



MANAGER'S MEMORANDUM

Prepared for: **Naperville City Council**

By: City Manager's office

9/4/2025

A. MANAGER'S MEMORANDUM

Source:

1. Ben Mjolsness,
Sustainability Manager

Subject:

Food Scrap Composting Program
and Clothing and Textile
Recycling Program Updates

Action:

FYI

CITY OF NAPERVILLE MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 4, 2025

TO: Doug Krieger, City Manager

FROM: Ben Mjolsness, Sustainability Manager

SUBJECT: Food Scrap Composting Program and Clothing and Textile Recycling Program Updates

Purpose:

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide updates for two recycling pilot programs that further the community's commitment to sustainability.

Background:

The City, in partnership with several area organizations, launched two new recycling pilot programs in June 2025 to further the community's commitment to sustainability.

The Food Scrap Composting Program and Clothing and Textile Recycling Program both launched on June 2, 2025, with initial plans to run the programs until Friday, August 29, 2025, and then evaluate program successes and challenges. After evaluating key performance metrics for both programs, including participation levels, amounts of materials collected, and any issues with contamination from non-recyclable items, the City and its partners have decided to extend both programs. The addition of these two free programs open to Naperville residents supports the City's goal of providing easy and convenient ways to recycle.

Discussion:

Clothing and Textile Recycling Program

Over the summer, the City partnered with DuPage County, eWorks, and re.tex on a 13-week pilot program to collect clothing and textiles for reuse and recycling at the City's Environmental Collection Campus.

The program was well received by the community. Since the program began in early June, an average of 12-15 cars per day have delivered clothing and textiles to the site, resulting in more than 26,800 pounds of material diverted from landfills. The strong participation highlighted both resident interest and the program's effectiveness.

Given these positive results, the City has decided to transition the pilot into a permanent recycling program. The program will continue to operate at the City's Environmental Collection Campus, 156 Fort Hill Drive, on weekdays from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

More information about the program and a complete list of acceptable and unacceptable items is available at www.naperville.il.us/textile-recycling.

Food Scrap Composting Program

Due to strong participation, the City’s free Food Scrap Composting Program will be extended through December 12, 2025, when Groot’s organics services end for the year. The City and Groot Industries will continue to evaluate the program’s performance to decide if it should return in spring 2026. Over the summer, the City partnered with its refuse and recycling contractor, Groot Industries, to reduce the amount of food waste sent to landfills with the free Food Scrap Composting Program. The program offered two accessible drop-off locations: the CNG Station, located at 1720 W. Jefferson Ave., and the City-owned parking lot at 91st Street and Wolf’s Crossing Road, where residents could drop off their food scraps.

The program, which ran for 13 weeks, provided valuable insights into resident participation. Over the first 12 weeks, residents filled a combined total of 286 compost carts, each holding 65 gallons of food scraps, at both collection sites. Data for the final week is not yet available. This level of engagement and participation demonstrates the popularity of the program among Naperville residents.

Year	Duration	Carts Collected	Avg. Carts/Week
2024 (Food scraps only)	11 weeks	55	5
2025 (Food scraps only)	12 weeks	286	24

As shown in the data above, the program's growth from an average of 5 carts of food scraps per week in 2024 to 24 in 2025 demonstrates its effectiveness.

To support the success of the program and minimize contamination, it is important for residents to only drop off food scraps, including fruits, vegetables, pastas, breads, crackers, meat/bones and cereals. Residents should bring their food scraps in their own containers and empty them into the marked bins, which Groot will regularly empty and process the materials for compost. There is signage at the drop-off locations that explains the accepted and not accepted materials. A complete list of acceptable and unacceptable items is available at www.naperville.il.us/food-scrap-compost.

The most common contaminants are yard waste and plastic bags. Contamination can render entire batches unusable for composting, which could jeopardize the program’s continuation if it becomes a consistent issue.

The extension of both programs will be shared on the City’s website, social media platforms, and Naperville Connected newsletter. A map of the food scrap drop-off locations is attached.

Recommendation:

I recommend that this information be shared with the City Council through the Manager’s Memorandum.

Attachment: Map of Food Scrap Compost Program Drop Off Sites

