

Mayor's Office of Sustainability**Legislative Summary
USDA Composting and Food Waste Reduction Project****Purpose of the Legislation**

Requesting legislation to authorize the Director of Public Works, on behalf of the Office of Sustainability, to apply for and accept grant funding from the United States Department of Agriculture to conduct the USDA Composting and Food Waste Reduction Project; and to enter into contracts to implement the Project.

Grantor

United States Department of Agriculture

Purpose of the Grant

The USDA Composting and Food Waste Reduction Project will strengthen and expand the urban community composting network collaboration with local enterprises, community-based training organization and demonstration farm, and public entities to promote food diversion education while generating healthy National Organic Program compliant compost, which is more fully described in the attached detailed description.

Amount of Grant

Approximately \$400,000, with a 25% in-kind contribution required by the Grantor. As a condition to receiving the grant, the City is required to provide a required in-kind match of approximate seven percent (7%) of the USDA's required twenty-five percent (25%) match requirement of the total project costs of the which the remaining approximate eighteen percent (18%) will be contributed by other parties.

Grant Term

Two years

Detailed Description

Authorizing the Director of Public Works in collaboration with the Mayor's Office of Sustainability to apply, accept, and spend grant funding from the United States Dept. Of Agriculture for the co-design of a comprehensive strategy that builds upon the results and recommendations of the 2023 food rescue plan and West Side Market composting Pilot to implement a city-wide composting program for residents.

Background/Purpose:

The City of Cleveland's Climate Action Plan continues to remain a key asset for developing strategies surrounding environmental justice action impact. In early 2023, Public Works and the Mayor's Office of Sustainability implemented a six month composting pilot at the historic West Side Market as an initiative of Circular Cleveland, promoting circular economy strategies for vendors to reduce and divert generated food waste. The Pilot was conducted by Rust Belt Riders Composting, LLC to demonstrate a composting strategy for food waste diversion to identify models for local access for vendors, "making the [Increased Access to Composting](#) roadmap come to life" for city-wide implementation. As we strive to develop innovative sustainable practices, the City is pursuing the USDA's Composting Food Waste Reduction Grant to improve soil quality from compost generated from food waste, which reduces greenhouse gas emissions by increasing carbon sequestration in the soil to offset methane emissions. Compost has various benefits contributing to nature-based solutions for environmental revitalization such as removing contaminants, natural storm water management, and building climate resiliency. As we strengthen our model, increasing equitable access to resources for local agricultural producers and drop-off access for residents enhance the probability to achieving projected goals. Through the grant, Public Works (the City) will accept the funding to collaborate with partners on activities to expand the developed strategies on implementing municipal food waste reduction plans that align with priorities from the *Environmental Protection Agency's Food Recovery Hierarchy*.

Scope of Work:

Public Works in collaboration with the Mayor's Office of Sustainability is seeking legislative authority for the following scope of work:

- Apply, accept, and spend grant funding through USDA's "Composting Food Waste Reduction" grants program. If awarded, through the city's processes, procure necessary services (professional services, direct awards, purchases under contract authority, etc.) to strengthen and expand the urban community

composting network collaboration with local enterprises, community-based training organizations and demonstration farm, and public entities to promote food diversion education while generating healthy National Organic Program compliant compost.

- If the grant is awarded, coordination with other City departments to contract as necessary for further implementation such as for food scrap collection, compost processing and distribution, workforce development, education, and evaluation of benefits.

Justification:

A request for introduction on June 5th to Council authorizing the City to collaborate with partners on implementing a comprehensive city-wide composting strategy. As the primary goal in the circular economy is reducing climate emissions by diverting waste from landfills, Sustainability and other departments have demonstrated successful methods for community benefits such as the recycling program. Due to the upcoming grant application and funding deadlines outlined, we are requesting authority now to apply, accept and spend funding that would be received late 2023.

Anticipated Costs and Funding Resources:

We anticipate receiving up to \$400,000 in grant funding with a required 25% match from the City of Cleveland and collaborative public and non-profit collaborators. The City, will contribute 7% in-kind match that includes salary. With the allocated grant award, the City's match, and other in-kind contributions from collaborative partners, we expect to implement components of the grant beginning from Dec 1, 2023 at the earliest for a duration of two years.

Term of Contract:

The grant requires two years of project duration (December 1, 2023 (earliest) through March 31, 2026 (latest projection from USDA), but the complete timeline includes the application, planning, implementation, and close-out process, estimated from June 15, 2023 to March 31, 2026. The USDA intends to notify awards around late August 2023 and Federal awards can be expected from December 2023 through the end of February 2024.