



Memorandum

TO: Sustainability Committee

FROM: Michael Peters, Sustainability Coordinator

CC: Mayor David E. Weiss
Matt Carroll, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: February 12, 2026

RE: **Request for Approval of Citywide Food Waste Collection (Composting) Program**

Background

The City began collecting food waste (that is subsequently composted into soil) in 2019 through various programs, including a public drop off site and an initial pilot at Fire Station 1. This has grown to today's programs that include:

- six public collection points (the five elementary schools and the Main Library),
- a separate program that collects food waste from the majority of the City Schools,
- an additional three paid drop off sites in the City (The Dealership, Unitarian Universalist Congregation, and The Nature Center), and ,
- a paid opt-in residential pick up program for residents.

This has resulted in total collected food waste of over 600,000 pounds per year since 2022.

The current citywide program originated in a pilot in the Lomond neighborhood, which collected over 30,000 pounds and led to the Sustainability Committee recommending a citywide program starting in 2025. An allocation of \$75,000 was included in the 2025 City Operating Budget for this purpose in addition to a small allocation in the Sustainability budget for collection in City buildings.

The citywide program, which began on April 22, 2025, collected 138,517 pounds from 1,155 participating households. The first month saw nearly 800 households sign up and we continue to have new participants joining each month. This food waste is estimated to create 307 cubic yards of finished soil.

There are no known vendors offering food waste collection services in our region aside from Rust Belt Riders and therefore competitive bidding is requested to be waived. The City has had a very positive working relationship with Rust Belt Riders since 2019.

CITY OF SHAKER HEIGHTS

3400 Lee Road Shaker Heights, Ohio 44120 P 216.491.1400 F 216.491.1465 Ohio Relay Service 711
shakeronline.com www.shaker.life

Recommendation

The Sustainability Committee is requested to recommend entering into a new 1-year contract with Rust Belt Riders for the food waste collection pickup in an amount not to exceed \$125,000. This amount has been identified in the 2026 Operating Budget. Upon recommendation, this request will be sent to the Finance Committee and then City Council for final approval.

Please also see the attached year-end report from Rust Belt Riders for additional program results.