

TOWN OF BLADENSBURG

Office of the Town Manager

TO: Mayor Takisha James and Members of the Town Council
FROM: Brian Wood, Town Manager
DATE: September 10, 2026
RE: Renewal of Household Organic Waste (Composting) Collection Contract — Compost Crew

Purpose

This memo provides background on the Town's household organic waste (composting) collection program, summarizes the status of the current contract with Compost Crew, and requests Council's guidance on renewal of the program as the current agreement comes up for renewal.

Background

The Town's composting collection program began as a grant-funded initiative undertaken in partnership with several other port towns in the region. Grant funding supported the cost of the program for participating households. That grant funding ended in January 2026, and since that time the Town has covered the full monthly cost of the program directly from the Town budget.

Under the current contract, the Town pays Compost Crew \$27.00 per participating household per month for weekly curbside collection, hauling, and processing of household organic waste, plus a one-time \$20.00 fee per household to cover the cost of a 7-gallon collection bin and liners for new sign-ups. Participation is voluntary, and the Town bears the full cost for each participating household.

Current Program Status

- 27 households are currently enrolled in the program.
- At the current rate, the program costs the Town \$729 per month, or \$8,748 annually, in collection fees alone (before any new sign-up bin fees) — see cost summary below.
- The per-household rate is subject to an annual adjustment tied to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV area.
- The proposed renewal contract would run through August 31, 2027, with two optional one-year extensions.

Cost Item	Rate	Total
Monthly household collection fee	\$27.00 / household / month	\$729.00 / month (27 households)
Projected annual collection cost	—	\$8,748.00 / year (27 households)
One-time new bin & liner fee	\$20.00 / household (one-time, new sign-ups only)	Varies with new enrollment
Rate adjustment	Annual CPI adjustment (Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV area)	Applied annually to per-household rate

Regional Context

Since grant funding ended, some of the other participating port towns have discontinued their composting programs altogether rather than absorb the full cost locally. Others have shifted to a cost-sharing model in which participating residents pay a monthly subscription fee directly, with the town subsidizing the remainder.

Staff has reviewed the cost-sharing approach and does not recommend it for Bladensburg at this time. With only 27 participating households, establishing resident billing, collections, and program administration would require a disproportionate amount of staff time and administrative overhead relative to the modest revenue it would generate. The current program's small scale makes a self-administered fee structure inefficient for both the Town and the Contractor.

Options for Council Consideration

- Renew the contract with Compost Crew as presented, continuing the Town-funded model at \$27 per household per month.
- Renew the contract, but pursue additional resident outreach to grow participation and improve the program's cost-effectiveness before the next renewal cycle.
- Discontinue the program, consistent with the approach some neighboring port towns have taken since grant funding ended.
- Explore a cost-sharing/resident-fee model — not recommended by staff given the administrative burden relative to current participation levels.

Staff Recommendation

N/A

Requested Action

Staff requests Council's concurrence to proceed with execution of the renewal contract with Compost Crew, or direction on an alternative course of action.