**City and Borough of Juneau**

**FY23 CDS Office of Senator Murkowski**

**Priority #5 of 5**

**Municipal Composting Facility Design and Construction**

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| **Requesting Entity** | **Lobbyist** |
| Rorie Watt  City Manger  City and Borough of Juneau  155 S. Seward Street, Juneau, AK 99801  [rorie.watt@juneau.org](mailto:rorie.watt@juneau.org)  907-209-9863 | Katie Kachel  Principal  Blank Rome Government Relations LLC  1825 I Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006  Katie.kachel@blankrome.com  443-465-2992 |

**Project Information**

*Subcommittee*: Interior, U.S. EPA

*Project Location*: City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ)

*Project Purpose:* The purpose of this project is to design and construct a commercial-scale composting facility to serve Juneau residents and businesses. Food scraps and organic wastes represent a large percentage of the material landfilled each year, taking up valuable space in the landfill and creating odor issues in the surrounding neighborhoods. Beyond the benefits of diverting waste from the landfill, CBJ also has a vested interest in reducing organic waste going to the sewer system. One of the main wastewater treatment facilities in the CBJ experiences high organic loading in the incoming wastewater, and CBJ staff are actively working on ways to reduce this loading through source control efforts. Ground up produce from commercial operations contributes to the high organic loading issues. With a commercial scale composting facility, the CBJ will have the capacity to accommodate large scale producers such as grocery stores and large restaurants as well as residential customers, getting this waste out of both the sewers and the landfill. Through composting, these food scraps and organic wastes then become a *locally produced resource* rather than a solid waste disposal problem.

*Project Impact to Alaska:* Lemon Creek, site of the existing landfill in Juneau, is home to a number of densely populated neighborhoods. Household income in Lemon Creek is 78% of the Borough wide income level and the racial make-up of the area is more diverse, with minorities comprising 49 percent versus 22 percent minority population in the Borough.

Odor problems from the landfill disproportionately affect the Lemon Creek area of Juneau. By removing organic waste from the landfill and composting them in a properly designed and operated compost facility, has the potential to significantly reduce odor issues in these neighborhoods.

*Project Description:* Juneau is positioned well to make composting a successful tool for achieving waste reduction goals. Based on a composting feasibility assessment performed for the CBJ in 2016, community support and economic drivers such as the high cost of landfilling make composting a promising option. A small, local composting company has been successfully composting residential and small business food scraps for several years. However, due to the cool wet climate here in Juneau, expanding capacity for larger-scale composting will require a facility and equipment that can support technologies such as in-vessel aerated static piles. The feasibility assessment also identified the need for additional carbon sources which can be filled using cardboard collected for recycling to be re-used locally rather than being shipped South.

This project would continue the work started with the composting feasibility assessment to design, and construct a commercial scale composting facility. The facility would be located on CBJ property that would be dedicated for this purpose. CBJ funds have been appropriated to identify an appropriate site and to support a Zero Waste planning effort in which increasing composting capacity has already been identified as an important component.

*Project Goals/Results:* This project will directly support the 2022 CBJ Assembly Goal#5:

Sustainable Community – Juneau will maintain a resilient social, economic, and environmental habitat for existing population and future generations

5a. Develop a Zero Waste or Waste Reduction Plan

This project will also result in improvements in environmental quality and human health by addressing a concern in the Lemon Creek Plan: “reduce incompatible uses and minimize or mitigate adverse impacts of such incompatible uses related to air quality (noise, dust, fumes, odors), public safety and natural resource protection.”

The volume of food scraps and other organic waste will be tracked for direct measurement of the success of the program in keeping material out of the landfill. Volumes of compost produced and used locally, offsetting the need for importing materials, will also be a metric used to evaluate the program. From this data, other relevant and important calculations, such as the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, can be made.

**Request Information**

*FY23 Funding Request:* $2.5 million

*Priority:* 5 of 5

*Are you submitting this request of any other members of Congress?* No

*Does you project meet all the criteria listed in the CDS guidance. If your request does not meet all the requirements, you are not automatically disqualified for consideration. Please indicate why your request should be considered by Senator Murkowski.*

Project is eligible under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency State and Tribal Assistance Grants[[1]](#endnote-1).

**Attachments (PDF)** Letter of support from Mayor Weldon

1. Project Eligibility/Guidance

   1. Describe the project and make the case for its consideration. This project would design and build a commercial-scale community composting facility. The project is needed for several reasons: (1) Juneau’s landfill has an anticipated lifespan of only 20-25 more years, and suitable land for a new landfill is in short supply. Being landlocked (with no roads in or out), the community would likely resort to shipping waste south, an expensive proposition. Considering that approximately 35% of what goes into the landfill is compostable, community-wide composting will significantly extend the life of our landfill. (2) Due to our cool, very wet climate, the landfill produces significant odors. In fact, the state Department of Environmental Conservation solid waste staff reports this landfill as having by far the most odor complaints of any landfill in Alaska. This stench degrades the quality of life in the nearby densely populated neighborhoods, posing an environmental justice issue. Since organic matter tends to be one of the most odorous components of a landfill, removing or reducing the amount of organic matter through composting can reduce the odors from the landfill. (3) Organic matter regularly makes its way into our local sewer system, which contributes to high organic loads and reduced treatment efficiency. Providing a composting option for both residents and businesses will provide an alternate means of disposal, providing another option to eliminate this source of excess strain on the wastewater treatment plant. (4) Composting will allow what was once a solid waste problem to be turned into a locally produced resource, providing a high quality soil amendment to local food growers and landscapers while reducing the production of greenhouse gasses, an important component of the CBJ’s climate strategy.

   2. Is the recipient entity a federal agency, state agency, Tribal entity, local city/county agency, university or college, or non-profit organization? Yes

   3. Does the project meet the eligibility and matching requirements for a specific grant program (provide description)? Yes – this project meets requirements for the EPA Multipurpose Grants to States and Tribes.

   4. Does the relevant federal agency have the authority to provide funds to this project and/or recipient (cite authority)? Yes. Categorical Grant: State and Local Air Quality Management Clean Air Act, §§ 103, 105, 106. https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2019-04/documents/fy20-cj-10-stag.pdf

   5. Is the project specifically authorized (cite public law or other authority)? No.

   6. Is the project on federal land or a federal facility? No

   7. Is the project funded in the President’s budget request (provide amount and describe any difference between the budget and your request)? No

   8. What is the federal nexus for this project and why should there be a federal funding component? The EPA State and Tribal Assistance program provides grant funding for air quality projects in local communities. https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2019-04/documents/fy20-cj-10-stag.pdf

   9. What is the total cost of the project? $2.5M

   10. Has this project received previous federal funds (provide year, amount, and program)? no

   11. Are there matching funds or partner contributions? Yes. We have $50k and can come up with more. 10% is reasonable… CBJ provides the land for the project

   12. Is this request being submitted to other subcommittees for consideration (note subcommittee, program, amount, and other relevant information)? no

   13. Is the project ranked on any federal, state, or other prioritized list (provide list name and rank)? CBJ Assembly Goals: #1 priority under sustainable community category.

   14. What is the timeline for this project and why are federal funds required in this fiscal year? The CBJ agrees to dedicate or acquire property for this project. Once funds are secured, the project would progress as follows: July 2022: CBJ advertises for design firm August 2022 design firm hired, project design begins December 2022 Design complete, Construction bids solicited, February 2023 Construction contract awarded April 2023 Construction begins

   15. What are the estimated start and completion dates for the project? July 1 2022 (if funds awarded), construction completed September 2023

   16. Can the project obligate all of the requested funding within 12 months of receipt? Assembly can accept the grant or loan and appropriate the money for this purpose within 12 months. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)