A COMPOST PROCUREMENT POLICY FOR MEMPHIS

Model policy written by the Environmental Law Institute and Natural Resources Defense Council

CLEAN MEMPHIS
WALK THE TALK

FOOD MATTERS

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW • INSTITUTE®

PROJECT GREEN FORK

OVERVIEW

In 2022, Clean Memphis gathered City and County municipal partners to pitch the procurement of compost for local projects.

MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATIVES:

- City Parks
- Solid Waste
- Planning and Development
- Sustainability and Resilience
- Public Works
- Engineering

Key Discussion: A compost procurement policy requires or encourages in some manner that municipalities purchase and use finished compost in public projects such as landscaping, construction, and stormwater management.

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CONNECTING POLICY TO PLANNING

Clean Memphis used existing objectives in the municipal Climate Action Plan and Memphis 3.0 to connect compost procurement to municipal priorities.

Memphis 3.0 Objectives

3.4 Expand sustainable approaches to material and waste management and reuse

- *3.4.1* Work with Shelby County and other municipalities to develop a long-term regional solid waste management plan that supports a vision of zero waste.
- *3.4.2* Incentivize material reuse.
- *3.4.11* Increase the City's capacity to divert and process food, yard, and wood waste for productive use.
- *3.4.12* Incentivize construction projects to utilize repurposed materials.
- *3.4.15* Identify value chain options for mulch, leaf litter, and yard trimmings.

Memphis Area Climate Action Plan:

"Current strategies to increase the amount diverted and recycled can include the support and creation of new circular economies and generating revenue streams from those products. Incentivizing both larger commercial operations and homeowners to reduce the amount of waste generated through creating marketable alternatives is a regional effort, seeking creative uses for products that would otherwise be landfilled."

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COMPOST SOLVES PROBLEMS

A leave-behind from the Compost Research and Education Foundation served as a guide for each division on HOW the use of compost could solve issues in their current projects.

CITY PARKS - LANDSCAPING

CITY PARKS - MUNICIPAL GOLF COURSES

STORMWATER

Contractors working with local government are often unaware of the benefits of using compost in their work. These guides act as a tool for them as well.

PILOT ESTABLISHED

Potential projects were identified as opportunities to implement a pilot. A city park was selected to receive the first round of compost.

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WINS AND CHALLENGES

The completion of this project marked an overall positive step towards future compost procurement projects in Memphis and Shelby County.

- **Pilot project fostered relationships between Clean Memphis and municipal leadership.**
- Offered a plug and play guide for all parties.
- **Provided Clean Memphis with an opportunity to connect our work with city/county sustainability priorities.**
- Created a replicable process for future compost procurement.

- **Changes in leadership hinder continuity and data collection.**
- Local procurement challenges include compost supply availability and packaging methods.
- **Commercial organics recycler loss in 2023 led to local procurement issues.**

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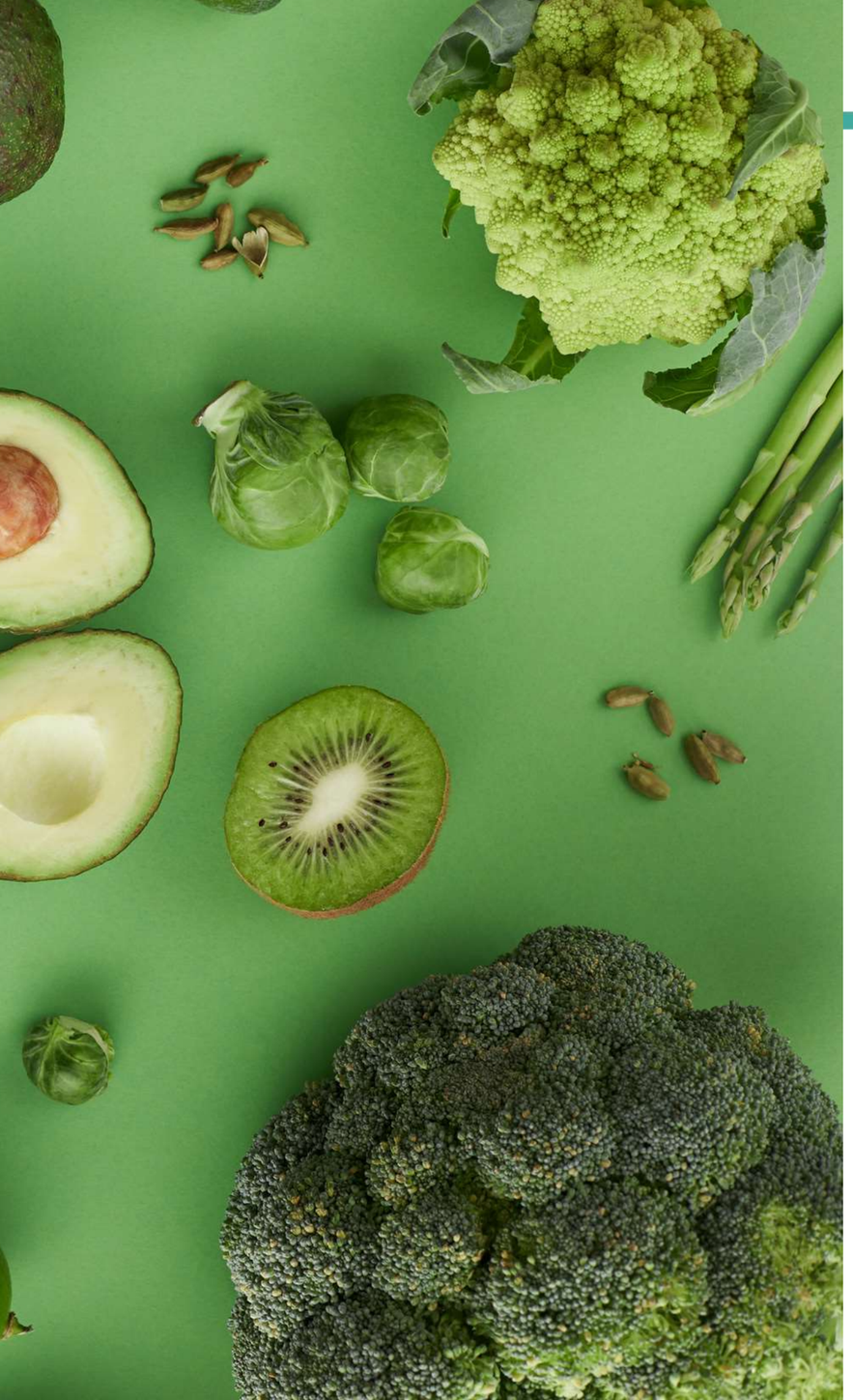
NEXT STEPS

- **City of Memphis conducting a waste characterization study and updating the Climate Action Plan.**
- Solid Waste finalizing contract with an organics recycler to reinstate compost production.
- **Clean Memphis continues advocacy, reconnecting with early adopters of sustainable policies and fostering a relationship with Mayor Paul Young and his administration.**
- Clean Memphis to reconvene leadership to identify the next opportunity for compost procurement.
- **Clean Memphis will shore up data collection process and assign a champion to judge the success of the next pilot.**



THANK YOU!

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