



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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THE CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION RECEIVES GRANT FROM USDA FOR COMPOST AND FOOD WASTE REDUCTION PROGRAM

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. February 6, 2023 – The City of Grand Junction was one of three Colorado recipients from a list of 45 cooperative agreements awarded grants through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's 2022 Compost and Food Waste Reduction program. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing more than \$9.4 million in programs that support innovative, scalable waste management plans to reduce and divert food waste from landfills.

"We are excited to be one of three Colorado communities to receive this grant and recognition by the USDA for our attention to the importance of building resilient, local food systems that benefit not only farmers but also our community," said Jay Valentine, General Services director. "The \$89,600 grant will allow Grand Junction to focus resources on local strategies that increase the availability of compost for use in farming and landscaping."

The City of Grand Junction's project is titled Grand Junction Organic Waste Diversion and Compost Utilization Program and the grant for \$89,600 will fund an organic waste collection route with a temporary composting outlet. Additionally, through partnerships with Mesa County and the CSU Western Colorado Research Center, and with funding from the grant, a compost utilization program will be implemented to promote local compost use and demonstrate benefits for water conservation and soil health.

According to the Western Colorado Waste Diversion Study, conducted by Souder Miller and Associates in 2018, about 13 percent of Mesa County's waste is comprised of food. This is equivalent to 21,420 metric tons of organic material that goes into the landfill annually. Due to capacity constraints, food waste is not currently accepted at the local Mesa County Organic Waste Facility. Grant funding for Grand Junction's program will create the density and demand needed to show the economic benefits of accepting more materials at the local facility.

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