



**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA**  
**Department of Transportation  
and Environmental Services**

# **Environmental Policy Commission Meeting**

## **March 10, 2025**

### **Annual Update: Resource Recovery**



# Agenda



## **Resource Recovery Update**

- **EAP Implantation Update**
- **Plastic Bag Tax**
- **Alexandria Clean Team**
- **Recycling in Alexandria**
- **Multifamily Recycling**
- **Food Waste Collection**

# Environmental Action Plan 2040

GOALS, TARGETS, AND ACTIONS	PROGRESS & NOTES	GOALS, TARGETS, AND ACTIONS	PROGRESS & NOTES
Recycle 5.1.1a (Glass Recycling)	<b>Complete</b> - 5 glass bins installed and partnered with region	Reduce 5.2.1 (Reuse Directory)	<b>Complete</b> - reuse directory implemented
Recycle 5.1.1b (phase Glass out of single stream)	<b>Complete</b> - phased out glass from single stream, annual MRF audits conducted to track progress	Reduce 5.2.2 (Collection Pricing)	<b>Ongoing</b> – Studies to evaluating , curbside composting and yard waste combine as part of PAYT, \$0 tip fee recycling processing and collection.
Recycle 5.1.2 (Recycle Right)	<b>Complete and ongoing</b> -What goes where tool, new oops tags, recycling sorting game, where does it go webpage, social media campaigns and revised guide to services	Reduce 5.2.3 (Share a Bag)	Suspended w/ COVID but implemented a <b>plastic bag tax</b> . Proposed remove on next review.
Recycle 5.1.3 (Route Optimization Study)	<b>Complete</b> - optimization study implemented.	Reduce 5.2.4 (Builders Recycling Guide)	<b>Complete and ongoing</b>
Recycle 5.1.4 (Recycling Ordinance)	No revisions made at this time, review of ordinance is ongoing	Reduce 5.2.5 (regional plastics plan)	<b>Complete and ongoing</b> -Plastic bag tax adopted Jan 2022 working with NVRC region and implemented novaplasticsolution.org
Recycle 5.1.5 (Composting)	<b>Complete</b> - WARM model to be used to calculate for new curbside composting pilot to evaluate GHG net reductions	Reduce 5.2.6 (sustainable purchasing)	Study to be proposed in future budget cycles.
Recycle 5.1.6 (public bin evaluation)	<b>Ongoing</b> - implemented No poo in the blue campaign for pet waste contamination reduction		
Recycle 5.1.7 (commercial requirements)	No revisions made at this time, review of ordinance is ongoing		
Recycle 5.1.8 (organics collection)	<b>Ongoing</b> -Curbside food waste pilot started 2023 to evaluate feasibility until Feb 2025		
Recycle 5.1.9 (alternative disposal study)	<b>Ongoing</b> - VDEQ tracks with SWIA and annual Recycling Rate Report on tonnages annually. SWMP also reviews capacity every 5 years. (Food Waste and Glass)		







## FY2024 / FY2025

# Resource Recovery Achievements

- **Alexandria Clean Team**
  - 3228 Total Bags of Litter Collected
- **Curbside Composting Pilot (EAP)**
  - USDA Grant Funding
  - 2-year pilot ending in May 2025.
  - 1400 Resident composted over 768,000 lbs.
- **Multifamily Recycling Outreach Survey (WasteSmart)**
- **Recycling contamination: 8.9% (EAP)**
  - Lowest in the region.
- **Reduce Holiday Waste Campaign (EAP)**
- **Reduce Food Waste Campaign (WasteSmart)**
- **On the Horizon:**
  - Multifamily Recycling Stakeholder Engagement
  - Recycling and Collections Studies
  - EPS Foam Ban







# Plastic Bag Tax

- The City of Alexandria, the City of Falls Church, Loudon County, Arlington County, and Fairfax County have adopted a 5-cent per bag tax on disposable plastic bags from **grocery stores, convenience stores, and drug stores.**
- The tax went into effect on January 1, 2022, for the City of Alexandria, Fairfax, and Arlington.
- Revenues may be used by localities to :
  - Fund environmental clean up programs,
  - Pollution and litter mitigation programs,
  - Education programs on environmental waste reduction, and
  - Provision of reusable bags to SNAP/WIC beneficiaries.

**BE THE  
SOLUTION  
TO PLASTIC  
POLLUTION**



**SWITCH TO REUSABLE BAGS**  
to keep local waterways, roads  
and open space free of litter.



5¢ PLASTIC BAG TAX TAKES EFFECT JANUARY 1, 2022

Bring your own reusable bag to avoid this fee.

[NOVAPlasticSolution.org](https://NOVAPlasticSolution.org)





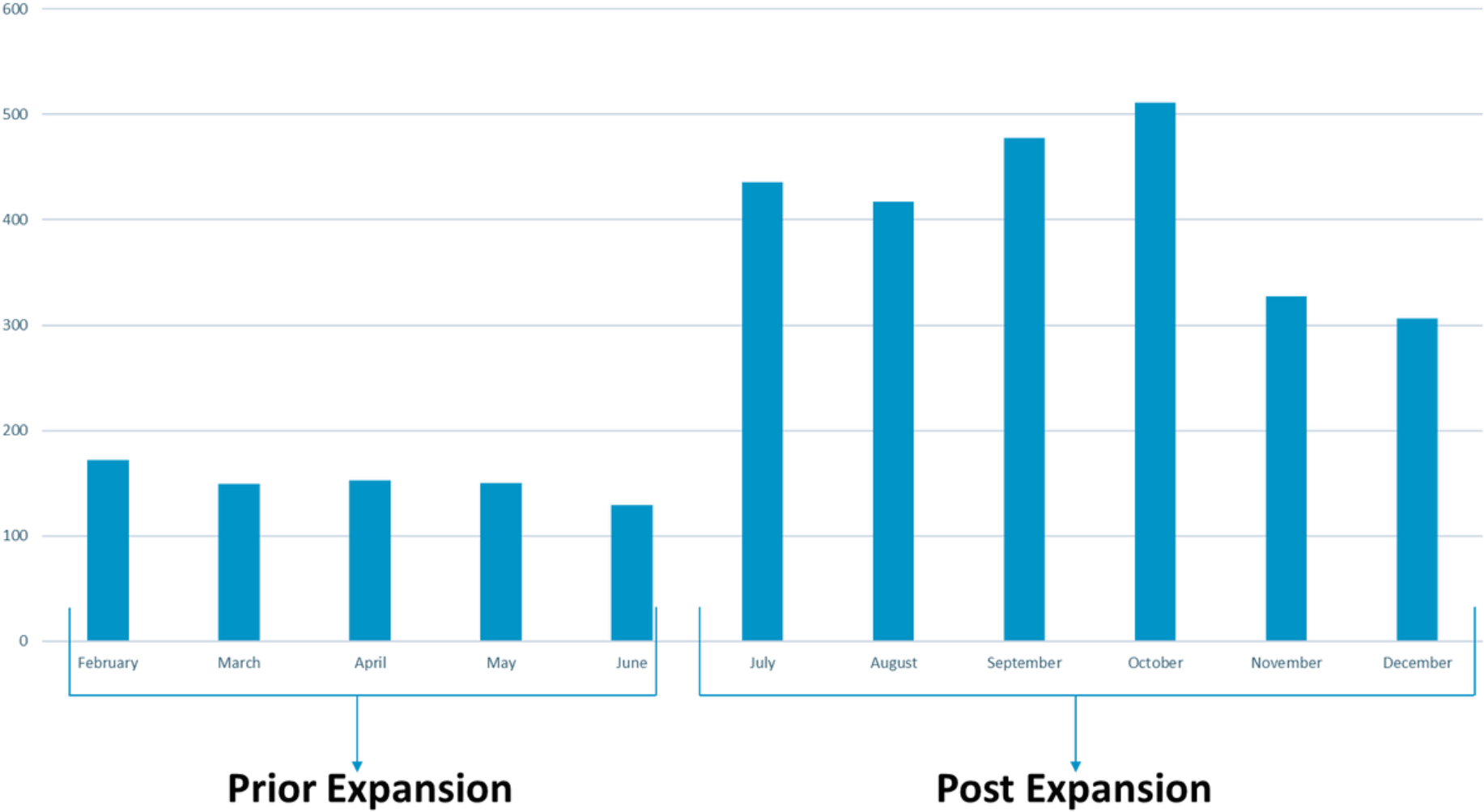


Alexandria Clean Team





# CY2024 Metrics



Monthly Totals	Bag Qty
February	172
March	149
April	153
May	150
June	129
July	436
August	417
September	478
October	511
November	327
December	306

3228 Total Bags/3596 Lbs.of Litter Collected





# Clean Team

In 2022, the West End Clean Team was rebranded as the Alexandria Clean Team (ACT), and its responsibilities were expanded.

The ACT is currently responsible for litter mitigation along 21.8 miles of roadway, along high-intensity pedestrian areas, including 45 parks throughout the city.

High-Intensity Pedestrian Areas include:

- Arlandria / Mount Vernon Ave / Commonwealth Ave
- Eisenhower Ave / Van Dorn / Holland Ln
- Van Dorn St / Eisenhower Ave / King St
- King St / Beauregard / Callahan
- Seminary Rd / Beauregard / Quaker Ln
- Waterfront & Old Town

In addition to litter mitigation the ACT also continues to contribute toward the following:

- Special Events (Litter mitigation / RCPA collaboration)
- Code enforcement projects/requests (200 block project / Mt Vernon Ave enforcement)
- Illegal dumping response Compactor Room Support (Access enforcement / Litter mitigation)
- Ice/snow removal @ King St (ADA ramps / Sidewalks)
- Public Trash/Recycling vandalism response

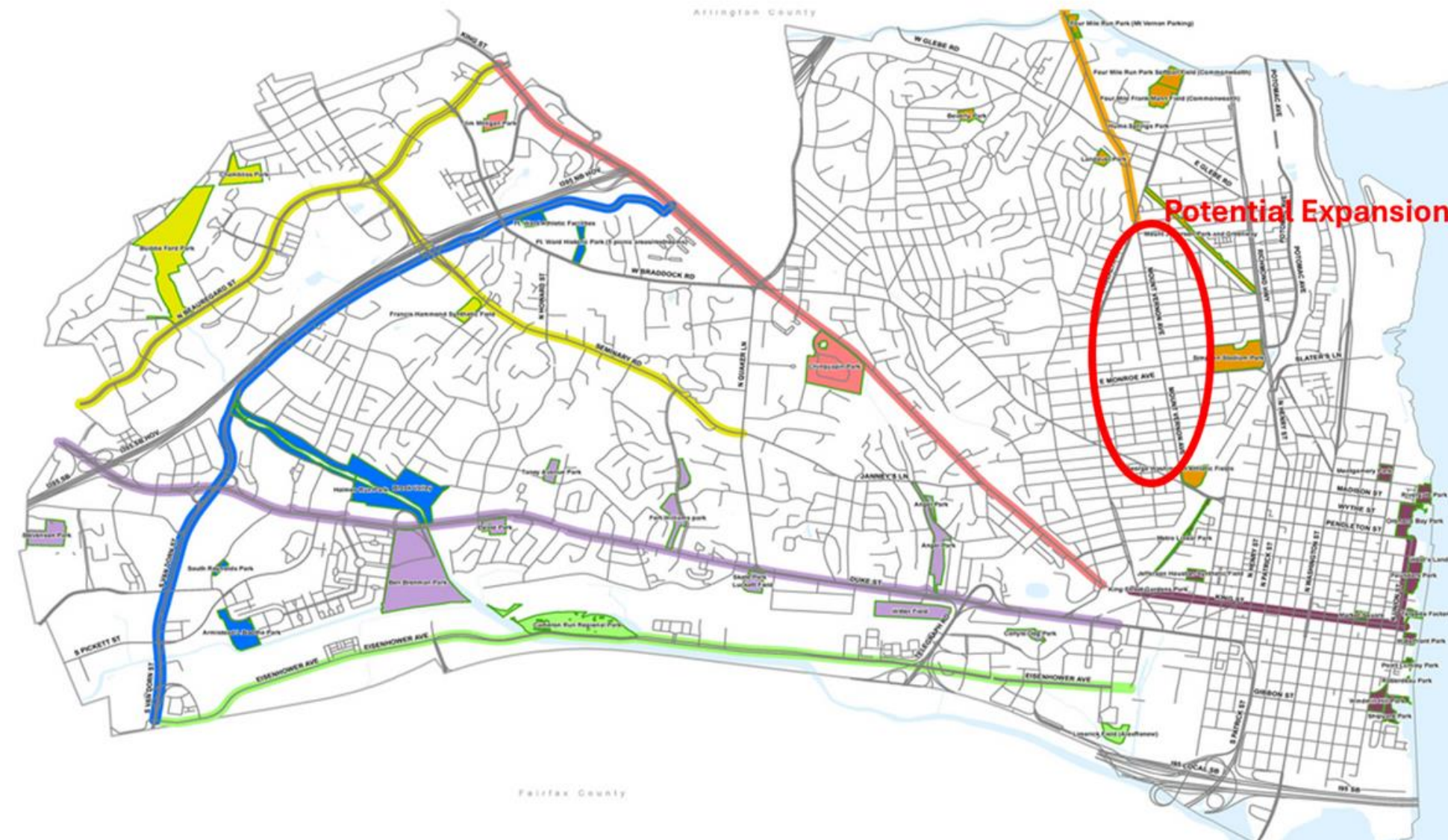




# What's Next?

## Strategize potential expansion

- Add drop-off locations/recycling centers as part of designed routes
- Review possible expansion of Arlandria / Mt. Vernon Ave area to increase litter reduction efforts
- Strategize further involvement in Winter Ops
- Plan and design add-on assignment of snow/ice removal within City protected bike lanes
- Establish SOP for snow/ice sidewalk treatment assignments related untreated areas reported by residents
- Review equipment needs for successful Winter Operations







# Recycling

- Recycling Rate 54.3%
- Contamination 8.9%
- Mult-Family Recycling Survey: 400 responses.
- Recycling Collections & Processing Contract
  - Renewal in FY2026
  - Combine services
- New WM Material Recovery Facility
  - Capable of sorting glass out of single-stream recycling.





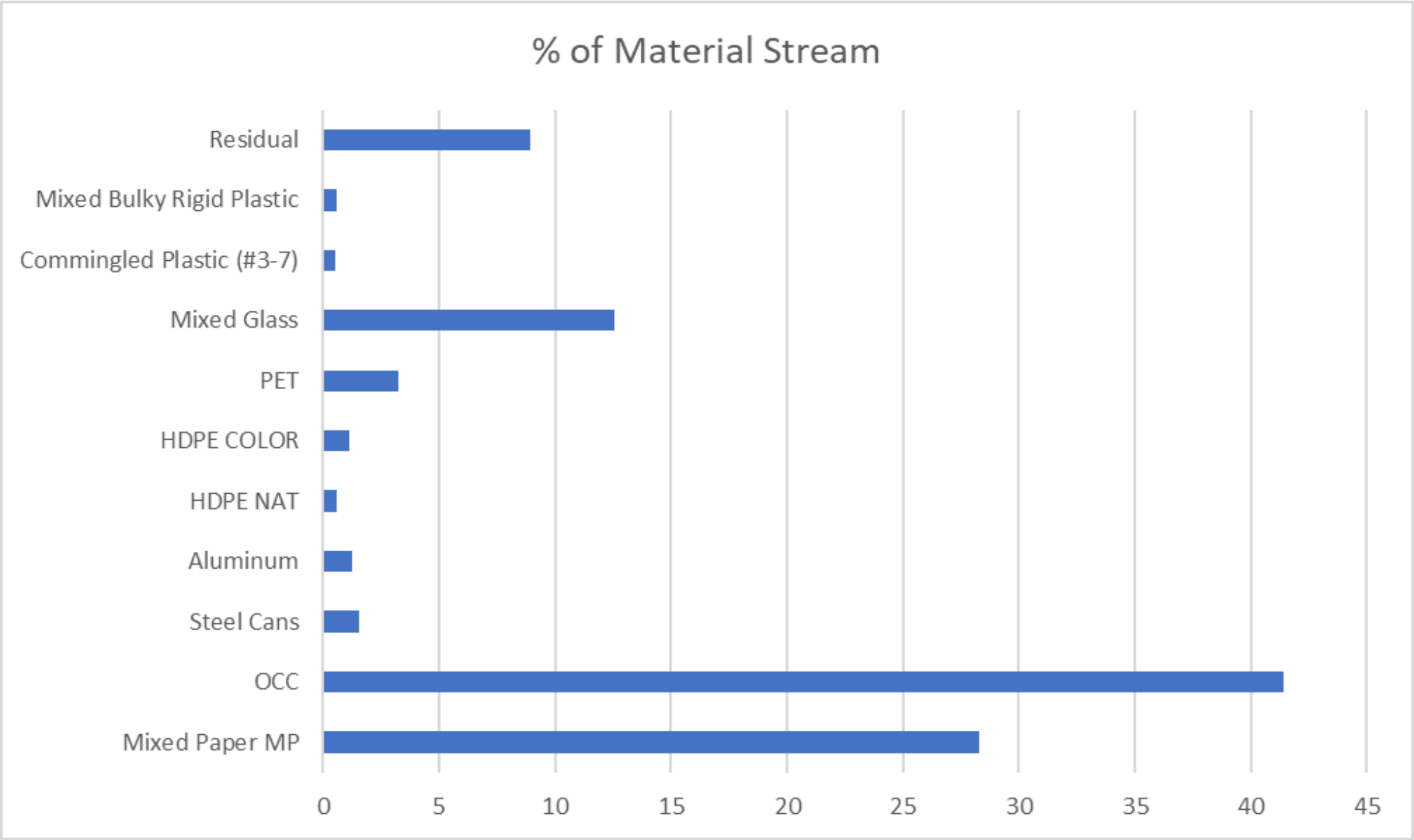
# Recycling Audit FY2025



Commodity	% of Material Stream
Mixed Paper MP	28.29
OCC	41.44
Steel Cans	1.54
Aluminum	1.25
HDPE NAT	0.56
HDPE COLOR	1.13
PET	3.22
Mixed Glass	12.55
Commingled Plastic (#3-7)	0.49
Mixed Bulky Rigid Plastic	0.59
<b>Residual</b>	<b><u>8.9</u></b>

400 tons/month.

November 2024 MRF Audit.



Findings





# Recycling Markets and Trends

Commodity	\$Price per Ton
Mixed Paper MP	\$45
OCC	\$80
Steel Cans	\$185
Aluminum	\$1900
HDPE NAT	\$1740
HDPE COLOR	\$120
PET	\$380
Mixed Glass	(\$15)
Commingled Plastic (#3-7)	\$50
Mixed Bulky Rigid Plastic	\$20
Residual	(\$61.74)

- Recycling markets remain stable
  - Paper and cardboard markets grown slightly due to increased demand for packages and toilet paper
  - HDPE and PET have strong markets.
- New Recycling MRF opening in Elkridge, Md with 13 optical sorts, with the capability of sorting out glass.
- Regional Battery Management Campaign: Batteries Cause Fires
- Virginia Foam Ban – July 2025 for large food establishments with 20 locations are more.
  - Smaller establishments in July 2026

TRENDS





# Multifamily Recycling

## Overall Learnings

- Majority of survey takers (94%) were daily or weekly recyclers.
- 92% of survey takers think it is extremely or very important that their building offer recycling to residents.
- Convenience is important to recyclers.
- Understanding rules & regulations of accepted recyclables is paramount.
- Explaining what happens to recyclables after collection will help to build trust.
- Making recycling easier in their homes and transporting to collection point should result in greater participation.
- Multifamily residents observe contamination in recycling by their neighbors.
- High demand for more convenient glass recycling.

## Demographics

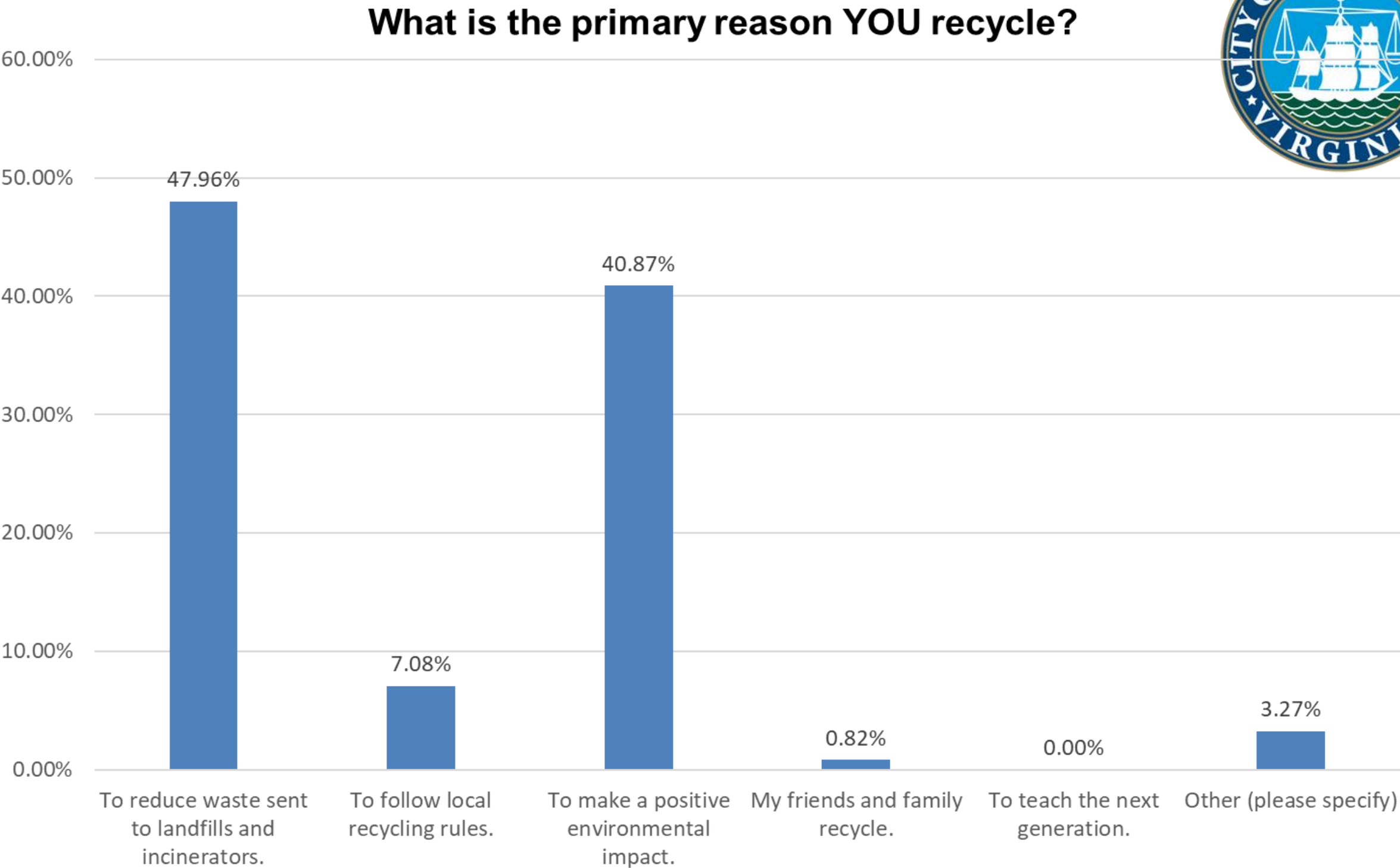
- Representing 60+ different facilities
- Majority of survey takers comprised a 1-2 person households at a range of income.
- Representing ages 25-75+
- 38% have lived in their facility 1-5 years
- 76% own their apartment or condo
- 69% of survey takers were female, 30% male, 2 self-described





# Multifamily Survey Responses

- OTHER:
- All of the above.
  - It's the right thing to do.
  - Offered on site at my residence
  - All of the above
  - When I feel like it
  - To make sure that aluminum and paper/cardboard is recycled. The other material (plastic) is really not recycled.
  - Mandated by the City
  - Compensation for aluminum cans
  - Boxes don't fit in the trash chute
  - I'm an eco freak.
  - When I feel like it, I'll do it
  - It's what we've been acculturated to do.



Answer Choices		Responses	
To reduce waste sent to landfills and incinerators.	47.96%		176
To follow local recycling rules.	7.08%		26
To make a positive environmental impact.	40.87%		150
My friends and family recycle.	0.82%		3
To teach the next generation.	0.00%		0
Other (please specify)	3.27%		12
		Answered	367
		Skipped	34

Findings

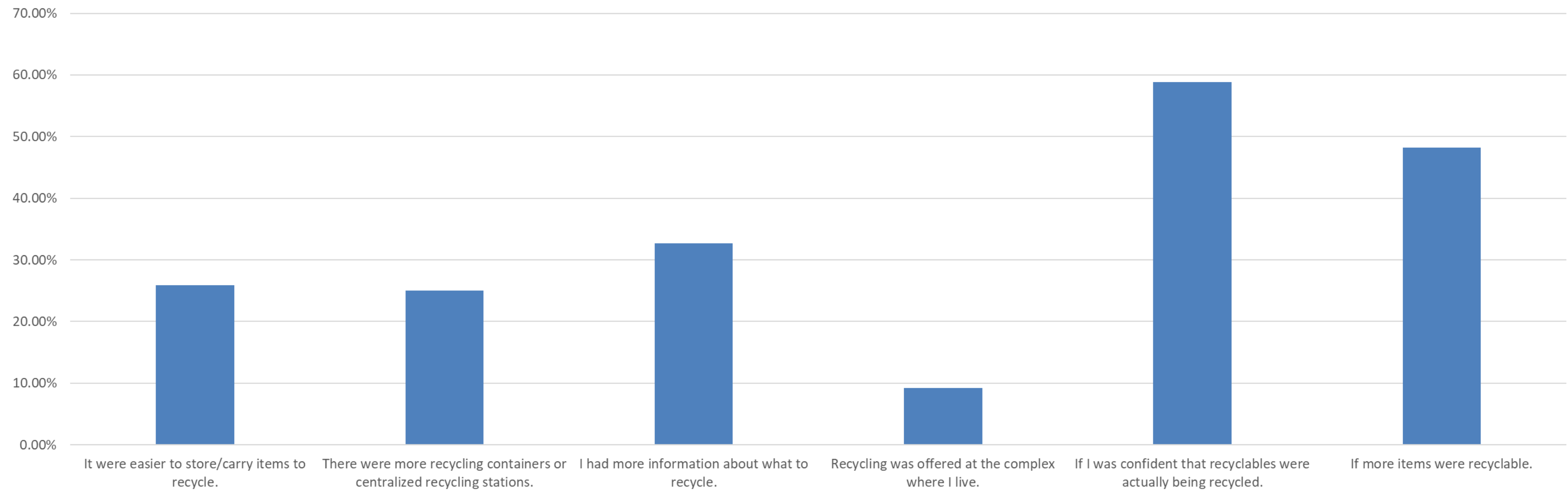




- Answer Choices
- It were easier to store/carry items to recycle.
  - There were more recycling containers or centralized recycling stations.
  - I had more information about what to recycle.
  - Recycling was offered at the complex where I live.
  - If I was confident that recyclables were actually being recycled.
  - If more items were recyclable.

Responses	
25.89%	95
25.07%	92
32.70%	120
9.26%	34
58.86%	216
48.23%	177
Answered	367

I would recycle more if (Select top two choices)







# Organics

## Curbside

- USDA Curbside Composting Grant
  - 2-year pilot program
  - 1453 Residents - Fully Subsidized
  - 169.39 tons of food waste in Year 1
  - City will continue service beyond the Pilot
  - T&ES exploring options to combine with Yard Waste Collections.

## Drop Off

- 6 Farmers Market Locations - 5 are year-round locations
- Exploring On Street Composting

Regional Compost Facility







# Curbside Composting

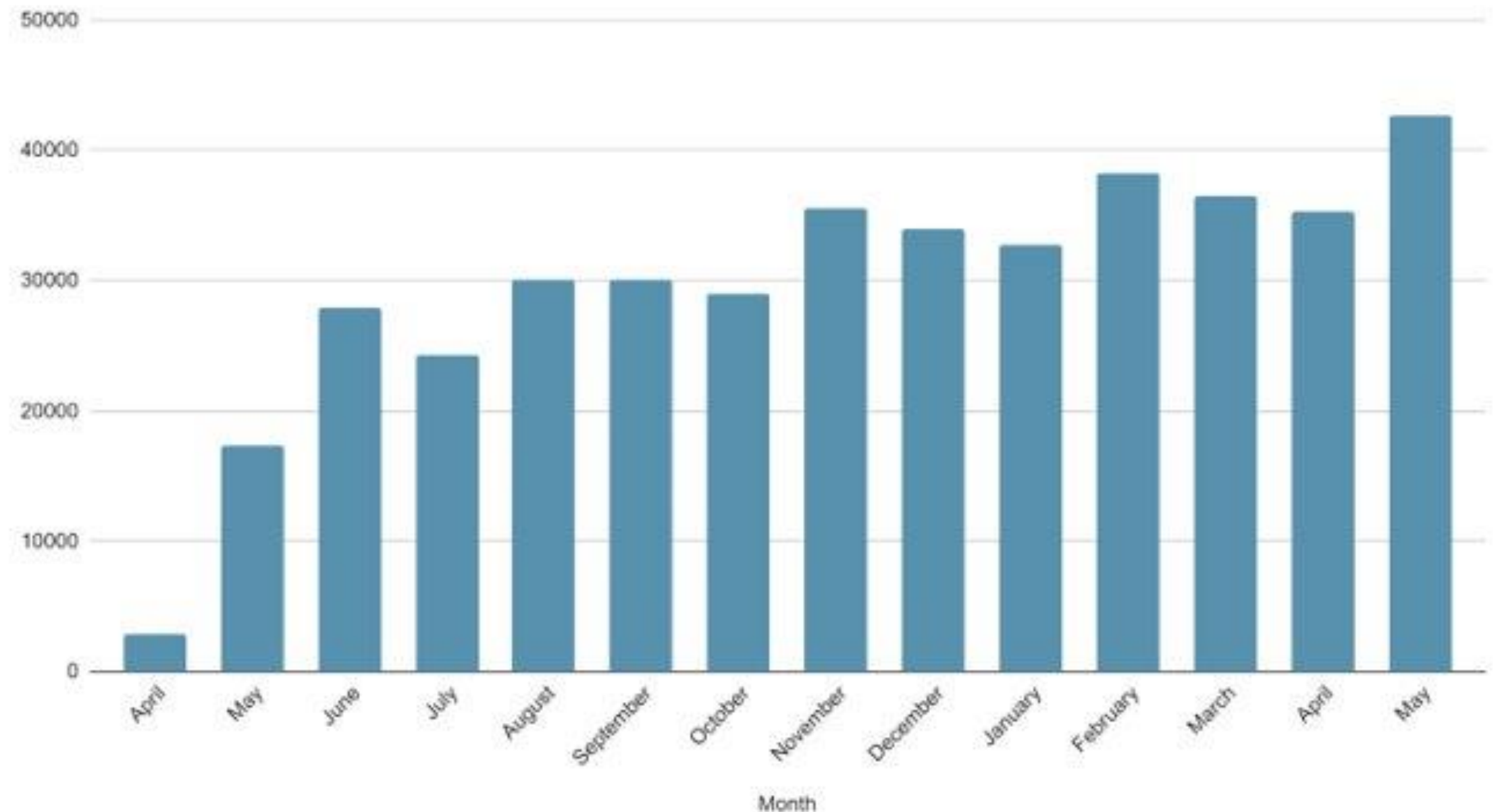
## Pilot Results

The curbside pilot began collection four days a week (Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday). An average route of 300 households diverted 1 ton of food waste per week or 3-4 tons per month.

In year one, 169.34 tons of food waste was collected and diverted from landfill.

**1453**  
**Participants**

Participants, Pounds Collected and Tons



**Findings**





# Food Waste



**Curbside Composting**



**Farmers' Market Composting**

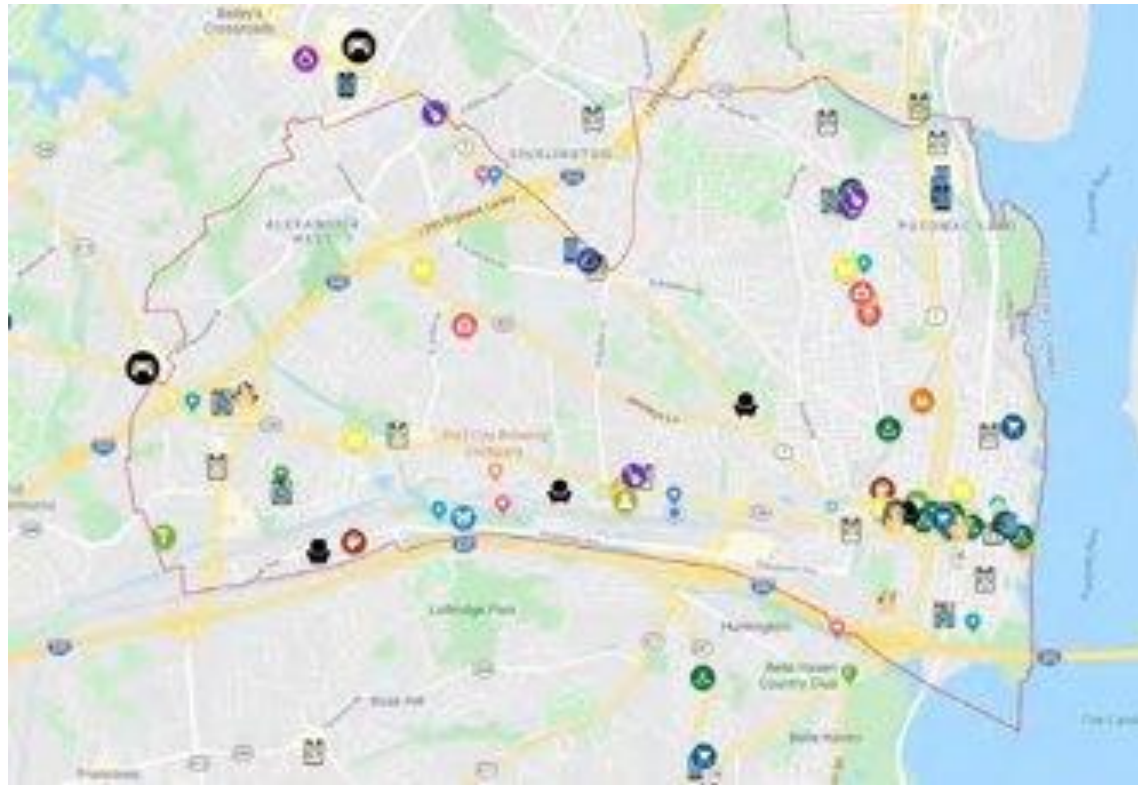


**Backyard Composting**





# Resources



**Alexandria  
Reuse  
Directory**



**Guide to  
Services**



**What Goes  
Where  
Directory**





**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA**  
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**Question & Answers**

**Thank you**

