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February 21, 2024

Sue Donoghue  
Commissioner, New York City Department of Parks & Recreation  
830 Fifth Ave  
New York, NY, 10065

Dear Commissioner Donoghue,

This letter is written to express unwavering support for the preservation of the community composting program operated by Big Reuse at their Queensbridge processing site. This initiative holds immense significance not only for environmental sustainability but also for the creation of green industrial jobs critical for our transition to a 21st century green economy.

The proximity of the Queensbridge composting site to renewable Ravenswood and the two Industrial Business Zones (IBZs) being studied through NYSERDA's just transition grant underscores its importance in fostering green industrial jobs. These composting jobs represent the epitome of sustainable employment opportunities and align with the vision outlined by the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) for a green economy.

Big Reuses's composting operation serves as an essential part of a community's sustainability infrastructure. It not only produces significant amounts of organic waste from landfills but also produces nutrient-rich compost that revitalizes local green spaces and gardens. There are a plethora of environmental benefits that the program provides, of which brings important contributions towards mitigating climate change, promoting ecological resilience and environmental justice.

The composting program at Queensbridge plays an essential role in supporting local communities and organizations. Big Reuse directly supports over 16 organizations in Queens and countless community volunteer groups. This outreach and engagement is essential for building a more sustainable and resilient Queens.

In 2023 alone:

- 976,000 lbs of food scraps composted
- 480,000 lbs of wood chips, leaves, and yard waste composted
- Almost 1.5 millions lbs total
- 243,000 lbs of Parks Department waste composted

- 700 cubic yards of high quality, screened compost produced and all returned to 154 different schools, parks, community gardens, and greening projects in NYC for free
- 300 cubic yards of composted returned to NYC parks for horticultural use
- 219 volunteers and tour attendees

The Queensbridge Baby Park upgrade project brought significant impact to Western Queens by providing a much-needed green space in Western Queens, especially in light of the recent pandemic highlighting the importance of outdoor activities and green spaces. Western Queens is also given its infamous reputation of being an “asthma alley” from the environmental issues they face. The Queensbridge Baby Park was brought to life by Big Reuse. They created a vision for the space to be used for the community and it also underscores the importance of preserving their composting program, which residents clearly supported during the Park’s scoping process for the new Park.

It's urgent for all stakeholders to recognize the invaluable contributions of Big Reuse and their Queensbridge composting site to the community’s sustainability efforts. Furthermore, it serves as a vital tool for community engagement and education in urban sustainability.

The preservation of this program is essential for the revitalization and enduring impact on our public spaces, ensuring that these invaluable resources remain for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donovan Richards Jr.", written in a cursive style.

**Donovan Richards Jr.**  
Queens Borough President