section of the City Manager's recommended 2013-14 biennial budget. We see much to like in that document, and little to dislike. Program offers that we are especially pleased to see included in the recommended budget include the following:

1. The Integrated Recycling Facility, which will help increase the community's recycling rate, particularly for difficult-to-recycle items such as wood debris, concrete, and asphalt,
2. Energy Services On-Bill Financing, which will make it easier for all Utilities' customers, including renters, to install upgrades to reduce their home's energy and water use,
3. Community Renewables / Small-Scale Solar , which will offer incentives to homeowners and businesses to install solar power systems,
4. Green Building / Building Energy Performance, which will help raise the bar for energy and water consumption by new buildings,
5. Community Renewables / Community Solar Garden, which will make it possible for Utilities' customers whose property isn't ideal for a solar power system to "buy in" to a solar power system in a more favorable location,
6. Community Renewables / Fort Collins Solar Program, which will launch a "feed-in tariff" program for solar power producers, which have been very successful elsewhere in promoting the installation of solar power systems, and
7. Electric Vehicle Charging Stations, which will install a number of these stations for use by the general public throughout the City.

Additionally, FCSG applauds the fact that the City Manager is not recommending one item for funding, and would like to urge council to include funding for another offer. More specifically, we are pleased by the fact that the City Manager is not recommending either the design or construction of a commercial foodwaste receiving station at the Drake Water Reclamation Facility. That station would have added food waste to the sewage stream, which would have required the City to dump additional sludge on the Meadow Springs Ranch, a city-owned property located north of the Rawhide Power Station. That sludge cannot be used for food production. We encourage the City to look for ways to support composting both commercial and residential food waste, so that the resulting product CAN be used as a soil amendment for food production.

Finally, FCSG asks that City Council consider funding the "Landscape Transform to Xeriscape" offer. This offer would add new programs to encourage utility customers to create low water use landscapes appropriate to our high plains environment. The heat and drought that we've experienced so far this year underlines the need for such programs. This offer would cost just over \$360,000 over a two year period, and would do much to improve our quality of life in Ft. Collins – particularly if it were to include low water use edible landscapes. We urge City Council to include "Landscape Transform to Xeriscape" in the 2013-14 biennial budget.