

## **Food Waste Prevention and Recovery Resolution**

**WHEREAS**, the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) published a report in 2012 stating that 40% of all edible food, or \$165 billion worth, is wasted in America and that uneaten food annually accounts for 33 million tons of landfill waste, 25% of all fresh water used in the US, 4% of total US oil consumption, and costs \$750 million per year to dispose of; and

**WHEREAS**, experts project that reducing food losses by just 15% would provide enough food for more than 25 million Americans every year, helping to sharply reduce incidences of food insecurity for millions; and

**WHEREAS**, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has published the Food Recovery Hierarchy giving preference to first reduce and prevent waste through effective food ordering and handling procedures, then direct appropriate food surplus to people and animals, and direct remaining leftovers to industrial uses and compost; and

**WHEREAS**, there are safe and legal ways to expand food donations as a result of the Texas Good Faith Donor Act of 1981 and the federal Emerson Good Samaritan Food Act of 1996 which protect food donors, as long as proper food safety handling procedures have been followed; and

**WHEREAS**, on September 16, 2015, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and Environmental Protection Agency Deputy Administrator Stan Meiburg announced the United States' first-ever national food loss and waste goal, calling for a 50-percent reduction by 2030,

**WHEREAS**, the EPA states that food waste is the single largest component sent to American landfills; and

**WHEREAS**, sending food to landfills generates methane, a greenhouse gas that is 21 times more potent than CO<sup>2</sup>, and uneaten food in landfills accounts for 25% of US methane emissions; and

**WHEREAS**, the EPA estimates that an average family of four wastes and leaves uneaten nearly \$1500 worth of food each year; and

**WHEREAS**, *Plan El Paso* calls for the "efficient management of the disposal of solid waste to protect the natural and human environment while extracting reusable materials and energy from the waste stream"; and

**WHEREAS**, *Plan El Paso* seeks to work with entities involved in the mass production of food to implement waste reduction programs; and

**WHEREAS**, *Plan El Paso* recommends that the City "assure adequate solid waste disposal capacity to serve El Paso's present and future needs and continue to increase recycling, reuse, and reduction as a way to recycle the generation of solid waste"; and

**WHEREAS**, the *City of El Paso 2016 Strategic Plan* seeks to provide long-term, cost effective, sustainable regional solid waste solutions; and

**WHEREAS**, the City can support the development of mechanisms that facilitate the higher priority forms of diversion in the Environmental Protection Agency's Food Recovery Hierarchy, which can help address hunger needs in our community; and

**WHEREAS**, efforts to recover food surplus will further align the City's actions with its solid waste goals, and potentially also save money through smarter ordering and serving, redirect surplus food to people in need in El Paso.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF EL PASO:**

That the Mayor declares 2017 the Year of Food Waste Prevention and Recovery in El Paso, Texas.

That the City will develop a realistic food waste reduction strategy by 2018.

That the City Manager is directed to request all relevant City Departments to participate in a stakeholder process, led by the Office of Resilience and Sustainability, to establish a Regional Food Policy Council that facilitates the development of responsible policies that improve access for El Paso residents to healthy foods, and that includes a subcommittee solely dedicated to food waste prevention and recovery goals and metrics. This will include awareness, education and actions appropriate to help El Paso become a national leader in food waste prevention and recovery, as well as sustainable food systems.

That the City Manager or his designee will provide periodic updates to the City Council for the City of El Paso regarding this stakeholder process and food waste reduction goals.

**PASSED AND APPROVED THIS \_\_ DAY OF OCTOBER, 2016.**

**CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Oscar Leeser  
Mayor

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Richarda Duffy Momsen  
City Clerk

**APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Elizabeth Ruhmann  
Assistant City Attorney

**APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nicole Ferrini  
Chief Resilience Officer