



Mayor Bill de Blasio

Commissioner Mitchell Silver
New York City Department of Parks & Recreation
830 Fifth Ave, New York, NY 10065

December 1, 2020

Dear Mayor de Blasio and Commissioner Silver:

Since August, we have publicly urged New York City to renew or extend the licenses of three essential community compost sites that sustainably process organic park materials such as leaves and wood chips along with food scraps from newly restored community drop off sites.

At this late date, these nonprofit organizations have not received license renewal offers, plans to relocate to alternative public space, nor have they received a clear explanation of why the Parks Department appears poised to evict popular community resources and threaten the livelihood of dozens of hardworking composters during a prolonged unemployment crisis and global pandemic.

These small compost sites are the backbone of the Sanitation Department's newly restored food scrap recycling program - a nimble and already highly popular sustainability program that dozens of City Council members and tens of thousands of committed New Yorkers pushed to fund in this year's budget. Shutting down these sites would result in even more recyclable organic waste being hauled to landfills and incinerators, passing through transfer stations and utilizing waste infrastructure overwhelmingly located in low-income communities and communities of color polluted by particulate matter linked to severe cases of COVID-19. **This would undermine the City's greenhouse gas emissions, Zero Waste, and environmental justice goals.**

Equally troubling is the apparent arbitrariness of the decision to evict popular nonprofit composters from small parcels of previously unused public space, while large, wealthy corporations such as the Trump Organization continue to operate for-profit concessions on our

most valuable public lands, and agencies such as the NYPD continue to use public park space as parking lots.

As we enter a threatening winter, we urge you to extend the licenses of these organizations, to save a beloved community sustainability program and the jobs of the essential recycling workers who allow our parks and our communities to live more sustainably and justly.

Yours,

Astoria Pug
Big Reuse
BK ROT
Brooklyn Solid Waste Advisory Board
Cafeteria Culture
Center for Zero Waste Design
Commit to Green
Common Ground Compost LLC
Community Composter Coalition
Earth Matter NY
East River Alliance
East River Park Action
Green Feen Organix
Henry Street Settlement
Institute for Local Self Reliance
Just Hauling
Lower East Side Ecology Center
Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board
Natural Resources Defense Council
Newtown Creek Alliance
New York City Environmental Justice Alliance
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
New York League of Conservation Voters
North Brooklyn Neighbors
People's Climate Movement of New York
Queens Solid Waste Advisory Board Organizing Committee
Sierra Club NYC
Smiling Hogshead Ranch
Think Zero LLC
350.org NYC
United States Composting Council
Upper Green Side

Cc: Deputy Mayor Vicky Been
Department of Sanitation Commissioner Edward Grayson
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson
City Council Parks Chair Peter Koo
City Council Sanitation Chair Antonio Reynoso