Communication from Public

Name:	Andy Shrader
Date Submitted:	08/09/2026 04:04 PM
Council File No:	26-0925
Comments for Public Posting:	See attached letter of support

People, Food & Land Foundation
Nourishing Land, Empowering Communities

August 10, 2026

The Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Support for Councilmember Blumenfield's Compost Master Plan (CF 26-0925) and Mayor Bass's Climate Action Plan Compost Goals

Dear Honorable Councilmembers,

On behalf of People, Food and Land Foundation (PFL), I am writing to express our enthusiastic support for Councilmember Bob Blumenfield's Compost Master Plan legislation (Council File 26-0925), as well as the ambitious organic waste and compost targets established in Mayor Karen Bass's Climate Action Plan.

Members of our team at PFL have been integrally involved in shaping and implementing key California environmental initiatives—including Senate Bill 1383 organic waste diversion mandates, Senate Bill 279 regulatory streamlining for local composting, and the City of Los Angeles' Regenerate LA healthy soils initiative. We view Council File 26-0925 as a critical operational bridge that will translate Mayor Bass' high-level executive climate targets into actionable, localized municipal infrastructure.

The Imperative: Global Water Bankruptcy, Soil Moisture, and Supply Chain Resilience

Recent research from the United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health formally declared that human society has entered an era of "global water bankruptcy." In the Western United States, chronic over-withdrawal, rising temperatures, and land degradation have pushed the Colorado River Basin to historic lows, threatening municipal water deliveries across the region. To adapt, Los Angeles must transition away from import reliance and build local ecological infrastructure that maximizes soil moisture retention and recharges local aquifers.

Applying compost to degraded urban and regional soils is one of the most effective ways to achieve this resilience. Research by UC Berkeley biogeochemist Dr. Whendee Silver demonstrates that every percentage point increase in soil organic matter enables soil to hold approximately 2,850 gallons of additional water per acre. Elevating soil moisture creates natural thermal buffers, mitigates wildfire fuel combustibility, slows vegetation desiccation, and improves precipitation infiltration into local groundwater basins.

Furthermore, replacing synthetic, fossil-fuel-based fertilizers with locally produced compost shields our municipal urban forestry and regional food systems from geopolitical supply chain disruptions and price volatility that is currently impacting global foreign energy corridors.

Ending the Exporting of Los Angeles' Organic Wealth

Currently, LA Sanitation and Environment (LASAN) exports substantial volumes of municipal compost over 100 miles to agricultural operations in the Central Valley to meet state procurement targets. This reliance on long-haul trucking incurs unnecessary transportation costs and deprives Los Angeles neighborhoods of the environmental, thermal, and hydrological benefits of their own organic waste.

Council File 26-0925 addresses this inefficiency by creating a framework to capture materials from the RecycLA 2.0 commercial organics expansion, deploy AB 2346 procurement funds for community composters, utilize SB 279 permit exemptions for small-scale operations, and keep organic nutrients within the city. This aligns seamlessly with Target 6B of Mayor Bass's Climate Action Plan, which mandates that Los Angeles reapply at least 50% of its locally produced compost and mulch within city limits by 2030 and eliminate organic waste disposal in landfills by 2035.

Integrating Compost Application into General Plan Updates

While processing infrastructure is vital, PFL's research highlights a gap in municipal land-use governance. In a 2025 statewide planning study shared by the Northern and Inland Empire Chapters of the American Planning Association, PFL evaluated planning documents across California and found that while 83% of city Climate Action Plans mention compost, only 10% of city General Plans contain actionable policies for applying compost to public or private lands.

To bridge this gap, we encourage the City Council to expand Council File 26-0925 or introduce companion legislation directing the Department of City Planning to integrate mandatory compost application requirements into upcoming Los Angeles General Plan updates:

1. **Open-Space and Conservation Element Updates (SB 1425 and AB 1889):** Mandating compost application across municipal parklands, golf courses, managed open spaces, medians, and parkways to build soil sponge capacity, lower irrigation costs, and mitigate urban heat island effects in disadvantaged communities.

2. **Decentralized Zoning Pathways:** Codifying streamlined zoning for community composting hubs under SB 279, leveraging partnerships with public institutions like the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD).

Utilizing Advanced Planning Tools and Global Knowledge Sharing

To optimize allocation, PFL highlights for the City's use the ArcGIS feedstock mapping of organic resources throughout the State, including within Los Angeles (peoplefoodandland.org/resource-library), and the pilot implementation of the open digital platform **COMMONS Planner** (developed with Point Blue Conservation Science). With interest and support, tools like the COMMONS Planner could be improved for use in LASAN and Department of City Planning workflows to allow the city to map soil carbon capacity, project water retention gains, and match organic waste streams directly with high-priority local application sites.

As an officially accredited organization at the upcoming 17th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP17) in August 2026, PFL will be highlighting Los Angeles' and California's policy coordination (SB 1383, SB 279, AB 2346, as well as CF 26-0925) as an international model for combating land degradation and global water bankruptcy.

Summary of Recommended Actions

People, Food and Land Foundation respectfully urges the City Council to adopt the following measures:

1. **Adopt Council File 26-0925** to unify RecycLA 2.0 collection with localized composting capacity.

2. **Implement Mayor Bass CAP Target 6B** by establishing binding procurement rules to apply at least 50% of city-generated compost locally by 2030.

3. **Mandate General Plan Application Quotas** in upcoming updates to the Open-Space Element (SB 1425) and Conservation Element (AB 1889).

4. **Deploy Local Capital via AB 2346 and SB 279** for community-scale composting infrastructure on managed public lands (e.g., LACCD properties).

5. **Utilize Spatial Planning Decision-Support Tools** (such as COMMONS Planner) to optimize distribution and track groundwater recharge.

Thank you for your leadership and dedication to building a resilient, sustainable future for the city of Los Angeles and a model for others to follow.

Sincerely,

John Heywood **Andy Shrader**
Executive Director Senior Advisor
People, Food and Land Foundation