

## **Discussion Item**

# Community Composting

**To** : Scott Buchanan, Susan Cox, Nicholas Soto, Maria Wildes, Jeff Lisanick, Robin Woods, Dan Courtney, James Konkell, Dave Bush, <BoardofDirectors@Parkfairfax.info>  
**From** : Residents For Composting In Parkfairfax  
**Subject:** Community Composting – Proof Of Concept  
**Date** : July 15, 2020

115 residents responded to [the Composting in Parkfairfax](#) survey. In a Zoom meeting on June 18th, 44 residents actively participated and 8 residents shared their questions ahead of time since they couldn't make the meeting. With a buzzing chat room, email threads and participation from diverse age groups, we are eager to discuss a plan and next actions for a compost pick-up service.

To the list of essentials like electricity, water, internet, heating and cooling, we need to add community composting. This is an imperative and urgent need to protect our environment and improve public health. 25% of all trash being thrown away by homes in Parkfairfax is food waste and compostables. Annually, this trash creates approximately 400 tons of greenhouse gases. This poundage is equal to the weight of 80 elephants.

All this can be positively changed and quality of life of residents can be improved by initiating a community composting program. The benefits of the program will include:

1. Solving the community's pest problem
2. Societal hygiene and community health benefits
3. Environmental impacts
4. Budgetary savings for Parkfairfax Association

### **ROLLOUT: PHASE 1 – Proof Of Concept**

The proposed program will be rolled out in two phases. Phase 1 will include trendsetting, early adopter residents who will participate in a weekly compost pick-up service. Each home will pay for the service out of their pockets.

The composting service mirrors the trash service. A compost truck, just like the trash truck, comes to the resident's home each week. They collect the odor-proof, pest-proof and tightly sealed compost bin. They empty the bin into their truck. The service replaces the liner of the bin and returns the bin to the residence from where it was collected.

We are requesting your participation in this program. Please join us in the Proof of Concept. In addition, we are requesting changes to the AR to allow the program to function smoothly. Draft language for AR 2 . (IV) (B4) is attached in Appendix 3.

In the duration of Phase 1 (Proof of Concept), we also request an insight into how much money the association is able to save because of diversion of trash into composting.

**Proposed dates for Phase 1: August 24, 2020 to December 31, 2020**

Phase 1 will allow us to test, gather data, record residents' experiences and formalize best practices. With the information from Phase 1, we should proceed to Phase 2 which includes diving deep into how the program can be offered as a mainstream service to all homes in the community.

Proposed starting date for Phase 2: January 1, 2021.

### **MATERIALS ATTACHED**

1. A detailed yet friendly presentation
2. Proposed changes to the AR
3. Details of residents' June 18 Meeting including presentations and video recordings

### **A SUMMARY OF THE TIMELINE**

<b>February 19, 2020</b>	: First presentation to the Parkfairfax Board
<b>March 12, 2020</b>	: Survey Inviting Parkfairfax Residents via Forum : 115 responses received ; 100% of the respondents want to participate : <a href="#">Survey Results</a>
<b>June 18, 2020</b>	: <a href="#">Resident Meeting On Zoom</a> : 44 participants active + 8 residents shared questions ahead of time because of conflict : Buzzing chat room : Diverse age groups represented
<b>July 15, 2020</b>	: Presentation to the Board Of Directors : Residents join online to voice their support and participation
<b>August 1, 2020</b>	: Proposed Town Hall to further discuss the composting program and ARs
<b>August 19, 2020</b>	: Board meeting to approve AR
<b>August 24, 2020</b>	: Proposed start date of composting program pilot
<b>January 1, 2021</b>	: Proposed start date of Phase 2

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# Composting in Parkfairfax

July 15, 2020

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# Index & Plan Of Action:

1. Introduction To The Composting Program (Slide #3)
2. Mechanics: Phase 1 (Slide #10)
3. Our Request From The Board (Slide #18)
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5. Mechanics: Phase 2 (Slide #21)



# Introduction: Why Compost?

1. Helps Removes Pests
2. Societal Hygiene & Community Health Benefits
3. Environmentally Critical
4. Budgetary Savings: Association Can Save Money on Trash Pick Up

# Introduction: Why Compost?

## 1. Helps Remove Pests

We need to think about our community's pest problem as one arising from our own behaviors and actions, rather than blaming them on external/unseen factors.

Pests exist because we invite them to participate in our trash fest. Every morning, homes across the association put out food that rots for several hours (or longer) before it is collected. Even if trash bags are placed outside after 7 am, trash collection doesn't happen until mid-day. This exacerbates our pest issues.

Composting can solve this problem.

# Introduction: Why Compost?

## 2. Societal Hygiene & Community Health Benefits

It is irresponsible, unhygienic and detrimental to public health to throw food waste inside flimsy trash bags. We need a pragmatic alternative.

As a society, we are grappling with a pandemic. We need to improve societal hygiene by following basic sanitary principles.

Composting can lead to better hygiene and foster community health.

# The everyday state of our trash pickup



# The everyday state of our trash pickup



# Introduction: Why Compost?

## 3. Environmental Ethics

“Whatever the dangers of the action we take, the dangers of inaction are far, far greater.” The magnitude of our environmental crises requires bold and collective action from the community.

Food waste (peels, scraps, unused groceries, cooked food in trash) is accelerating our carbon and methane emissions.

This can be stopped right away by diverting the community’s food waste to composting facilities.

# Introduction: Why Compost?

## 4. Financially Advantageous: Association Can Save Money

A) Currently trash pick up fee is calculated paid by poundage. If the volume of trash can be reduced by diverting food waste into the composting stream, the Association will save money.

B) In addition, the compost pick up service shares compost with the community twice a year at no cost. This compost can be used for community landscaping further reducing the need to buy new mulch and soil.



# Mechanics: Phase 1

Mission: Proof Of Concept.

# Phase 1: How does the composting program work?

Weekly pick up by the compost company.

Residents fill up their odor-proof, pest-proof bucket inside their homes each week.

Every week the compost company drives to their homes, empties their compost bins, changes the liner inside their compost buckets and returns the buckets.

Residents collect their buckets. Put it back in their homes and start again.

# 5 Gallon Compost Pick Up



# 6 Gallon Compost Pick Up



# 12 Gallon Compost Pick Up



# Phase 1: Proof Of Concept

115 residents responded to survey. All 115 residents are interested in composting.

44 residents joined the June 18 Zoom Meeting.

8 residents shared their questions ahead of time since they had conflicts.

Diverse age-groups represented in the Zoom video call.

# Phase 1: Proof Of Concept

Tap into the energy of early adopters and kick-start the program.

Residents pay composting company out-of-pocket for the duration of the proof of concept.

We record experiences of residents and performance of the composting company to formalize best practices.

We work with Board to understand cost reductions for the trash service.

# Phase 1: Proof Of Concept

Proposed Timeline: August 24, 2020 – December 31, 2020



# Requests From The Board

1. Approve changes requested in AR
2. Communicate with trash company to ensure that compost bins are not accidentally taken away or emptied out by them
3. Help us understand how much money is being saved by the Association by cutting down on trash.
4. Please participate with the residents in the program. Experience it yourself. Big feel-good factor.
5. Reconvene in three months to understand how to further reduce costs and offer service to the community.



# The Board's Legacy

1. Improve the residents' quality of life.
2. You are the most immediate level of governance available to us. Let's do good.
3. Create a program that wins accolades from the current residents and residents to be.

# The Board's Legacy

Join the ranks of other associations in Northern VA that are championing composting.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Dominion Hills, Arlington
- Lyons Village, Arlington
- Lake Barcroft, Falls Church
- Douglas Park, Arlington
- North Springfield, Springfield
- Fairfax Station, Fairfax
- Woodlea Mill, McLean



## Mechanics: Phase 2

Inclusiveness: How to onboard homes that want to participate in the program but are not able to afford a \$14 - \$18 monthly fee?

Mainstream It: Offer composting in Parkfairfax as a basic service.

Just like people have water, electricity and internet in their homes. Offer composting.

# Phase 2: Timeline

Proposed Start Date: January 1, 2021.

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**Thank You. :)**

## **AR. 2. (IV). (B4) DRAFT CHANGES**

[Original Version](#) – see pages 13-14 for current Administrative Resolution.

### **COLLECTION:**

(Compost Crew Collection Times Are Between 5 am - 12 pm)

Compost bins to be placed outside after 7 pm on the night before pick-up. Compost bins must be returned indoors by 7 pm on the day of pick up.

### **PLACEMENT:**

1. In this 24-hour window, bins are kept on residents' stoops – at the exact point where residents currently keep their trash bags.

### **BIN STORAGE:**

1. Home compost bins are kept inside the unit except on collection days.

### **PENALTIES:**

(This is a new program with new learned behaviors. Ramifications for participants that are unable to collect their bin and keep it back in their home need to factor this in.)

1. Five notices before a home is given a written warning
2. After the first written warning, the unit needs to go through compost training again

### **DIMENSIONS AND PHOTOS OF BINS:**

(Each unit can select from the following options:)

1. 5.0 gallon Twist Top: 18.43" x 10.24"
2. 6.0 gallon Eco Caddy: 15.94" x 12.59" x 15.75"
3. 12 gallon Mini Toter: 26.9" x 15.5" x 17.7"