

BUSINESS RECYCLING CASE STUDY

Piazza Navona Condominiums – August 2016

Austin, Texas



“At first, I told the HOA it was impossible to remove one of the two landfill trash dumpsters. Seven months later, we have only one landfill trash dumpster, and the recycling program is working great.”

-Chris, Community Manager, Piazza Navona

PIAZZA NAVONA CONDOMINIUMS – Overview:

- 55 Condominium Units
- West Campus, near UT-Austin
- Many residents are students renting from owners
- Savings of \$400/month and more recycling

RECYCLING HIGHLIGHTS:

- » Saving \$4,800+ per year by right-sizing trash and recycling capacity
- » Reduced weekly landfill trash capacity by 66% in less than 7 months
- » Increased weekly recycling capacity by 75%
- » Started gift card raffle program to engage tenants by advertising local Zero Waste restaurants

Challenges. Piazza Navona Condominiums’ door-to-door (valet) trash and recycling program was struggling. A low participation rate from student residents, and services did not align with hauler services. Additionally, valet services were offered 3 times per week, but its two landfill trash dumpsters were serviced daily, adding costs. Obtaining residents’ contact information was challenging since most units were leased by owners.

Solutions. Piazza Navona’s Homeowner Association (HOA) contacted ARR’s Business Outreach team to learn about the Zero Waste Business Rebate. During a free Zero Waste Site Assessment, ARR staff suggested moving from door-to-door to carts placed at the ends of hallways. Checking the fullness of exterior dumpsters before each pick-up.

Results. Piazza placed one recycling and two landfill trash, 96-gallon carts on each of the 7 floors, with signs showing recyclable materials. All carts are emptied 3 times/week. By considering demand, Piazza Navona significantly reduced the weekly landfill trash capacity from 48 to 16 cubic yards (CY), and increased recycling from 2 to 8 CY.

After quadrupling recycling capacity, the complex is saving over \$400/month! Tenants are recycling more, and breezeways are cleaner without bags outside of doors. Additionally, the HOA:

- Promotes recycling by offering 10-gallon recycling containers.
- Collects email addresses by raffling gift cards from Zero Waste restaurants.
- Paired recycling and landfill trash containers near elevators and mail area.
- Adopted flex-scheduling (ie reduced service levels for summer break).

Success Factors. Change began with an HOA board member who was engaged and aware of recycling challenges. With a shift in property management companies, she saw an opportunity to improve recycling practices. Onsite staff was also central to transport material from carts to dumpsters, and monitor the dumpsters’ use.

Looking Forward. In fall 2016, the complex plans to bring its recycling hauler onsite to train residents on how to recycle properly. They also aim to increase recycling by having one landfill trash cart and two recycling carts on each floor, the reverse of what is implemented currently.

BUSINESS PROFILE

Business Type » Condominiums
Neighborhood » West Campus
Zip Code » 78705
Building » 55 Units
New to recycling? » No, previously offered door-to-door trash and recycling collection, but had limited tenant participation.

AUSTIN RESOURCE RECOVERY

Austin Resource Recovery’s (ARR) 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:

P » (512) 974-9727

E » commercialrecycling@austintexas.gov

RESOURCES

- www.austintexas.gov/zwbizrebate
- www.austintexas.gov/department/austin-green-business-leaders



Recycling hubs similar to the above are available on every floor.