

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: ORDER OF THE BOARD OF ALDERS OF THE CITY OF NEW HAVEN
authorizing the Mayor of The City of New Haven to apply for and accept the Composting and Food Waste Reduction Pilot Project Grant from the US Department of Agriculture to pilot strategies for increasing food rescue and food scrap diversion in the downtown area.

Submitted by: New Haven Office of Climate and Sustainability

REPORT: 1632-15

ADVICE: Approval

BACKGROUND

Funding request: \$250,000.00 for two years

The New Haven Office of Climate and Sustainability will partner with Haven's Harvest, the Center for EcoTechnology (CET), the Town Green District, and local businesses and large multi-family residences to pilot innovative strategies for increasing food rescue and food scrap diversion in the downtown area. As the City pursues models for providing access to food scrap diversion and composting for residences served by City refuse and recycling pickup, it is important to consider that residences and businesses served by private haulers make up nearly two thirds of the City's solid waste tonnage annually. Piloting and demonstrating the value of strategies for increasing food rescue participation and food scrap diversion that meet the needs of these residents and businesses is therefore an important component of the City's efforts to reduce food waste and increase the diversion of organic material toward productive uses. If funded, this proposal would provide support for expanded food rescue activities, provide free technical advice on food rescue, food scrap diversion, and waste reduction to downtown businesses that generate large amounts of food, and pilot new models of food scrap diversion for large multi-family residences.

Grant funds would provide direct support to Haven's Harvest to assist them in growing their food rescue operation and in exploring and adopting innovative models to sustain food rescue operations over the long-term. In partnership with CET and the Town Green District, the grant would also fund outreach to and engagement of local businesses that generate large amounts of food waste, such as restaurants and hotels. These businesses would be given the opportunity to opt into free technical advice from CET on how to reduce food waste, increase food rescue through Haven's Harvest, and implement food scrap diversion. The City and CET also plan to partner with large residential buildings to pilot a platform to allow residents of larger buildings to opt into food scrap collection, utilizing the smart composting bin program that New York City has launched as a model. The aim of this would be to test the model in order to see if it can be deployed in other areas of the City.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

This grant proposal is aligned with the City Comprehensive Plan because it will further Comprehensive Plan goals to:

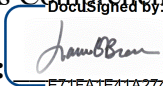
- Enable and encourage the use of yards and shared space for home gardens and residential composting.

- Encourage connections between food processing and food production operations and local composting operations (or other waste minimization technologies) to reduce long-distance transport of food waste.
- The Commission recommends that the OCS look into connecting community gardeners in New Haven with compost created from proposed activities to keep this agricultural resource within the city

ADVICE

Approval. Authorization of this grant application aligns with the City's Comprehensive Plan goals.

ADOPTED: June 21, 2023
Leslie Radcliffe
Chair

ATTEST:  June 23, 2023 | 12:23 PM EDT
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Laura E Brown
Executive Director, City Plan Department