



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Joint Sustainability Committee

Recommendation Number: (20160727-04B)

Organics Collection: Budget Recommendation

**WHEREAS**, Organics Diversion action number 2 in the Austin Community Climate Plan calls for Austin Resource Recovery to expand collection of food residuals and other compostable, non-recyclable materials to all residential customers; and

**WHEREAS**, organic materials produce methane, a powerful greenhouse gas, when decomposing in landfills; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin has a goal to divert 90 percent or more of solid waste from landfills and incineration by 2040 or sooner; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin established interim goals of diverting 50 percent of solid waste from landfills and incineration by 2015, 75 percent by 2020 and 85 percent by 2025; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin has achieved 43 percent diversion in 2016, below the 50 percent diversion goal for 2015; and

**WHEREAS**, 46 percent of waste from customers served by Austin Resource Recovery is compostable; and

**WHEREAS**, Austin Resource Recovery began an organics collection pilot program in 2013, which now serves 14,000 households in 10 geographic areas; and

**WHEREAS**, costs to Austin Resource Recovery will remain fairly constant, regardless of the number of customers participating in the organics collection program, because collection truck routes wouldn't be reduced; and

**WHEREAS**, backyard composting is a beneficial activity supported by the city, but should not be considered a substitute for Austin Resource Recovery organics collection because many more types of materials can be composted in commercial composting operations, but not in backyard composting; and

**WHEREAS**, the labor required to continually verify that backyard composting is taking place would be costly and burdensome;

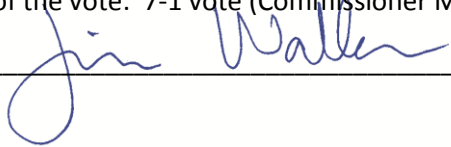
**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Joint Sustainability Committee recommends that the Austin City Council approves the expansion of organics collection to all residential customers by 2020 as requested in the proposed Fiscal Year 2017 budget by Austin Resource Recovery.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Joint Sustainability Committee recommends that customers served by Austin Resource Recovery not be permitted to opt out of the organics collection service.

Date of Approval: July 27, 2016

Record of the vote: 7-1 vote (Commissioner McGhee voting against)

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Walker", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.