

NEWS

FROM THE OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER
PAUL KORETZ
FIFTH DISTRICT



For Immediate Release

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LA Councilmembers Koretz and Bonin Announce #RegenerateLA Use LA Food Waste to Drawdown LA Greenhouse Gases

Inspired by Groundbreaking New Netflix Documentary “Kiss The Ground”

Los Angeles - September 23, 2020 - With record-breaking climate-exacerbated wildfires burning across the west and extreme weather pummeling the Gulf Coast states, Los Angeles City Councilmembers Paul Koretz (CD5) and Mike Bonin (CD 11) introduced a [motion](#) today launching RegenerateLA, which they are calling “an antidote to global warming.” At a press conference this morning, along with healthy soil and regenerative agriculture experts and key city staff and inspired by and in coordination with the world premiere of the, yes, groundbreaking new documentary “[Kiss the Ground](#),” Councilmember Koretz announced the legislative action to “drawdown,” or pull greenhouse gases from the atmosphere through a holistic, comprehensive effort by using the City’s annual estimated 280,000 tons of food waste to build healthy soils on parklands and open space. In the wake of the COVID-19 economic crisis, the additional goal is to create jobs throughout the City, particularly in the areas that need it most.

“We’ve been so busy surviving COVID-19 these past several months that many of us may not have noticed all the climate-exacerbated damage going on. From record-setting wildfires in California, to the derecho wind storm destroying farmland in Iowa and across the Midwest, to the massive hurricanes pummeling and flooding the Gulf Coast, all are made worse by our rapidly-warming planet,” said Councilmember Koretz. “In addition to moving off fossil fuels as fast as possible, we need to actively engage in the drawdown of greenhouse gases, which is why we’re launching #RegenerateLA today. Inspired in part by the new documentary, “Kiss the Ground,” Regenerate LA will actively use our food waste from compost and anaerobic digestion ‘cake’ to create healthy, carbon-sequestering soil in our parks, playing fields, medians and wherever we can.”

The new RegenerateLA program will use Los Angeles City’s food waste, and therefore compost and digester cake, to regenerate City parklands and open space from dirt and dust to rich environmentally valuable earth. Today, soil scientists estimate that 30% of the planet’s topsoil is acutely degraded, with fertile soil being lost at an alarming rate of 24 billion tons a year through intensive farming. With threats like increased erosion, desertification, soil compaction, nutrient imbalance, and loss of soil organic matter, **scientists estimate that our Earth may have only 60 harvests left.** Los Angeles has 469 square miles of parkland and miles of road medians and produces 300,000 tons of food waste annually.

-MORE-

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The legislation addresses the daily activities of the City from managing food and green waste to nourishing our parks and medians in order to reduce global warming. It includes planting trees, harvesting methane from landfills and from food waste with anaerobic digesters, and, turning food waste into healthy compost that can be used throughout the City to create healthy carbon-sequestering soil.

“Good stewardship of our soil is essential to life on Earth and this film will help people understand the severe stakes in the fight for climate justice,” added [Councilmember Mike Bonin](#). “A better healthy soils policy in Los Angeles will have direct benefits to our neighborhoods, especially in LA’s food deserts, where fresh produce is lacking. It will also show that change is possible and that the second-largest city in the nation can create jobs, improve our local climate, and thrive through better stewardship of our soil locally. I am proud to work with Councilmember Koretz and these great grassroots environmental activists to introduce this legislation and to work to avert the worst damage that will be done by the climate crisis.”

“LA compost is thrilled to support the Regenerate LA initiative which will ensure that soil health and human health are prioritized across the city,” said [Michael Martinez](#), Founder and Executive Director of LA Compost. “We look forward to collaborating with both city agencies and community members to ensure that compost creation and application is the new normal moving forward”

"Regenerating our soil health is a pathway forward to helping balance our climate while simultaneously being a means for water and food security, increased human health, and way to make our land more resistant to flooding, drought, and fire," said [Finian Makepeace](#), Co-Founder, Policy Director, and Lead Educator for Kiss the Ground. "Regenerate LA can set a model for cities across the world not just doing less harm but actually doing more good and making our land function again."

"To limit catastrophic climate chaos we must both reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and drawdown existing levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. The good news is that we have new information about soils and their capacity to, in concert with plants, quickly drawdown and store the excess of atmospheric carbon. Composting both reduces emissions and is the fastest acting way support soils and plants sequestering carbon, re-hydrating the landscape and reducing need for chemical use. Kudos to Councilmember Koretz for being a leader in ushering in a new regenerative, local economy that is healthy for people and planet!, said [Calla Rose Ostrander](#), Climate, Agricultural Policy and Science Advisor People, Food & Land Foundation.

“Everyone has a role to play in our climate crisis,” said [Doniga Markegard](#), Regenerative Rancher, [Markegard Family Grass-Fed](#). “You can grow your personal soil, purchase from farmers and ranches that are building soil, adventure to the source of your food and make your decisions based on the health of the planet for the future generations.”

Enrique C. Zaldivar, Director and General Manager of LA Sanitation and Environment pointed out that “healthy Soils and Food Security go hand in hand. [LASAN](#) joins Councilmember Koretz Regenerative Farming Initiative thru our many localized programs like Backyard Composting, in-Basin composting, biodiversity, organics processing, and several others.”