

Universal Recycling Ordinance (URO)

How the Business Outreach Team (BOT) implements the URO



1

What we'll cover today

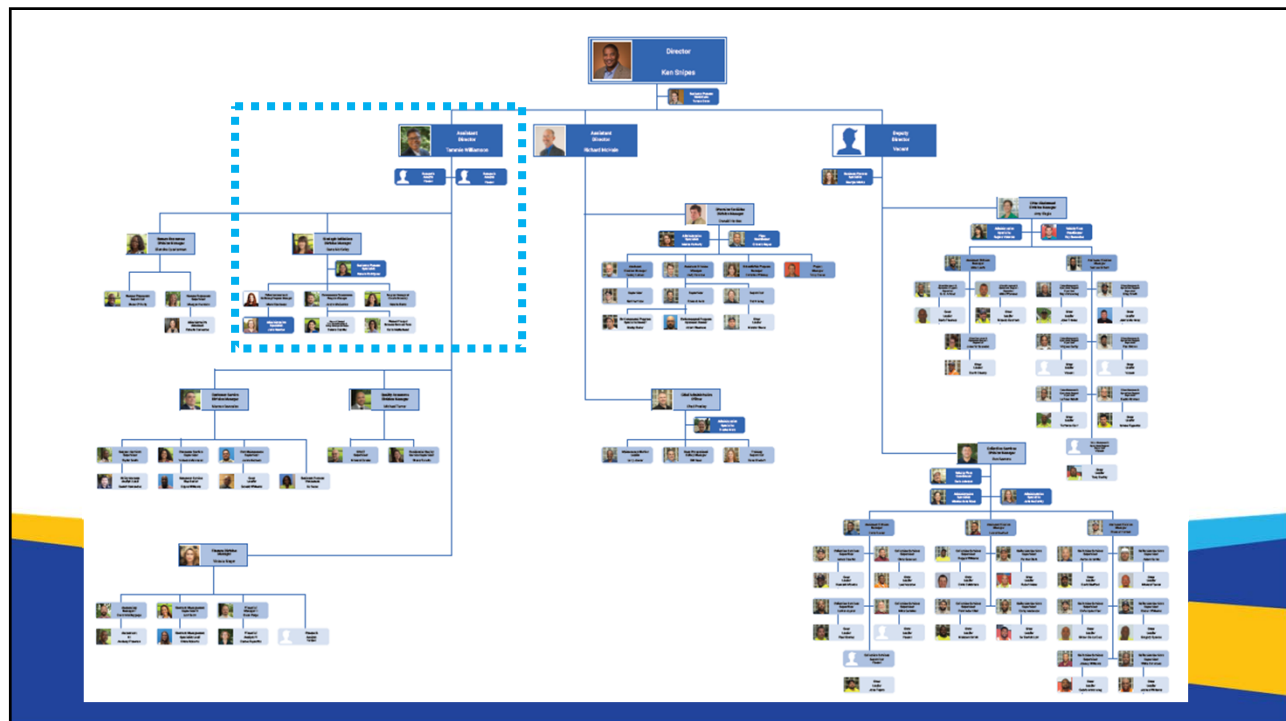
- Who we are
- Why we exist
- URO
 - Who is affected & who is responsible
 - What is required & who the URO is for
- BOT
 - What we do
 - How we follow up
 - How we incentivize
 - What we want to do next

2

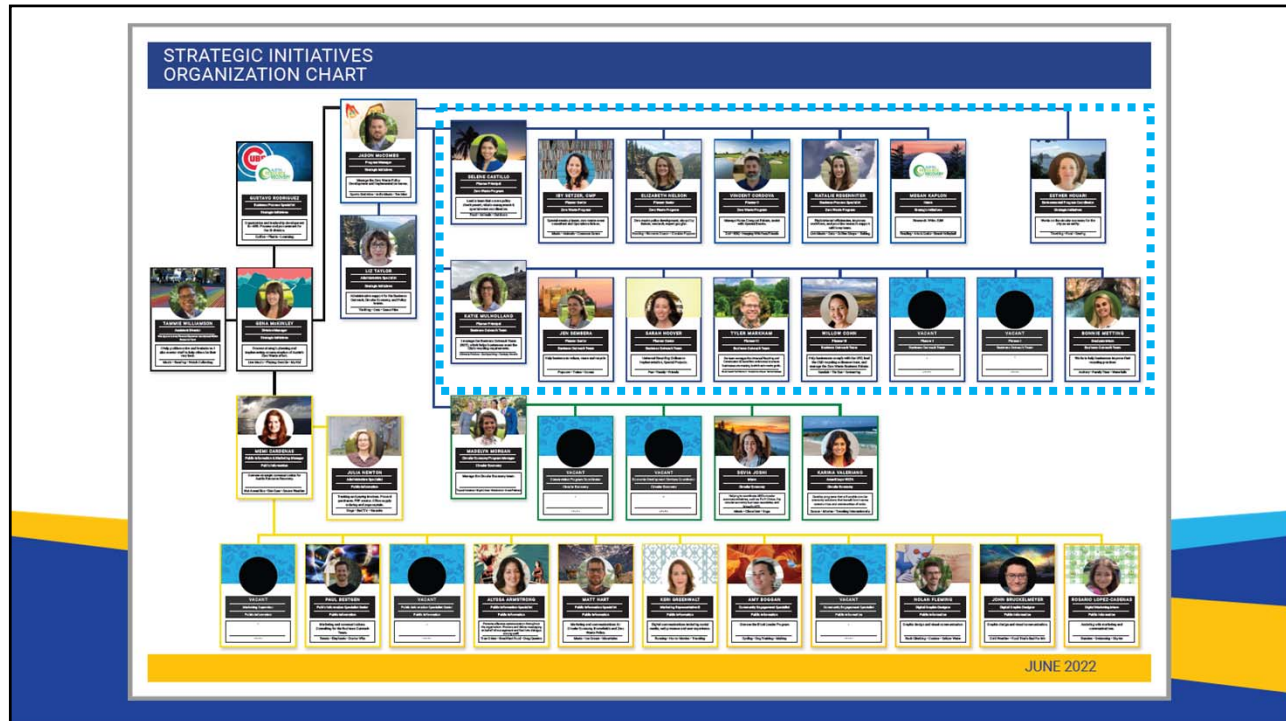
Who we are

- Policy Team
 - develops new policy
- Business Outreach Team (BOT)
 - implements existing policies

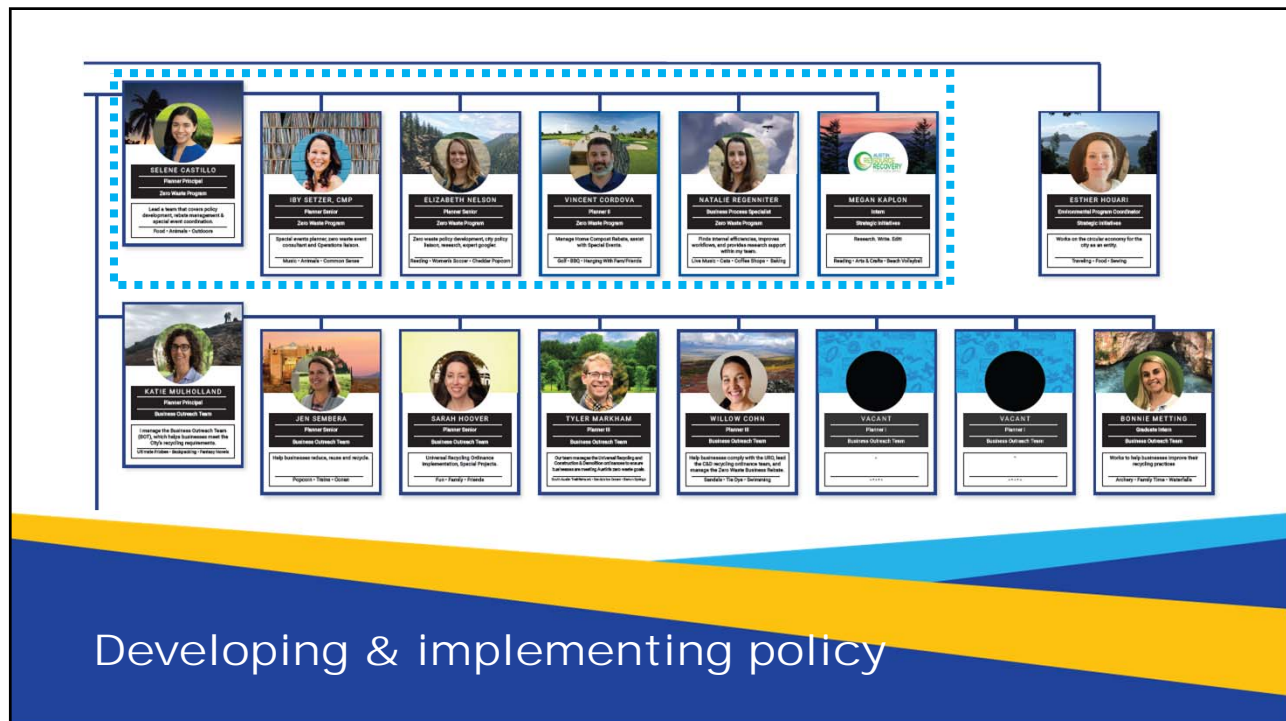
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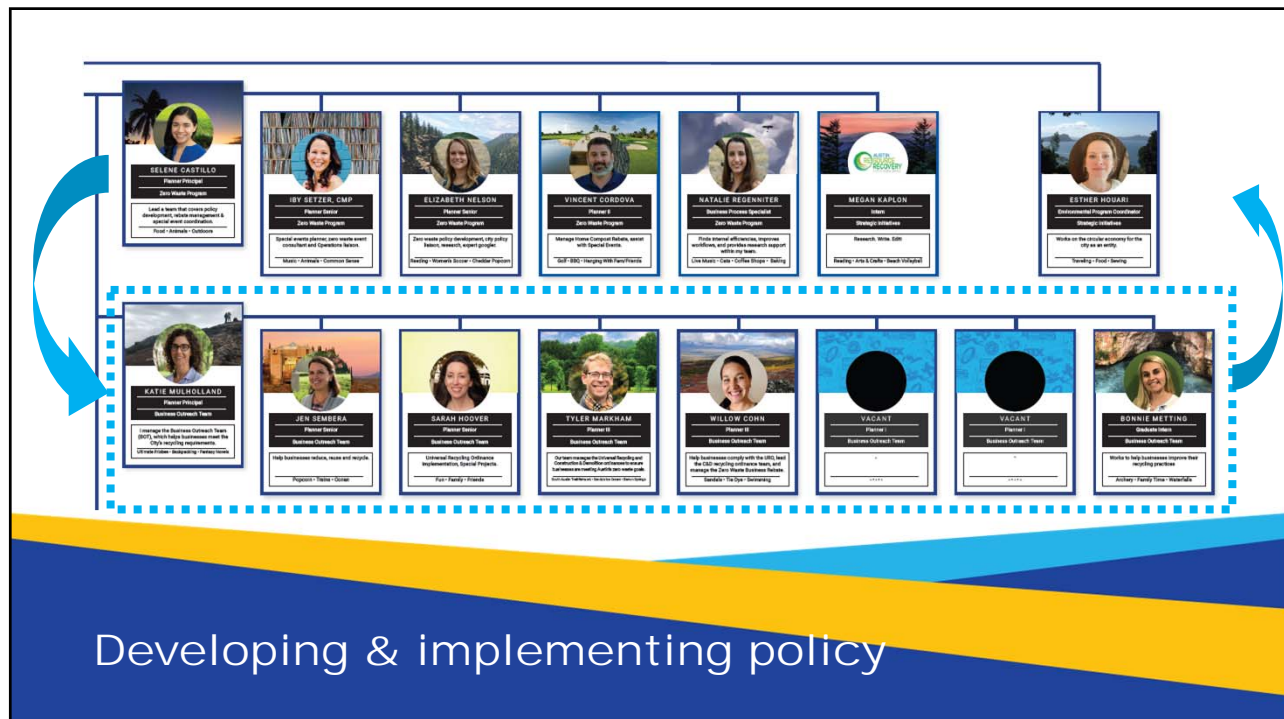


6

Who they are: Policy Team

- Policy Team develops new policy
 - **Researches** best practices
 - **Analyzes** industry data
 - **Pilots** potential ideas
 - **Develops** new policy
 - **Engages** with affected stakeholders

7



8

Who we are: BOT

- Business Outreach Team (BOT) implements existing policy
 - **Notifies** properties about requirements
 - **Assists** affected properties
 - **Develops** educational materials
 - **Tracks and analyzes** ordinance data
 - **Reviews** for compliance
 - **Develops** standard procedures

9

Why we exist

- City of Austin (ARR) provides services to:
 - Residential properties with 4 or fewer units
 - 45% of Austin households
 - Very limited commercial properties (~2k)
- Private haulers provides services to:
 - Multifamily properties with 5 or more units (2k)
 - 55% of Austin households
 - Almost all commercial properties (7k)

10



11

Why we exist

- City of Austin uses ordinances to regulate sectors the City doesn't directly control and set minimum standards.
- BOT implements some of the City's ordinances to our zero waste goals, including the URO.

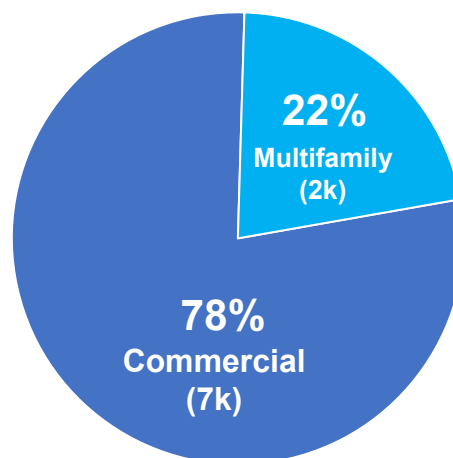
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Who is affected

- Recycling:
 - All commercial properties
 - Multifamily with 5 units or more
 - Includes apartments, condominiums, dormitories, nursing homes, assisted living facilities
- Organics:
 - All businesses with City of Austin food permits
 - Includes restaurants, grocery stores, catering companies, commercial kitchens
- ~14k properties (9k recycling, 5k organics)

13

Who is affected



14

Who is responsible

- Whoever contracts or arranges for waste services
- Recycling:
 - Typically property owner/manager or business owner/manager
- Organics:
 - Typically business owner/manager; can be property owner/manager

15

Who is responsible

- Haulers are responsible for:
 - Signs on outdoor containers
 - Outdoor recycling containers are within 25' of landfill trash

16

Who is it for

- Recycling:
 - Employees, commercial tenants, residents
- Organics
 - Employees (back of house only)

17

What is required

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| • Recycling | • Skerrow |
| 1. Five Materials | 52 Sri\$ri\$ziwns\$txsr |
| 2. Capacity | 62 Eggiww\$ |
| 3. Access | 72 Wkrw |
| 4. Signs | 82 Ihygexsr |
| 5. Education | 92 Vitswkr\$tp- |
| 6. Reporting (plan) | |

18

What is required

- Recycling requirements:

1. Five Materials

- Single stream – paper, cardboard, glass, metal, hard plastic
- *Material substitutions may be made*

2. Capacity

- 1:1 landfill trash to recycling/organics
- Alternatively multifamily may provide 24 gallons per unit per week

3. Access

- Outdoors: Recycling containers within 25' or less of landfill trash
- Indoors: if landfill trash is collected in common areas, recycling must be provided and bins must be paired (or grouped, if organics)

19

What is required

- Recycling requirements

4. Signs

- Label stream (landfill trash, recycling, organics)
- List materials that go in container
- Written in two languages

5. Education

- Provide written resources in two languages
- List materials that go in container
- Show where outdoor containers are located
- Provide resources within 30 days of new hire/move in, every year, and when there's a change
- Document when resources are provided

20

What is required

- Recycling requirements
 - 6. Recycling Plan
 - Due by Feb. 1 every year
 - Report how the property meets the five URO requirements

21



Capacity

22



23



24



25

← WORKSPACE

ORGANICS DIVERSION PLAN

Annual | 2019

Business Information

Business Name: *

Business Address: *

Food Permit Number ([Click to view Samella Permit number](#)): *

Example: 2016000111

If you have additional food permit numbers to enter for this address, please click 'Add' below.

+ ADD

To retrieve your Property ID number, click on the link for your county:

- [Travis Central Appraisal District](#)
- [Williamson Central Appraisal District](#)

Property ID #

Travis County example: 223456, Williamson County example: R123456

Type of Business: *

- Select -

Note: Organic material includes:

- Meats, fats and dairy
- Vegetables, fruits, grains
- Paper towels (including bathroom) and paper napkins
- Food soiled paper, cardboard or woodboard (e.g. pizza boxes, paper cups, paper food containers, coffee filters, tea bags)
- Landscape trimmings and floral décor

Submit plan

26

What is required

- Organics requirements:
 1. One organics diversion option
 - Divert organic material (food, food scraps, food-soiled paper)
 - Options include feed people, feed animals, compost, food waste reduction
 2. Access
 3. Signs
 4. Education
 5. Reporting (submit plan)

27



Feed people

28



Feed animals

29



Compost

30

What is required


- What is not required?
 - Recycling: Appropriate recycling
 - Organics: Front of house (customers)
- Who is not affected?
 - Landscape companies that create yard debris

31

What we do

- BOT implements existing policy
 - **Notifies** properties about requirements
 - Currently 4 letters & emails (October, January, March, May)
 - **Assists** affected businesses
 - Provide customer service
 - Respond to calls & emails
 - Update contact information
 - **Develops** educational materials
 - To help business meet requirements
 - To support zero waste

32



City of Austin
Austin Resource Recovery
P.O. Box 1088, Austin, TX 78767

November 1, 2021

<Physical Name>
<Physical Address Line 1>
<Physical Address Line 2>
<Physical City>, <Physical State> <Physical Zip Code>

The City of Austin requires all commercial businesses and all multifamily properties with 5 or more units to provide their tenants, employees and employees convenient access to recycling. The Recycling Plan for your business is due every year starting October 1.

As of October 13, our records show your business or property has NOT YET COMPLETED its required Recycling Plan this year. If you have filled out a Plan since October 13, you can confirm the status by going to austintexas.gov/uro, scrolling down to the "How can I check to see if my Plan is complete?" section and following the steps on the webpage.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

1. Go to austintexas.gov/uro
2. Select the property type that describes you: **COMMERCIAL** or **MULTIFAMILY**
3. Click the **SUBMIT RECYCLING PLAN** button

To fill in your Plans, you will need:

- ☐ Your Property ID#, Business Name and Physical Addresses
- ☐ See page 2 of this letter
- ☐ Service receipts from your hauler
- ☐ Size and number of landfill trash and recycling containers / Frequency of collection

4. Save a copy of the completed Plan for your businesses' records.

5. If you have a food permit for your business(es), you will also need to fill out an Organics Plan.

WHAT AM I REPORTING?

You will report how your business(es) meets the recycling diversion requirements:

1. **Offer sufficient recycling** by providing:
 - Single stream recycling that allows 5 materials (paper, cardboard, metal, glass & hard plastics) in 1 container
 - Equal or greater recycling as to landfill trash service; Multifamily properties have the option of providing 24 gallons of recycling per unit per week
2. **Provide convenient access** by ensuring all outdoor recycling dumpsters and carts are 25 feet or less from all landfill trash dumpsters and carts.
3. **Post signs** on all outdoor landfill trash and recycling dumpsters and carts in 2 languages that:
 - Indicate what materials are accepted in container or are labeled by waste type (e.g., "landfill").
 - If you provide indoor landfill trash and recycling collection service, you are required to group them together and label them in at least two languages.
4. **Educate** employees and residents in print or electronically about how to recycle in 2 languages:
 - Within 30 days of employee hire, resident move-in, when there is a change to the program and every year and
 - That indicate materials that are accepted in each type of container and where the containers are located

Print free signs and resources for your business(es) at austintexas.gov/urocommercial and scroll down to the "Post Signs" section.

INTERESTED IN DOING MORE TO REDUCE WASTE? APPLY FOR A REBATE

If you have submitted your Recycling Plan, you may be eligible for a Zero Waste Business Rebate. Eligible businesses can receive funding for going beyond the minimum requirements. Eligible expenses include composting/organic service, equipment for food donation, recycling bins for multifamily properties and more. Learn more at austintexas.gov/zwbizrebate


WHAT IF COVID-19 HAS AFFECTED MY BUSINESS?

If your business has closed due to COVID-19, please email us to let us know. Visit austintexas.gov/uro for resources aimed at businesses and individuals facing financial hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Business Outreach Team | Austin Resource Recovery | City of Austin | commercialrecycling@austintexas.gov

Letters

33



November 1, 2021

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Letters

34

WHAT CAN I RECYCLE? ¿QUÉ PUEDO RECICLAR?

PAPER (MIXED & OFFICE)
PAPEL (MEZCLADO Y DE OFICINA)

HARD PLASTICS
PLÁSTICOS RÍGIDOS

GLASS BOTTLES & JARS
VIDRIO (JARROS Y BOTELLAS)

FLATTENED CARDBOARD
CARTÓN APLANADO

ALUMINUM & STEEL CANS & FOIL
LATAS DE ALUMINIO Y PAPEL DE ALUMINIO

NO:

PIZZA BOXES
CAJAS PARA PIZZA

PLASTIC BAGS
BOLSA DE PLÁSTICO

PAPER TOWELS
TOALLAS DE PAPEL

STYROFOAM
POLIESTIRENO EXPANDIDO

FOOD
COMIDA

SYRINGES
JERINGAS

RECYCLING
MATERIAL RECYCLADO

AustinRecycles.com

Sign Resources

35

FOOD DONATION DONACIÓN DE ALIMENTOS

FOOD CANNOT BE:
LOS ALIMENTOS NO PUEDEN SER:

DAMAGED
DAÑADOS

OPENED
ABIERTO

ROTTEN/MOLDY
PORRIDO/MOHO

PREVIOUSLY SERVED OR EATEN
PREVIAMENTE SERVIDO O COMIDO

FOOD DONATIONS ARE PROTECTED UNDER THE GOOD SAMARITAN FOOD DONATION ACT
LAS DONACIONES DE ALIMENTOS ESTÁN PROTEGIDAS BAJO LA LEY DE DONACIÓN DE ALIMENTOS DEL BUEN SAMARITANO

AustinTexas.Gov/URO

Sign Resources

36

How to DONATE FOOD

Approximately 40% of food in the U.S. is wasted. Organic materials, including food scraps, make up about 37% of the materials sent to local landfills. Much of this wasted food could be used for higher and better uses — like feeding people!

WHY DONATE FOOD?

- **Help end hunger:** One in six people in Central Texas struggle to have enough food to eat and almost 25% of children in Travis County lack consistent access to food.
- **Conserve valuable resources:** Wasted food represents 4% of U.S. oil consumption and requires 25% of our fresh water supply to grow.
- **Reduce greenhouse gas emissions:** Uneaten food in landfills accounts for 23% of the nation's output of methane, a potent greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change.
- **Save money:** Businesses can receive tax incentives for food donations while simultaneously lowering their disposal costs. And for businesses in Austin, food donation counts towards compliance with the Universal Recycling Ordinance.

WHICH FOODS CAN BE DONATED?

- **Pre-packaged foods** that are non-perishable and fresh, whole fruits and vegetables that have not been cut may be collected for donation and distribution without a permit.
- **Certain foods** that require time/temperature control for safety (such as cut fruit, hot meals, dairy products, eggs, meat, etc.) may be donated if both the donor and recipient are food permitted facilities and the food has been properly handled at an appropriate temperature.

WHO WILL TAKE FOOD DONATIONS?

- **Food pantries:** Use austintexas.gov/food to find a food pantry near you that accepts donations. Call ahead to make sure that the pantry can accept your donation and to coordinate how and when it should be delivered or picked up.
- **Food banks:** Contact Central Texas Food Bank to schedule a donation.
- **Food rescue programs** like Keep Austin Fed may be able to help with donation logistics.

WORRIED ABOUT YOUR LIABILITY?

Don't be! The Good Samaritan Food Donation Act encourages companies and organizations to donate healthy food that would otherwise go to waste by protecting them from criminal and civil liability.

HELPFUL TIPS

- Keep track of donations by weighing and recording any donated foods for your tax records.
- Make sure foods are maintained at safe temperatures and are properly labeled.
- Visit austintexas.gov/food for more information on food donation guidelines.

GOVERNMENT SUSTAINABILITY

MORE INFORMATION AT: www.austintexas.gov/food or sustainability@austintexas.gov

Educational Resources

37

Recycling at [Business Name]

Dear Employee and/or Commercial Tenant,

Thank you for being part of our team! We want to update you on our recycling efforts and provide you with a few resources to support you in your recycling practices at work. We have conveniently located recycling containers near the landfill containers throughout the property. It is important that we use these containers correctly!

Only FIVE items are allowed in the recycling containers:

- 1) **Cardboard:** Cereal Boxes, Shoe Boxes, Toilet Paper Rolls
- 2) **Paper:** Glossy Paper, Junk Mail, Envelopes, Magazines, Paper Bags
- 3) **Glass:** Glass bottles, Glass Jars
- 4) **Metals:** Aluminum Foil Baking Pans, Soda Cans, Steel and Tin Cans
- 5) **Hard Plastics:** Water or Soda Bottles, Plastic Milk Jugs, Detergent Bottles

Remember: The recycling containers at our business are [color here] with [color here] lids and [color here] recycling stickers.

Please do NOT put these items in Recycling:

- Food or Liquids
- Styrofoam
- Plastic Bags
- Waxy Paper
- Food Soiled Paper or Dirty Take-Out Containers
- Wood
- Furniture
- Mattresses

Remember: The landfill trash containers at our business are [color here] with [color here] lids and black landfill stickers.

Why is this important?
Putting landfill items into your recycling bin causes expensive problems and unsafe conditions for employees, recycling trucks and machinery.

Thank you for your efforts!
Sincerely,
[Business Name]

Education Templates

38

Recycling at [Business Name]

Dear Employee and/or Commercial Tenant,

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Sincerely,
[Business Name]

Education Templates

39




LEGEND:
L = Landfill/Basura
R = Recycling/Reciclaje
C = Compost

Education Templates

40

Check out our [commercial organics video playlist](#) to learn more:



Commercial Organics Diversion Programs
6 videos • No views • Last updated on Mar 25, 2022

PLAY ALL

1 **Intro to Zero Waste** 6:47

2 **URO Organics Diversion Requirements** 13:35

3 **Zero Waste Programs Best Practices** 6:35

4 **What Can I Compost?** 12:15

5 **Reduce The Risk of Compost Contamination** 10:32

6 **Zero Waste Programs Above and Beyond** 8:49

Subscribe to austintexasgov

Education Videos

41

AUSTIN BUSINESS JOURNAL CRANE WATCH Keep tabs on big commercial projects going up in Central Texas >

INDUSTRIES & TOPICS NEWS LISTS & LEADS PEOPLE & COMPANIES EVENTS LEADERSHIP TRUST MORE...

Recycling Plan Required for Businesses
A recycling plan is required for Austin businesses. Submit your plan before February 1.
[Submit Today](#)

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YOUR NEWS

DIGITAL EDITION

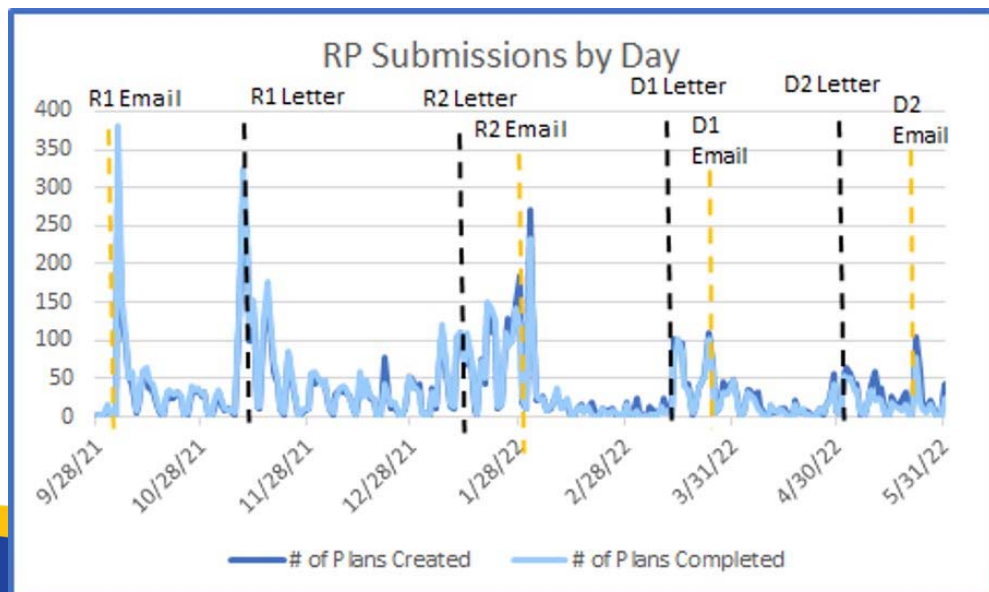
Marketing Resources

42

What we do

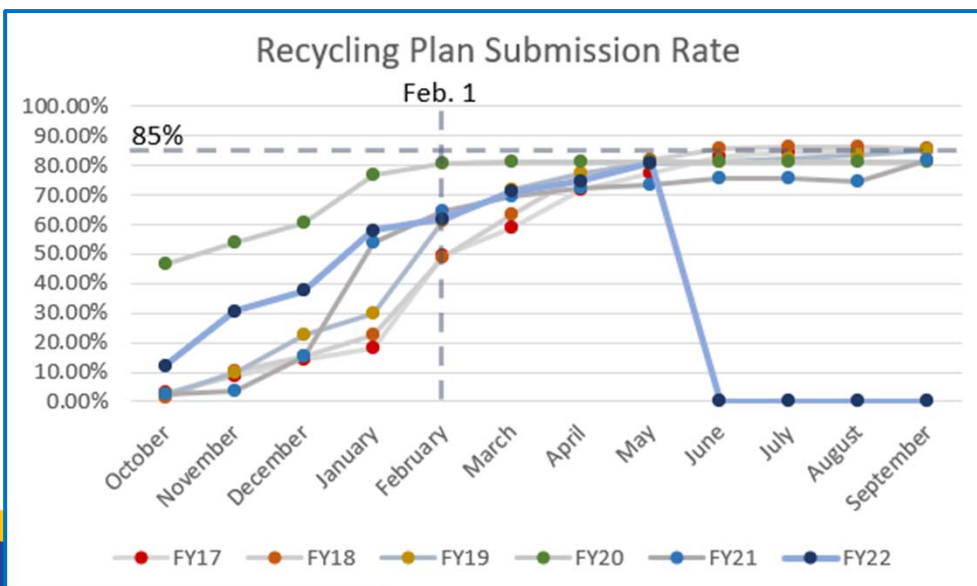
- BOT implements existing policy
 - **Tracks data** & analyzes trends
 - for reporting and compliance
 - to inform new resources and future policy
 - **Reviews** for compliance
 - Plan data and waivers
 - **Refers** non-compliant properties
 - To CCU follow up
 - **Develops** standard procedures

43



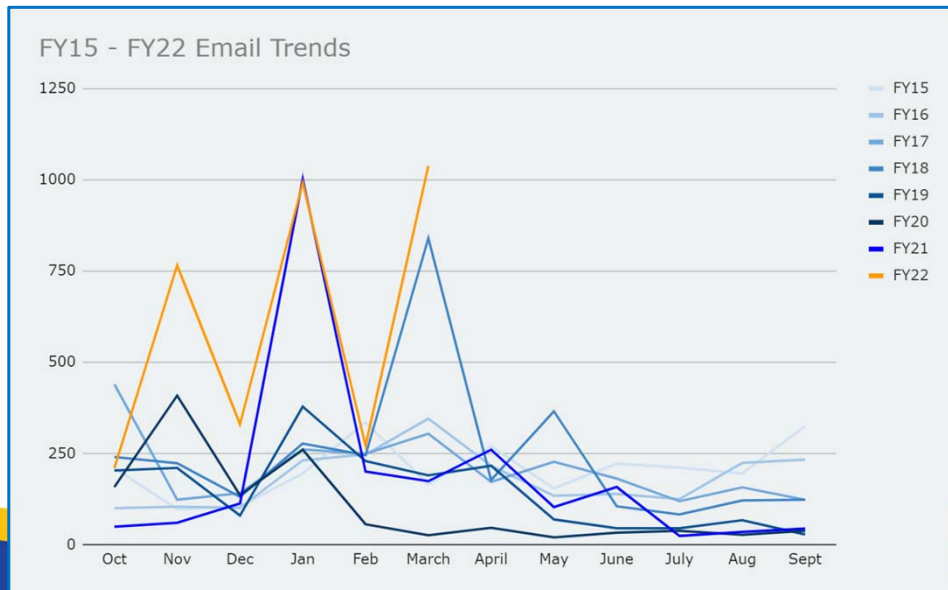
Communications & Submissions

44



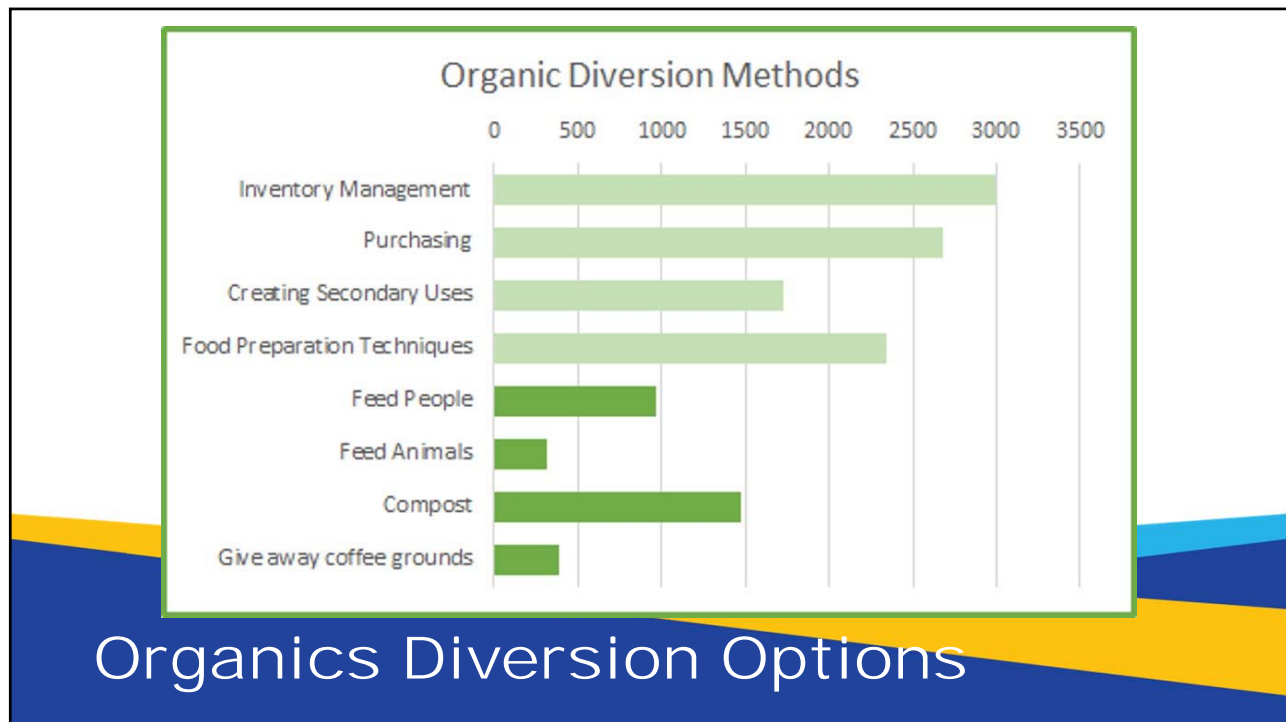
Submission

45



Communication Trends

46

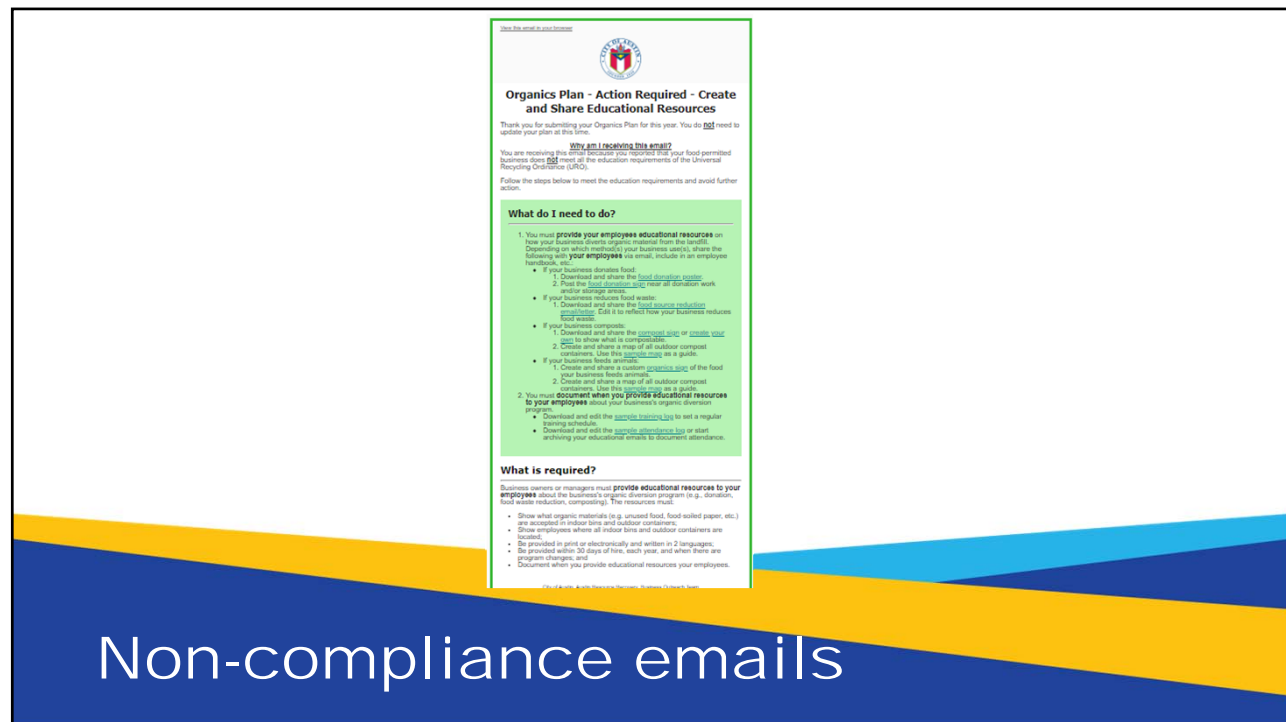


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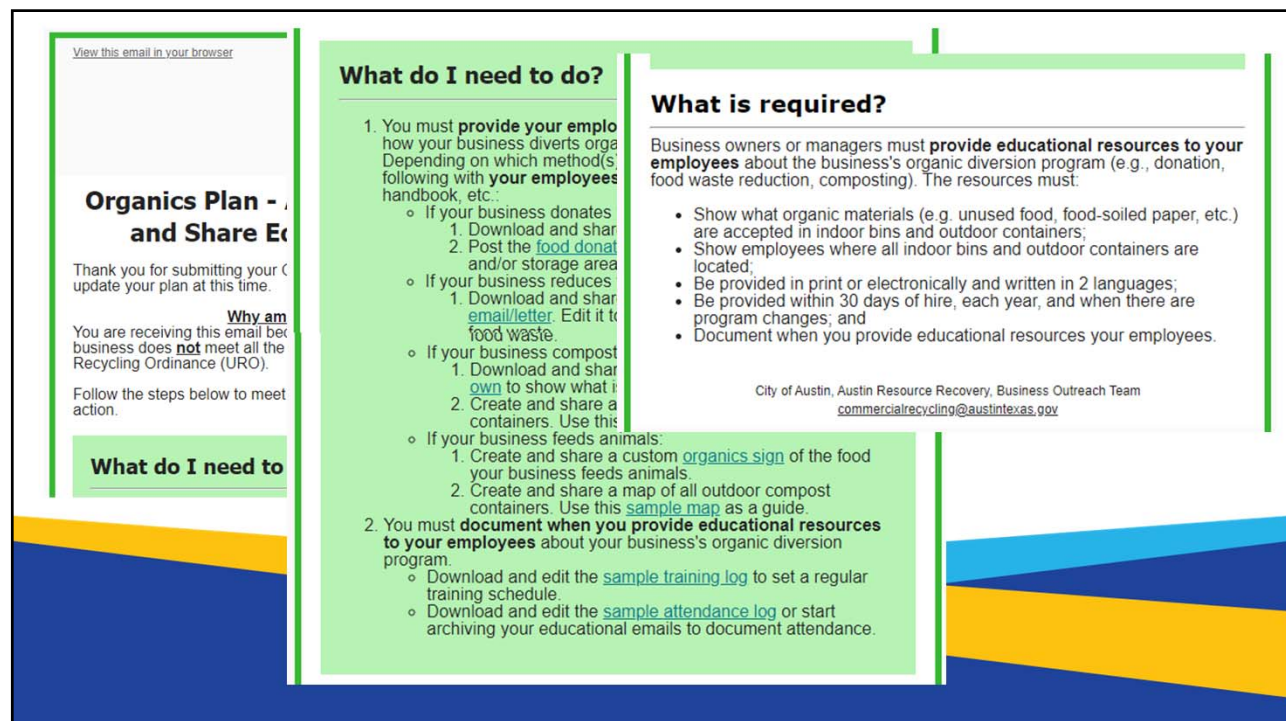
How we follow up

- Property reports not meeting materials, capacity, or convenience requirements:
 - we review waiver request & approve or deny
 - If we deny, CCU follows up
- Property report not meeting signs & education requirements:
 - we send an email with resources

48



49



50

Who they are: CCU

- Commercial Compliance Unit (CCU) follows up on non-compliant properties
 - Focused on complaints, denied waivers (~70), non-submittals (2k)
 - Calls, emails, site visits
 - Provides compliance education, notices of deficiency
 - Will take to court, when necessary

51

How we incentivize

- Zero Waste Business Rebate
 - Requirements:
 - Must be affected by URO
 - Must go above and beyond
 - Can't be used to meet minimum requirements
 - Process
 - Not a true "rebate"; must be approved before purchasing and sending receipts
 - If report meeting capacity requirement, we send 1 of 4 rebate emails

52



ZERO WASTE
Business Rebate

Looking for ways to reduce waste and save money?

You can receive up to \$3,000 in rebates from the City of Austin to start or expand your food donation program, start a compost/organic program or switch from single use plastic items to more sustainable options.

Eligible expenses include:

- Equipment to help donate food to people including refrigeration and storage
- Compost/Organics hauling service for up to 6 months - *Only available to Food Permitted Businesses that donate excess food to people*
- Compostable, paper, and reusable to-go ware

Apply now at austintexas.gov/zwbizrebate. Rebate limitations and other restrictions apply.

City of Austin, Austin Resource Recovery, Business Outreach Team
commercialrecycling@austintexas.gov

Rebate email

53

How we incentivize

- Historically:
 - Used to incentivize early adoption of URO requirements
 - Was more open-ended, took more time to administer
- Since roll out:
 - Developed specific options to choose from
 - E.g., Compost service, straws, bags, to-go ware
 - Last year, added & pushed food donation
 - This year, continued to push food donation; added expanding organics if donating food

54

How we incentivize

- Rebate options:
 1. Food rescue (up to \$3k)
 - Equipment to store and transport food
 - E.g., refrigerators, freezers, shelving, coolers, thermal bags
 2. Organics diversion (up to \$3k)
 - Organics/composting service (up to 6 months), indoor bins
 3. Sustainable switch (up to \$1.8k)
 - Switch from plastic to reusable, paper, or compostable to-go items, like cups, bags, straws.
 4. Multifamily recycling bins (up to \$1.8k)
 - Indoor bins for residents

55

How we incentivize

- This year's results:
 - Food rescue (up to \$3k)
 - 5 applicants; 3 refrigerators/freezers reimbursed (\$9k)
 - Organics diversion (up to \$3k)
 - 4 applicants; 1 month of organics service reimbursed
 - Sustainable switch (up to \$1.8k)
 - 2 applicants; reusable products (\$3.5k)
 - Multifamily recycling bins (up to \$1.8k)
 - 0 applicants

56

Earn up to \$1,800 in rebates

from the City of Austin to expand your food rescue program.*

Eligible expenses include:

- Improving food storage (includes refrigerators, freezers, and shelving)
- Purchasing equipment to transport food (includes coolers and thermal bags)

Apply at
AustinTexas.gov/ZWBizRebate

Email
CommercialRecycling@AustinTexas.gov
to learn more



*available to organizations which distribute food to persons earning 50% or less of median family income in Austin




How we incentivize

57



How we incentivize

58

What we want to do next

- Support new compliance processes & CCU
- Develop resources:
 - help reduce the risk of common contaminants
 - encourage circularity (reuse, reduction, durable, repair)
 - encourage organics diversion, especially food donation
- Incorporate equity:
 - shift from request-based to data-driven
 - proactively help businesses that need it the most
 - improve access through translation, paper plans, etc.

59

Questions?



60