

## **Proposed Environmental Commission Resolution:**

### **City Staff Analysis of every- other-week Residential Garbage Collection**

**Whereas**, the City of Ann Arbor (henceforth “the City”) has collected single-family residential trash on a weekly basis for decades; and

**Whereas** the State of Michigan Bottle Deposit Law was enacted in 1976 providing for the return of empty containers made of metal, glass, paper or plastic that contained beer, pop, carbonated and mineral water, wine coolers or canned cocktails to retailers for a 10-cent refund to increase recycling rates; and

**Whereas**, the City implemented what is now a comprehensive weekly curbside recycling program for all residents in 1991 (after initiating partial service in 1978); and

**Whereas**, the City added weekly three-season (April – November) curbside compost and organics collection in 2019; and

**Whereas**, Ann Arbor city residents have access to many other landfill diversion, recycling and reuse options, including but not limited to specialty item recycling (Recycle Ann Arbor’s [henceforth RAA] Drop-Off Station), hazardous waste (Washtenaw County’s Home Toxics Program), construction and demolition materials (RAA’s Recovery Yard), appliances (RAA’s Drop-Off Station and retailer programs), furniture (numerous charities and resale outlets), clothing textiles (multiple charities and consignment stores), all of which collectively afford residents the possibility of greatly reducing their waste to landfill; and

**Whereas**, the Ecology Center’s Recycling Education Program, supported by City funding, has taught – and continues to teach – over 100,000 Ann Arbor-area kids about recycling, composting, and zero-waste through hands-on activities and informational programs; and

**Whereas**, collectively the above and the efforts of City staff and residents has increased the City’s diversion rate for single families to 52% in 2019; and

**Whereas**, any waste sent to landfill with organic materials decomposes over time resulting in the creation of methane gas, a potent greenhouse gas, contributing to anthropogenic climate change; and

**Whereas**, City Council unanimously passed the A2Zero Carbon Neutrality Plan in 2020 with a net zero carbon neutrality target date of 2030, including strategies and actions to further “Change the Way We Use, Reuse, and Dispose of Materials”; and

**Whereas** the Ann Arbor City Council (henceforth “City Council”) passed the updated Solid Waste Resource Management Plan (henceforth SWRMP) in 2021 which includes proposals to further expand waste diversion services, including year-round compost and organics collection and textile collection, all of which is consistent with the A2Zero Plan; and

**Whereas**, best-in-class residential diversion rates approach 75% in the U.S. and Europe; and

**(Whereas,** does anyone has figures on the figures for City of Ann Arbor single family waste per single family resident trends?)

**Whereas,** all the above lead to the conclusion that a reduction in the frequency of City trash collection, for example to every-other-week, should be both possible as well as beneficial considering the likely pressure to divert even more non-trash resources from landfill, the negative environmental impacts of waste to landfill, the GHGs created by landfilled organics and collection vehicles running their routes, and the cost to the City and ultimately to taxpayers; therefore, be it

**Resolved,** the Environmental Commission requests City Council to direct City of Ann Arbor staff to conduct an analysis of the impacts of every-other-week trash collection; and

**Resolved,** the assessment should include, but not necessarily be limited to: (1) public acceptance; (2) prerequisites (e.g., the implementation of year-round weekly compost collection); (3) needed upfront education and messaging; (4) possible cart adjustments (size, number, etc.); (5) the possibility of increased contamination levels of the recycled material waste stream (6) union workforce impacts; (7) operating and maintenance expense and capital cost savings; (8) GHG reductions; and (9) possible offsetting solid waste service expansions and their pros and cons (similar to those outlined in points 1 - 8); and

**Resolved,** the study timetable, with a due date ideally no later than YE2021?, and budget – both staff time and potential expense funds for third-party consulting services – be coordinated with City leadership and staff in consideration of overall available resources and the implementation of the SWRMP so as not to delay actions outlined in the Plan but also so that a change in the frequency of single-family residential curbside collection is not precluded, significantly delayed or otherwise made substantially more difficult or expensive.