



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Zero Waste Advisory Commission

Recommendation Number: (20160413-4d): Curbside Composting

WHEREAS the City of Austin has set a goal of reaching Zero Waste by diverting at least 90% of our discards by 2040, and

WHEREAS the City of Austin has set a goal of reaching Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, or sooner if feasible, and

WHEREAS a majority of Austin's waste is compostable in a municipal composting program, and

WHEREAS landfilling organic wastes is a major source of methane emissions, a dangerous greenhouse gas, and

WHEREAS composting organic wastes creates almost 5 times as many jobs as landfilling the same materials, and

WHEREAS compost retains more water than other soils, reducing water consumption, and

WHEREAS the Austin Resource Recovery Department already collects organic yard and tree wastes for composting, and

WHEREAS the Department can extend curbside composting to Austin residents by simply enhancing this existing program, and

WHEREAS the Department estimates that the fees necessary for this program will be an average of \$ 4.10 per household per month, phased in over multiple years, and



WHEREAS three-quarters of residents will be able to fully offset this fee by downsizing their current trash cart, and

WHEREAS more than 14,000 Austin households have already been receiving comprehensive curbside organics collection for up to three years, and

WHEREAS the Austin Resource Recovery Department has identified important learned lessons from this pilot program, and

WHEREAS advocates in the community report having generated thousands of letters, calls, emails, and other communications from residents demanding curbside composting, and

WHEREAS the Austin City Council will be considering whether to extend curbside composting citywide as part of the 2017 budget process, beginning this month, and

WHEREAS 46 percent of Austin's residential waste is made up of compostable material,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Zero Waste Advisory Commission recommends that the Austin City Council authorize the necessary expenditures and fees to enhance Austin's organic waste collection program to include all organic and compostable wastes including food wastes and food soiled papers, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Zero Waste Advisory Commission recommends that the Austin City Council authorize the fastest possible timeline for phasing this service in so that the program will be fully operational by the time we reach the Zero Waste Plan's 2020 75% diversion benchmark, and



BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Zero Waste Advisory Commission recommends that the Austin City Council direct the Austin Resource Recovery Department to use the existing food waste collection pilot program to test any identified learned lessons as soon as possible, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Zero Waste Advisory Commission recommends that the Austin City Council direct the Austin Resource Recovery Department to work with the Commission and other stakeholders in developing a roll out plan for this service which will maximize the likelihood of its successful adoption by the public.

Date of Approval: April 13th 2016

Record of the vote: Approved 7-1-1-2 on motion by Commissioner Gattuso motion, Commissioner Hoffman second, Commissioner Joyce opposed, Commissioner Acuna abstained, Commissioners Valera and Jiampietro absent.

Attest: Michael Sullivan

(Staff liaison)