

Commercial Recycling Plan for the City of Fayetteville, Arkansas



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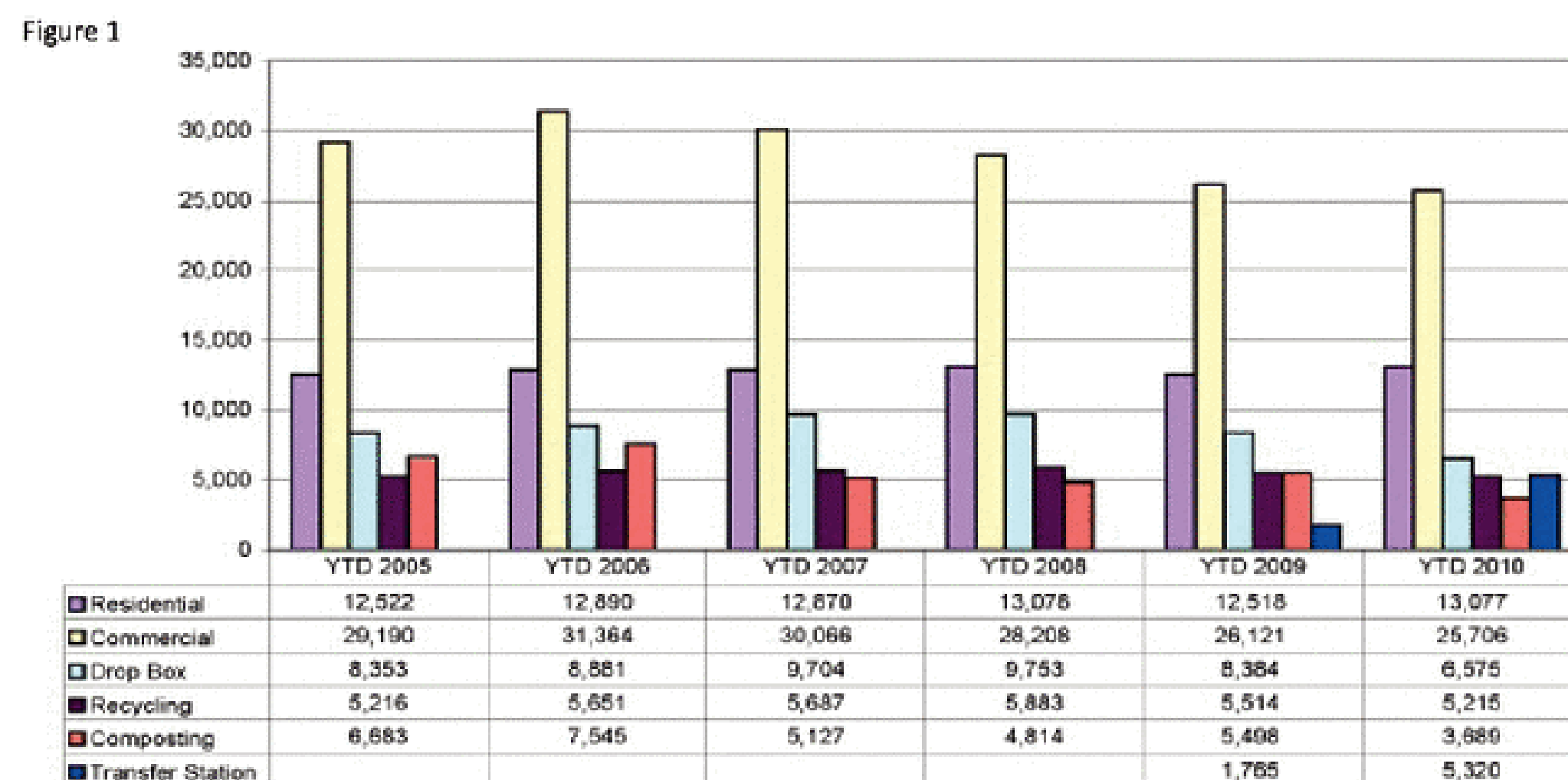
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Background

Currently in Fayetteville, Arkansas, only about 150 businesses participate in the small business recycling program. This program allows for each small business to have up to 5 18 gallon recycling bins, at a one time fee of \$10.50 per bin, and a \$5.88 recycling fee per month. Beyond that, larger businesses have the option of paper and cardboard recycling services. The cardboard program allows for 4 to 8 yard dumpsters, and can be dumped up to 5 times a week. The paper recycling program allows for a 4 yard dumpster, with collection once a week. The collection fee is \$32.76 per month, and the business must lease the paper dumpster at \$14.73 per month. Along with these options, there is a 24 hour 7 day a week drop off location for anyone including businesses to drop off their recyclable materials. Recently a glass recycling program that consists of a dumpster or 96 gallon cart has been offered to businesses on or near Dickson Street with once a week collection, at no charge to the business.

Figure 1 below illustrates the number of customers participating in the PAYT program with the tonnage of residential waste and recyclables shown. (Note: The University of Arkansas is not included in these totals.)



The City of Fayetteville operates a curbside sort recycling program for its approximately 20,000 single family residential and duplex customers. This program collects ten different materials for recycling:

City of Fayetteville Solid Waste and Recycling Resource Management Plan

The Problem

The city of Fayetteville specifically has set a goal of 25% of waste diversion by 2015. This includes yard waste for composting, as well as other recyclable materials including but not limited to cardboard, glass, steel, aluminum, paper, and plastics one and two. Businesses and corporations are often responsible for large portions of waste, and this holds true here in Fayetteville. While the existing options are helpful, only about 190 of roughly 3,000 of Fayetteville's businesses participate in the small business recycling program. What incentives could be given to encourage participation? Are there programs that work elsewhere that would also work well here?

The Project

The purpose of this project is to examine current corporate and business waste and recycling policies in various cities across the United States. After this evaluation, as well as examining the demographics of and the resources available to this area, the goal is to produce a feasible commercial recycling program plan for the city of Fayetteville, Arkansas. Along with a more in-depth program, I hope to come up with a more sociology-based outreach and advertisement system for the recycling programs in an attempt to maximize participation from community members.

The Facts

•“The city sent 50,786 tons of solid waste collected from residential and commercial services, the dropbox, (roll off container program), and transfer stations to the landfill in 2010. This accounted for 85% of the total waste stream collected and processed at the City's Material Recovery Facility (MRF) and Transfer Station. Of the remaining 15% of materials, 9% were recycled and 6% were composted” (City of Fayetteville, pg. 7).

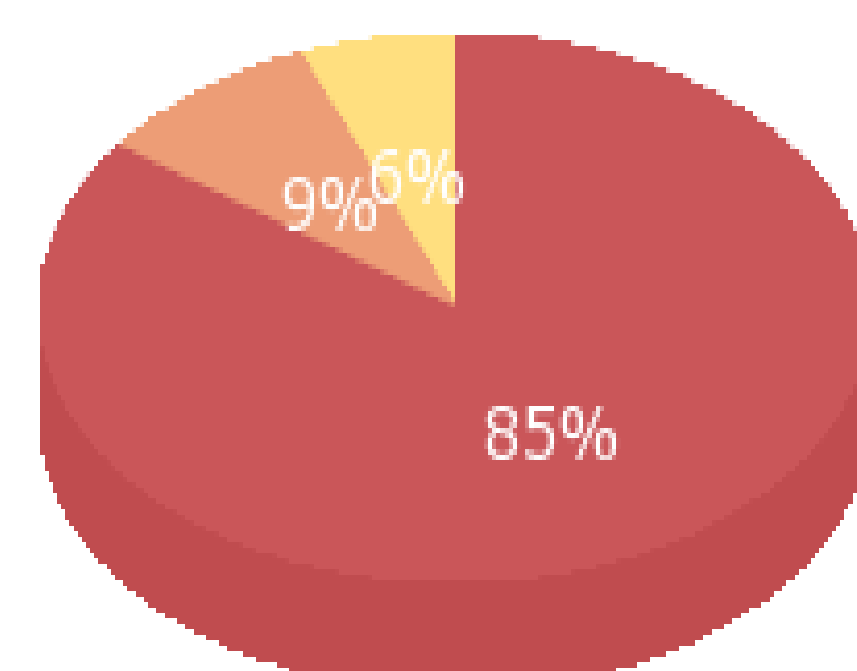
•“Including avoided landfill fees, the city of Fayetteville receives \$125.04 per ton of recycling material sold” (City of Fayetteville, pg. 26).

•Before publishing the Recycling Resource Management Plan, a survey was conducted. In this study, only 7% of businesses said they did not participate in recycling programs because one was not available, although many noted not having enough storage spaces for the different containers.

•The commercial recycling program that currently exists here in Fayetteville is actually subsidized by the residential services fee.

Fayetteville Waste Stream 2010

■ Landfill=85
■ Recycled=9
■ Composted=6



<http://c1ecolocalizercom.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/files/2009/09/bins-300x274.jpg>

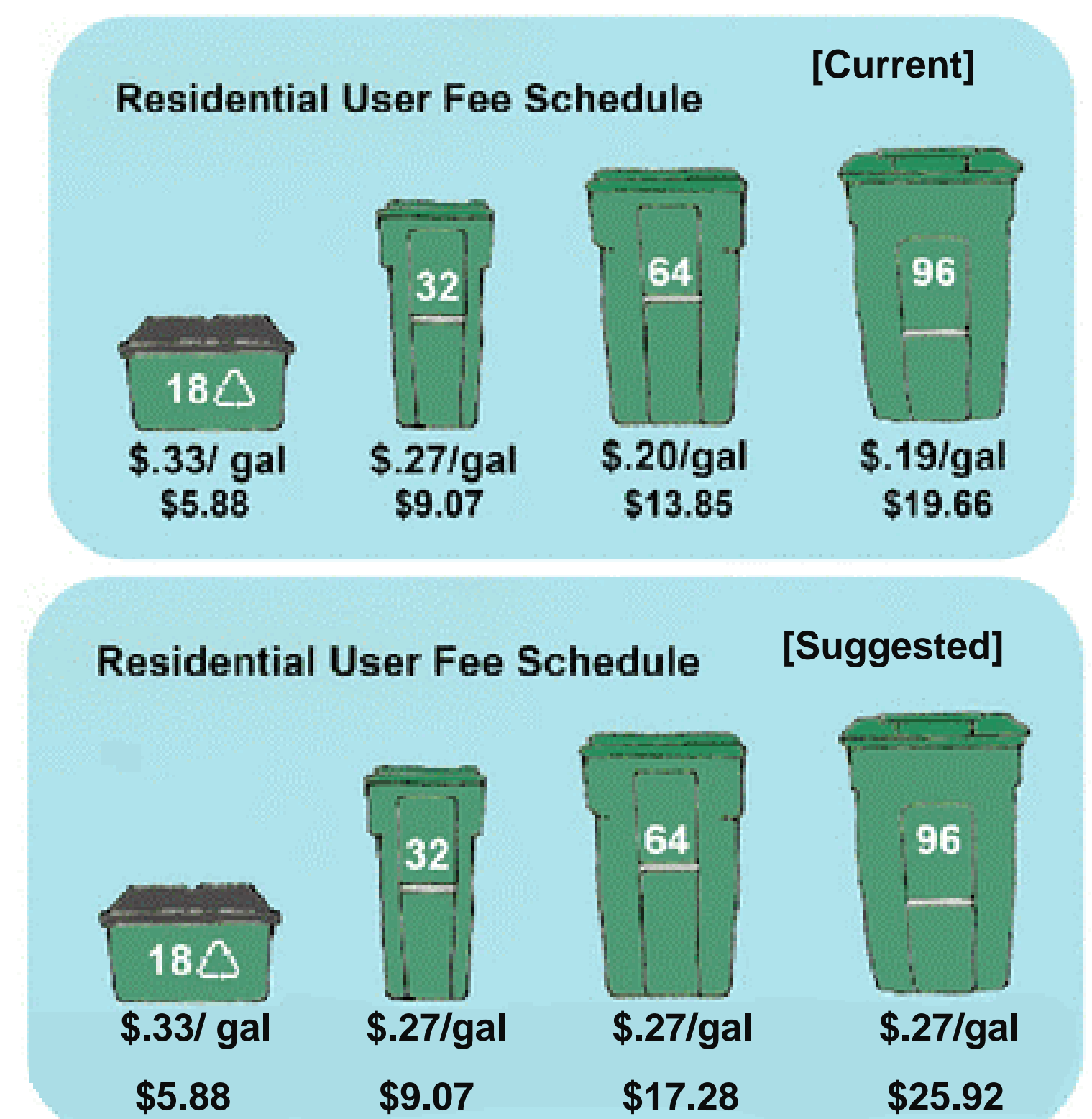
Proposals

- Instead of one cart and up to 5 recycling bins for the small business program, an initial implementation of 2 carts: one for recycling and one for landfill waste, with the option of keeping a 3rd cart for glass. This would reduce the amount of space taken up by the bins, while increasing the ease of the program.
- Mandatory recycling for businesses that produce 4 or more cubic yards of waste and housing complexes of 5 or more. This has been implemented statewide in California, and seems to be doing well.
- Food waste composting. Use this at restaurants first, and when the funding to increase the capacity of the program becomes available expand the food waste composting to residential areas as well.
- It may not be necessary to encounter and persuade everyone to participate, but rather convince a few people in each neighborhood, and the effect could trickle down. According to a substantial amount of research conducted by Nicholas Christakis, a professor at Harvard, and James Fowler, a professor at the University of California, San Diego, “everything we do or say tends to ripple through our network, having an impact on our friends (one degree), our friends' friends (two degrees), and even our friends' friends' friends (three degrees). The rule applies to a broad range of attitudes, feelings, and behaviors and it applies to the spread of phenomena as diverse as political views, weight gain, and happiness” (Connected, pg. 28).
- Because the City of Fayetteville's Solid Waste and Recycling Division receives no designated tax or subsidized funding from the city, an increase in division revenue will be necessary to fund any further recycling programs. In the blue charts to the right I have given a phase one suggestion for increasing the divisions revenue.

Sustainability

Sustainability is considered to be a collective movement of roughly four different domains, and this project bridges all four of those categories. Introducing a commercial waste management policy would increase the amount of waste diversion from landfills and therefore reduce the amount of raw materials needed for production. It would strengthen the infrastructure for recycling in the area. New legislation could provide incentives for more businesses to participate, which would further the participation from the public and concurrently alter existing social norms.

Working on this project has provided an avenue for me to connect my majors, criminal justice and sociology, with my minor in sustainability. I have spent hours examining existing legislation for recycling programs across the United States, as well as social and demographic data of those areas. After doing this I was able to apply my previous knowledge to develop a tentative plan that could easily benefit a city in which I personally live. These skills and this opportunity only increased my desire to study environmental law, which I will have the opportunity to do in the fall at the University of Arkansas School of Law.



LITERATURE CITED

- City of Fayetteville Solid Waste and Recycling Resource Management Plan.
- Cal. 75 Percent Initiative. Chapter 476, Statutes of 2011 (Chesbro, AB 341)
- Christakis, Nicholas A., and James H. Fowler. Connected: The Amazing Power of Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives. London: HarperPress, 2011. Print.