

Multifamily Organics Pilot

ZWAC – 9/14/2022



Background

- Resolution 20191017-028
- Universal Recycling Ordinance – organics diversion requirements for food service businesses only
- Multifamily properties (>4 units) required to provide access to recycling for residents
- About 55% of Austin households are in multifamily properties
 - 95% of those are renters

Resolution 20191017-028

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Manager is directed to make recommendations to the City Council, within six months of the pilot program's completion, on possible amendments to the Universal Recycling Ordinance to include organic waste collection at all commercial and multi-family properties. The recommendations should take into consideration a broad spectrum of interests, including, but not limited to, City staff, multifamily property owners and managers, zero waste advocates, the Austin Apartment Association, the Building Owners and Managers Association, environmental advocates, the Austin Tenants Council, and residents of multifamily properties.

Multifamily Properties

- Apartments
- Condominiums
 - Including detached homes
- Townhomes
- Dormitories
- Nursing homes / assisted living facilities
- Mobile homes
- 1,800 properties in Austin

Existing Composting Options for Multifamily

- Drop-off sites
 - Community gardens
 - Farmers' Markets
- Neighbors/friends with ARR carts
- Backyard composting
- Valet opt-in collection
- Full-service collection offered to all residents

Additional Research

- Researched and interviewed other municipalities with multifamily organics programs
 - Collection - Boulder, CO; Seattle, WA; New York, NY
 - Drop-Off – Washington D.C., Charlotte, VA; NYC
- Researched existing multifamily organics pilots
 - San Francisco
- Investigated properties in Austin with existing organics collection
- Commercial Organics Pilot – Austin, 2012

Input from URO Committee

- Onsite collection systems rather than drop-off
- Large sample size
- Geographic representation
- 6 month pilot

Input from Stakeholders

- Meeting Dates: 4/23/19, 6/4/19, 1/8/20
- Stakeholders: haulers, multifamily property managers, Austin Apartment Association

Pilot Goals

- Identify challenges and best practices
- Understand cost impacts
- Inform future policy recommendations



Property Recruitment

- Began in 2019
- Put on hold for COVID
- Restarted in Winter 2020
- On hold due to Uri
- Restarted in Spring 2021
- Calls, emails, newsletters, social media
- 8 properties participated

Service Delivery

- Properties chose their own service provider and contracted for services at market rates
- Up to 6 months of rebated service
- Service levels chosen by property management
 - Cart-based or valet service
 - Locked containers
- Simulate real-world scenario



Education

- Virtual information session
 - Language interpretation available
- Kitchen collectors with labels
- Bilingual how-to guides
- Letters
- Website



Data Collection

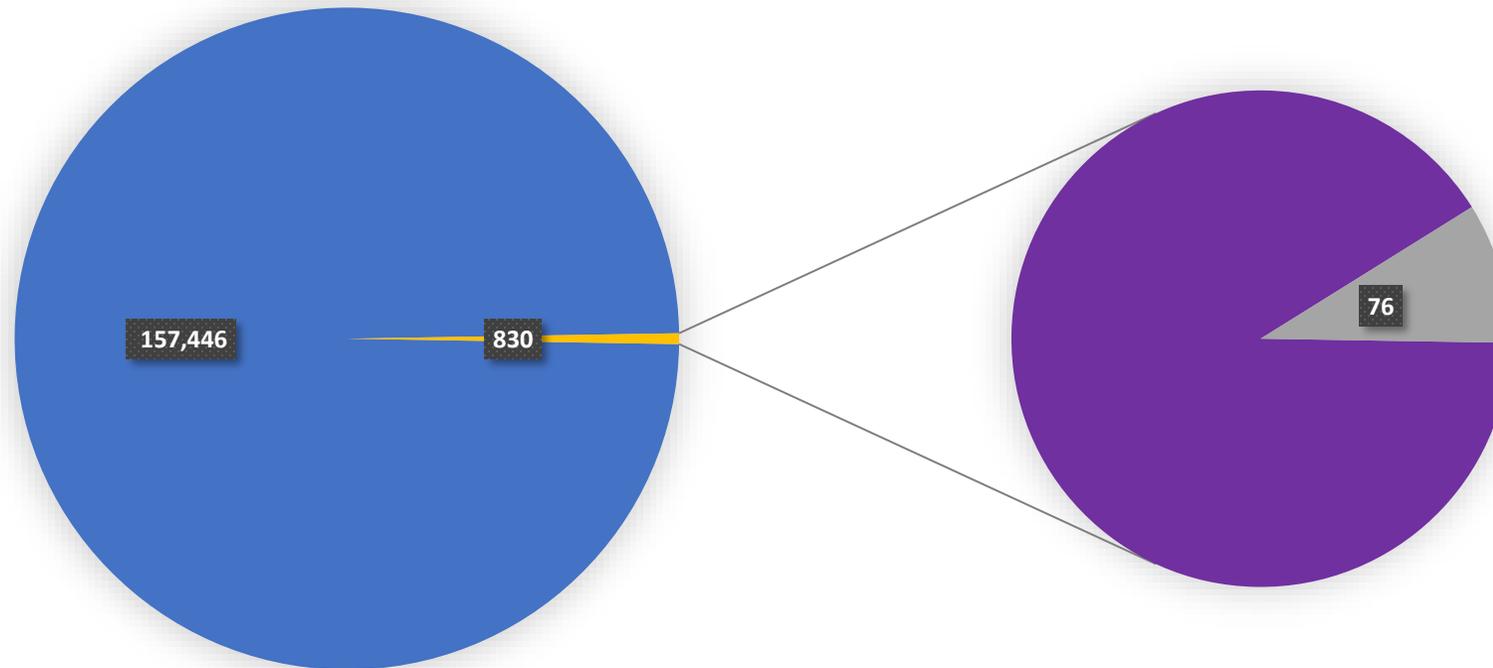
- Weekly container audits
 - Identify materials
 - Contamination
 - Container fullness/use
- Management Surveys
 - 3 months and end of pilot
- Resident Survey
 - End of pilot
- Invoices

Results



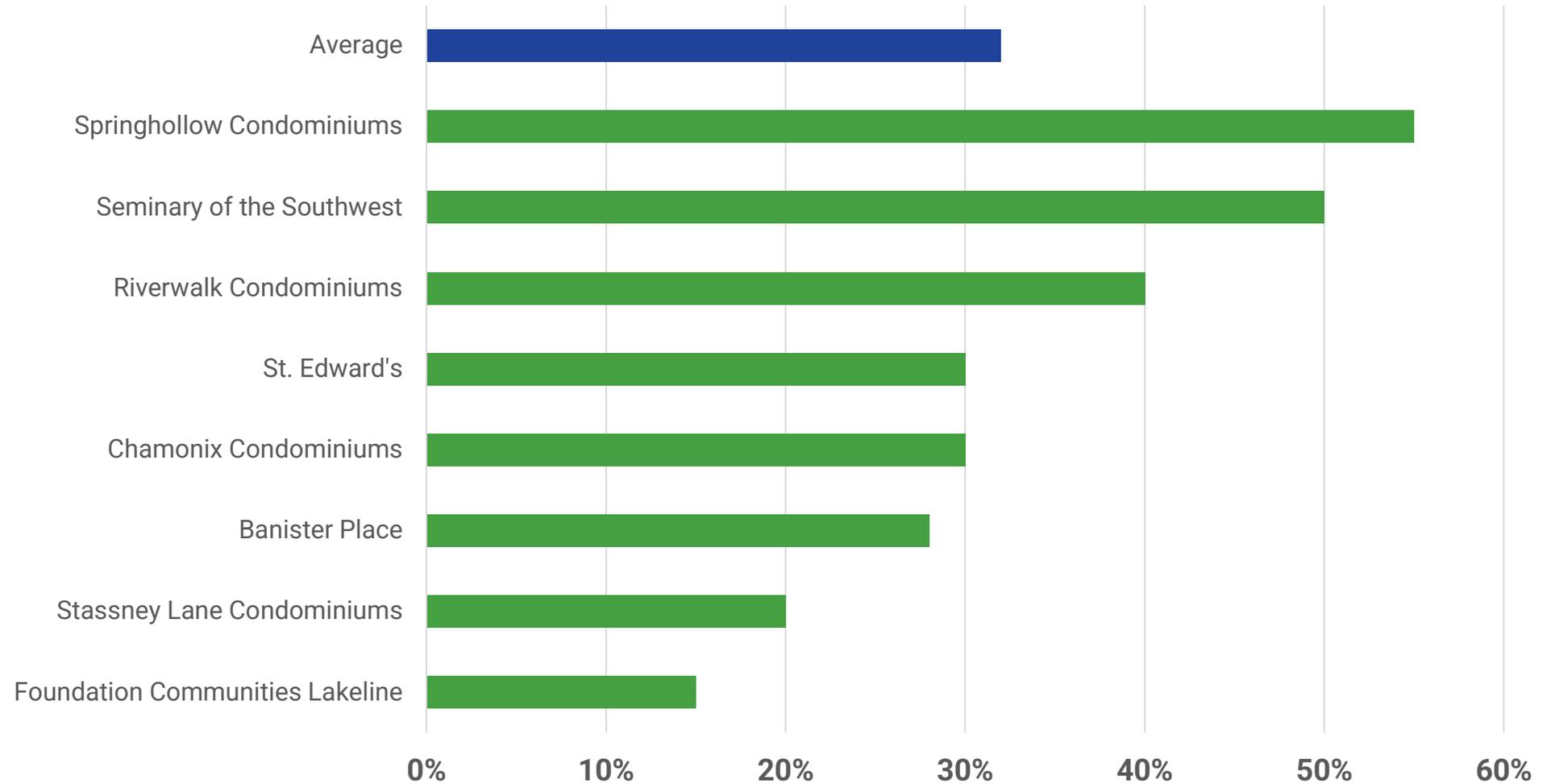
Survey Caveats

Resident Survey Responses



■ Total Multifamily Units ■ Total Units in Pilot ■ Survey Responses

Percent of Residents per Property that used the Pilot Compost/Organics Service according to Management

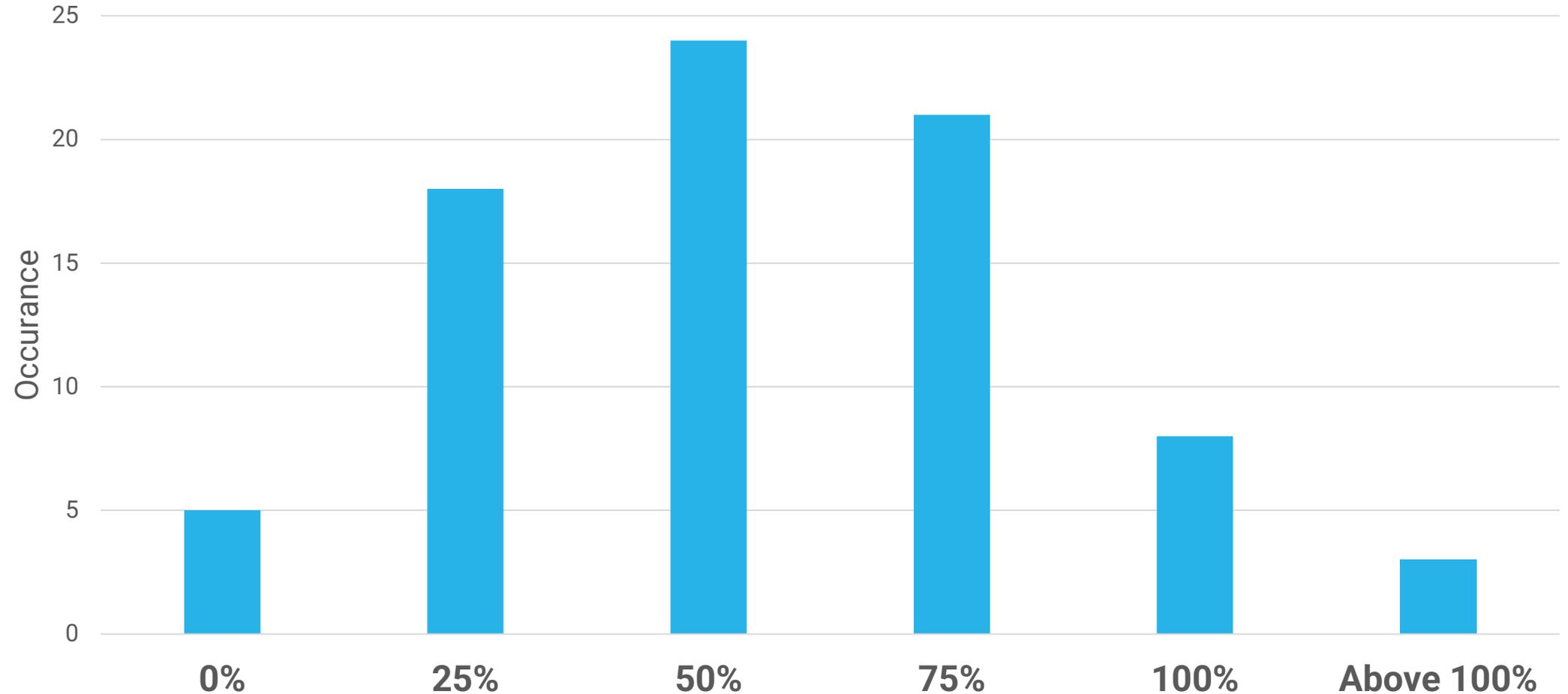


Service Level

| Property Name | Dwelling Units | Number of containers | Container size (gallons) | Gallons / week service level | Gallons / Unit / Week |
|--|----------------|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Chamonix Condominiums | 130 | 4 | 64 | 256 | 1.97 |
| Seminary of the SW | 38 | 1 | 64 | 64 | 1.68 |
| Banister Place | 32 | 1 | 65 | 65 | 2.03 |
| Foundation Communities Lakeline Station | 132 | 2 | 64 | 128 | 0.97 |
| Riverwalk | 142 | 2 | 64 | 128 | 0.9 |
| Springhollow Condominiums | 63 | 3 | 64 | 192 | 3 |
| Stassney Lane Condominiums* | 114 | 104 | 5 | 520 | 4.56 |
| St. Edwards | 178 | 2 | 64 | 128 | 0.72 |

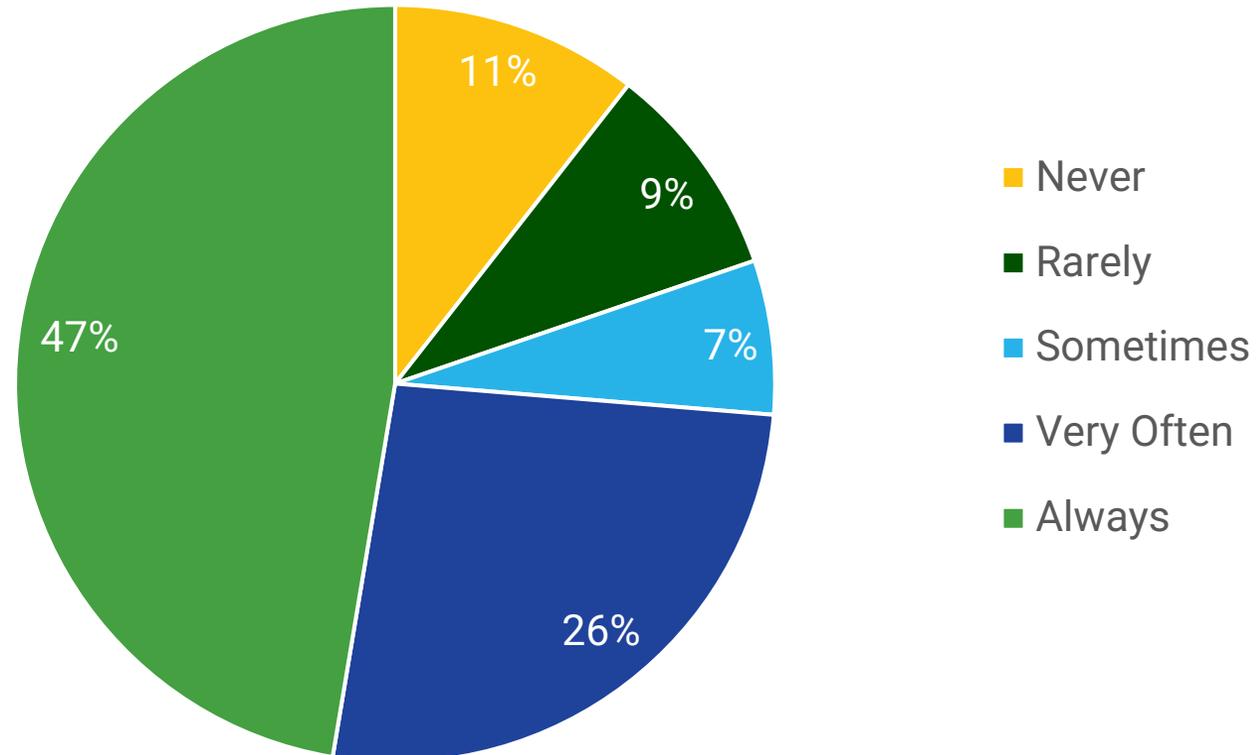
*used a valet collection service.

Weekly Audit Observed Container Fill Level



Survey Results

How often did you use the pilot compost/organics service at your community?



What resources did you find helpful?



Challenges

- Lack of participation – reported by half of managers
- Contamination

Costs

- Costs vary based on service level provided and number of carts
- Larger properties with more carts see a lower per-cart fee and therefore a lower per unit cost
- Smaller properties will see a higher cost burden that is passed on to residents

Costs

- Valet service: \$50 per unit per month
- Community cart-based service: \$51 – 112 per cart per month
- Per unit costs: range \$0.80 - \$2.95 for community collection and \$50 for valet

Next Steps

- URO Committee meetings with stakeholders
 - Including stakeholders identified in Council Resolution
- Next meeting 10/6/22
- After stakeholder process, develop recommendations for Council