

Highland Park Composts!

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Greenest Region Corps

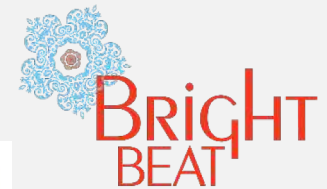
*The **Greenest Region Corps** is a program to bring Americorps volunteers into municipalities for a ten-month period to assist with a sustainability project of your choice.*



Highland Park Composts!

Highland Park Composts! is an initiative of the City of Highland Park, SWALCO, and LRS to support the implementation of food scrap composting at select businesses.

- Project began in November 2017
- inspired by Grayslake
- Pilot Program with Bright Beat
- Co-funded by SWALCO and Highland Park's Sustainability Fund (HP paid \$5,000 which was matched by SWALCO)
** consulting costs with Bright Beat depend on the scope of the project



Business Selection

- Needed to demonstrate community interest in the project
- Strategic outreach to local businesses who are known to be leaders and examples for other restaurants and organizations in Highland Park
- Long term objective of this is to inspire a snowball effect
- Phone calls to restaurant owners
 - Establish value of the program over the phone
 - Explain why Highland Park is involved
 - Explain why we want them
 - Optional to participate
 - No cost to the restaurant for waste audit and recommendation process
 - Optional to compost after process is over

Participants in Pilot Program



Bluegrass



Little Szechwan



La Casa de Isaac and Moishe



Michael's Red Hots



Norton's



Sunset Foods

Identifying Partners



- Project management and professional support throughout pilot program
- Analysis of current waste generation at restaurants
- Recommendations for best practices to increase diversion, gain recognition, and reap the benefits of composting

- Waste Hauler
- Competitive recycling and organics contracts previously negotiated with the city
- Year-round residential composting in Highwood
- Negotiated rates to encourage participation based on factors including route, number of carts, and pick up dates

- Co-funding for the program
- Free compostable Commit to Green bags for restaurants



- Compost servicer and producer

Consultation and Recommendation

Consultation Process

- Initial meeting with Bright Beat
- Walk-through of operations and waste audit
- Strategic ordering of follow-up meetings: most eager → most hesitant

Recommendation Process

- Increase and improve recycling practices
- Introduce organics pick-up once a week
- Option to introduce organics gradually
- Decrease landfill pickup

GOAL: Achieve a recommendation which offers a net zero or minimal cost increase

Summary of Recommendations



Business	% Cost Difference (per month)	Potential Volume Diverted from Landfill (per month)	
		Recycling	Organics
Little Szechwan	-9.1 %	2.064 cy	2.064 cy
Norton's	-2.2%	15.05 cy	4.128 cy
Sunset Foods	-2.75%	178.45 cy	30.96 cy
Michael's Red Hots	+9.2 %	75.25 cy	12.384 cy
Bluegrass	+14% or +3.5%	23.65 cy	2.064 cy
La Casa de Isaac and Moishe	+14% or +33%	23.65 cy	4.128 cy or 6.192 cy

Materials Provided

- IFSC Bilingual Restaurant Training Guide
- 3 Customized 11 x 17 laminated posters
- Customized Communications Cheat Sheet
- Compostable Commit to Green bags (courtesy of SWALCO)

Compost & Recycling Training for Restaurants
Basura y Reciclaje en los Restaurantes
Instrucciones

1. Compostable Bags

Compostable bag

- ONLY for collecting food and compostable service-ware
- Prevent spills
- DO NOT Overfill
- Purchase bags that are ASTM 6400 certified

Clear bag

- For collecting recyclables and landfill

Las bolsas claras se usan para recoger la basura y el reciclaje

2. BOH Setup

- Make sure you are using the correct bag in each bin
Asegura que está utilizando la bolsa correcta.
- Each section of the kitchen should have:
Asegura que cada sección de la cocina tiene los tres tipos de contenedores:

COMPOST (green)
compost (verde)
RECYCLE (blue)
reciclaje (azul)
LANDFILL (grey)
basura (gris)

Food+ Compostables
NO Plastic. NO Metal. NO Glass.

Fruits
Vegetables
Shells & bones
Pasta & rice
Eggshells, nutshells
Bread & grains
Meat, fish & dairy
Plants & Flowers
Approved Compostable Bags
 Meet compliance with the ASTM D6400 Certification

Recycling
 Put these **CLEAR** items in your recycling container:

Aluminum, metal & foil
Glass bottles & jars with lids attached
Plastic bottles, containers & buckets #1-5 with caps & lids attached
Boxes, Cardboard, & Paper
Latex & plastic gloves

Landfill
 Put these items in your landfill container:

Foam
Plastic wrap & bags
Plastic food bags
Soiled foil
Condiment packages
Wrappers
Plastic utensils & straws
Rubber bands & hair ties

City of Highland Park | SWALCO | Organix | LRS | Bright

Note: This is specific to items accepted by Organix and LRS

Successes



Bluegrass



Little Szechwan



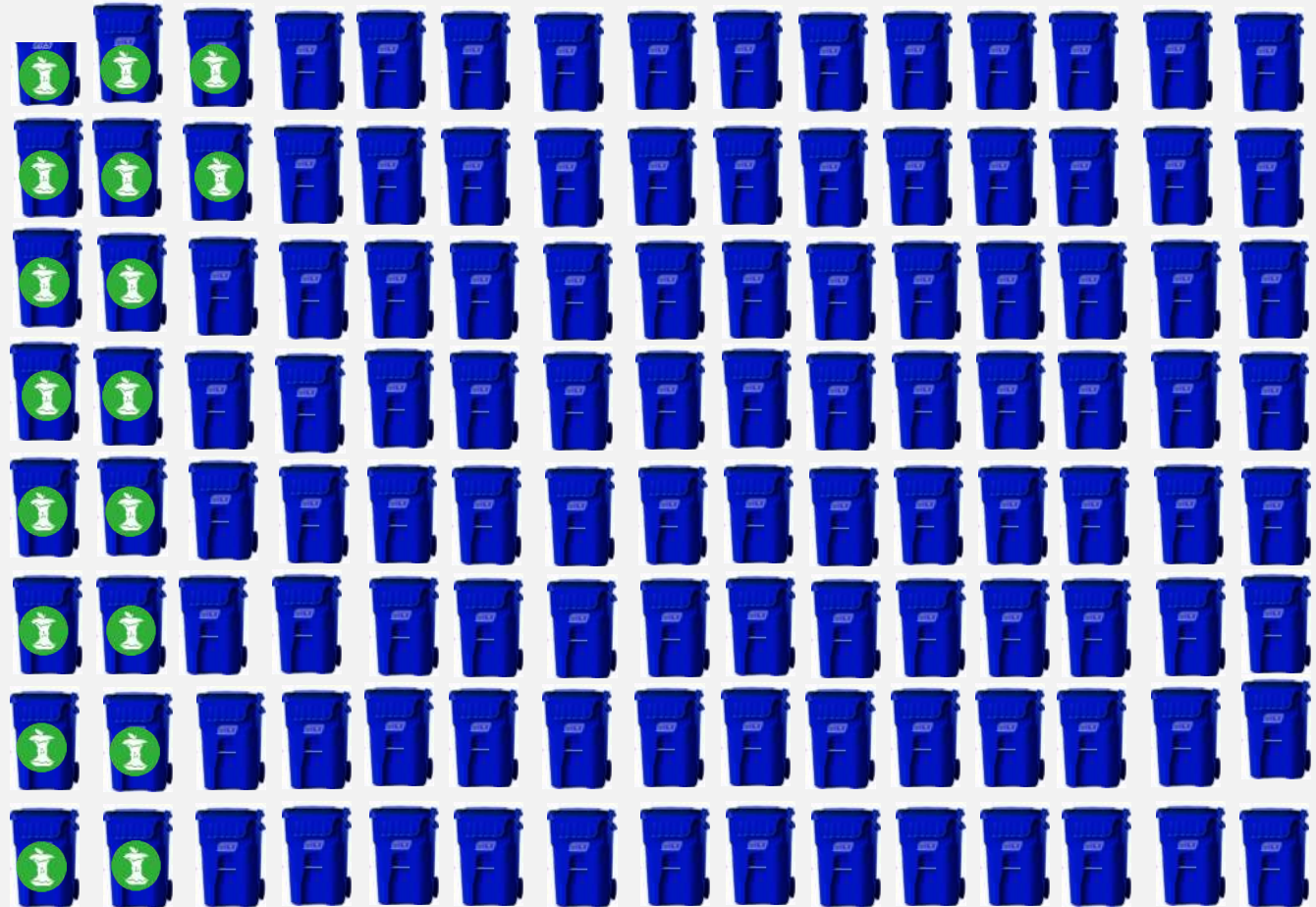
La Casa de Isaac and Moishe



**The remaining 3 businesses decided to wait until after the holidays

Total Monthly Waste Diversion

For Little Szechwan, Blue Grass, and La Casa de Isaac and Moishe



57.62 cubic
yards of waste
diverted each
month

That's equivalent to 122.5 95-gallon carts!
17.5 carts of food scraps 105 carts of recycled material

Logistical Concerns and Challenges

Restaurant

- Space for additional bins, both inside and out
- Cost of adding organics pickup
- Training and Education of staff
- Operational Logistics
- Health and Sanitation
- Adequately accounting for all waste generated
- Contamination of waste by other restaurants or residents

Waste Hauler

- Route density
- Communication between business owner, landlord, and hauler
- Know requirements and specifications of compost site

Municipality

- Strategic outreach requires more staff time and effort
- Finding support amongst elected body
- Slow process
- Coordinating meetings between waste haulers, busy restaurant owners, consultant, and city representative(s)
- Consulting Costs

Next Steps

- Follow-up meeting with businesses not yet composting
- Check-ins with businesses currently composting
- Begin marketing and communications campaigns
- Register restaurants with Illinois Food Scraps Coalition
- Training and education of restaurant staff where needed
- Partner with Go Green Highland Park where possible
- Begin outreach for new restaurants

