

2025

3:30 PM

Oct 23

PLENARY 4

Day 2

Funding Zero Waste Programs

Moderator: Heather Trim

Sunni Hutton

Speakers: Michael Looney

Paula Luu



NATIONAL
ZERO
WASTE
CONFERENCE





Catalyst
of
Change



Planting Justice,
Cultivating
Change



SOW JOY PEOPLES FUND

Empowering Communities to Build an Ecosystem
Where We Heal, Thrive and Belong



Mission

The Sow Joy Peoples Fund promotes environmental justice by centering frontline voices, fostering trust, and empowering communities to drive systemic change

Our Ecosystem



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Michael T. Looney

Senior Advisor to the Commissioner

CT Department of Energy & Environmental Protection

Plenary #4 – Funding Zero Waste Solutions



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Setting the Stage for Waste Infrastructure Funding

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- ❖ Major changes in CT waste disposal landscape over last 5 years
- ❖ All MSW landfills in state have been closed for nearly a decade
- ❖ Reliant upon set of five WTE facilities
- ❖ In 2022, Hartford WTE plant closed – removed between 600k-700k TPY in capacity
- ❖ Ramifications – by 2024, approx. 930k tpy of MSW shipped out of CT
- ❖ Approximately 90% of this tonnage going to landfills



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The Materials Management Infrastructure (MMI) Grant Program

- ❖ Funding authorized through Public Act No. 23-205 and State Bond Commission**
- ❖ \$15 million available for municipalities and regional waste authorities to develop and construct solid waste management infrastructure**
- ❖ RFA issued on 8/30/24, Applications closed 12/20/24, awards announced 3/29/25**
- ❖ 9 Grant awards made totaling \$14.7 million, out of \$29.9 million requested**



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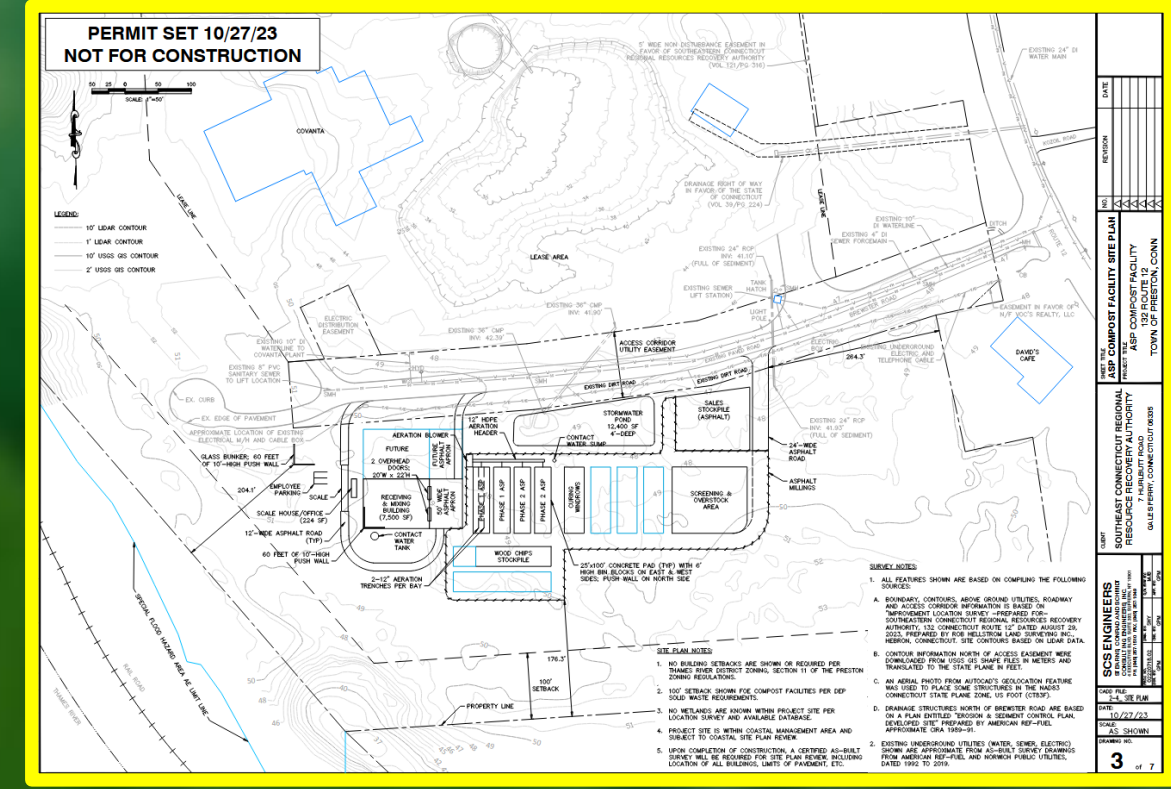
Funded MMI Projects

❖ **Town of Manchester - \$4,775,000**

❖ **SE CT Resource Recovery Authority - \$4,500,000**

❖ **City of New Haven - \$3,347,876**

❖ **Housatonic Resource Recovery Authority - \$779,750**



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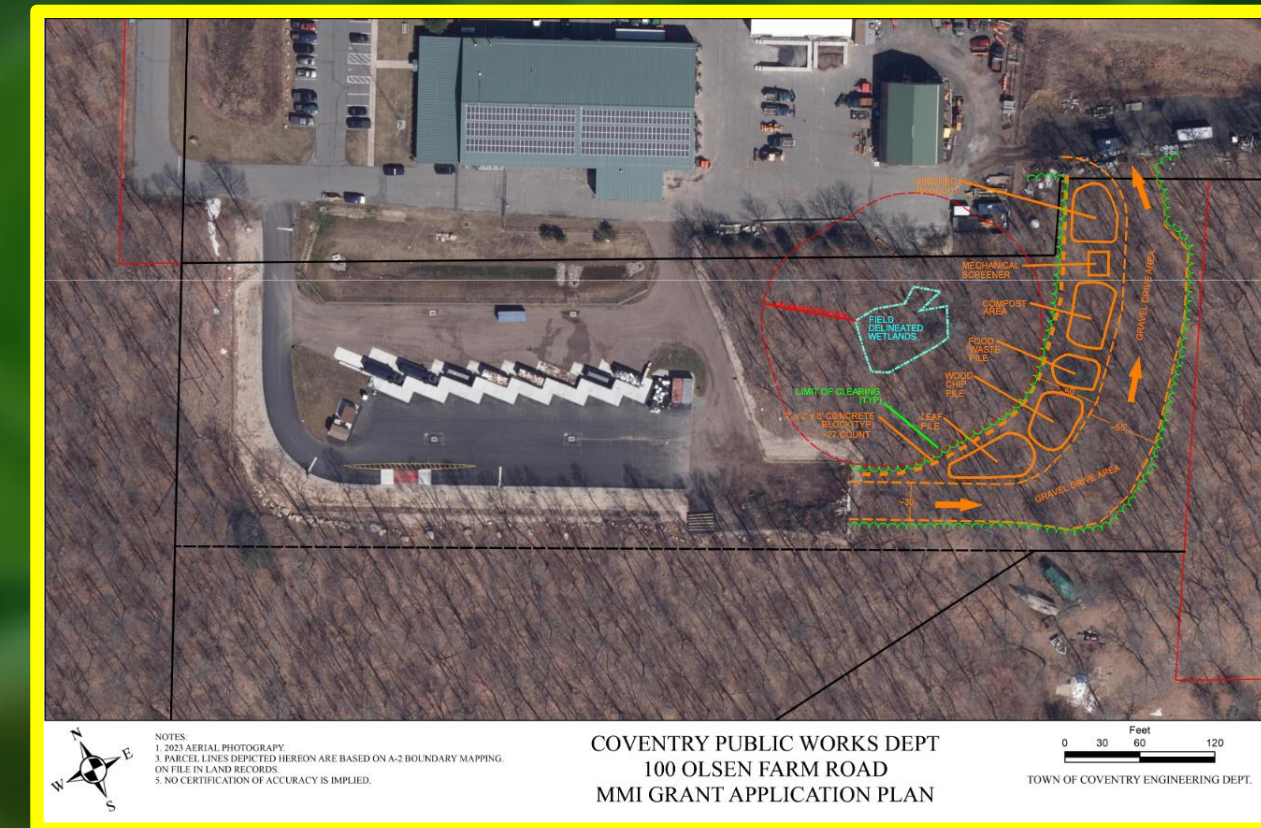
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Funded MMI Projects (cont'd)

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- ❖ **Town of Stratford - \$544,583**
- ❖ **SE CT Council of Governments - \$425,711**
- ❖ **Town of Coventry - \$202,896**
- ❖ **Town of Mansfield - \$129,500**
- ❖ **Town of Greenwich - \$15,892**



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MMI Program as Funding Alternative

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- ❖ **Direct - avoids necessity of applications for grants**
 - ❖ Heavier lift to obtain funding, lack of certainty
- ❖ **Bond bill is coupled with overall State Budget bill**
 - ❖ Generally protected from economic/fiscal fluctuations
- ❖ **Ready funds as opposed to a possible reimbursement process**
- ❖ **Potential political appeal of directly connecting legislative action of bond fund issuance with delivery of funds/projects to communities**



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Program Challenges

- ❖ **Infrastructure construction/development projects are complex undertakings**
- ❖ **Multiple levels of coordination, variety of stakeholders**
- ❖ **Solid waste permitting**
- ❖ **CEPA – CT Environmental Policy Act**



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Going Forward

- ❖ **Grant assistance agreements being finalized and permitting process underway**
- ❖ **Possibility of annual recurring funding by way of the state bond bill**
- ❖ **Balancing of regulatory role of the Agency**
- ❖ **Currently only public/non-profit recipients – outside this sphere in the future?**



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EPR as Alternative to Traditional Funding

- ❖ **Transfers financial burden of end-of-life management of products from public sector/taxpayers to the producers of these goods**
- ❖ **Fee Payment vs. Fee Modulation vs. Fund Distribution**
- ❖ **Wide variety of programs and initiatives that can be funded**
- ❖ **Several benefits as compared to traditional funding**
 - ❖ Taxpayers – progressive “burden”
 - ❖ Funding is sustainable/stable, with some tweaks over time
 - ❖ Reward innovation by producers/manufacturers
 - ❖ Improved recycling rates



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Thank You!



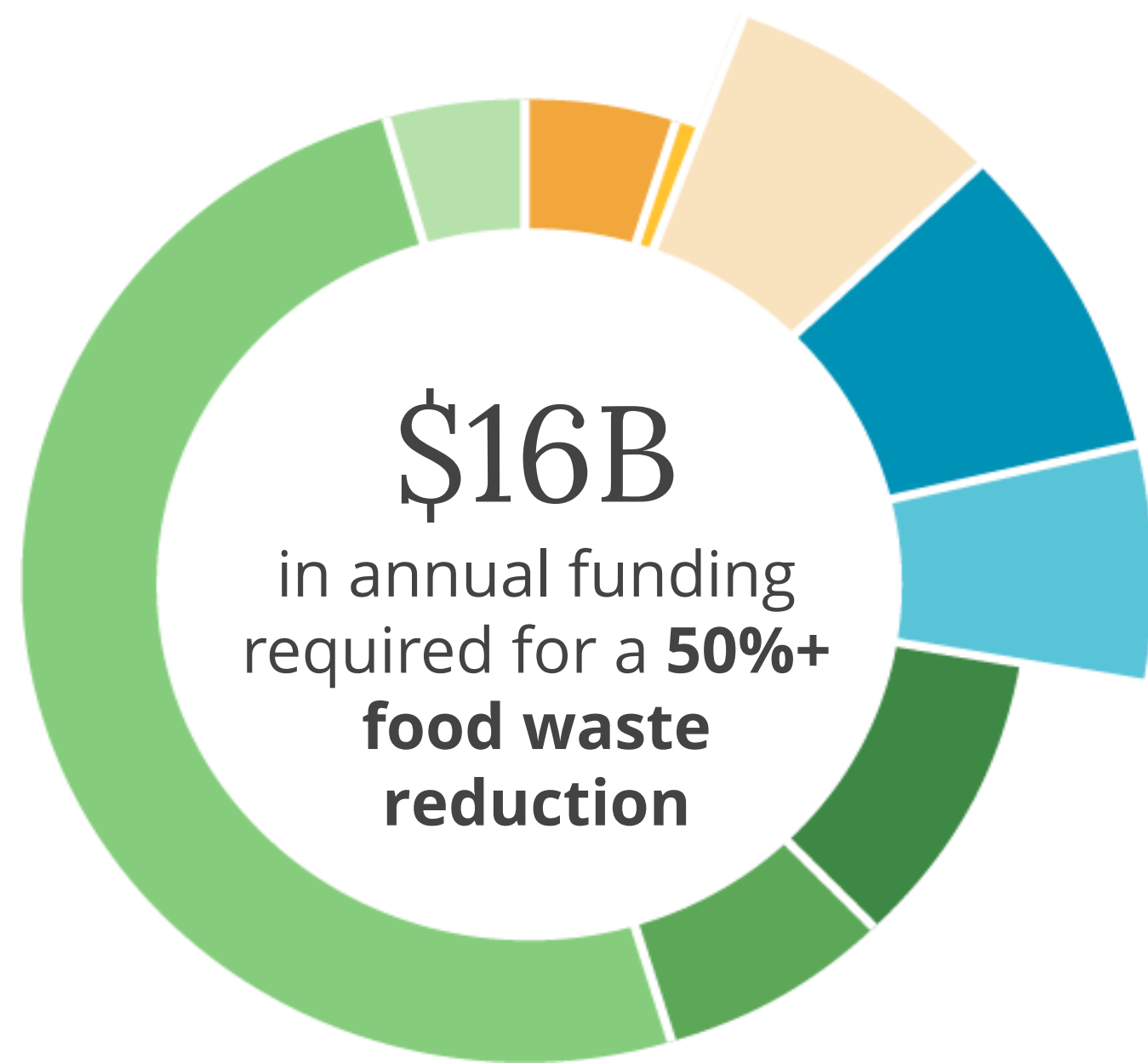
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Catalytic Funding



\$3.4B per year
Catalytic Capital
Required

- De-risks new innovation
- Unlocks bottlenecks
- Overcomes agency problems
- Stimulates marginal projects

Announcing 8 Grant Recipients Scaling Food Waste and Compostable Packaging Recovery



Projects include:



Funding equipment, infrastructure upgrades, new organics collection programs



Supporting certified compostable packaging recovery and associated marketing materials



Strengthening the circular economy for organics

“These projects showcases what’s possible when forward-thinking solutions receive funding and a commitment is made to building a circular economy for food and certified compostable packaging.”



The ReFED Catalytic Grant Fund: A Financing Engine for Food System Change



The Betsy and Jesse Fink
FOUNDATION



POSNER
FOUNDATION
of Pittsburgh



three graces foundation



Roy A Hunt Foundation



HINDAWI
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The Methane Open Call will focus on Two High-Impact Food Waste Reduction Opportunities



Beef & Dairy
Loss Prevention



Advancing Food
Recycling

With questions contact Angel Veza at angel.veza@refed.com.