

# Compost & Food Waste Diversion

## CITY OF PROVIDENCE

March 11, 2025



# City of Providence Efforts

Moving Towards Zero Waste – A Residential Compost Assessment

USDA Compost & Food Waste Reduction Grant

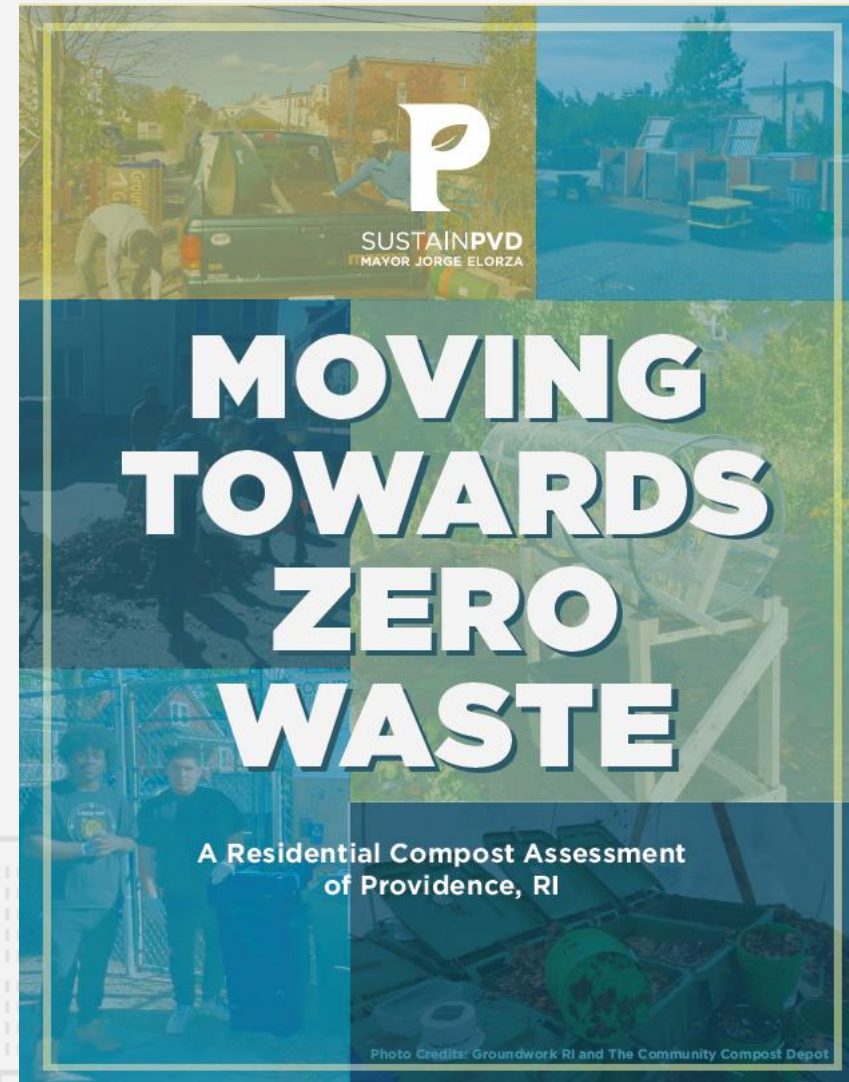
USEPA Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling Grant



# City of Providence Efforts

## Moving Towards Zero Waste

Explores Providence's residential organic waste diversion practices, most commonly through the means of composting, and assesses the economic and environmental impacts of landfilling organic materials. The report also provides recommendations on how to increase organic recycling to meet climate and sustainability goals while also creating jobs and saving tax-payer dollars.



# City of Providence Efforts

## Moving Towards Zero Waste

### Key Findings:

- 32% of MSW is organics (~20 tons per year)
- MSW budget growing (~\$1.5M in '15, \$3M in '20)
- 50% organics diversion in '21 would have saved \$750,000

### Broad Goals:

1. Keep materials local
2. Promote community composting
3. Close the loop
4. Support local workforce development
5. Center justice and equity
6. Prioritize composting over anaerobic digestion

### Strategies:

1. Steward an education and outreach campaign
2. Offer community composting throughout the city
3. Advocate for additional facilities
4. Promote composting through land use policies
5. Procure compost for City projects
6. Compost organics at municipal facilities/events
7. (Long-term) Develop a plan for city-wide organic diversion and ban organics from the MSW stream.



# City of Providence Efforts

## USDA Compost & Food Waste Reduction Grant (~\$280K)

- **Backyard Compost Mentorships** | Providence Gardenworks
- **Drop-off Sites** (new and repaired) | Groundwork RI & The Community Compost Depot
- **Education and Marketing** | Zero Waste Providence
- **School Cafeteria Recycling** | Rhode Island School Recycling Project
- **Institutional Recycling TA** | Center for EcoTechnology (CET)



# City of Providence Efforts

## USDA Compost & Food Waste Reduction Grant

- **Backyard Compost Mentorships** | Providence Gardenworks
  - 40 new households last year, add 20 more this year
- **Drop-off Sites** (new and repaired) | Groundwork RI
  - Repair 10 existing, build 5 new, expand capacity at Ring St. Garden
- **Drop-off Sites** (new and repaired) | The Comm. Compost Depot
  - Improve Frey Florists drop off site and training area.
  - Add 2-4 new drop off/processing sites
- **Open Doors Composting Site** | Groundwork RI
  - Add compost processing capacity to Open Doors RI garden

# City of Providence Efforts

## USDA Compost & Food Waste Reduction Grant

- **Education and Marketing** | Zero Waste Providence
  - Ward based strategy to encourage uptake of existing food waste diversion options (backyard, drop-off, collection)
- **Institutional Composting TA** | Center for EcoTechnology (CET)
  - Identify and assist at least one major food producing institution to begin diverting food waste.



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## USDA Compost & Food Waste Reduction Grant

- **School Cafeteria Recycling** | Rhode Island School Recycling Project
  - Introduce food waste diversion programs at four PPSD schools
    - D'Abate Elementary School (2023/24)
    - Fogarty Elementary (2023/24)
    - Spaziano (2024/2025)
    - George West (2024/25)







*Backyard composting with PVD Gardenworks, cafeteria waste diversion with RISRP, and a community composting drop-off site with Harvest Cycle and ZWP.*



*Credits (clockwise from left): Providence Gardenworks, Providence Journal, Zero Waste Providence*

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## USEPA Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling Grant (~\$850K)

- **West End Compost Hub Construction** | Groundwork RI
  - Construct an in-vessel aerobic composter on a former brownfield in the West End of providence.
- **ReMix Organics Preprocessing Upgrades** | Remix Organics
  - Purchase vehicles/equipment to support infrastructure upgrades & increase capacity for institutional/business food waste diversion.
- **Business Recycling and Compost TA** | CET
  - Work with 100 food producing businesses and institutions to implement recycling and food waste diversion.



# Questions?

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