



## Composting Information

The Grant is to the Town of Edmonston from United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) Agriculture and Innovation Production. The grant was for \$279,030. Partners include Eco City Farms and Compost Crew. The project has expanded to Bladensburg, Colmar Manor, and Cottage City. Cheverly would be the 5<sup>th</sup> community. The program runs through November 30, 2025, and includes the cost to pick up food compost door-to-door for 150 customers. Bins and bags are provided as part of the grant

Goals and Objectives: For the Town of Edmonston, the over-arching goal of this project is to bring us one step closer to our journey to become Maryland's greenest and most sustainable, near[1]zero-waste climate smart community, where residents live in peace and harmony while protecting and preserving our natural environment. As a largely low to moderate historically-underserved community of color, it is important to us to demonstrate that historically underserved and vulnerable communities, with a long history of flooding and suffering related environmental disasters, can become diligent and exemplary stewards of the environment. As our Mayor Gant proudly proclaims, "thanks to our vigilance and mutual support, our small town demonstrates that we can accomplish challenging green goals with grace and ease." The objectives of our project are many. Our project will simultaneously:

- Strengthen the Town and County's capacity to manage and process local food waste cleanly and efficiently;
- Expand the growth of a decentralized, right-scaled distributive composting system around the Capital Beltway to service the composting needs of urban farmers and gardeners;
- Generate food-production quality compost on-farm/gardens where it is needed;
- Increase access to compost for the new agricultural producers at the Watkins Incubator farm and adjacent Community Gardens;
- Reduce reliance on, and curtail the use of, non-organic fertilizers for local food production;
- Improve the quality of the soil (and the food production of healthy food) at the Watkins incubator farm for its 9-10 new farmers;
- Support the growth and development of Compost Crew, a community-serving entrepreneurial food scrap waste-management business in the Metro DC area;
- Increase rainwater absorption on farm through the judicious use of compost for water and soil management;
- Divert Edmonston's residential/commercial food scraps from landfills to produce an agricultural-quality soil conditioner;
- Increase the composting skills, knowledge and production of historically under-served and under-resourced farmers and their likelihood of succeeding in their new farm businesses;

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- Educate the Town and County community about food-waste reduction, food scrap and yard waste recycling, and climate-smart municipal strategies;
- Make fighting climate change at the community-level a desirable and credible goal, especially for underserved and vulnerable communities of color.

3) Procedures and Work Plan

a) Planned Procedure and Activities: Collection Compost Crew will operate the food scrap collection process for the Town of Edmonston. They will work with the Town and ECO to set the rules, design and operate the program and advise on the development and distribution of the educational/outreach materials and strategy. To minimize plastic waste of any kind, paper bags will be used in the collection process, similar to the Town's recycling program. The number of participants involved will be phased in to reach 45% participation in the final phase. CC will provide residents in the

Town of Edmonston with the convenience of a curbside food scraps collection service, apartment building food scraps drop-off sites as well as two Town drop-off food scraps options to maximize participation and increase food waste diversion rates. ECO's Edmonston farm will be one such option. Compost Crew (CC) will onboard and manage the collection of food scraps and approved waste organics from the Town of Edmonston. CC will deliver an agreed upon number of bins and paper bags to the Town, where the participants will pick up their allocated materials. (All bins have a secure closing mechanism making them more secure than ordinary trash bins.) CC will collaborate with Edmonston and ECO to create and apply an educational sticker to each bin indicating the partnership and explaining what can go into the bin. CC also will provide digital resources to the Town that spell out best practices and suggested direction on the Town's outreach and education. The Town assumes responsibility for generating all resident education materials. All materials will be bilingual and designed for door to door as well as social media distribution. CC assumes responsibility for the once-per-week food scraps collection for all participants, which will occur on the same day every week, unless otherwise communicated. Compost Crew then will take the Town's waste organics to the incubator farm's Compost Outpost to be processed weekly. Compost Crew will manage participant customer service and handle the onboarding for new participants, as well as any cancellations. Once secured, the Town will own and manage the bins and paper bag distribution. Curbside: Each curbside pick-up resident will receive a 7-gallon bin and a bundle of paper bags. The participants use the paper bag to gather food scraps before putting it into their collection bins, to help prevent the collection bins from getting too messy. The participant will put the bin out on their curb as they would any trash or recycling container the night before collection. CC will empty the contents of their bin into its truck and leave the empty bin on the curb for the participant to gather (and clean as needed) later that day. The collection service will be provided in a phased approach to maximize interest and participation with the goal of achieving a 45% participation rate by the end of year two. Collection service will commence after the Compost Outpost has been constructed, which is estimated to be complete in six months, by August 2023. Initial participation is set at 50 homes for curbside collection the first six months. It will then expand to 100 homes for the following six months, and finish with servicing 150 homes for the last six months for a total period of 18 months. Apartment dwellers: The Town includes 8 apartment buildings (for a total of 156 units). We will include residents of these buildings in the food scrap collection project, in a phased in manner. We USDA-NRCS-NHQ-CFWR-22-NOFO0001179-Composting & Food-Waste Recovery Pilot for the Town of Edmonston, MD Page # 6 start with two buildings, which receive a 65-gallon bin each, along with a bundle of paper bags. Residents from the complex will be able to empty their food scraps into paper bags before dropping them into the apartment drop-off bin. The apartment drop-off bin will be accessible at times and a location convenient for apartment staff handlers. CC will empty the contents of the bins into its truck at a location and time that is convenient for the CC truck to access. The apartment building partners will eventually receive one 65-gallon bin per building, starting with two buildings the first six months, then adding an additional three buildings every six months thereafter, for a total period of 18 months

**From:** Dan Israel  
**Sent:** Friday, April 25, 2025 1:07 PM  
**To:** Rod Barnes  
**Cc:** Kristie Blumer  
**Subject:** Monthly collection costs

Hi Rod,

Per your request, we have been working on determining the price for curbside food scraps collection beyond the current grant period. With the current number of participating homes, it would likely be cost prohibitive, but we are hopeful that with the addition of Cheverly and Cottage City we can get to (or close to) 220 homes participating.

Our pricing includes a couple of assumptions that are worth calling out:

- 1) There are 220 participating homes. Fewer homes would increase the per home cost.
- 2) To help keep the costs lower, Compost Crew is willing to purchase the shipping containers used for the Compost Outpost from the Town of Edmonston -- and the proceeds would be put towards defraying the costs of the residents' composting over the next 2-3 years.

With that in mind, here are a couple of pricing options:

- With the cost savings from selling the shipping containers spread over two years, the monthly per home cost would be \$27.82.
- With the cost savings spread over three years, the monthly per home cost would be \$30.00.

Note that of the monthly cost, the Town(s) may choose to have the residents cover a portion. For example, in the City of Falls Church residents pay \$8.00 per month to participate in curbside composting and the City covers the balance.

Please let us know what questions you have.

Thank you,  
Dan

A faint Outlook signature bar is visible at the bottom of the email, containing icons for email, calendar, and other Outlook features.