WHEREAS, the City of Memphis can serve as a leader in developing a more sustainable food systems approach, reducing wasted food and the resulting wasted water, labor, land, and money, as well as increased pollution, by supporting waste diversion and generating useful products such as finished compost with this diverted food waste; and

WHEREAS, Feeding America estimates that 19% of Shelby County’s population is identified as food insecure, and that the Natural Resources Defense Council estimates that approximately 20% of this meals gap could be addressed with improved waste management practices; and

WHEREAS, many residents of the City live in areas known as ‘food deserts’ in which grocery store access is limited, and as of 2015, 74% of Memphians lived in such areas, prompting the Memphis 3.0 Comprehensive Plan to recommend incorporating more fresh and healthy foods at smaller, neighborhood-level corner stores to improve access to quality fresh foods and wellness opportunities as stated in Memphis 3.0 Goal 1, Objective 1.6; and

WHEREAS, there is great rescue potential for that would otherwise go to waste, which could be retrieved and donated to those in need, and we can improve the percentage of wasted excess food from restaurants, hospitality providers, and other food producers diverted in the City and work to engage residents and businesses to join us in this effort by composting, thoughtful purchase habits, improved storage, and other behavior changes; and

WHEREAS, the City of Memphis plans to meet a 10% reduction in the share of food waste in the municipal solid waste stream sent to landfills by 2030, incorporating efforts from commercial, institutional, and industrial sectors, as outlined in the Memphis Area Climate Action Plan, and to work towards supporting the national goal of reducing food waste by 50% by 2030.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Memphis will work to develop a more sustainable food systems approach for the City of Memphis following the guidelines of the EPA’s Food Recovery Hierarchy, adopting strategies to prevent food from going to waste, prioritizing proper storage and handling, rescuing surplus food to distribute to people in need, and recycling food scraps.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City will improve access to food for residents who are food insecure, through supporting cross-sector coordination among government, businesses, and community partners working in the food access ecosystem, and will encourage food waste diversion at home and in the community through behavior change initiatives to help businesses and residents build more thoughtful food-related habits.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Memphis to be affixed this 19th day of December 2020.

[Signature]

JIM STRICKLAND
Mayor