



Date: December 10, 2024

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Author and title: Melanie Grebitus, Program Analyst II

Title: **Budget Amendment for Public Trash Can Monitoring Software**

Jen Callaway, Town Manager

Recommended Action: Approve a budget amendment adding \$3,500 to the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget for Sustainability Administrative Software Supplies (G/L 101.109.00.63.33) for trash compactor monitoring software for downtown public litter containers.

Discussion: The Town is responsible for public trash and recycling containers intended to reduce litter located along the public right-of-way. Downtown is a high-traffic area and recently there have been challenges with trash overflow. To add additional trash capacity, the Town relocated 8-10 black and gray solar-powered trash compactors from the Railyard into Commercial Row in 2020. These compactors are intended to provide temporary relief in Commercial Row and will eventually need to be returned as the Railyard area is further developed. There are currently approximately 20 compacting trash cans installed throughout downtown in the Railyard and Commercial Row.

Council approved the purchase of 10 new brown solar-powered compacting trash cans and 10 non-compacting recycling containers for Commercial Row on June 27, 2023, and the containers arrived in March of this year. These containers will be installed before the end of this year to replace some of the old style single-can trash cans and black and gray compactors intended for the Railyard. The new compacting cans for Commercial Row are brown, per Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC) recommendation. The new compactors are also smaller than the ones originally intended for the Railyard, and while they have sufficient capacity for many parts of downtown, a test installation suggests they do not have sufficient capacity for the highest-traffic sections of Commercial Row. Staff plan to install the smaller compactors in other areas of downtown, and temporarily leave the larger Railyard compactors in place on Commercial Row while gathering additional data to better understand high usage areas and dates to identify to identify areas that require the larger capacity containers.

Tahoe Truckee Sierra Disposal currently services all public trash cans downtown three times per week but does not offer service on weekends, when containers typically are used the most. Staff have been contacted by downtown businesses about overflow and litter and have been working with these businesses to identify potential solutions. Overflow has been most noticeable in one section of Commercial Row and is most common on weekends in the summer peak season. The Town has investigated utilizing a contractor to address overfilled containers over weekends and an on-call service to fill servicing gaps. To further address overflow issues, the Town's updated special events policy will require downtown events to develop a plan to avoid overflow of public trash containers if they are likely to be impacted by the event. These changes to the special events policy will take effect in 2025.

To assist with monitoring and data collection, staff recommend subscribing to a software service that will work with the trash can's existing sensors to monitor real-time data on fill levels. Town staff would like to utilize monitoring software for both the new and existing compactors to plan proper capacity for high usage areas and dates, address overflow issues more promptly, and monitor the performance of

the compacting cans. The software has the ability to send notifications when containers are near capacity, display current fill levels of units, show the current battery life of the unit, and other useful functions. Staff plan to utilize the data to identify specific times and locations with capacity constraints and ensure there are a sufficient number of cans in the necessary high usage areas. Data will inform if the capacity constraints are limited to the summer season and which areas of downtown may require additional or larger trash containers given collection frequency limitations and help develop a comprehensive trash plan for downtown. As the remaining Railyard compactors will eventually be returned to that area of downtown, the Town may need to purchase some additional higher-capacity brown compactors for areas of Commercial Row.

The trash compactor monitoring software costs \$16-18/month per unit, depending on trash can type, and is proposed for approximately 30 units throughout downtown through the end of the 24/25 fiscal year, totaling an estimated \$3,240. Staff are proposing to increase the Sustainability Administrative Software Supplies Budget (G/L 101.109.00.63.33) for Fiscal Year 2024/25 from \$22,000 to \$25,500 with the increase funded from the sustainability designation reserve. Funding is proposed to come from the sustainability reserve rather than the Solid Waste Fund Budget, because the Solid Waste Budget is ratepayer funded and does not have as much flexibility for additional costs. Rates were set based on anticipated costs, and the FY 24/25 Solid Waste Budget has already resulted in higher than anticipated software costs, leaving less room for this additional expense. The current sustainability designation reserve balance is \$138,050. These software costs will be incorporated into the Solid Waste Fund Budget for future years.

Priority:

<input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced Communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Climate and Greenhouse Gas Reduction	<input type="checkbox"/> Housing
<input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure Investment	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency and Wildfire Preparedness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Core Service

Fiscal Impact: \$3,500 in additional costs for the Sustainability Administrative Software Supplies Budget (G/L 101.109.00.63.33) for FY 24/25 to be funded from the sustainability reserve.

Public Communication: Staff have met with representatives of the Truckee Downtown Merchants Association, the Truckee Chamber, and downtown businesses to discuss downtown trash plans.

Attachments: none