



# Building Better Systems

May 7, 2026

## **Jennifer Heaton-Jones, Executive Director Housatonic Resources Recovery Authority**

Regional, governmental, waste management and recycling authority  
serving 14 municipalities in Western Connecticut.



# Summary

## History:

Collection & Purpose

## Collection Models:

Managing Cost

## Cost Challenges & Pivots:

From cost to savings

## Innovation:

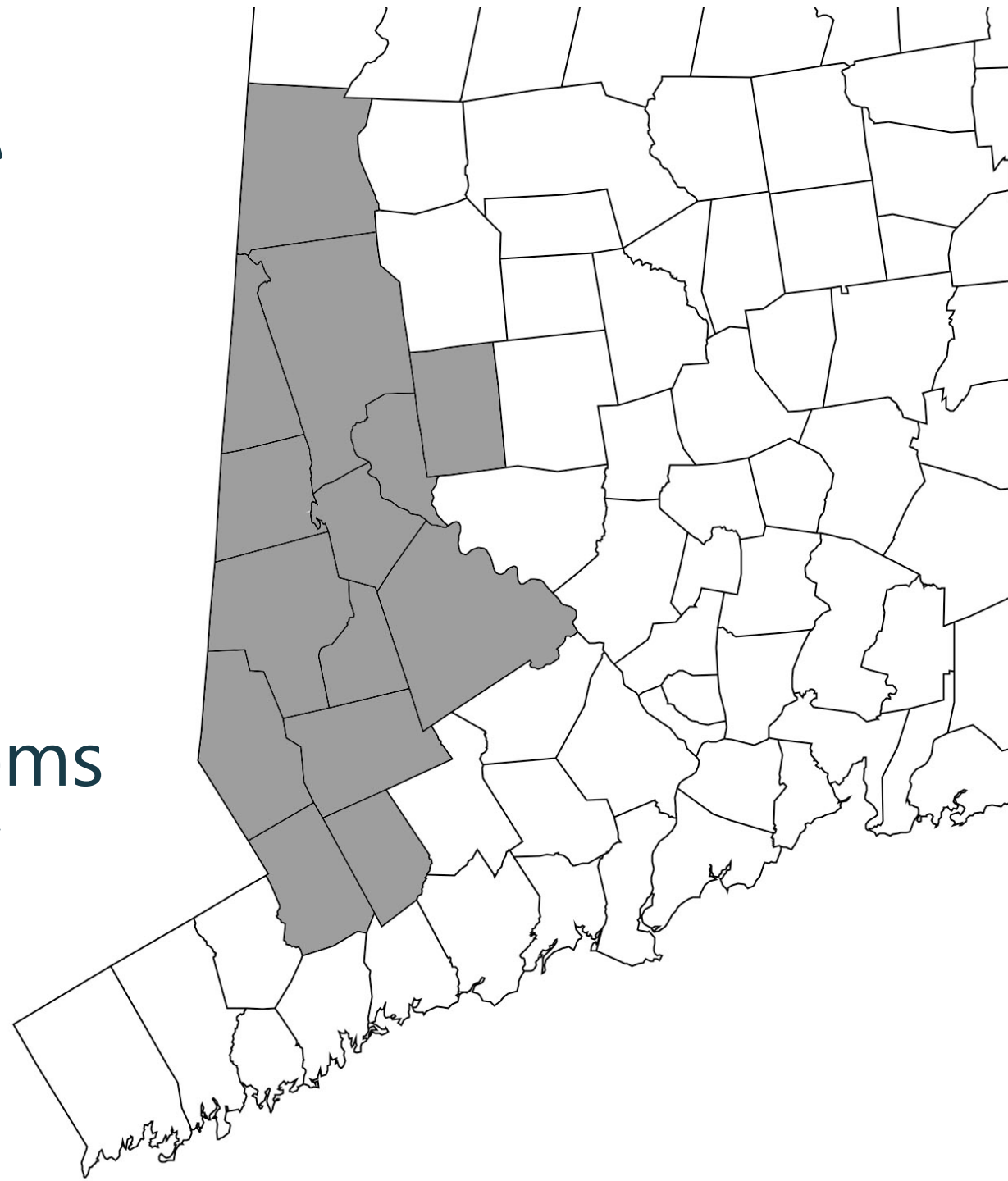
Building Better Systems



# HRRA's Collection & Processing Network

- 29** Drop-off Locations
- 3** Commercial Processors
- 2** Municipal ASP systems
- 2** In-vessel composting systems

*\* Regional backyard composting 101 classes*



# History

The HRRRA began the first municipal collection program in 2014, collecting organics at the curb.



# Transfer Station Dropoff Collection

A more cost-effective solution



# Satellite Dropoff Collection

Building more access



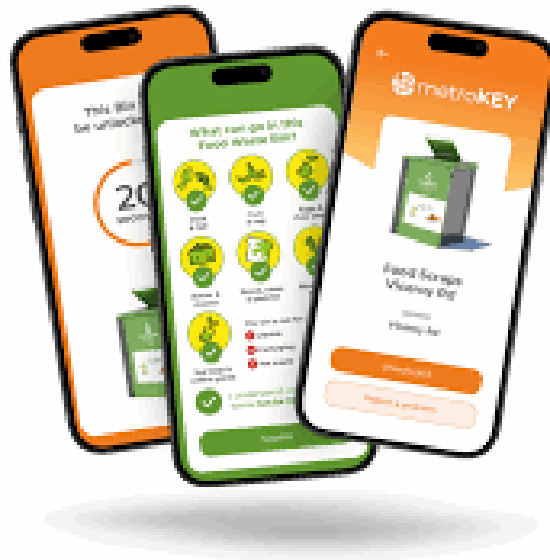
metroKEY


Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play




# E-Access Secure System





**Housatonic Resources Recovery Authority**  
**metroKEY download instructions**



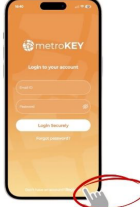
**Step 1. Open**

- App store (iPhone)
- Google play (Android)


**Step 2. Click**  
"search" & enter "metroKEY"

**Step 3. "Get"**  
**metroKEY app**

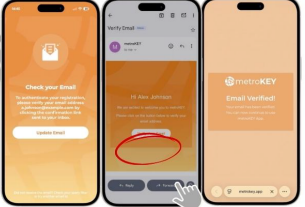
  



**Step 4. Registration:**  
Open the app & tap "Register" to begin creating your account.




**Step 5. Enter Your Account Details.**  
Be sure your email address is correct for account verification.




**Step 6. Verify Your Email:**  
Check your inbox for a metroKEY email, then tap "Verify your email". Return to the app to continue. If you don't see an email check your JUNK or SPAM folders.

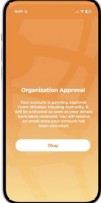
  



**Step 7. Create your password:**  
After verifying your email, set a secure password to complete your account setup.



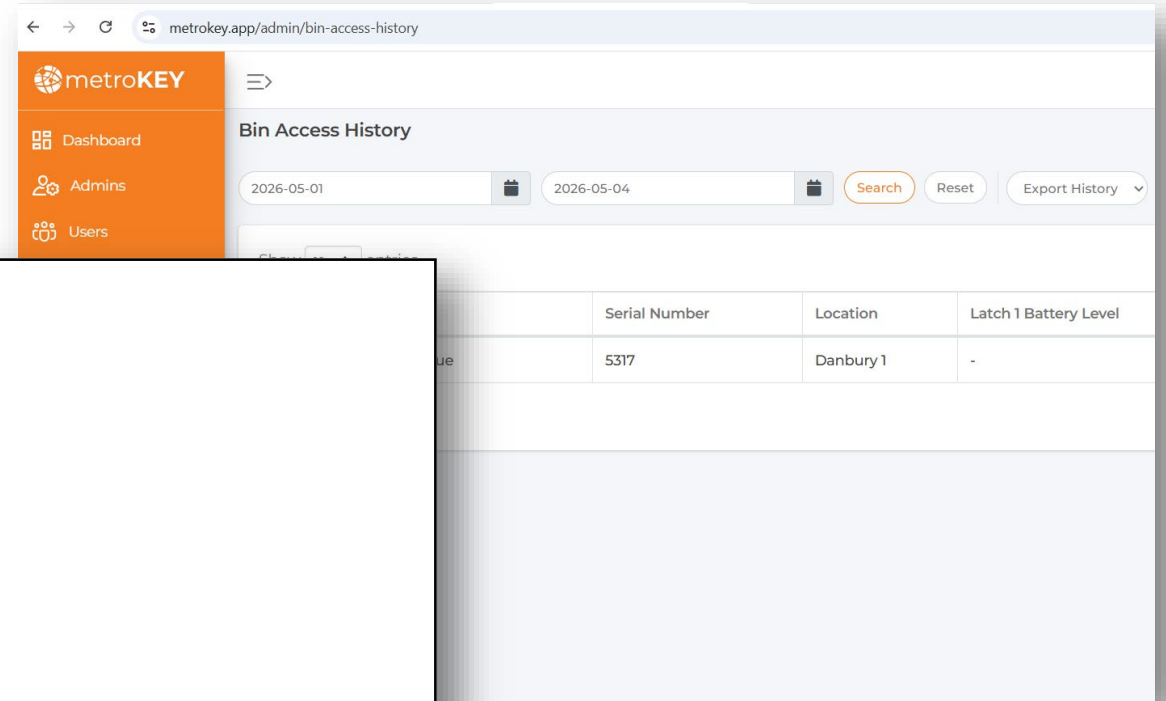
**Step 8. Complete your profile:**  
**On iPhone**  
Tap each field to select your State, Town & Organization. Press "Done" after each to save selection. Then enter your ZIP code & address to finish this step.  
**On Android**  
Tap each field to open the drop down & select your State City & Organization, then enter your ZIP code and address.



**Step 9. Approval is required.**  
Please allow two business days to access app.

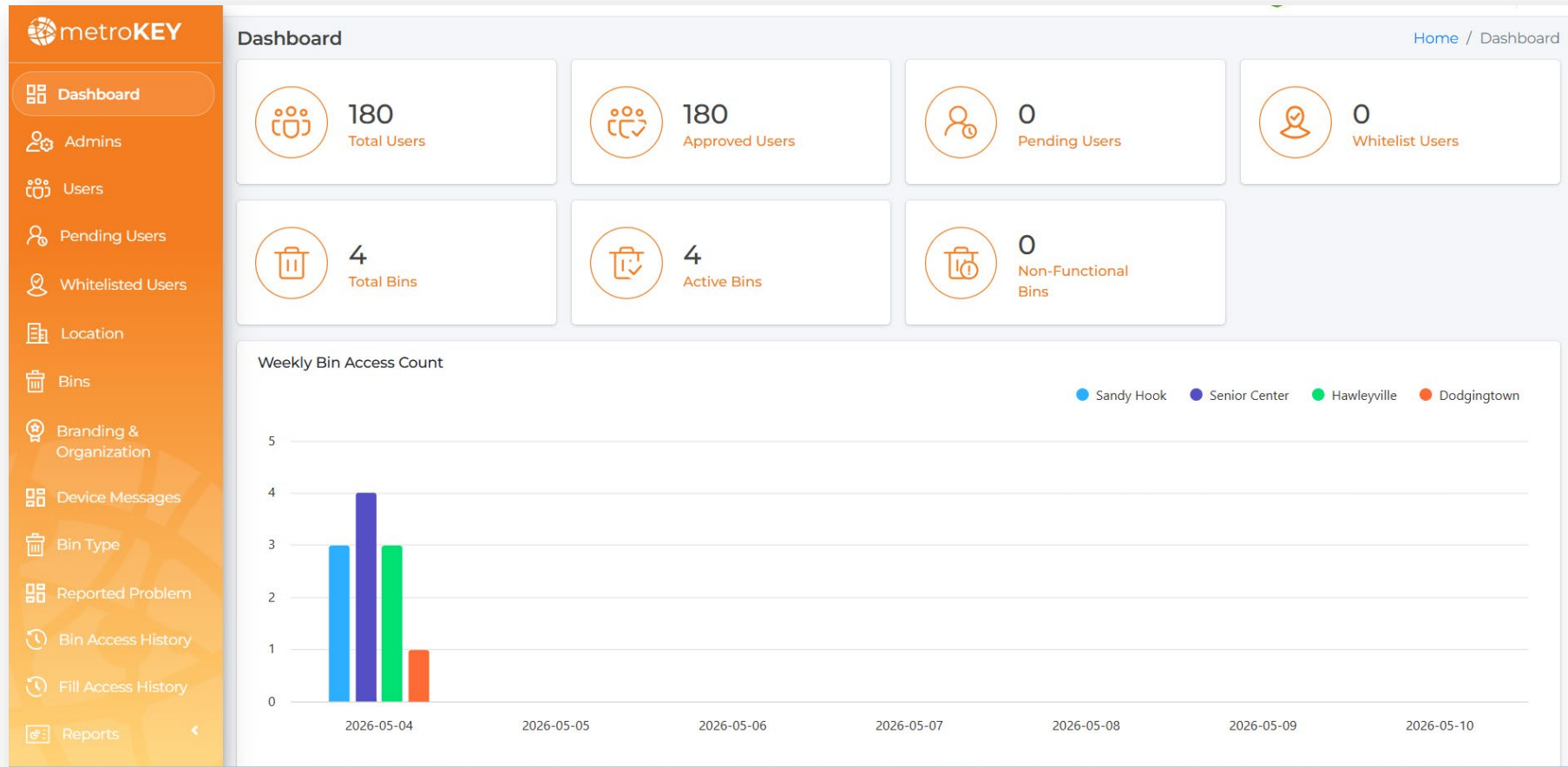
# Monitoring

## Education & Contamination



# Data Analysis

## Building Success



# Incentives

Residents receive compost for participating.



# Collection Cost

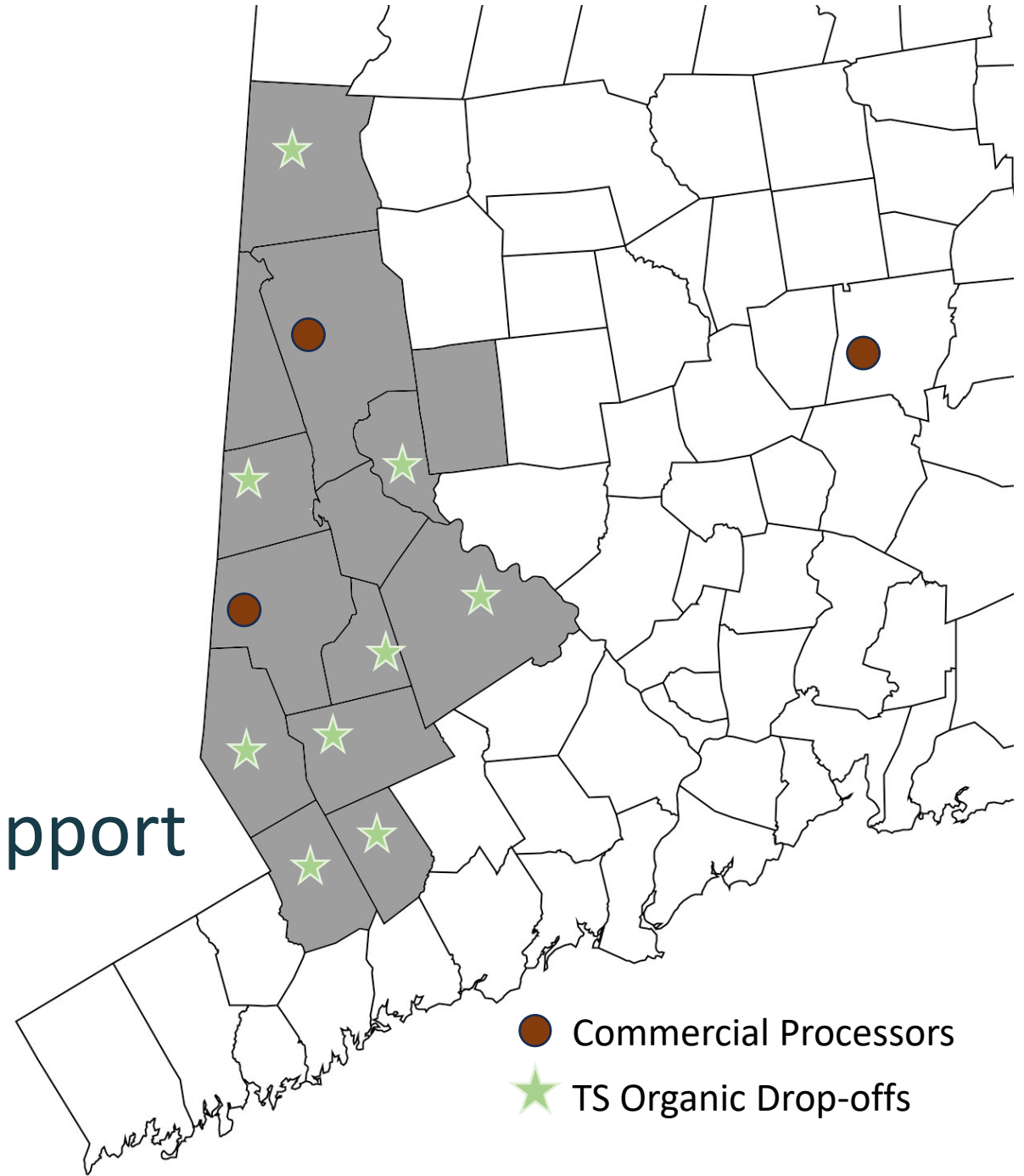
- Collection Kits
- Transportation & Disposal
- Buying back compost
- Bin System (e.g., MetroSTOR)



# Cost Challenges

## Financial Sustainability

- **Transportation Cost:**  
Distance to processor
- **Disposal Cost:**  
Tip fees
- **Buying Compost:**  
Maintaining community support



# Strategic Pivot

Building Processing Capacity to be Self-Sustainable

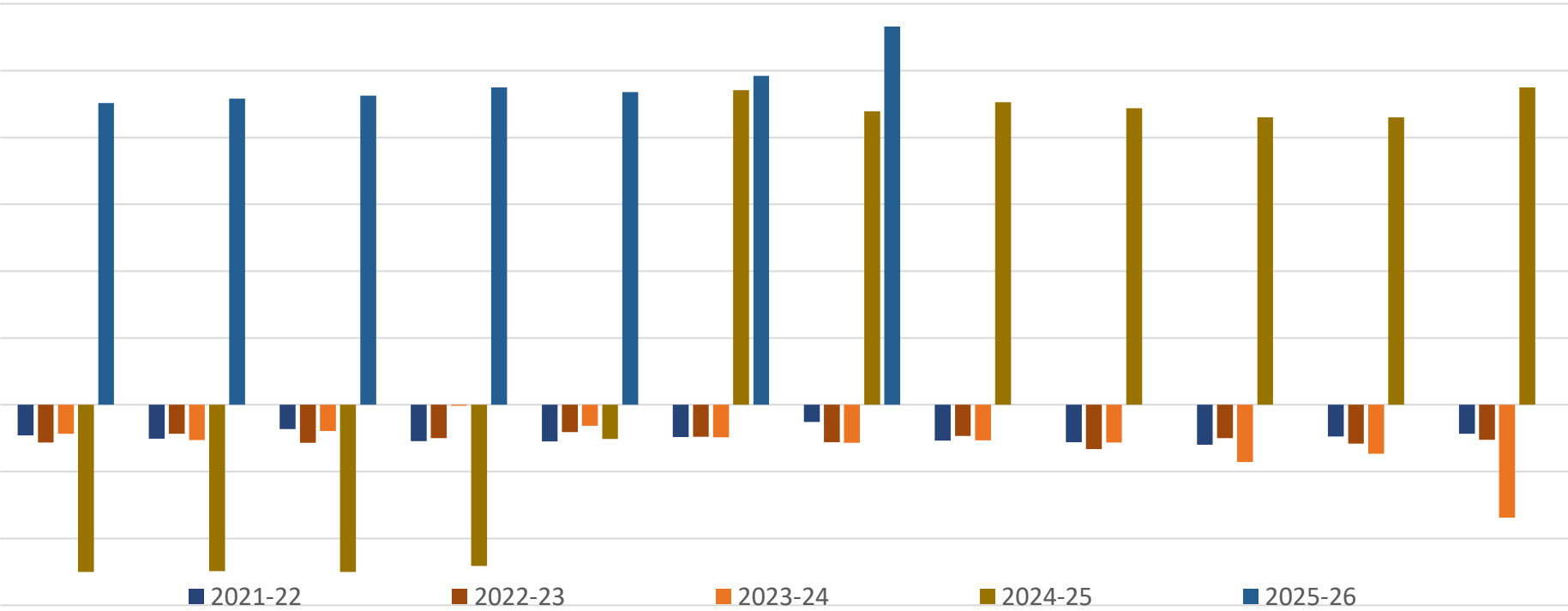


Municipal Solar-powered ASP Composting System

# Collection Cost to Savings

Municipal on-site composting proved the solution to more collection with real cost savings.

Year	Gain/Loss
2020-21	<span style="color: red;">\$(2,943.90)</span>
2021-22	<span style="color: red;">\$(2,881.53)</span>
2022-23	<span style="color: red;">\$(3,118.16)</span>
2023-24	<span style="color: red;">\$(3,554.97)</span>
2024-25	<span style="color: gold;">\$ 2,102.79</span>
2025-26	<span style="color: blue;">\$ 8,565.53</span>



Newtown, CT

PAYT = more collection but also, more cost.

# Funding & Development

USDA Grant

RecycleCT Grant

CT DEEP SMM Grant

CT DEEP MMI Grant

Funding to build more collection access and municipal processing.



U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal, USDA grant announcement 2021

# Regional Collection Cost

Towns spend more individually to manage their programs combined.

With a new regional approach, the region will save as a whole.



# The Future

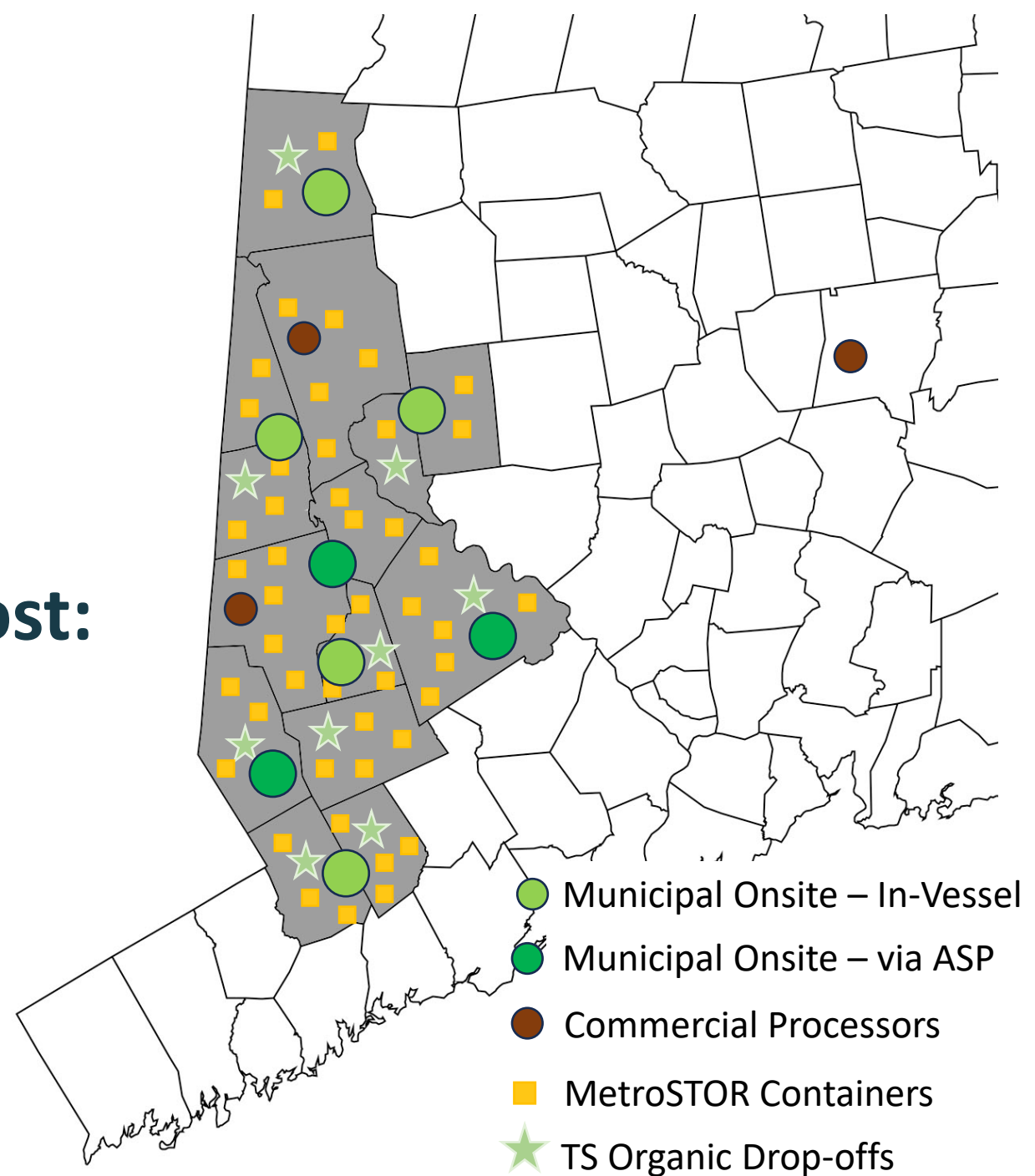
**More collection access:**  
29 to 45 drop-off option

**More processing capacity:**  
4 to 8 sites

**Less Carbon Footprint / Less Cost:**

**Less Waste**

**More Compost**  
**Makes “Cents”**



# Thank you

Jennifer Heaton-Jones,  
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