



City of New Haven
Community Services Administration
Food System Policy Division

May 29, 2020

The Honorable Tyisha Walker-Myers
President, Board of Alders
City of New Haven
165 Church Street
New Haven, CT 06510

Dear Alder President Walker-Myers,

In accordance with the Order of the Board of Aldermen authorizing the Mayor to apply for and accept all grants on behalf of the City of New Haven, passed on October 17, 1994, I am writing to respectfully advise the Honorable Board of an application by the City of New Haven's Community Services Administration, Food System Policy Division (FSPD) to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Services. The FSPD is applying for up to \$90,000 for a single year - from the newly established Community Compost and Food Waste Reduction (CCFWR) Project.

The benefits of investing in citywide composting programs range from the obvious to the obscure. On the most basic level, residential and commercial composting is a simple way for cities to divert waste from landfills. Landfills are leading contributors of groundwater pollution, and greenhouse gasses released from landfills contribute to a changing climate. And for cities, composting saves money. With space in landfills becoming scarcer and more expensive, composting is now often cheaper than sending waste to garbage dumps, opening resources and dollars to be reinvested in alternative sustainability initiatives or being poured back into the community. Composting can also be used as a tool to generate clean energy. A growing number of new facilities are popping up around the country, including CT, with the ability to harness the natural gasses released from compost and landfills and use them to power city transportation fleets. These innovations prevent the release of harmful pollutants and cut fuel costs for cities. Composted materials can also be sold for agricultural purposes. Landscapers are using the material to enrich soil, lay fertile ground for turf or gardens, and even city departments can utilize the resource for projects ranging from erosion control to wetland restoration.

Potential funding from the USDA's Community Compost and Food Waste Reduction (CCFWR) Project would provide the FSPD with the unique opportunity to lay the groundwork to identify, research, and pilot the policy and program changes necessary to implement a municipal composting system. This project will be performed in collaboration with key partner organizations and community members, to ensure that these changes meet the community's needs. Sustainability decisions made by municipal leaders must address the demand by residents for actionable climate solutions. Sorting trash, recycling, and compost is a simple first start, with clear benefits, and simple ways for residents to get involved.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Latha Swamy
Director of Food System Policy
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