

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 2

Approved January 14, 2021

WHEREAS, Providence's Climate Justice Plan identifies the following strategies to build a sustainable economy: "Increase carbon sequestration in soils through composting" and "Explore a city-wide community composting program and other food waste reduction strategies."; and,

WHEREAS, The FY2020 Approved Budget for the City of Providence allocated \$3,190,000.00 to Refuse Processing at the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation (RIRRC); and,

WHEREAS, RIRRC estimates the Central Landfill to reach maximum capacity in 2034. Once capacity is reached, Rhode Island must commit to higher-cost alternatives for disposing of waste: shipping waste out of state or constructing a new landfill; and,

WHEREAS, In 2019, RIRRC estimated approximately 32% of the RI's waste buried at the Central Landfill consisted of compostable organics¹, such as food scraps; and,

WHEREAS, Compostable organics buried in a landfill become starved for oxygen and emit Methane, a greenhouse gas 84 times more potent than Carbon Dioxide; and,

WHEREAS, The composting process exposes decomposing organics to oxygen so unnatural Methane production is avoided; and,

WHEREAS, Separating food waste from the trash receptacle to be composted at a local garden or farm reduces the demand for landfill space and returns nutrients back to Rhode Island's soil; and,

WHEREAS, Compost is a natural, nutrient-rich soil that can replace chemical fertilizers known to pollute waterways and increase algal blooms; and,

WHEREAS, The composting process turns organic matter into a source of community health and wealth as compost assists in the succession of backyard and community gardens.; and,

WHEREAS, The Covid-19 crisis has impacted weekly income in many households, and backyard and community gardens are a means of improving food security; and,

WHEREAS, Mayor Jorge O. Elorza has set a goal for Providence to become Carbon Neutral by 2050 and the composting process sequesters Carbon from the atmosphere.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the City Council hereby requests that the Office of Sustainability, Department of Public Works, the Environmental Sustainability Task Force and other community groups that represent Providence's diverse constituencies, produce a residential composting plan that explores current composting practices in Providence, identifies short and long-term steps to eliminate food waste from the residential waste stream and establishes a set of principles and values to guide the work.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That, upon passage, copies of this resolution be sent to the Mayor of Providence, the Director of the Office of Sustainability, the Director of the Department of Public Works, and the members of the Environmental Sustainability Task Force.

¹ Climate Justice Plan p. 61

IN CITY COUNCIL

JAN 07 2021

READ AND PASSED

Robert Mateo
PRES.

Ann Sullivan
CLERK

I HEREBY APPROVE.

[Signature]
Mayor
Date: *1/14/21*