CITY OF KNOXVILLE

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MEDIA RELEASE

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KNOXVILLE A FINALIST FOR BLOOMBERG PHILANTHRIOPIES' MAYORS CHALLENGE

Knoxville Mayor Madeline Rogero today announced that Knoxville has been selected as a finalist for the Bloomberg Philanthropies' Mayors Challenge, a competition created to inspire American cities to generate innovative ideas that solve major challenges and improve city life – and that ultimately can be shared with other cities across the nation.

The City of Knoxville was selected based on its innovative idea to create an urban food corridor. The idea was selected after input from citizens and a committee to create a unique business model that encompasses the entire urban food cycle by connecting land, farming jobs, processing facilities, food transit, sale, and composting.

The plan will provide employment and economic development opportunities, and link three key components: re-purposing vacant lots for food production; partnering with existing facilities to establish certified kitchens used to process food; and establishing a legal mechanism to enable a business model of food distribution to those in need and produce sale to local establishments." To see the completed Mayors Challenge application, click here: http://www.cityofknoxville.org/sustainability/bloomberg.pdf

The City of Knoxville will now compete against 19 other cities across the country for the $5 million grand prize as well as one of four additional prizes of $1 million each.

A team from Knoxville will attend Bloomberg Ideas Camp, a two-day gathering in New York City in November during which city teams will work collaboratively with each other and experts to further refine their ideas.

"This is exciting news for the City of Knoxville," said Knoxville Mayor Madeline Rogero. "Our proposal of a food corridor was not only innovative but also addressed key issues for our community and others. To be among the 20 finalists in the nation is both humbling and thrilling. We look forward to the Bloomberg Ideas Camp where we can fine-tune our idea."

Coming out of Camp, the team will have access to additional technical support to prepare their ideas for final submission. Winners will be announced in spring 2013, with a total of $9 million going to five cities to jumpstart implementation of their ideas.

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"Congratulations to Mayor Rogero and the City of Knoxville for becoming a Mayors Challenge finalist. The response to the Mayors Challenge was extraordinary: bold and innovative ideas were submitted from every corner of the country. We look forward to welcoming the Knoxville team to Ideas Camp," said James Anderson, who directs the Government Innovation program at Bloomberg Philanthropies.

The 20 finalist ideas were rated on four key criteria: vision/creativity, ability to implement, potential for impact, and potential for replication.

A specially-assembled selection committee, co-chaired by Shona Brown, Senior Vice President and head of Google.org, and Ron Daniel, Bloomberg Philanthropies board member and Former Managing Partner at McKinsey & Company where he is still active, helped select the finalist cities.

About the Mayors Challenge

Mayors of U.S. cities with 30,000 residents or more were eligible to compete in the Mayors Challenge. 305 cities representing 45 states across the country submitted applications by September 14, 2012.

The Mayors Challenge is the latest initiative of Bloomberg Philanthropies' Mayors Project, which aims to spread proven and promising ideas among cities. Other Mayors Project investments include Cities of Service, Innovation Delivery Teams, and Financial Empowerment Centers.

To learn more about the Mayors Challenge, visit bloomberg.org/mayorschallenge.

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