



**CITY OF KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE**

**City Council**

**AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET**

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**AGENDA DATE:** April 29, 2025

**DEPARTMENT:** Public Service Department

**DIRECTOR or DESIGNEE:** Rachel Butzler

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**AGENDA SUMMARY**

A Resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute any and all documents necessary to apply for the "Organic Management" Grant and, if awarded, accept a grant in the amount of \$25,000.00 from the Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation (TDEC), to further grow The Knoxville Compost Project by continuing to divert municipal food waste from the landfill to reduce greenhouse gases and to produce compost to grow food in urban farms, community gardens, and residential backyards.

**COUNCIL DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED**

All Districts

**BACKGROUND**

In February 2022, the City of Knoxville along with three partner organizations launched the city's first public compost program, the Knoxville Compost Project. The success of the pilot project led us to expand our composting efforts through an \$89,270 grant from the USDA in 2023. The USDA grant was completed in February 2025 and thus the Waste and Resources Management Office is seeking additional funding to continue the composting momentum!

Thus far, the project has outperformed expectations. It is very popular with the public as residents and restaurants continue to utilize all five food scrap drop-off locations, diverting more food waste from the landfill than the previous year since the program's creation in 2022. Through the previous USDA grant, we were able to offer free backyard composting workshops where attendees received a free compost tumbler and countertop food scraps collection bin. We hosted eight workshops, each workshop's registration filling up within minutes of it going live.

This grant, if funded, will allow for the expansion of this proven model. It is our goal to work with more community partners to host food scrap drop-off locations, providing additional convenient locations for the public to compost their food waste. Further, because the backyard composting workshops were so popular, this funding will allow us to continue offering these valuable workshops to the public.

**ESTIMATED PROJECT SCHEDULE**

The turnaround time for this grant application was short and the proposal submitted before it could be heard by Council. The grant was due to TDEC on April 18, 2025 and the City's

application was submitted on April 15, 2025. Grantees will be announced May 12, 2025 with funding available July 31, 2025. Grant obligations must be completed by June 15, 2026.

**PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW**

**FISCAL INFORMATION**

Total budget for the one-year project is \$50,000. Our grant proposal requests \$25,000 from TDEC. Grant requires a 50% match (\$25,000) which will be pulled from the Public Service Department's Waste and Resource Management Operating Budget. 230.43430