



Town of Bristol, Rhode Island
Department of Community Development

10 Court Street
Bristol, RI 02809
401-253-7000

July 24, 2024

TO: Honorable Town Council

FROM: Edward M. Tanner, Principal Planner *EMT*

Cc: Steven Contente, Town Administrator

RE: *Residential Composting Pilot Program*

The Town of Bristol has been approached by Black Earth Compost and 11th Hour Racing with a proposal to partner on a USDA Composting and Food Waste Reduction grant to fund a two-year pilot project for residential curbside compost collection. As proposed, the pilot program would target a 5% participation rate from Bristol households over a two year period. Black Earth Compost has used data from Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation (RIRRC) to estimate anticipated savings in landfill tipping fees from diversion of compostable material from our municipal waste stream. Based upon Bristol's 2023 landfill disposal tonnage from RIRRC, Black Earth has calculated anticipated savings to the Town based upon an estimated 33% waste removal (RIDEM estimate for residential waste stream) and for 47% waste removal (Black Earth upper estimate based upon their waste stream audits). They estimate that savings would be between \$6,615 (33% removal) and \$9,421 (47% removal) annually for a 5% household participation rate. A 5% participation rate would total 435 households; although the pilot project would target a goal of 500 households by the start of the second year of the program.

Black Earth estimates that the total cost for the pilot project would be \$109,693. This includes all costs for the project from public engagement to distribution of supplies and waste collection for 450 households. Each participating household will also receive a one cubic yard bag of compost annually for use in their garden or lawn. The USDA grant would cover 75% of this cost, and 11th Hour Racing has offered to split the remaining 25% cost with the Town. Thus, **the total contribution that Black Earth is requesting from the Town is \$10,969.30 over the two year project timeline.** This cost would be offset by the anticipated reduction in the Town's landfill tipping fees estimated to be at least \$6,615 annually, although that savings will only be realized when participation reaches the 5% target of 435 households (and could be greater if we reach the goal of 500 households). 11th Hour Racing has also offered to cover any additional costs that may be incurred to get to the 500 household goal for the program.

After reviewing this proposal and meeting with representatives of Black Earth and 11th Hour Racing, I recommend that the Town move forward with the USDA grant application to fund the two year pilot program. The Town of Bristol would be the applicant for the USDA grant, but Black Earth and 11th Hour Racing will prepare the application and work with us to get it submitted. If the grant is awarded, the Town would be required to have a competitive bidding procurement process for a contractor to administer the program and conduct the curbside pickup. At the conclusion of the two-year pilot program, the Town would be under no obligation to continue residential composting. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me.