



## ZERO WASTE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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### **Establish a zero waste policy in the City of Philadelphia**

Through the Solid Waste and Recycling Advisory Council's (SWRAC) 10-year solid waste management plan that is being prepared for the PA Department of Environmental Protection, develop a zero waste policy that includes goals for conducting residential food waste collection pilot programs, and emphasizes the need for food composting to further reduce the City's carbon footprint and provide healthy soils in support of community gardens, urban agriculture, green stormwater infrastructure, and local economic development. The policy should focus on waste reduction, recycling, and composting with the objective of diverting 90% of materials from landfills and waste-to-energy facilities.

### **Increase the City's Zero Waste practices**

The City should model food waste recovery practices, such as Waste Watchers. The City should extend these successful practices if there is local capacity to responsibly handle the material.

### **Support increased surplus food donation**

FPAC can create a dialogue with Philabundance and other leading food rescue organizations to understand how the City can better support their efforts. This should start with a Surplus Food Donation session at an FPAC meeting. Philabundance and other rescue organizations' food waste can be a clean source of material for any new City or related local composting initiatives. As stated earlier, disposing of food donations that spoil while in storage is a large cost for these agencies and having local composting facilities may lower these costs.

### **Emphasize the necessity of properly preparing source-separated materials**

Source-separating materials properly and maintaining strict material acceptance standards are critical for the success of all composting operations.

### **Strengthen the food composting option for commercial food establishments**

The City should encourage a dialogue between the Recycling Office and the Health Department regarding making food composting an effective option for commercial food establishments.

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**Promote and support backyard composting**

The City should work in partnership with local organizations to promote and support backyard composting. The do-it-yourself method of composting is the most environmentally preferable way of handling food waste because it eliminates the need for transporting food waste for processing and for delivering finished compost to markets. Using the New York City model, the City should promote and educate residents about composting benefits, backyard composting methods, and bins that can be purchased or built. The City should use its website as a resource and should actively sponsor and promote training programs in neighborhoods throughout the city. The City should seek funding support to subsidize the bin costs.

**Support the growth of community-based composting efforts**

The City should foster a culture of composting by promoting existing successful models and offering Master Composting training sessions similar to the ones offered in New York City.

**Encourage the use of compost and/or compost production on the Land Bank's urban agriculture projects**

FPAC will identify Land Bank community garden and urban agriculture properties that will benefit from the use of compost to enrich existing soils or for raised beds. FPAC can present options for (1) securing compost from local businesses or organizations producing compost from food waste and/or (2) doing on-site composting using food waste as one feedstock. Any new composting sites will require proper training to assure that the system is designed well and operated properly.

**Explore Water Department/Private Sector partnership for compost and engineered soils for Green City, Clean Waters projects**

FPAC will encourage the Water Department to consider making property available for a private contractor(s) specifically to create an engineered soils pilot project for the Green City, Clean Waters projects. This effort would use targeted, locally-generated food waste (i.e. Philabundance, Universities, other nonprofits, thus assuring savings for them) along with City-collected leaves and wood chips from fallen trees, limbs and branches in its process.

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