

# 2015 FORT COLLINS WASTE REDUCTION & RECYCLING REPORT

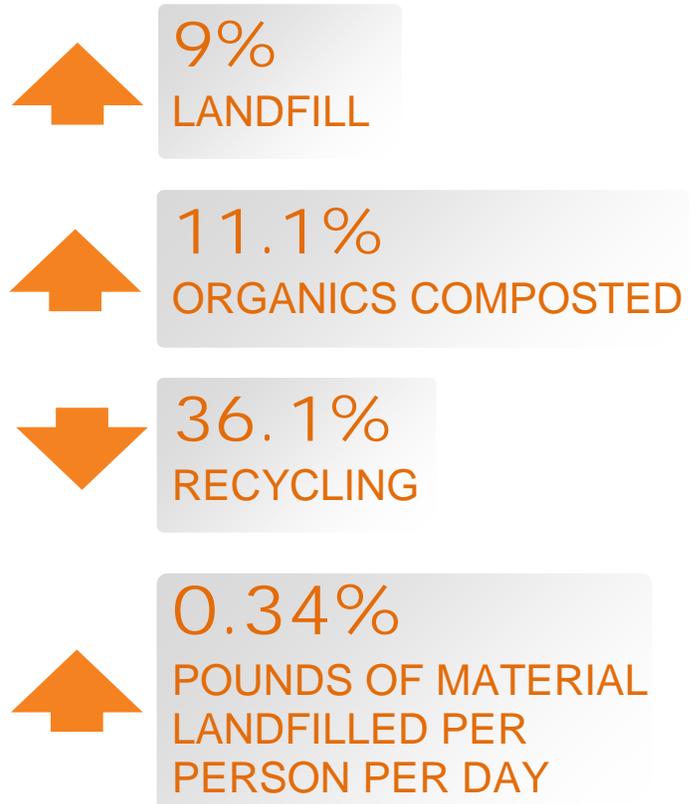
## Community Diversion Rate

A diversion rate compares the amount of material that was recycled or composted compared to the total waste generated by the community. It is useful for tracking trends in the community related to waste generation.

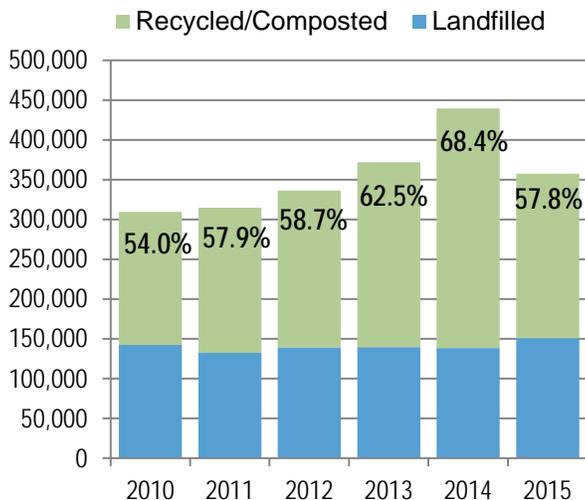
Fort Collins' overall Community-wide Diversion Rate (which includes all residential, commercial and industrially-generated trash and recyclable materials) decreased from 68.4% in 2014 to 57.8% in 2015. The Industrial Diversion Rate – exclusive of residentially/commercially generated discards – decreased from 83.2% in 2014 to 72.9% in 2015. The combined residential and commercial waste diversion rate (which may be thought of as Non-Industrial Diversion) decreased from 34.3% in 2014 to 32.8% in 2015.

Based on the 2015 population of 158,300 residents, Fort Collins generated 5.22 pounds of landfill-bound material (trash) per capita per day (in 2014, per capita trash measured 4.89 pounds per day).

**FIGURE 1 – CHANGE IN MATERIALS GENERATED “COMMUNITY-WIDE” FROM 2014-2015**



**FIGURE 2 – COMMUNITY DIVERSION RATES**



## Changes by Sector from 2014-2015

### INDUSTRIAL

- landfill up 17.7%, organics composted up 17.1%, recycling down 39%

### RESIDENTIAL-ONLY

(excluding commercial and industrial)

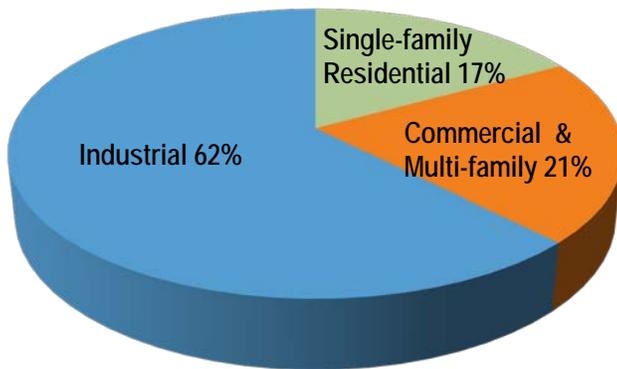
- landfill up 8.8%, organics composted down 36.8% recycling down 10.2%

### COMMERCIAL-ONLY

(excluding residential and industrial)

- landfill down 0.3%, organics composted up 33.7%, recycling down 5.8%

**FIGURE 3 - PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL COMMUNITY WASTE AND RECYCLING GENERATION BY SECTOR FOR 2015**



### Community Diversion Rate Drivers

The community diversion rate decreased by 10.6 percentage points from 2014 to 2015, which is a significant decrease. The primary driver for the change in diversion that took place from 2014 to 2015 is further explained below in the Crushing Facility section.

Additionally, amount of materials landfilled and wood composted increased as a result of the significant building taking place in Fort Collins.

The diversion rate in 2014 was identified as a likely anomaly, which has proven to be the case in comparison with the 2015 diversion rate and the years preceding.

### City of Fort Collins Crushing Facility

The City of Fort Collins operates a Crushing Facility at 1380 Hoffman Mill Road, accepting concrete, asphalt, clean dirt, and porcelain. Concrete, porcelain and asphalt are crushed and sold for use as road base, and dirt is screened and sold as fill dirt.

As was noted in the 2014 report, the 2014 and to some degree the 2013 diversion rates were significantly impacted by the unusually high amounts of dirt and asphalt recycled by the City's Crushing Facility as the Woodward headquarters were built, the Foothills Mall was redeveloped, and roads damaged in the 2013 floods were repaired concurrently.



*The decrease in Fort Collins' Community Diversion rate is primarily due to the unusually high amount of concrete, asphalt, and dirt recycled in 2014 at the City's Crushing Facility.*

In 2015, the City invested in the future of the Crushing Facility by purchasing the land on which it operates. After the sale, the facility was cleaned out and reorganized. A significant amount of material had accumulated over the years at the facility and the majority had to be landfilled (such as concrete with rebar in it that can't currently be processed at the facility). There was a substantial enough amount of material that this alone resulted in a 1.7 percentage point decrease in the 2015 community diversion rate.

### Municipal Self-Haul to Landfill

Due to the site cleanout of the City's Crushing Facility noted above, the municipal self-haul to the landfill increased by 72% in 2015 compared with 2014. The City continues waste reduction projects such as diverting wet soils to be dried and screened for reuse.

### Climate Action Plan

In 2015, the City of Fort Collins City Council unanimously adopted updated greenhouse gas reduction goals, with an eventual goal of carbon neutrality by 2050.

A key component to the plan for meeting those goals is waste reduction and recycling. New programs and efforts to compost food scraps, yard trimmings and food-soiled paper would account for a significant amount of the reduced emissions needed to meet the 2020 benchmark in the Climate Action Plan.

## Community Recycling Ordinance

In 2015, the City engaged in a project focusing on new policies needed to meet the 2020 Road to Zero Waste Goal of diverting 75% of the community's materials from landfill disposal.

The Community Recycling Ordinance project included significant community engagement: four public meetings were held, presentations were given to 14 stakeholder groups and to five City boards and commissions, information booths were set up at eight community events, an online questionnaire received over 200 responses, and over 500 community members signed up to receive email updates about the project.

City Council reviewed the project in October 2015, which at the time included the following elements:

- options for collection of yard trimmings and food scraps from single-family residences
- collection of food scraps from restaurants and grocers
- reinstating haulers' ability to charge a service surcharge on residential bills or updating the incline rate in the residential Pay-As-You-Throw regulations
- requiring recycling for businesses and apartment complexes in Fort Collins

Fort Collins City Council was receptive to many of the concepts in the Community Recycling Ordinance and the project continued into 2016.

## Regional Wasteshed Planning

Recognizing that the Larimer County Landfill is expected to reach capacity by 2025 at current disposal rates, staff from the City of Fort Collins, Larimer County, City of Loveland, and Town of Estes Park formed a regional wasteshed planning coalition. In 2015, the group initiated technical analyses, studies, and public involvement to evaluate what new infrastructure and policy options are needed to help the region responsibly manage waste in the future after the landfill is closed.

An initial stakeholder forum with nearly 50 participants was held in the fall of 2015 and provided valuable input to the process. Regional wasteshed planning is expected to be a multi-year project.

## WRAP (Waste Reduction & Recycling Assistance Program)

The Waste Reduction and Recycling Assistance Program (WRAP) continued to serve the community in 2015. WRAP provides resources to apartment complexes and businesses in Fort Collins to start or improve their recycling programs. Since its inception in early 2012, over 18,000 residents or employees have been impacted by WRAP. In 2015, WRAP reached an additional 4,900 individuals.

## Increased Recycling in City Parks

The City of Fort Collins' Parks Department committed to pairing a recycling bin with every trash bin in all parks in 2015 and removing unnecessary trash cans (with the exception of bins in restrooms and the limited space in baseball dugouts).

The Parks Department fulfilled this goal within months by purchasing 169 new recycling cans, which brought the number of recycling bins in parks to 338.

Overall, the Parks Department now empties 20.8% fewer trash cans, and recycling is available throughout all Fort Collins Parks. This has resulted in a significant amount of additional recyclable material being captured.



*A paired set of trash and recycling bins in a Fort Collins park.*

## Trash and Recycling Cart Sizes

The residents of Fort Collins continued to reduce the size of their trash cans and increase the size of their recycling carts. In 2015, the number of single-family households with a 96-gallon trash cart reduced by 9%, while the number using a 32-gallon cart increased by 7%. Overall, 38% of households subscribed to 32-gallon trash cart service, 38% to the 64-gallon, and 24% to the 96-gallon service, with 1% using intermittent trash service via pre-paid bags.

Twenty-two percent more single-family households signed up with their hauling company for a 96-gallon cart for recycling in 2015 than in the year before, and the community also saw a 26% decrease in use of the outdated 18-gallon recycle tubs. Overall, 83% of Fort Collins single-family households recycled in a 64- or 96-gallon cart and 17% used 18-gallon tubs.



*Over a third of local residents now subscribe to the smallest trash can size, and over three-quarters of Fort Collins residents now use large 64- or 96-gallon carts to recycle.*

## Definitions

*Non-industrial diversion rate:* includes waste generated by single-family residential, multi-family residential and commercial sectors.

*Industrial diversion rate:* includes materials such as waste generated by City government's operations, concrete and asphalt recycled at crushing facilities, construction and demolition waste, brewery wastes, and biosolids that were land-applied.

*Community diversion rate:* the combined total of industrial and non-industrial wastes – provides an overall view of waste generation and waste diversion for the entire community.

Note about *Alternative Daily Cover*: Fort Collins does not include materials used for alternative daily cover at the landfill as recycling or diversion.

## Report Prepared By



Caroline Mitchell, Environmental Planner  
Environmental Services  
City of Fort Collins  
970-221-6288  
[cmitchell@fcgov.com](mailto:cmitchell@fcgov.com)  
[fcgov.com/recycling](http://fcgov.com/recycling)