



To: Zero Waste Advisory Commission
From: Bob Gedert, Director
Austin Resource Recovery Department
Date: June 10, 2015
Subject: **Director's Monthly Report to the Zero Waste Advisory Commission**

Downtown Recycling Containers Update

In 2014, Austin Resource Recovery embarked on a new effort to increase diversion rates with the start of the street-level recycling pilot within the City's Central Business District. The pilot involved two intersections: 4th and Colorado and 5th and Colorado. Trash cans were converted into recycling cans so that both intersections had one recycling container and one trash container. The pilot lasted for approximately five weeks and data was collected on cans at both intersections to determine how frequently the containers were used as well as what materials were being recycled.

The average recycling rate during the course of the 2014 pilot for both intersections was 33%. In addition, both intersections experienced an average contamination rate of 37%.

In the summer of 2015, Austin Resource Recovery will expand the Downtown Recycling Program by converting trash cans to recycling cans in an area around Austin City Hall. Trash and Recycling Cans will be located on the corners with recycling containers identified by blue domes. Crews will switch the domes on half of the cans.

ARR Staff recently conducted an audit on the trash containers located in the Recycling pilot area. During the audit, staff found that on average 50% of the materials disposed of in the containers was recyclable items.

ARR is also working with the Downtown Austin Alliance on recycling container placement along Congress Avenue. The plan is to place recycling containers on cross streets that intersect with Congress Avenue through the downtown area from Caesar Chavez to 11th Street. Crews will install new containers over a three-week period. Timeline for the Congress Avenue recycling can installation is scheduled for late summer.

Ecology Action Update

The City of Austin, through ARR, held a contract with Ecology Action for six years, from 2009 through 2015. The agreement involved a three-year contract for services, plus three one-year extensions. The contract ended in May 2015, however ARR extended the contract through September through a 120-day hold-over clause. ARR cannot legally extend the contract beyond September 2015.

ARR is planning to bid out a reuse & recycling drop-off contract soon, however this contract opportunity is required to be competitively bided per city purchasing and contracting policies.

Ecology Action, through a recent press release, has announced the permanent closure of the downtown recycling drop-off location. The current downtown recycling drop-off site has been sold and the construction of a building is being planned for that location. ARR assisted Ecology Action in finding a new location; however that search yielded at site that was not conducive to the continued operations of the drop-off center. The closure will be timed to the end of the city contract in September.

According to Ecology Action Executive Director Alden Larrick, the non-profit organization plans to shift their focus to Circle Acres Nature Preserve (<http://www.ecology-action.org/circleacres/>) and do more community education and programming at that site. They will have a community charette mid- summer for the future development of the facility. The organization will be increasing their focus on event services and zero waste consulting.

In addition, Ecology Action is the primary contractor of the *Austin Materials Marketplace*, in coordination with the US Business Council for Sustainable Development (the project host). *Austin Materials Marketplace* can be found on the web at: <http://austinmaterialsmarketplace.org/>

The current transition of Ecology Action is featured in a recent article of *The Austin Chronicle*, and can be found at this website: <http://www.austinchronicle.com/news/2015-06-05/victory-recycled/>

CBI Waste Characterization Report Recommendations

I presented the *CBI Waste Characterization Report* to ZWAC in May. CBI offered the following recommendations for action. I have provided the recommendation in **black**, and my response in **blue**.

“This section provides a number of recommendations for near-term implementation that may increase diversion cost-effectively.

1. Continue customer education. Ensuring customers are aware of the materials that may be diverted and of proper preparation of recyclable materials is essential to every waste diversion program. The trash sort indicated that nearly one-third of the disposed waste stream consists of materials that are currently accepted in the curbside collection program (cardboard, newsprint, mixed paper, HDPE and PET plastics, aluminum, ferrous metal, glass bottles/jars, and yard trimmings), supporting the need for continued education. **The primary observation of this study is that 90% of landfilled residential trash is recyclable or compostable. ARR’s Recycled Right Campaign is designed to address these concerns. The results of this study have been discussed with staff, and a new incentive outreach campaign is being designed and will roll-out in November 2015 on America Recycles Day.**
2. Perform an analysis of diversion rates on a route basis throughout the City. Reviewing diversion and disposal tonnages and assessing the level of participation in curbside programs on an individual route basis can assist in identifying particular areas of the City in which diversion is lowest. This can allow for the development and implementation of targeted outreach and education efforts, beyond the broad-based education provided currently. **ARR staff have reviewed the data from routes, and have summarized the information per Council District. Weak areas have been identified, and targeted outreach is being designed to address the low diversion areas. In addition to targeting certain areas, it should be noted that “diversion” is weak city-wide, and as such, a city-wide approach is also necessary.**

3. Expand access to curbside organics collection services to increase diversion of food waste from disposal. Food waste, as the single largest component of the disposed waste stream, represents an opportunity for a substantial increase in diversion if collection service is provided to more households. Expansion of curbside organics collection citywide by FY2015 was also recommended in the 2011 Master Plan. **The current budget proposal before City Council includes the five-year roll-out of enhanced organics collection, as previously presented to ZWAC. The organics roll-out schedule is from 2016 through 2020.**
4. Review existing contracts with recycling and composting facilities and identify incentives to increase diversion that may be included in the next contract. By incentivizing processing facilities to accept additional types and/or quantities of material, more components of ARR's waste stream may be targeted for diversion. **This study did not observe or recommend new items to add to the recycling blue cart. In fact, the study reconfirmed that the recyclables currently being landfilled are also currently accepted by the two recycling processors. The City and its recycling processors are discussing additional materials to the current processing agreements. However, the largest quantity gains will be from increased use of the recycling blue carts with the current list of recyclables.**
5. Investigate recycling options for bulk items which are currently disposed, such as furniture and mattresses. These items are currently sent to the landfill for disposal. While reuse options for furniture and mattresses that have been set out on the curb for collection are likely not feasible, recycling options may exist within the marketplace to divert them from disposal. **ARR is currently redesigning the old MRF into a reuse and recycling collection program for appliances, bulk items and hard to recycle items. The new collection program will launch in the spring of 2016.**
6. Implement a textiles collection program. The 2011 Master Plan recommended conducting a pilot textiles collection program during FY2014, which has not been implemented to date. In addition to providing an outlet for reuse, contractors serving these programs also have recycling options for textiles that cannot be reused. **Textiles collection is being explored by staff. Although textiles cannot be added to the blue cart, a separate collection network is being explored. ARR staff anticipate a textile collection program to be added by spring of 2016.**

In the longer term, the City may also consider further evaluation of the following recommendations:

1. Implement a ban on yard trimmings in trash. If education efforts do not result in decreased yard trimmings in the disposed waste stream, the City may consider passing an ordinance to ban yard trimmings in trash. **A ban is not being considered at this time; however it is a tool to utilize if necessary. A ban requires enforcement and fines. These actions will not be considered until the city-wide roll-out of the organics program is complete and measured for effectiveness.**
2. Provide recycling collection service every week. With recyclables currently collected every other week, some households may fill their recycling container to capacity before their collection day or forget to place their container at the curb for collection on the proper week. Increasing the frequency of recyclables collection may increase the quantity of material segregated for recycling. ARR will need to evaluate the collection cost increase relative to the economic and environmental benefits of increased diversion of recyclables from the landfill if this recommendation is considered further. **Collecting recyclable weekly is being considered for 2017. The current collected volume of recyclables does not justify weekly frequency; however recycling collection might increase with the weekly collection.**
3. Provide trash collection every other week. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) rules require that waste containing putrescible materials (i.e., organic wastes) to be collected at least once per week. In order to reduce the frequency of trash collection to less than once per week, in accordance with TCEQ rules putrescible wastes must not be present.

If the City implements a ban on organics in trash, and if the ordinance is adequately enforced and households properly manage organic wastes, then a switch to every other week collection of trash may be possible. **This reduction in trash collection is being considered for 2025 or thereafter. The city-wide roll-out of organics collection must be fully implemented, and effectively capturing as much food waste as possible before the City can petition TCEQ for every-other week trash collection.**

Source: *CBI ARR Internal Waste Characterization Study* – March 2015

TXP Economic Development Report Recommendations

The TXP Economic Development Report entitled *The Current and Potential Economic Impacts of Austin Recycling and Reuse Related Activity*” was presented to ZWAC in May. TXP offered the following recommendations for action. I have provided the recommendation below, and my response in **blue**.

“More broadly, the use of recycled materials is clearly an economic development focus and goal for the city. Therefore, TXP further recommends:

1. Work on developing end-use markets locally for products made from recycled materials, with particular focus on the sectors that require upstream packaging [e.g. food and beverage sector}.
2. Identify meaningful incentives to encourage the use of recycled materials in the production process.
3. Leverage the City’s buying power to promote end-markets for recycled products by including a preference for locally-made recycled content products in the City of Austin’s purchasing process.
4. Solicit stronger relationships with the Gulf Coast ports.
5. Focus on business and consumer education efforts connecting recycling and economic development. “

These recommendations offer a range of economic development opportunities to encourage the local consumption of our collected recyclables, completing the recycling loop locally and supporting economic development locally. ARR will explore implementation strategies that address each of these key recommendations.

Source: *TXP: The Current and Potential Economic Impacts of Austin Recycling and Reuse Related Activity* – 2015

Actions Taken By City Council since the last ZWAC Meeting

The ABIA Total Waste Management agreement recommended at the May 13 ZWAC meeting was approved by City Council at its regular May 21st meeting.

The Community Climate Plan recommended at the February 11th ZWAC meeting was approved by City Council at its regular June 4th meeting.

The Public Utilities Council Committee plans to discuss the 5-year Organics Collection service plans, however that discussion has not been scheduled to date.

Personnel Changes May 2015

New Employee	Temp to Regular	Promotions	Title
Rachel Betts			Temp, Waste Diversion Planner
Sarah Puffer			Planner II
Sarah Hoover			Temp, Waste Diversion Planner
Madelyn Morgan			Intern-Strategic Initiatives
	Edgar Hinojosa		Austin Rsc Recovery Oper Asc
	James-Anthony Rodriguez		Austin Rsc Recovery Oper Asc
	Kareem Williams		Austin Rsc Recovery Oper Asc
		Caesar Jeffery	ARR Operator Sr
		Clinton Kerr	ARR Operator Sr
		Antowain Hubert	ARR Operator Sr
		Stephon Joiner	ARR Operator
		Timothy Darby	ARR Operator
		Julian Townsend	ARR Operator

Positions we are looking to fill in June 2015

Position	# open	Contact Manager	Posting Status
Support Services Supervisor	1	Jessica Frazier	Interviews scheduled
Contract Compliance Spec. Sr	1	Jessica Frazier	Position to be Posted
Waste Diversion Planner	1	Jessica King	Position to be Posted
Research Analyst	1	Tammie Williamson	Position to be Posted
Performance Consultant	1	Blanche Quarterman	Position Posted
Occ. Health/Safety Spec Sr	1	Jeff Dilbert	Screening Applications
ARR Operator	4	Ron Romero	Position to be Posted
ARR Operator Sr	2	Ron Romero	Top candidates selected
Grant Coordinator*	1	Donald Hardee	Interviews scheduled
Enviro. Program Specialist	2	Donald Hardee	Position posted
ARR Operator (YT)	5	Richard McHale	Interviews scheduled
ARR Operator (DA)	1	Richard McHale	Interviews scheduled
ARR Operator Sr Brush/Bulk	2	Richard McHale	Interviews scheduled
ARR Operator or Associate	3	Richard McHale	Position to be Posted
ARR Associate*	8	McHale/Romero	Screening applications

* denotes a Temporary worker

Zero Waste Advisory Commission - June 10, 2015								
Single Stream Recycling Statistical Report								
FY 2014-15: October, 2014 - April, 2015								
Texas Disposal Systems (TDS) and Balcones Resources, Inc. (BRI)								
Month and Year	Contractor	Tons Delivered	Contractor Payments			Net Value to the City \$ per ton value	Landfill Cost Avoidance	
			Revenue	Processing Cost	Net Amount Due/(Owed)		Cost Per Ton	Total
October 2014	TDS	1,794.16	\$109,458	\$164,166	(\$54,708)	(\$30.49)	\$21.49	\$38,556
	BRI	2,973.81	\$161,505	\$235,645	(\$74,140)	(\$24.93)	\$21.49	\$63,907
	Total	4,767.97	\$270,963	\$399,811	(\$128,848)			\$102,464
November 2014	TDS	1,696.79	\$99,202	\$155,256	(\$56,054)	(\$33.04)	\$21.49	\$36,464
	BRI	2,587.55	\$146,047	\$206,077	(\$60,030)	(\$23.20)	\$21.49	\$55,606
	Total	4,284.34	\$245,249	\$361,333	(\$116,085)			\$92,070
December 2014	TDS	2,291.38	\$132,131	\$209,661	(\$77,531)	(\$33.84)	\$21.49	\$49,242
	BRI	3,042.85	\$169,341	\$240,930	(\$71,589)	(\$23.53)	\$21.49	\$65,391
	Total	5,334.23	\$301,472	\$450,592	(\$149,120)			\$114,633
January 2015	TDS	2,054.29	\$107,991	\$187,968	(\$79,976)	(\$38.93)	\$21.49	\$44,147
	BRI	3,078.17	\$158,610	\$243,634	(\$85,024)	(\$27.62)	\$21.49	\$66,150
	Total	5,132.46	\$266,601	\$431,601	(\$165,000)			\$110,297
February 2015	TDS	1,665.75	\$77,949	\$152,416	(\$74,467)	(\$44.70)	\$21.49	\$35,797
	BRI	2,542.52	\$118,863	\$202,630	(\$83,767)	(\$32.95)	\$21.49	\$54,639
	Total	4,208.27	\$196,812	\$355,046	(\$158,234)			\$90,436
March 2015	TDS	2,294.45	\$107,883	\$209,942	(\$102,059)	(\$44.48)	\$21.49	\$49,308
	BRI	2,336.33	\$109,013	\$186,846	(\$77,833)	(\$33.31)	\$21.49	\$50,208
	Total	4,630.78	\$216,896	\$396,788	(\$179,892)			\$99,515
April 2015	TDS	1,744.78	\$83,199	\$159,646	(\$76,447)	(\$43.81)	\$21.49	\$37,495
	BRI	3,111.61	\$149,599	\$246,193	(\$96,594)	(\$31.04)	\$21.49	\$66,868
	Total	4,856.39	\$232,799	\$405,840	(\$173,041)			\$104,364
FY 2014-15 Totals		28,358.05	\$1,497,992	\$2,395,171	(\$897,179)			\$713,778

Zero Waste Advisory Commission - May 13, 2015								
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FY 2014-15 Totals		28,358.05	\$1,497,992	\$2,395,171	(\$897,179)			\$609,414

Material Composition Percentages					
		Previous Audit		Current Audit	
		TDS	BRI	TDS	BRI
Material		10/18/14	11/1/14	4/25/15	5/9/15
ONP #8 (Old Newspaper)		20.71%	24.77%	16.51%	19.61%
OCC (Corrugated Cardboard)		14.64%	10.69%	13.74%	9.94%
Mixed Paper		10.40%	13.82%	10.46%	15.47%
Plastic Bottles - PETE		2.72%	2.23%	2.77%	2.73%
HDPE Natural		1.06%	0.80%	1.05%	0.78%
HDPE Color		0.95%	0.52%	0.98%	0.99%
Mixed Plastics 3-7		3.72%	2.71%	4.26%	2.56%
UBC (Used Beverage Cans)		1.19%	1.06%	1.26%	1.17%
Tin Cans		1.57%	1.60%	1.66%	1.55%
Scrap Metal		0.83%	0.71%	1.24%	1.12%
Glass		28.12%	28.70%	27.51%	27.64%
Residual - trash		14.08%	12.39%	18.57%	16.42%
Total		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

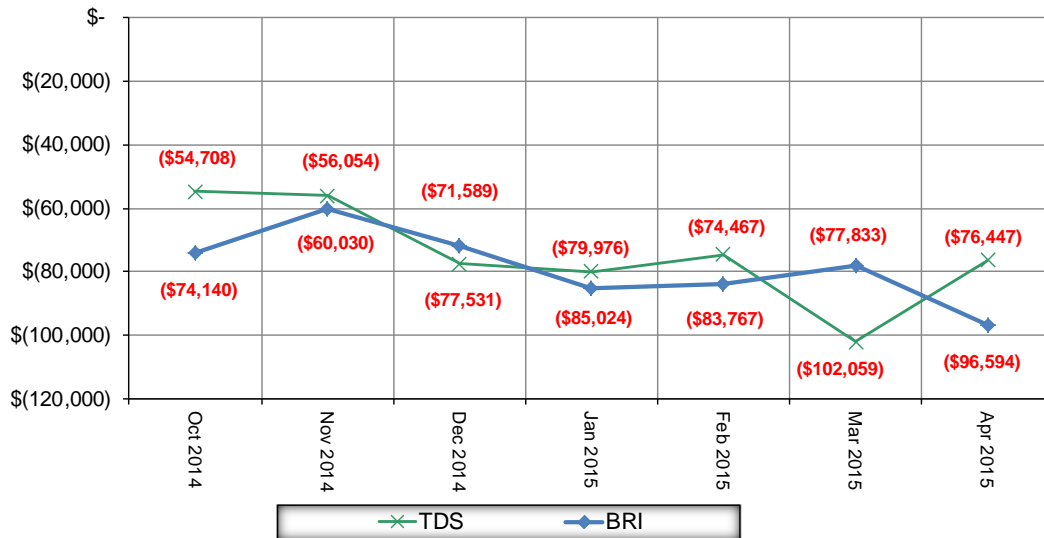
Zero Waste Advisory Commission - June 10, 2015

Single Stream Recycling Statistical Report

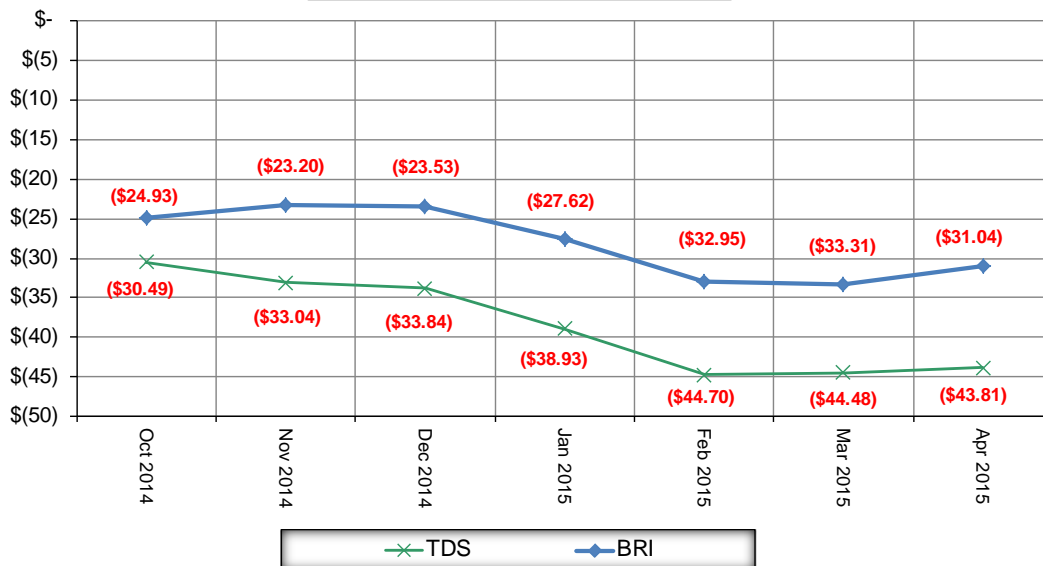
FY 2014-15: October, 2014 - April, 2015

Texas Disposal Systems (TDS) and Balcones Resources, Inc. (BRI)

Revenue Less Processing Costs



Net Value Per Ton to the City

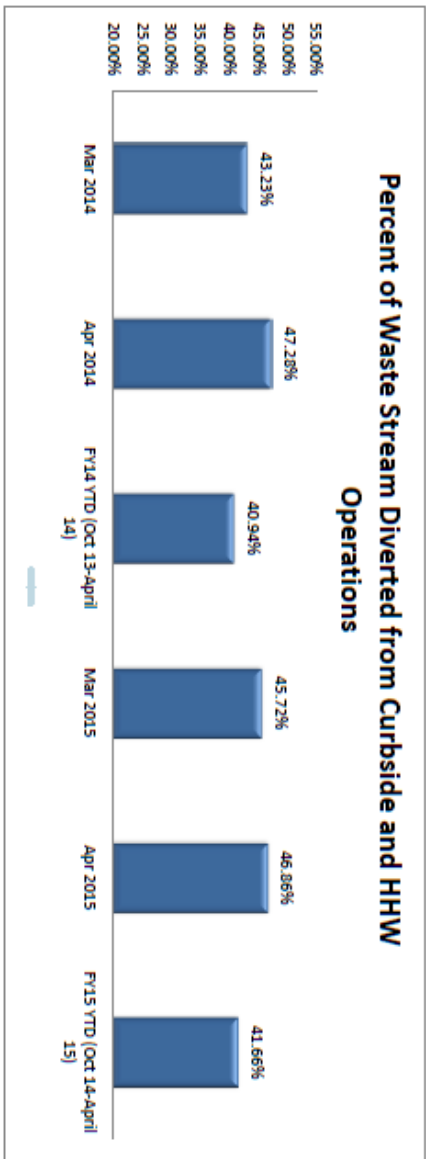
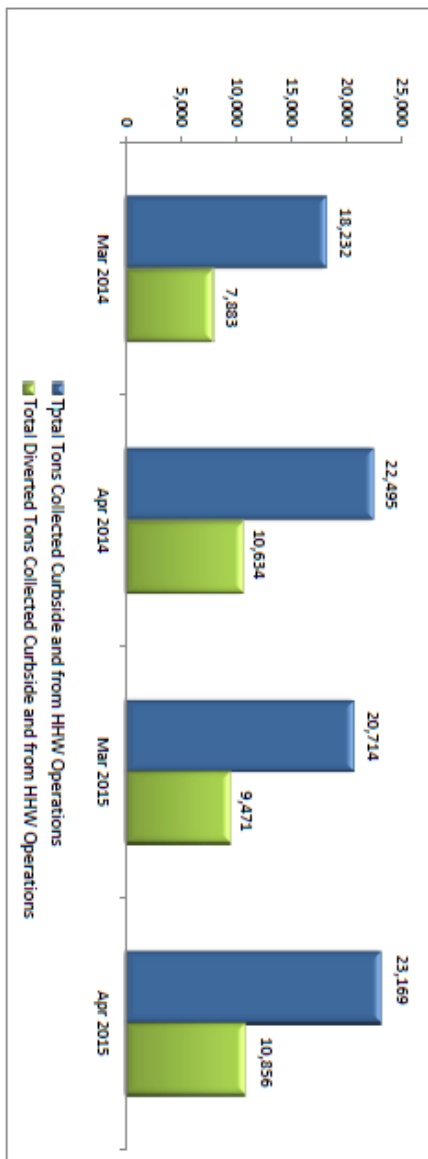


Zero Waste Advisory Commission					
Single Stream Recycling Statistical Report					
FY 2013-14: October, 2013 through September, 2014					
Texas Disposal Systems (TDS) and Balcones Resources, Inc. (BRI)					
Month, Year	Contractor	Tons Delivered	Revenue	Processing Cost	Net Amount Due/(Owed)
October, 2013	TDS	1,824.24	\$108,623	\$168,473	(\$59,850)
	BRI	2,910.84	\$177,974	\$230,825	(\$52,850)
	<i>Total</i>	4,735.08	\$286,598	\$399,298	(\$112,701)
November, 2013	TDS	1,682.84	\$99,569	\$153,980	(\$54,411)
	BRI	2,775.04	\$165,885	\$220,429	(\$54,544)
	<i>Total</i>	4,457.88	\$265,454	\$374,409	(\$108,955)
December, 2013	TDS	2,237.24	\$130,657	\$204,707	(\$74,051)
	BRI	2,781.35	\$167,489	\$220,913	(\$53,423)
	<i>Total</i>	5,018.59	\$298,146	\$425,620	(\$127,474)
January, 2014	TDS	2,108.75	\$123,783	\$192,951	(\$69,167)
	BRI	2,963.60	\$175,333	\$234,864	(\$59,531)
	<i>Total</i>	5,072.35	\$299,116	\$427,814	(\$128,698)
February, 2014	TDS	1,821.99	\$108,246	\$166,712	(\$58,466)
	BRI	2,392.85	\$142,235	\$191,172	(\$48,937)
	<i>Total</i>	4,214.84	\$250,482	\$357,884	(\$107,403)
March, 2014	TDS	1,875.52	\$115,807	\$171,610	(\$55,803)
	BRI	2,470.59	\$152,032	\$197,124	(\$45,092)
	<i>Total</i>	4,346.11	\$267,839	\$368,733	(\$100,894)
April, 2014	TDS	1,954.76	\$119,253	\$178,861	(\$59,608)
	BRI	2,757.04	\$151,574	\$219,052	(\$67,478)
	<i>Total</i>	4,711.80	\$270,827	\$397,912	(\$127,085)
May, 2014	TDS	2,179.65	\$132,219	\$199,438	(\$67,219)
	BRI	2,572.14	\$140,352	\$204,897	(\$64,545)
	<i>Total</i>	4,751.79	\$272,571	\$404,335	(\$131,764)
June, 2014	TDS	2,012.96	\$121,013	\$184,186	(\$63,173)
	BRI	2,618.97	\$141,425	\$208,482	(\$67,057)
	<i>Total</i>	4,631.93	\$262,438	\$392,668	(\$130,230)
July, 2014	TDS	2,301.98	\$137,844	\$210,631	(\$72,787)
	BRI	2,485.29	\$133,677	\$198,249	(\$64,572)
	<i>Total</i>	4,787.27	\$271,521	\$408,880	(\$137,359)
August, 2014	TDS	2,066.90	\$125,679	\$189,122	(\$63,443)
	BRI	2,223.71	\$121,132	\$178,225	(\$57,093)
	<i>Total</i>	4,290.61	\$246,811	\$367,347	(\$120,536)
September, 2014	TDS	2,540.99	\$154,065	\$232,501	(\$78,435)
	BRI	2,153.26	\$117,864	\$172,832	(\$54,968)
	<i>Total</i>	4,694.25	\$271,929	\$405,333	(\$133,404)
FY 2013-14 Totals		55,712.50	\$3,263,731	\$4,730,234	(\$1,466,503)

Austin Resource Recovery Curbside Collection and HHW Operations

	LAST FISCAL YEAR					CURRENT FISCAL YEAR				
	FY 2014	FY 2014 Goal	Mar 2014	Apr 2014	FY 14 YTD (Oct 13-April 14)	Mar 2015	Apr 2015	FY 15 YTD (Oct 14-April 15)	FY 2015 Goal	
Tons Disposed										
Tons of Curbside Garbage	127,824	123,000	10,175	11,408	73,049	11,090	11,698	75,351	123,000	
Tons of Curbside Bulk Disposed	8,892	7,000	149	417	4,127	121	567	3,831	6,459	
HHW Operations Tons Disposed	427	350	26	35	218	32,55	48	241	330	
Total Disposed Tons Collected Curbside and from HHW Operations	137,258	130,350	10,350	11,850	77,394	11,244	12,313	79,425	131,789	
Tons Diverted										
Tons of Curbside Recycling	55,494	64,000	4,346	4,712	32,336	4,825	4,898	33,354	60,000	
HHW Operations Tons recycled/reused	296	150	20	32	152	37,60	34	155	220	
Tons of Curbside Yard Trimmings	27,357	31,000	3,096	5,255	17,602	4,325	5,387	19,867	29,037	
Tons of Curbside Bulk Recycled	176	753	1	6	83	4	10	80	180	
Tons of Curbside Fluids Collected	6,682	6,200	420	630	3,486	478	567	3,264	6,066	
Total Diverted Tons Collected Curbside and from HHW Operations	90,015	102,133	7,883	10,634	53,659	9,671	10,895	56,720	97,503	
Total Tons Collected Curbside and from HHW Operations	227,273	232,523	18,232	22,485	131,053	20,714	23,169	136,143	229,292	
Percent of Waste Stream Diverted by Curbside and HHW Operations	39.61%	44%	43.29%	47.28%	40.94%	45.72%	46.85%	41.85%	43%	
Pounds of Garbage collected per customer per pickup	25.96	24.64	24.77	27.78	25.55	26.71	28.19	25.97	24.64	
Number of Garbage customers	188,543	192,000	189,288	189,652	188,966	191,369	191,664	191,305	193,800	
Pounds of Recycled materials collected per customer per pickup (every other week)	22.79	25.64	21.45	23.26	22.92	22.45	23.60	23.18	25.64	
Pounds of Yard Trimmings collected per customer per week	5.82	6.21	7.64	12.97	6.24	10.50	13.09	6.90	6.21	
Number of Recycling and Yard Trimmings customers	187,296	192,000	186,779	187,163	186,057	189,876	190,128	189,797	193,800	
Number of PAYT pickups	52	52	4.34	4.33	30	4.34	4.33	30	52	
Total tons of Dead Animals Collected from COA rights-of-way and the animal shelter	61	55	5.00	4.00	38	4.00	5.00	37	58	

Austin Resource Recovery Curbside Collection and HHW Operations



Austin Resource Recovery Curbside Collection and HHW Operations

Reporting Status and Diversion Results for All Categories of Waste Generation							
Category of Waste Generation	FY2009-10 actual	FY2010-11 actual	FY2011-12 actual	FY2012-13 actual	FY2013-14 actual	FY2014-15 Goal	FY2014-15 Current
Residential Waste Diversion (city serviced accounts)	37.32%	38.57%	37.86%	39.64%	39.61%	44.00%	41.66%
Commercial / Industrial Waste Diversion	information not available*						
Institutional Waste Diversion	information not available*						
*Non-residential waste diversion to be inventoried in 2015							

