

A Resolution Declaring Mansfield a *Near Zero Waste Community*

WHEREAS, Chapter 161, Article 5 of the Mansfield Solid Waste Ordinances empowers the Mansfield Resource Recycling Authority to improve waste reduction, reuse and recycling in the Town and assist with the development and implementation of town wide resource conservation and sustainability programs; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Mansfield has positioned itself as an environmental leader among CT communities, by offering a broad array of recycling and reuse options in the community including a swap shop, a regional repair café, on-site school composting, textile, paint, fluorescent bulb and electronics recycling at the transfer station, offering the Celebrate Mansfield Festival as a low waste event, committing to energy efficiency and renewable energy by participating in the Neighbor to Neighbor Energy Challenge and Solarize Mansfield, and pledging to be a Clean Energy Community; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Mansfield is committed to protecting and enhancing environmental quality in the community now and for future generations; and

WHEREAS, by increasing reuse and recycling, the Town of Mansfield can keep valuable materials circulating in the local economy, spurring economic growth; and

WHEREAS the Zero Waste philosophy accepts that the earth's ability to support life is finite and that natural resources must be used in the most efficient and sustainable way possible; and

WHEREAS, the guiding principles of Zero Waste are: managing resources instead of waste, conserving natural resources through waste prevention and recycling, turning discarded resources into jobs and new products instead of trash, promoting products and materials that are durable and recyclable, and discouraging products and materials that can only become trash after their use; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 3,300 tons of waste is generated in the Town of Mansfield each year by residents, businesses, and institutions, and approximately 75% of this amount is sent to incineration; and

WHEREAS, Town residents have reached an overall recycling rate of 33 percent, more can be done, especially in removing valuable materials from the waste stream and "closing the loop" by purchasing products made with recycled content; and

WHEREAS, the placement of recyclable materials in waste disposal facilities, such as incinerators and landfills, wastes natural resources, wrongly transfers liabilities to future generations, and has the potential to cause damage to human health; and

WHEREAS, avoiding the creation of waste or discards in the first place is the most economically efficient and environmentally sustainable resource management strategy; and

WHEREAS, waste prevention, reuse, recycling, and composting are material management options that conserve resources while reducing environmental impacts; and

WHEREAS, with the appropriate economic incentives, manufacturers can and will produce and businesses will sell products that are durable and repairable and that can be safely recycled back into the marketplace or nature; and

WHEREAS, increasingly, U.S. and international governments and organizations are adopting the policy that the financial responsibility of collecting, recycling, and disposing of materials belongs with producers; and

WHEREAS, government is ultimately responsible for leading by example and establishing criteria needed to eliminate waste, and for creating the economic and regulatory environment in which to achieve it.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Town Council of the Town of Mansfield, Connecticut:

The Town Council hereby declares the Town of Mansfield a *Near Zero Waste Community*. A *Near Zero Waste Community* can be achieved through action plans and measures that significantly reduce waste and pollution. These measures will include encouragement of residents, businesses and agencies to judiciously use, reuse, and recycle materials, and motivation of businesses to manufacture and market less toxic and more durable, repairable, reusable, recycled, and recyclable products. The Town hereby establishes an intermediate goal of reducing its residential waste stream and meeting the State's Solid Waste Management Plan goal of 58% by 2024. Be it further resolved that Mansfield will support initiatives at the state level that move Connecticut closer to 80% diversion by 2030.

This resolution shall become effective upon adoption.