



SUSTAINABLE WEST HARTFORD COMMISSION

September 18, 2023

7:00 PM, Room 314, Town Hall

MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to Order, Attendance – 7:10 PM
 - *Jim Fishman Y*
 - *Kimberly Hughes Y*
 - *Aditee Madkekar Y*
 - *Christy Matthews Y*
 - *Ted Newton Y*
 - *Alejandro Paiuk Y*
 - *Bernard Pelletier Y*
 - *Stephen Sack Y*
 - *David Sagers X*
 - *Rachael Virgin Y*
 - *Patricia Wilson X*
 - *Town Staff: Catherine Diviney, Katherine Bruns, Rick Ledwith (Town Manager), John Philips (Director of Public Works)*
 - *Students: Nathaniel Goldschmidt (Hall)*
 - *Public: Erik Granstrand, Luciana Granstrand, Johnathan Humphrey, Roger Smith, Rick Bush*
 - *Presenters: Chris Nelson (CT DEEP), Mark Daniel and Tori McBrien (Waste Zero)*
2. Introductions – *Town Manager gave a few welcoming comments, then we went around room (starting with Commissioners) so all meeting attendees could quickly introduce themselves and describe their background or interests.*
3. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes – *n/a, first meeting.*
4. Old Business
 - *Sep 14, CTLCV – Climate Conversation recap – about 35 people attended this conversation hosted by CT League of Conservation voters with State legislators held at Conard HS. Last legislative session was not great for environment. Work to be done at State AND LOCAL levels. Write to your legislators! More events like this can be organized by Commission and/or students. Video here: <https://fb.watch/n9pNZ3zhnl/>*
5. New Business
 - *Overview of Sustainable West Hartford Commission – Slides attached. **Motion by Catherine Diviney: To continue the practice started by Clean Energy Commission of having non-voting student representatives from Hall and Conard HSs. Vote: Passed (9-0).** Catherine to reach out to schools to designate reps.*
 - *Working Groups and membership – Slides attached (starting pg 3).*

- West Hartford Waste Reduction Pilot: PAYT & Food Scrap Collection, overview and next steps - Dept of Public Works, Waste-Zero, CT DEEP – *Slides attached (starting pgs 16 & 25). Recording of presentation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rX0Ft4I5SjA> Questions focused on clarifying how the program works, understanding financial comparisons and/or savings, impact to tenants (e.g., multi-family households), and ensuring full consideration of environmental externalities. There was concern about inconsistency of behavior at school vs home (e.g., food waste separation in WHPS) and “signal” sent to kids. There was general consensus about the need to put A LOT of effort into clarity of message and presentation in order to avoid revisiting West Hartford’s failed 2017 PAYT discussions.*
 - Working Group updates (if time) – *Deferred, no time.*
6. Announcements
 - Tu Sep 19, 5:30 -7:30 PM, Vision Zero Public Meeting #1 @ Town Hall
 - Sa Sep 24, 10-1 PM – Drive Electric Week – EVs, E-Bikes, E-Lawn Equipment @ Town Hall (w/ Blue Back Farmers Market)
 7. Public Comment – *Questions and comments were entertained as part of presentations.*
 8. Agenda for Next Meeting
 - *Kim hopes for a conversation about foundational values of the Commission with regard to climate change and best practices, including the need to factor environmental costs (often unquantifiable and long-term) into Town/BOE decision making.*
 - *Ted suggested an open discussion on how we can structure agenda and make Commission meetings most effective.*
 - *Election of officers – Bernie, interim president? Secretary?*
 9. Adjournment – 9:40 PM

Anyone requiring auxiliary aid or service for effective communication or modification of policies or procedures to participate in a meeting, service, program or activity of the Town of West Hartford, should contact Suzanne Oslander, ADA Coordinator, at suzanneo@westhartfordct.gov or (860) 561-7580, as soon as possible, preferably seven days beforehand.

Sustainable West Hartford Commission

September 18, 2023



Background

- There have been **dramatic changes** in the world and in our ways of thinking: racism, equity, pandemic/COVID, public health, climate change, environmental justice, electrification, resiliency, natural disasters, weather, etc.
- Now more than ever: **Sustainability is important**. To the Town, its residents, and its **future residents**.
- This Commission has been in the works for a long time...
 - Recommended by [Sustainable Advisory Group](#) (2022)
 - Merger of Clean Energy and Conservation & Environment Commissions
 - Better coordination, more holistic approach to sustainability, bigger voice
- Increased urgency for **action**
- More involvement/support from **leadership**
- Critical role of **education**

Purpose

The Town Council hereby establishes a Sustainable West Hartford Commission consisting of eleven electors of the Town for the purpose of

- *promoting practices that lead to greater environmental, social and economic sustainability;*
- *ensuring a high quality of life for present and future generations by fostering an inclusive, resilient, and thriving community; and*
- *encouraging the responsible use and conservation of energy and natural resources.*

Chapter 5, Article XVI of the Code of Ordinances , rev. June 13, 2023

<https://ecode360.com/WE0900/laws/LF1819422.pdf>

Duties

- A. **Identify and prioritize concerns and issues** relating to long-term environmental, social and economic sustainability of the Town of West Hartford with due consideration of local, regional, state, national, and global contexts.
- B. **Advise and make recommendations** to the Town Manager on policies, programs and proposals regarding sustainable practices including, but not limited to, environmental and ecological resources, air, water, energy, land, waste, materials management, transportation, climate change, equity and environmental justice.
- C. **Collaborate with and serve as a resource** for Town Council, Town departments, boards, commissions, and committees of the Town, and the community at large in order to advance a comprehensive, integrated approach to sustainability.
- D. **Develop and encourage efforts, relationships and resources to educate and act** on sustainability within our community and beyond, and to **serve as a community liaison** for issues, ideas, and proposals.
- E. **File an annual written report** with the Town Council. Such report shall include a summary of current sustainability initiatives, as well as recommendations for future sustainability initiatives and policy.

Website

<https://www.westhartfordct.gov/government-services/boards-commissions/sustainable-westhartford>

SUSTAINABLE WEST HARTFORD COMMISSION



The Sustainable West Hartford Commission promotes practices that lead to greater environmental, social and economic sustainability; ensures a high quality of life for present and future generations by fostering an inclusive, resilient, and thriving community; and encourages the responsible use and conservation of energy and natural resources.

There are 11 members on this commission who serve a 5-year term. The commission typically meets the last Monday of the month.

SUSTAINABLE WEST HARTFORD COMMISSION (11 Members, 5-year term, Code Sec. 5-16)

MEETING DATES

SEP MON 18	OCT MON 23	NOV MON 27
Sustainable West Hartford Commission - Special Meeting	Sustainable West Hartford Commission - Special Meeting	Sustainable West Hartford Commission - Special Meeting
7:00 PM	7:00 PM	7:00 PM
Town Hall - Room 314	Town Hall - Room 314	Town Hall - Room 314
Agenda		

Additional meeting dates are to be announced.

MEETING AGENDAS & MINUTES

2023

[September 18 Agenda](#)

BOARD MEMBERS

Jim Fishman
Kimberly Hughes
Adilee Madhakar
Christy Matthews
Edward "Ted" Newton
Alejandro Paiuk
Bernard Pelletier
Stephen Sack
David Sagers
Rachael Virgin
Patricia "Pat" Wilson

[Affordable Housing Advisory Group](#)

[Board of Assessment Appeals](#)

[Board of Assessors](#)

[Board of Education](#)

[Clean Energy Commission](#)

[Civilian Police Review Board](#)

[Commission on the Arts](#)

[Conservation & Environment](#)

[Council Zoning Alternates](#)

[Design Review Advisory](#)

[Fair Rent Commission](#)

[Fellowship Housing](#)

[Greater Hartford Transit District](#)

[Health District Board](#)

[Historic District Commission](#)

[Housing Authority](#)

[Human Rights Commission](#)

[Library Board](#)

[Mayor's Youth Council](#)

[Metropolitan District](#)

[Parks & Recreation](#)

[Pedestrian & Bicycle Commission](#)

[Pension Board](#)

[Persons with Disabilities](#)

[Prevention Council](#)

Membership

- 11 members
- 6 is quorum to meet
- 7 max from one party, 1 minority rep*
- Any working groups must have less than 6 members (< quorum)
- 2 non-voting student reps – Hall/Conard, **VOTE**

* CGS § 9-167a & Town Charter Ch. 14 Section 4

Jim Fishman

Kimberly Hughes

Aditee Madkekar

Christy Matthews

Ted Newton

Alejandro Paiuk

Bernard Pelletier

Stephen Sack

David Sagers

Rachael Virgin

Patricia Wilson

Staff Liaisons

Catherine Diviney

Energy Specialist

860-561-7581 o, 860-616-8718 c

catherine.diviney@westhartfordct.gov

Katherine Bruns

Recycling Coordinator

860-561-8107 o

katherine.bruns@westhartfordct.gov

Organization & Operation

REQUIRED	OPTIONAL (Up to Commission)
Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) – training in March	Determine schedule; virtual/in person
Notice, Agenda, Minutes - file w/ Town Clerk	Create officers – Chair, Secretary, etc.
• Yearly schedule, by Jan	Any sub-committees or working groups?
• Agenda, 24 hrs in advance	• Sub-committees (FOIA), commission members only
• Minutes, within 7 days	• Working Groups, open to all, < 6 commission members
Quorum and membership	Establish Rules of Procedure/Bylaws, if desired
<i>“File an annual report with the Town Council”</i>	

Working Groups

Up to Commission...



- Summary Plan, Coordination, Reporting
- Climate Change, Resilience
- Equity
- GHG Inventory
- Sust CT
- WHPS

Energy

- Energy Plan
- PowerSmart
- EV Day
- Renewables
- Heat Pump

Materials Mgt

- Mat Mgt Plan
- Food Pilot
- PAYT

Transport

- Trans. Plan
- EV Charging
- Fleet
- Public Transport
- EV Day

Land Care

- Land Care Plan
- Gardens
- Grounds Practices
- Elec Lawn Equip

Buildings

- UCONN
- Resident
- Business
- Codes

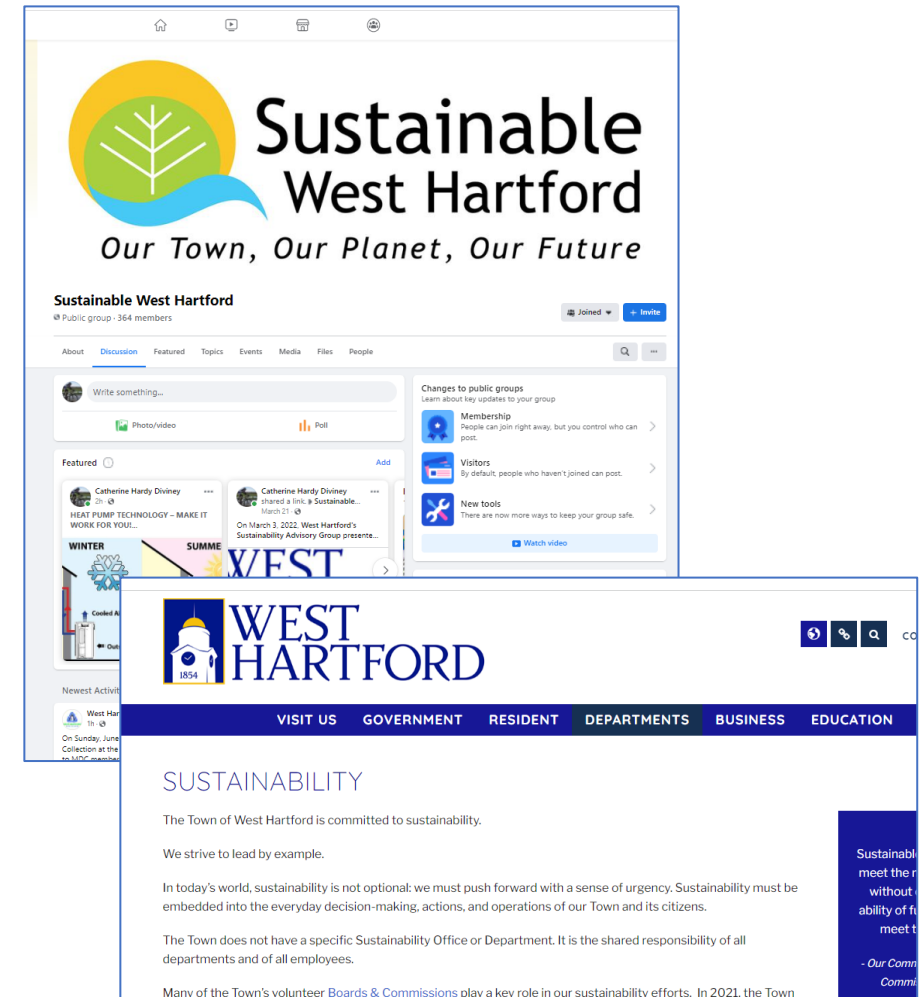
Outreach

- Strategy
- Channels
- Website
- Council
- Sustainable CT

Priorities

Up to Commission...

- Waste – CT in crisis, PAYT & Food Scrap Collection, commercial, food rescue, schools
- 1700-1800 Asylum (former Uconn)
- Sustainable CT Gold - due Aug 2024
- Energy – SmartPower campaign, heat pumps, solar, business, town/school buildings, EVs, GHG inventory
- Land Care – best practices, Wolcott gardens, educational workshop series, tree canopy study
- Outreach – website, communication strategy, social media
- Schools – WHPS sustainability policy, coordination
- Education to empower decision making!



Building on past work

The new commission will build on and expand upon work done over prior years. Each commissioner should familiarize themselves with:

- Plan of Conservation and Development:
https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1593103526/westhartfordctgov/oc8nhtmagcuwftd9wam7/POCD_Adopted.pdf
- Clean Energy Plan:
https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1628009345/westhartfordctgov/etwrxxr9c5p9avs2kz69/WH_ENERGYPLAN_2021_0622.pdf
- Resolution Declaring a Climate Crisis (Page 9 of 12):
<https://ecode360.com/WE0900/document/644791582.pdf>

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.



Questions?





SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS MANAGEMENT GRANT WEST HARTFORD PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Chris Nelson, Supervising Environmental Analyst, CT DEEP

CT's Disposal Capacity Decrease

- CT and the New England region are running out of cost-effective options for getting rid of our trash.
- Much of CT's trash is burned at 4 waste-to-energy facilities in CT; all of these facilities are over 30 years old.
- There are few remaining regional landfills for residential trash
 - RI facility has limited life
- Connecticut's policy is self-sufficiency (i.e. minimizing dependency on out-of-state options)
- **Strain on capacity is leading to increased disposal costs for CT municipalities (and residents).**



SMM Grant Program – Innovative Solution to Manage Waste

Sustainable Materials Management Grant Program

Grant funds and technical assistance available to help municipalities and regional waste authorities initiate and scale up Unit-Based Pricing (UBP) and/ or food scraps collection programs, pursuant to Public Act, Spec. Sess., June 2021, No. 21-2, § 308.

Pilot Program Objectives

Identify best alternatives for separating food scrap and increasing diversion

- Drop-off
- Co-collection
- **Separate collection route**

Demonstrate ability to separate residential food scrap

- Will residents participate?
- How would participation compare to other recycling programs?

Measure quality of separate food scrap and assess alternatives for recycling

- Clean material (i.e., low contamination) has higher value
- Anaerobic digestion (AD)
- Composting

Provide municipalities with estimates of the cost/benefit of various diversion strategies; however, not necessarily demonstrate cost savings during the pilot.

Set communities on a path toward UBP/PAYT/SMART

Reducing Trash is the Solution

- **Unit Based Pricing (UBP)** is the single most effective way to reduce waste and cut disposal costs.
- Other approaches can help increase recycling and create less trash
 - **Remove food scraps & other compostable items from trash**
 - Donate and reuse clothing and other fabrics – sheets and towels
 - Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) - manufacturers are responsible for the costs of disposal
- **UBP is the best option for CT to be self-sufficient**
 - Financially prudent – saves municipalities money through avoided disposal costs
 - Environmentally responsible – reduces waste and GHGs and increases recycling

SMM GRANT PROGRAM

Grants have been approved by DEEP for the following towns and regional groups:

Ansonia

Bethany

Bethel

Bethlehem

Deep River

Guilford

Kent

Madison

Meriden

Middlebury

Middletown

Newtown

Seymour

Stonington

Rocky Hill

West Hartford

West Haven

Woodbridge

Woodbury

South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG)

Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG)

Housatonic Resources Recovery Authority (HRRA)

SMM GRANT PROGRAM STATUS

[illegible]

West Hartford Waste Reduction Pilot Program Details

- Pilot Started on **May 1st, 2023**, in the pilot neighborhood.
- West Hartford residents are being asked to **“Take the Challenge”** and cut their trash in half by using one green bag for food scraps and up to 2 orange bags for trash per week per household.
- On the regular trash day, residents place their orange bags in the normal garbage can and the green bag in the 6-gallon bucket.



Participants in the food scrap recycling program have been given a small green bin to put at the curb on their trash pick-up days.

Image Source: We-ha.com. August 23, 2023.

Thank you
for
participating!

QUESTIONS?

Contact: DEEP.RecyclingProgram@ct.gov

SMM Grant Team

Chris Nelson

Jennifer Weymouth

Chelsey Hahn

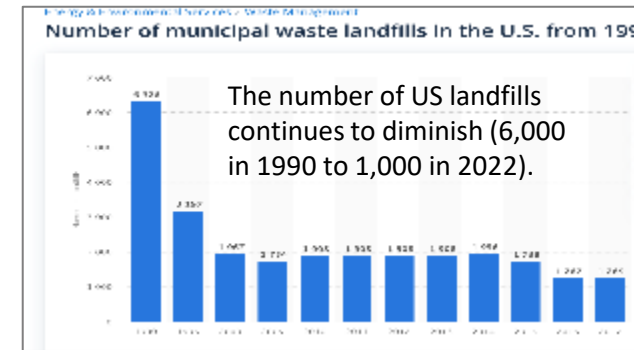
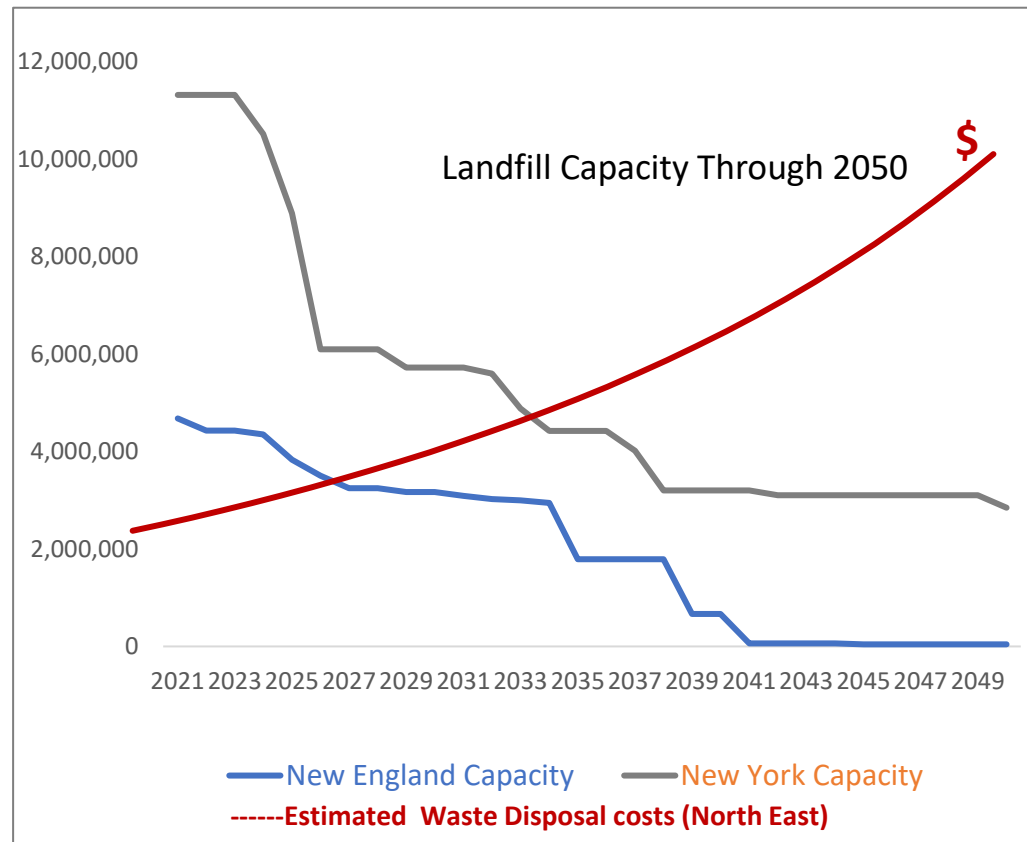
Luciana Granstrand

WEST HARTFORD

1.	Overview of Waste Crisis, UBP and Food Scraps & Current Situation
2.	Pilot Progress Update
3.	Timeline and Next Steps
4.	Q&A

We Must Address an Urgent Problem

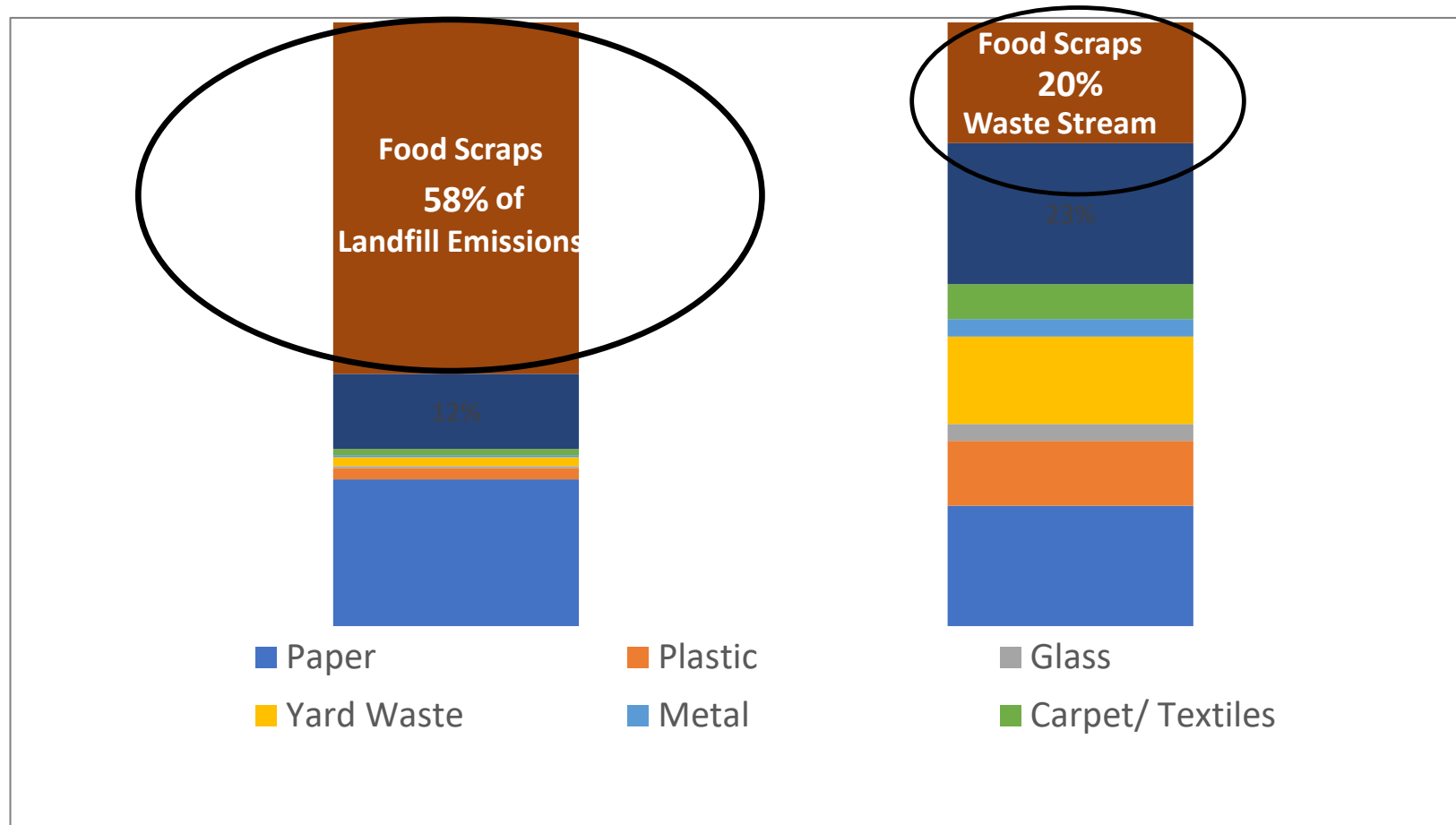
There are 39 million residents living in New England and New York. It is extremely unpopular and difficult to site a new Incinerator or landfill. Costs are expected to double in the next 4 years.



1. Northeast will lose 40% of disposal capacity in the next 5 years.
2. Of the 75 Incineration facilities in the US, all but 1 are over 30 years old – end of their useful life.
3. 85% of disposal facilities are owned by private and public companies.
4. Costs are expected to double in the next 4 years.

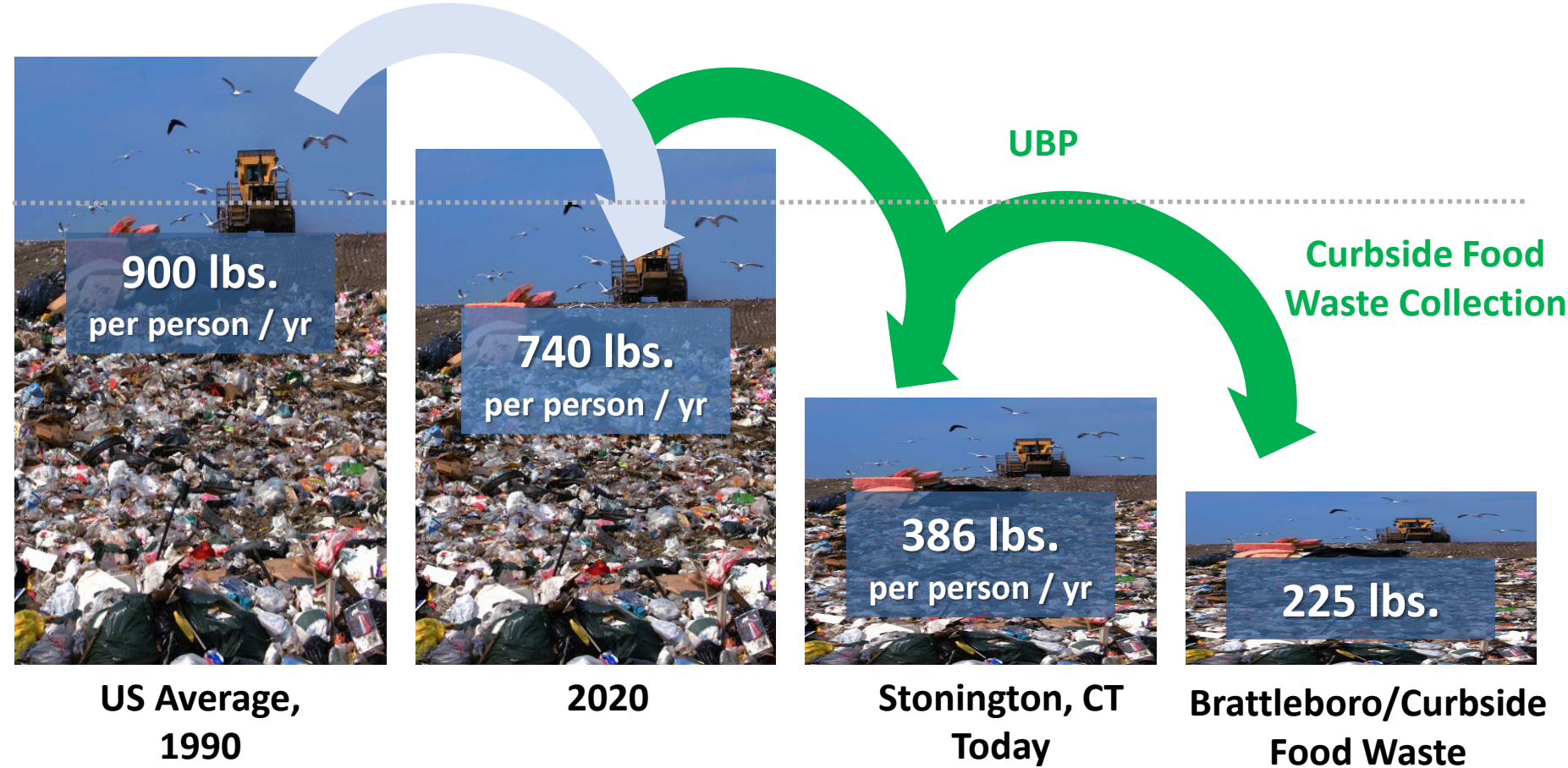
Why target food scraps?

Food Waste is about 20% of the waste stream but responsible nearly 60% of all emissions



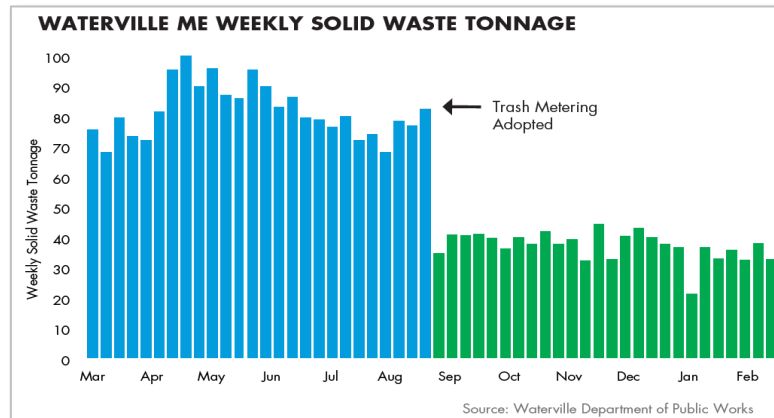
Per Capita Disposal with Unit Based Pricing plus Food Waste

According to USEPA - UBP is the single most effective action that a municipality can take to reduce waste. Curbside food waste collection—and other new program types—can reduce per capita waste even more. Over 550 municipalities in the Northeast have UBP with an average of 44% waste reduction.

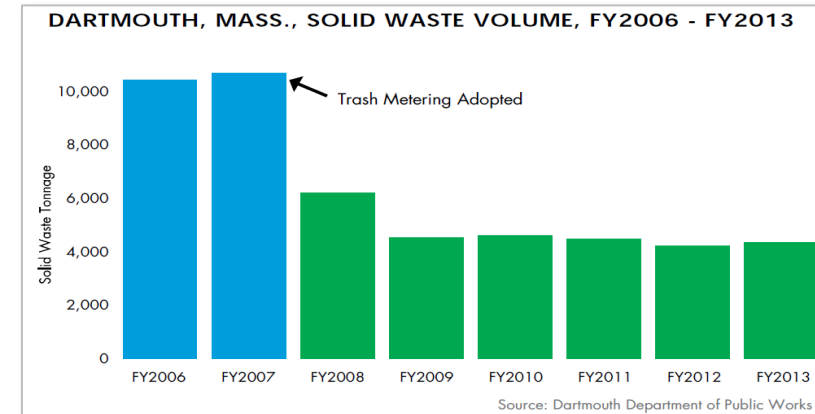


UBP Results: Immediate & Predictable

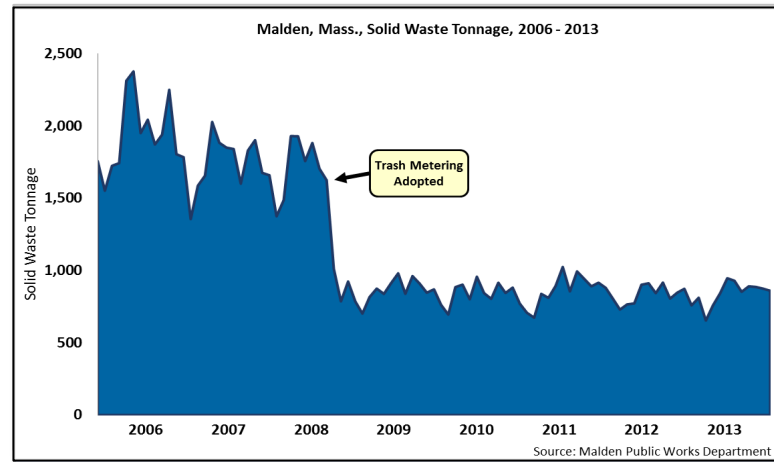
Results are immediate and sustained over time.



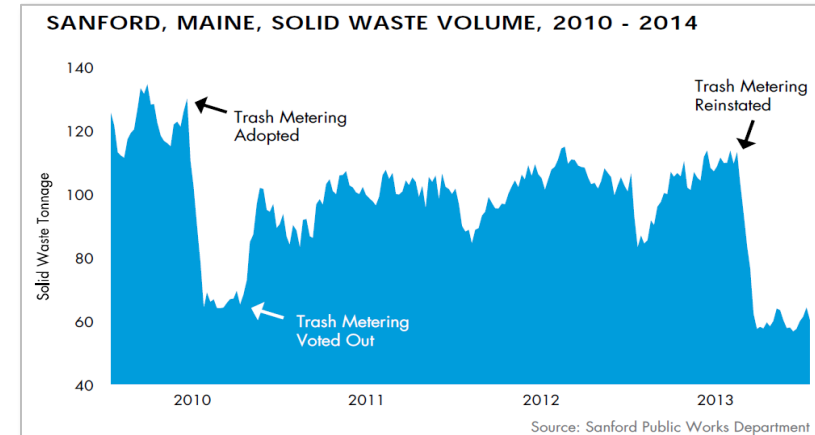
WATERVILLE, MAINE
53% DECLINE IN WASTE



DARTMOUTH, MA
59% DECLINE IN WASTE



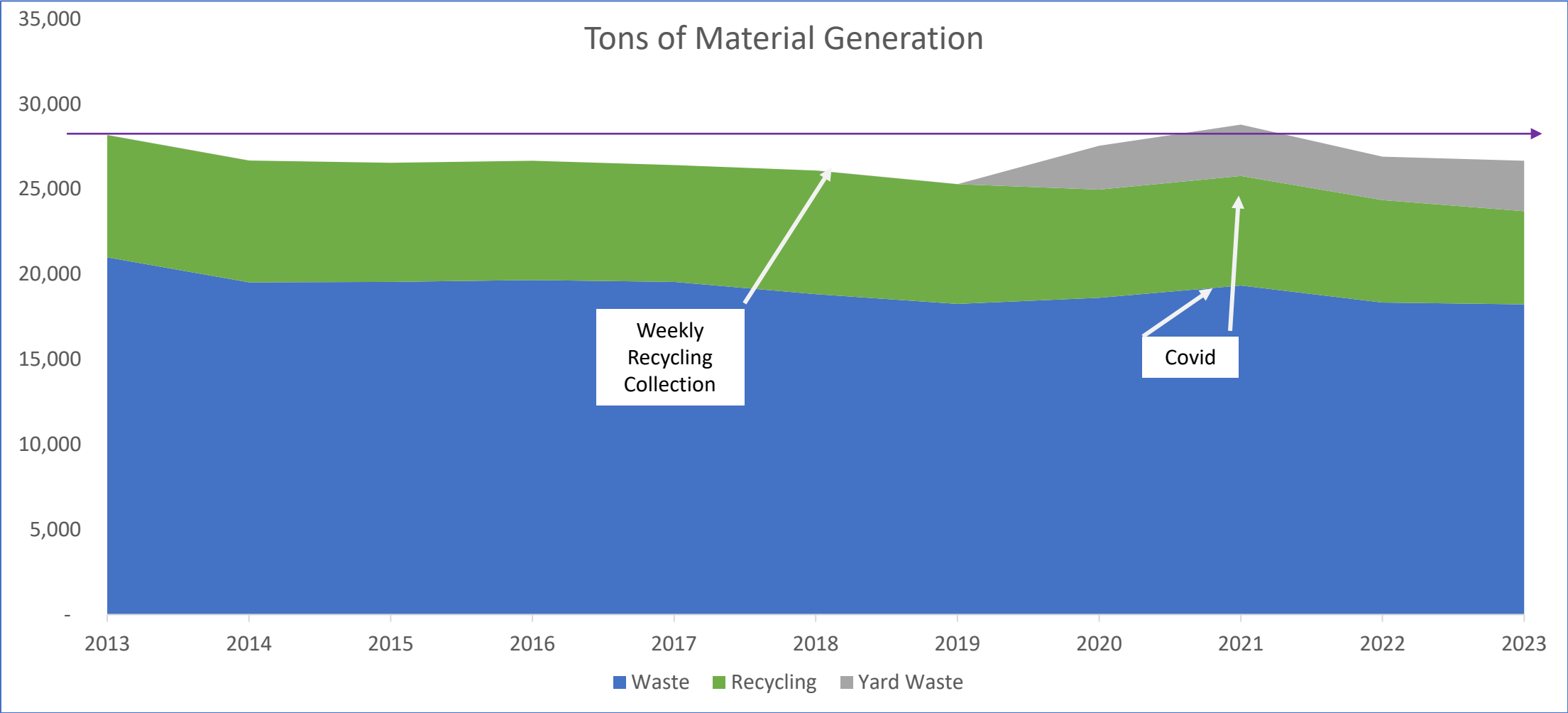
MALDEN, MA
52% DECLINE IN WASTE



SANFORD, MA
40%+ DECLINE IN WASTE...TWICE

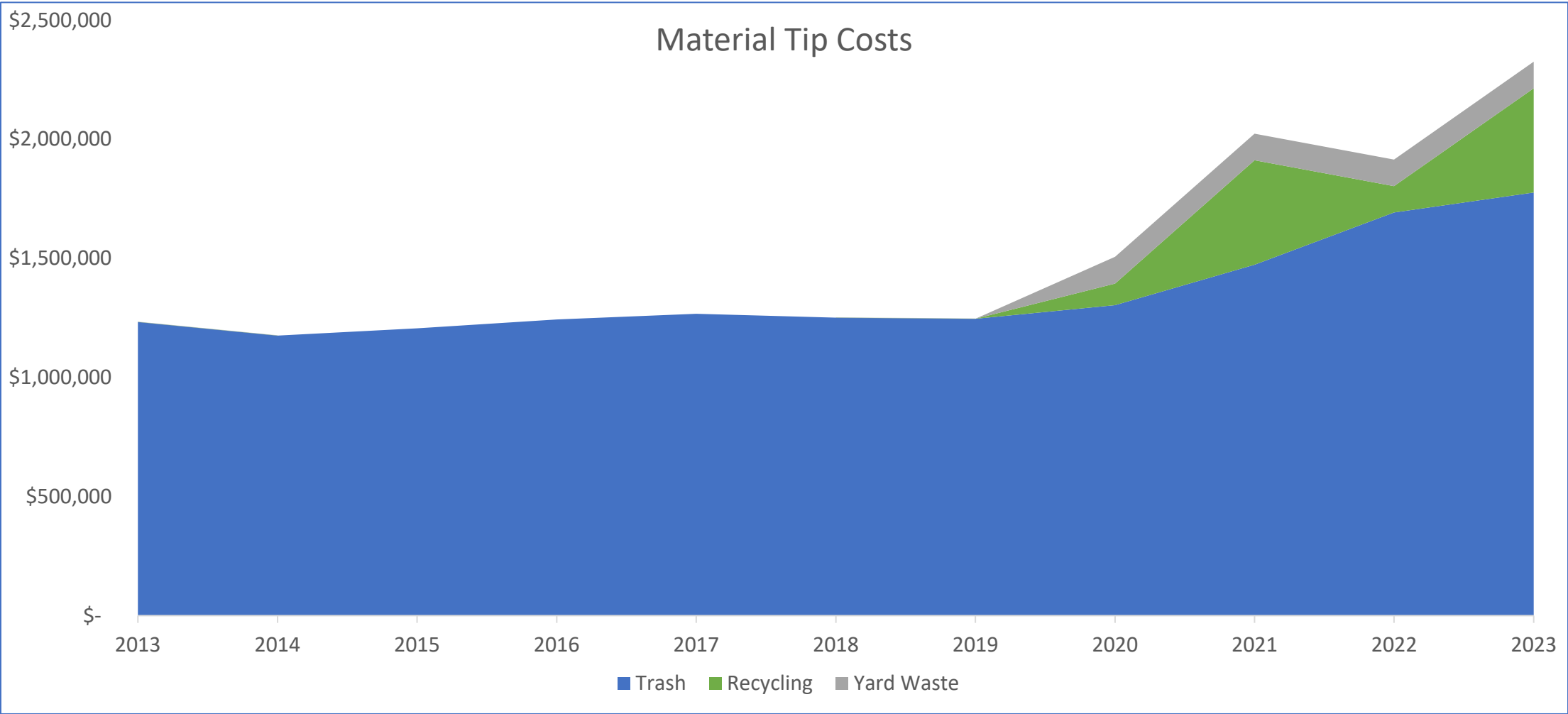
Total Waste Generation 2013-2023

Per/Capita Waste Generation = 650 (FY – 2023)



Total Tip Costs 2013-2023

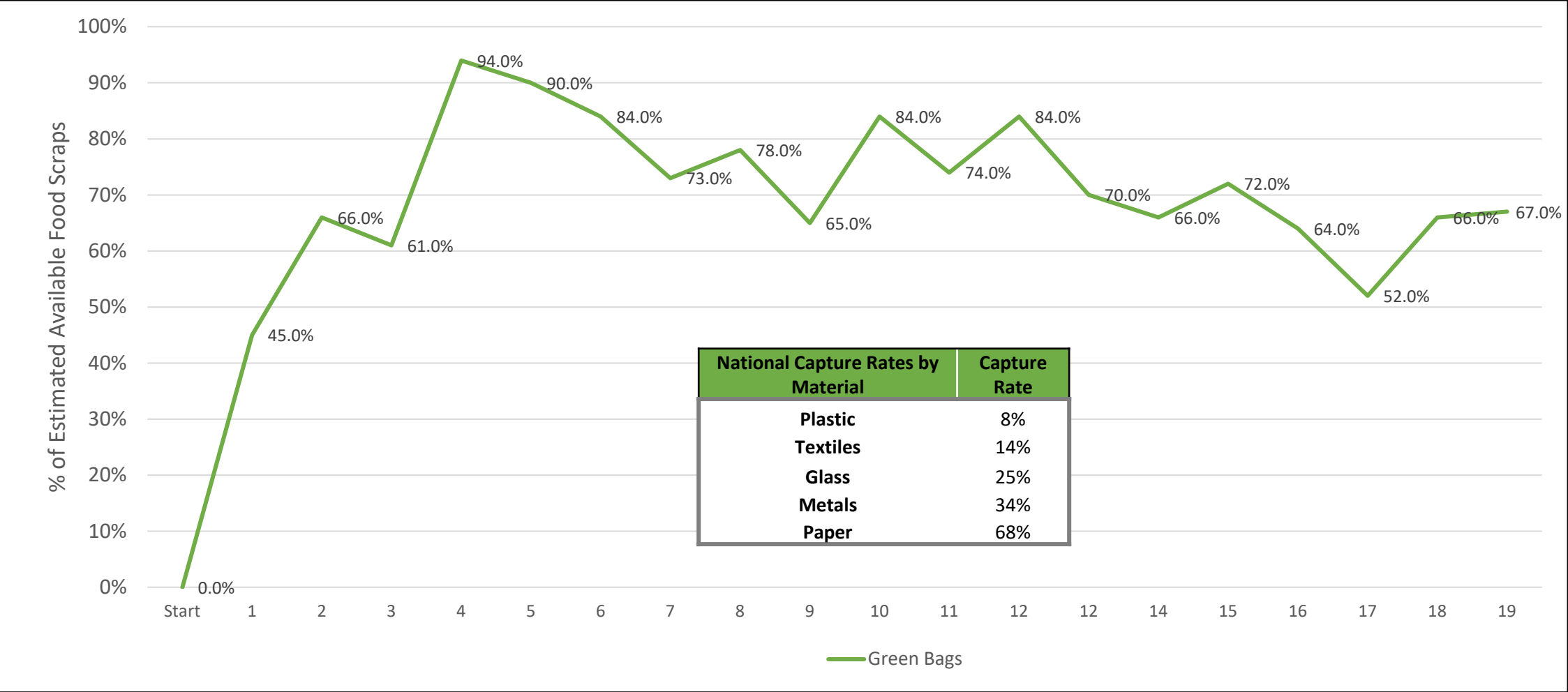
Cost does not include additional yard waste collection



1.	Overview of Waste, UBP and Food Scraps & Current Situation
2.	Pilot Progress Update – UBP + Food Scraps
3.	Timeline and Next Steps
4.	Q&A

Food Waste Capture Rate = 71% (of available food waste)

Average of 16% Waste Reduction – Pounds / Capita of pilot Route = 540



How Co-Collection Works



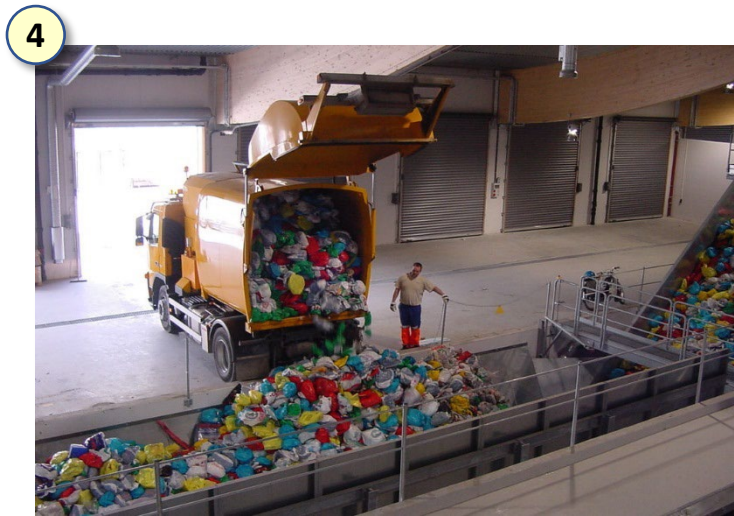
Resident separates material types at home into official, color-coded bags



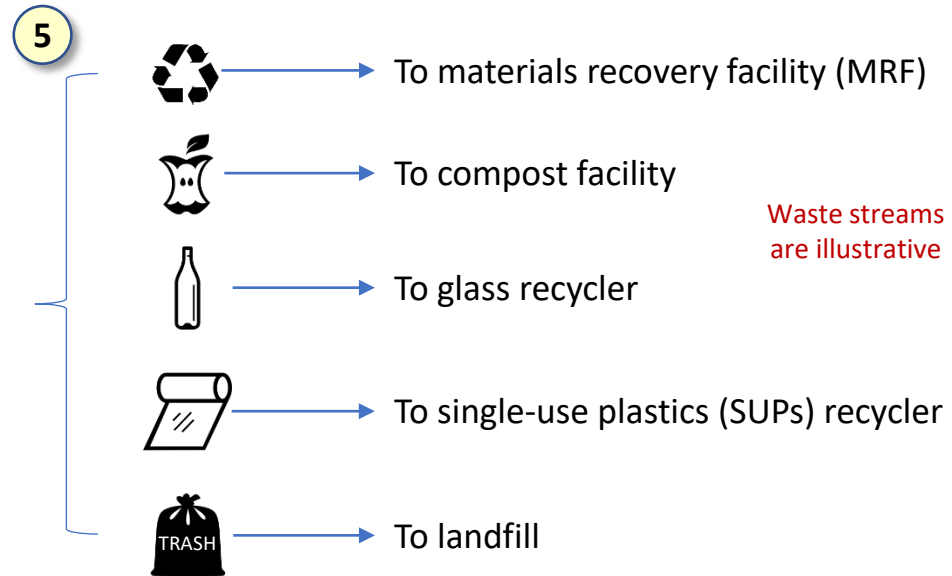
All bags go into one cart



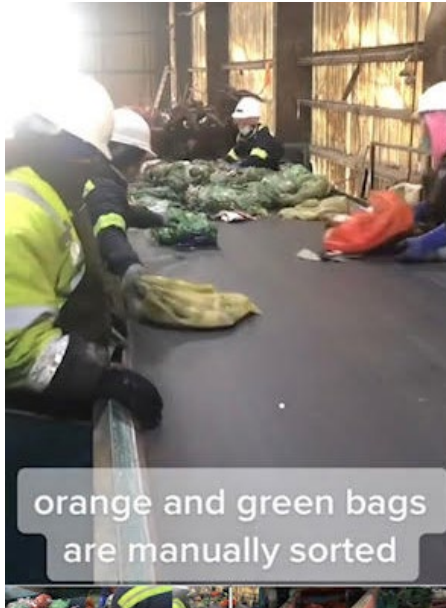
All material goes into the same truck on the same collection route



Materials are separated at sort facility



UBP+ Co-collection of Food Scraps

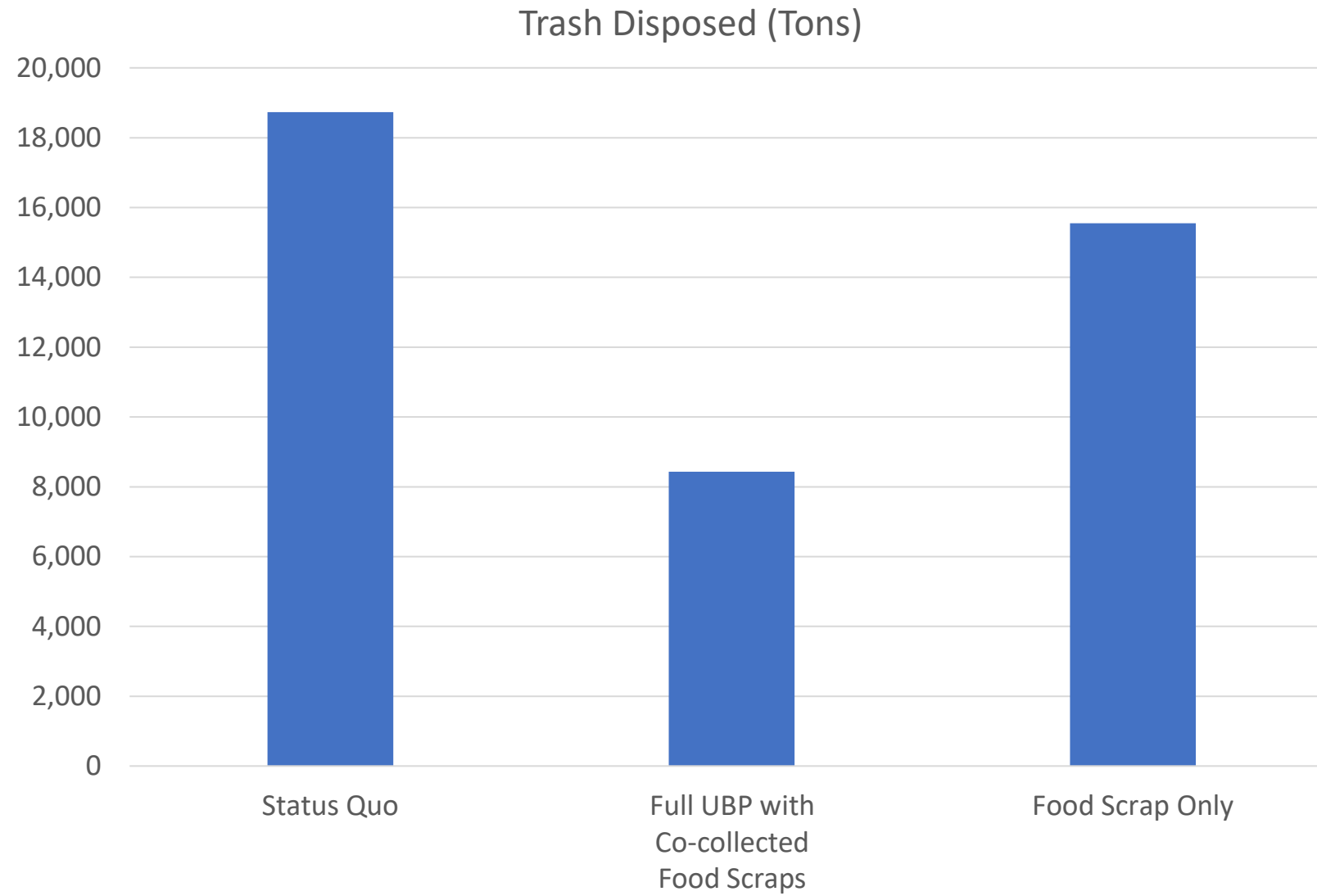


- Projected waste reduction 50+%
- Cost effective food-scrap option to all district homes and small businesses (that use carts).
- New service with no new vehicle miles traveled VMT's, emissions or expense.
- Can be scaled in future years to district users with dumpster service as well as outer district residents.



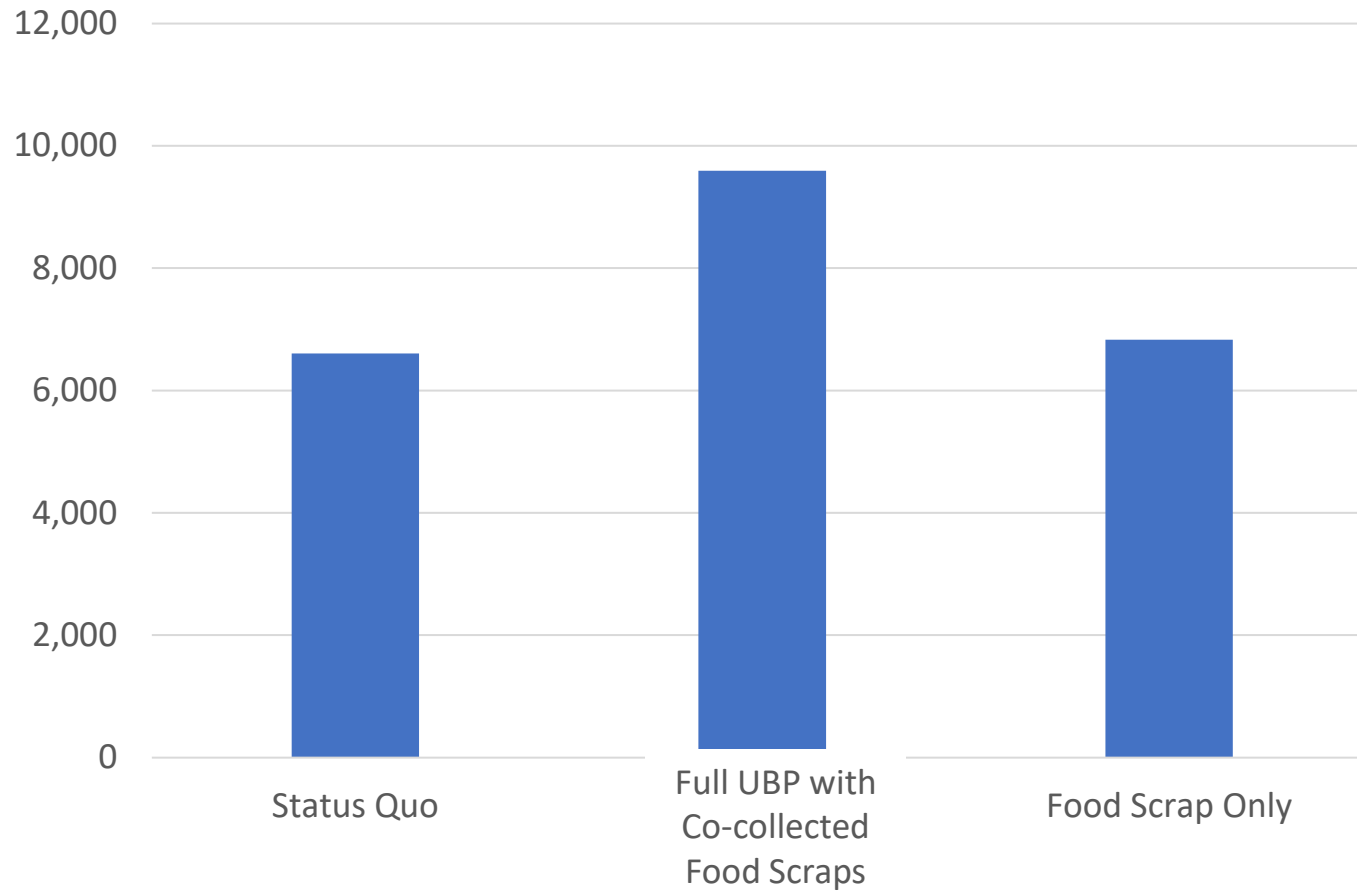
1.	Overview of Waste, UBP and Food Scraps
2.	Pilot Progress Update – UBP + Food Scraps
3.	Pilot to Permanent
4.	Q&A

<i>Do Nothing</i>	<i>Food Scraps with Full UBP</i>	<i>Food Waste, No UBP</i>
This option is the baseline to compare the financial and environmental impacts of the other options.	- This system would require trash to be in standard Town of Deep River bags. - The town would add a markup to the price of the bag. This markup is structured to cover the tipping cost of trash for the Town of West Hartford. Bags will be available at local stores for residents. - Paying per bag incentivizes residents to reduce their trash, while mitigating risks associated with rising tip fees for the town. - Bags for the food scrap portion could be optional and the funds generated from orange bags sales would finance the extra service of food scrap separation.	- The town would continue to offer the food scrap drop off option at the transfer station. - In this system, there is no incentive for trash reduction or food scrap separation other than for residents who are interested by the environmental benefits. - The diversion of food scraps would likely not offset the cost of separate collection. The town would cover the cost of this extra service.



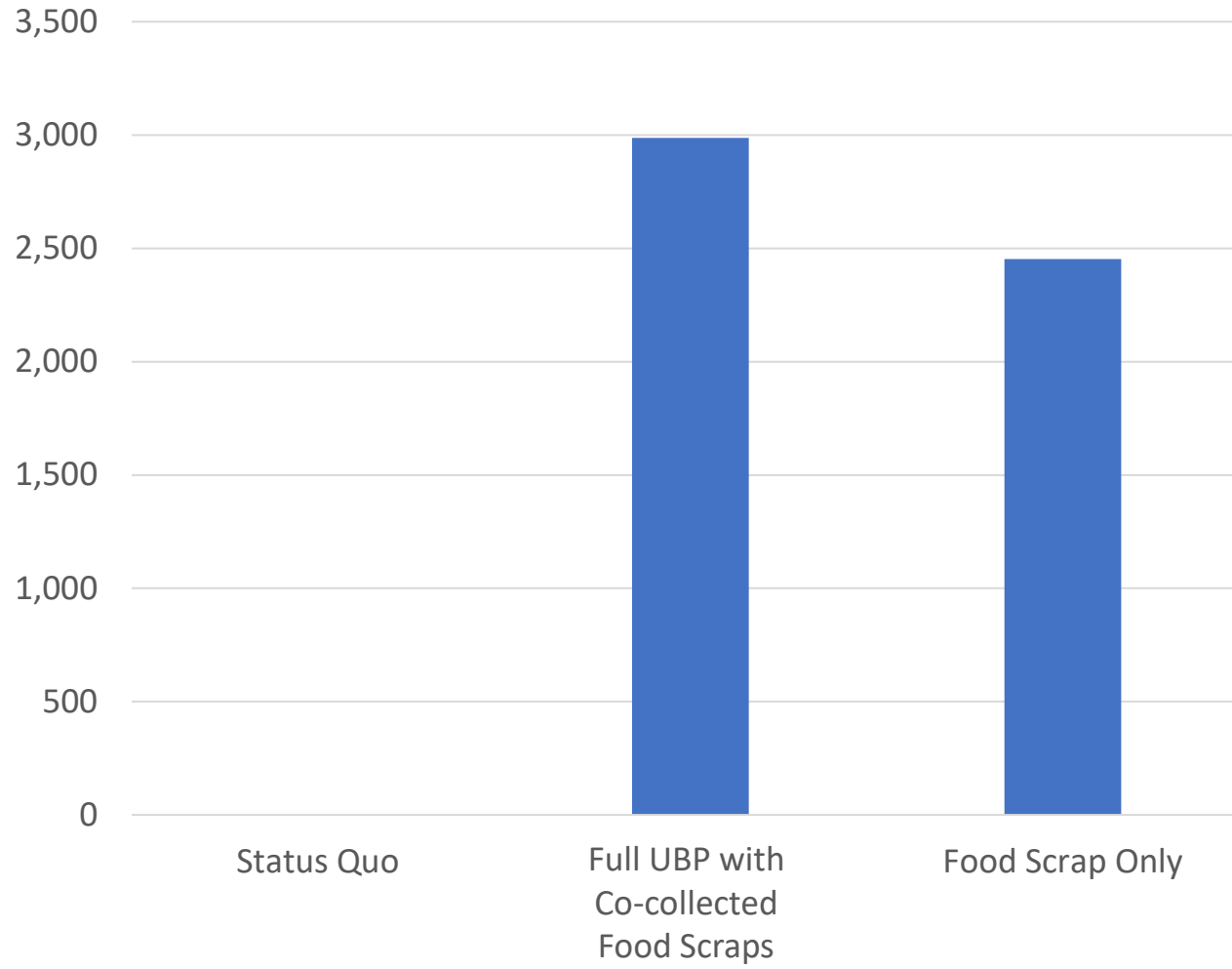
- Less tons of trash to dispose of saves money

Recycling Tons



- More recycling saves energy
- Makes us more efficient
- Saves resources
- Significantly reduces carbon emissions

Food Scraps Recycled

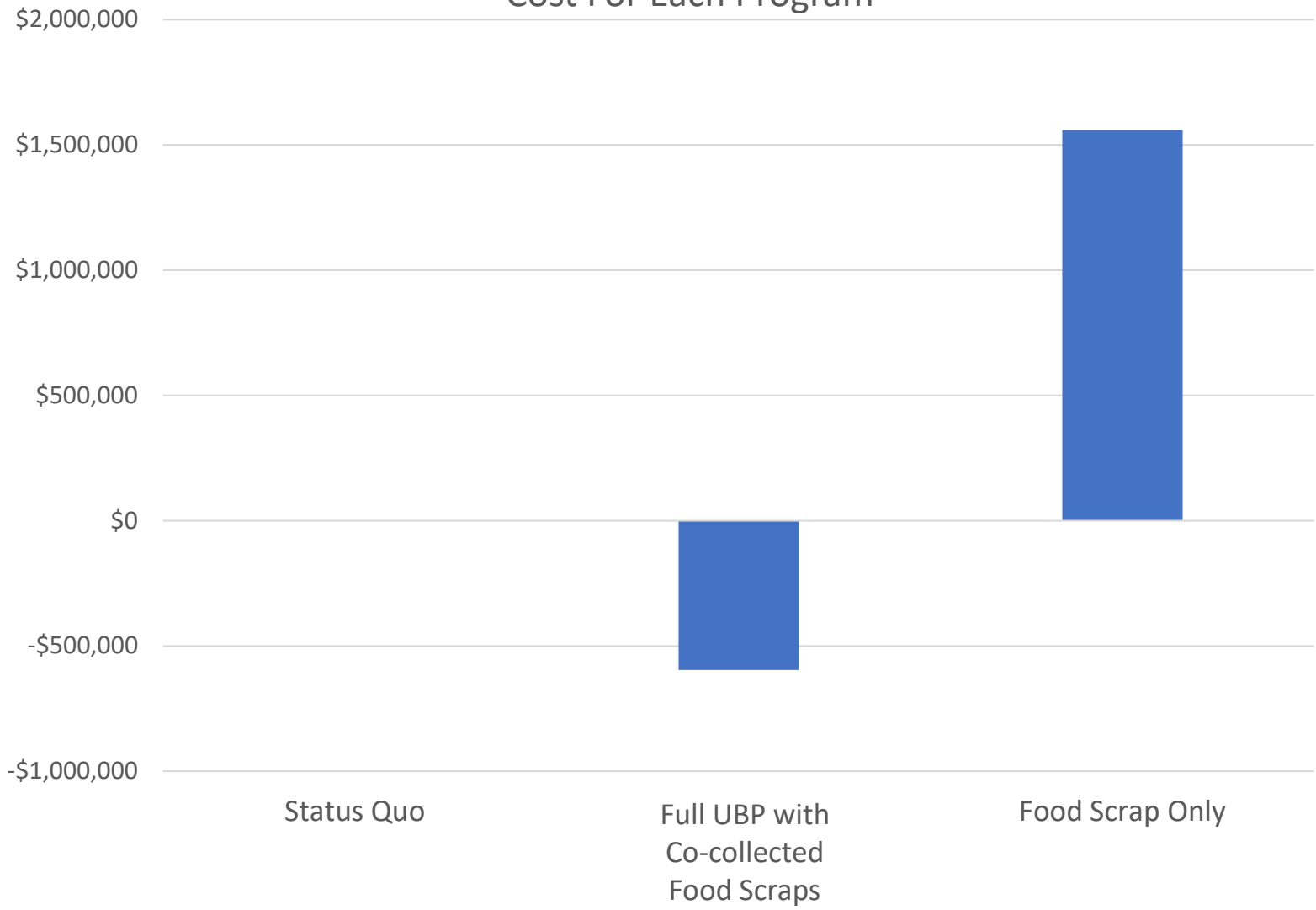


- Can create energy and high-quality compost
- Food Scraps make up about 22% of the waste stream but contribute to nearly 60% of all GHG emissions in landfills. Reducing food waste is the single largest action you can take with respect to carbon emissions

**Demonstrates a current food scrap only diversion of 71%*

Cost For Each Program

*Savings of over \$2 Million /annually
Full UBP with Co-collected Food
Scraps*



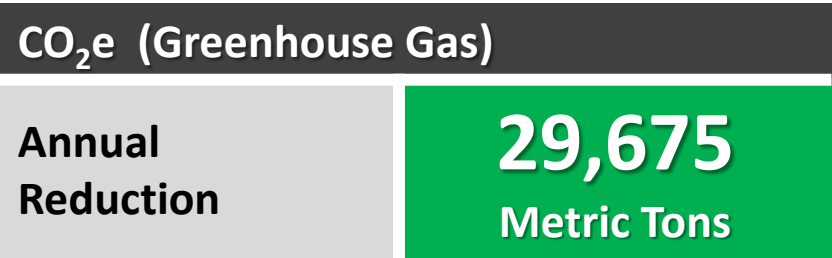
GHG Impact

- According to the EPA WARM model, on average one ton of trash diverted reduces GHG generation by 2.88 tons
- **West Hartford generated 563,063 tons of GHG in 2019***
- The Town Government in West Hartford generated approximately **15,000** GHG
- Cutting Trash by 55% would reduce GHG by **29,675**

**West Hartford Clean Energy Commission 2020*

Environmental Impact of SMART

Projected GHG savings is equal to 100%+ of municipal government GHG emissions in the Town of West Hartford. SMART is the single most effective action a city or town can take to reduce carbon emissions.



- Reduced carbon footprint
- Less pollution
- Healthier environment for residents



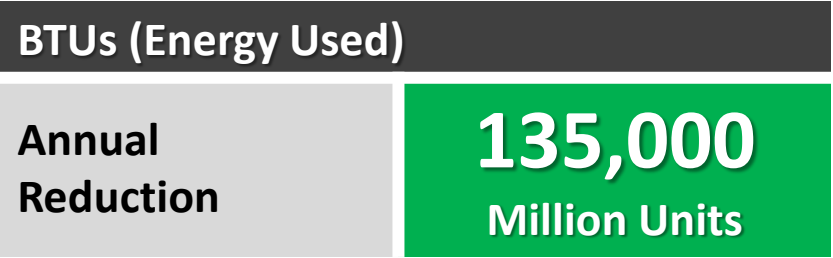
Equivalent to:



Removing
4,580
passenger vehicles from the road

or

Reducing gasoline consumption by
2,718,000
gallons



- Reduced costs
- Reduced carbon footprint
- Increased energy security



Equivalent to:



Powering
1,800
residential homes

or

Installing
25,000
rooftop solar panel arrays



Source: EPA WARM Model