



"I hope that the initiative at Pearl will serve as a model to help other businesses reduce the mess that is West Campus and increase diversion from the landfill."

- Ken Mills, Operations Director, College Houses

BUSINESS OVERVIEW:

- West Campus, near UT-Austin
- Two properties sharing services:
 - Student cooperative housing
 - News station office building

SHARED SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS:

- » Pearl St. Co-Op & KXAN made infrastructure investment to facilitate shared services.
- » KXAN's monthly service costs decreased by 50%
- » Co-Op to recoup investment in 5 yrs. based on 40% monthly savings

- » Benefits from sharing services:
 - Improved mobility
 - Minimized illegal dumping
 - Decreased service costs
 - Reduced truck traffic, less damage to asphalt

BUSINESS PROFILE

Type of Businesses » Multifamily cooperative & media office
Neighborhood » West Campus
Zip Code » 78705
Buildings » Pearl St. Co-Op (managed by College Houses) and KXAN
New to recycling? » No

AUSTIN RESOURCE RECOVERY

Austin Resource Recovery's Business Outreach Team offers free consulting services to help businesses reduce waste, recycle materials and comply with Austin's Universal Recycling Ordinance (URO). Please contact us at: (512) 974-9727 or commercialrecycling@austintexas.gov

Problem. Pearl St. Co-Op, owned and operated by College Houses, and KXAN share a space-constrained alley in West Campus. For years, both businesses managed their own waste services and struggled to combat continuous illegal dumping. It was also commonplace for parked cars to block dumpsters, resulting in missed pick-ups.

Solutions. In 2015, College Houses' operations director, Ken Mills, attended a zero waste conference hosted by Austin Resource Recovery (ARR). Inspired, he began ramping up diversion efforts at his properties and used [ARR's Zero Waste Business Rebate](#) to increase diversion during 2016 move-out. These efforts prompted thoughts about illegal dumping solutions. Ken cold called KXAN in hopes of consolidating services.

Challenges. The businesses wanted to use the service consolidation as an opportunity to move the dumpsters to centrally shared location and build an enclosure to deter illegal dumping. Relocating the containers necessitated a few capital improvements. Co-Op members were split on the necessary investment, but decided to move forward. This special accommodation included: contacting the cable company to move a low-hanging cable, resurfacing broken asphalt, pouring a pad for the dumpsters and building an enclosure.

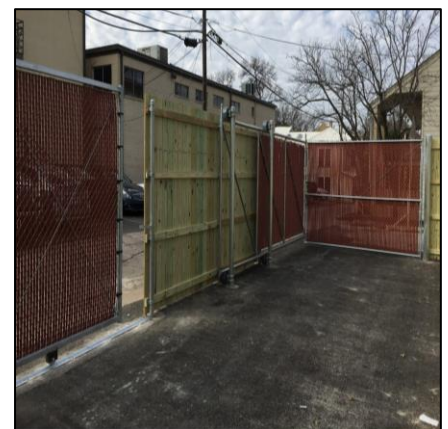
Results. Despite upfront costs and labor, both businesses are benefiting from:

- Improved mobility in alleyway and additional parking space for KXAN
- Increased service reliability (fewer missed pick-ups)
- Decreased monthly service costs for both businesses
- Minimized illegal dumping and labor/fees associated with extra pick-ups
- Increased cleanliness and safety of alley

Success Factors. A tenacious operations director, a collaborative approach between the organizations and a desired common interest to alleviate shared challenges helped make this a successful project. Involving the hauler from the beginning, and working closely throughout the process also helped ensure success. Buy-in from the Co-Op board members and both businesses was also critical.



Pearl St. Co-Op dumpster area (compost, recycling, and landfill) before sharing services.



Newly built enclosure to deter illegal dumping.