

Climate Smart San José Zero Waste Element

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San José City Council
November 18, 2025

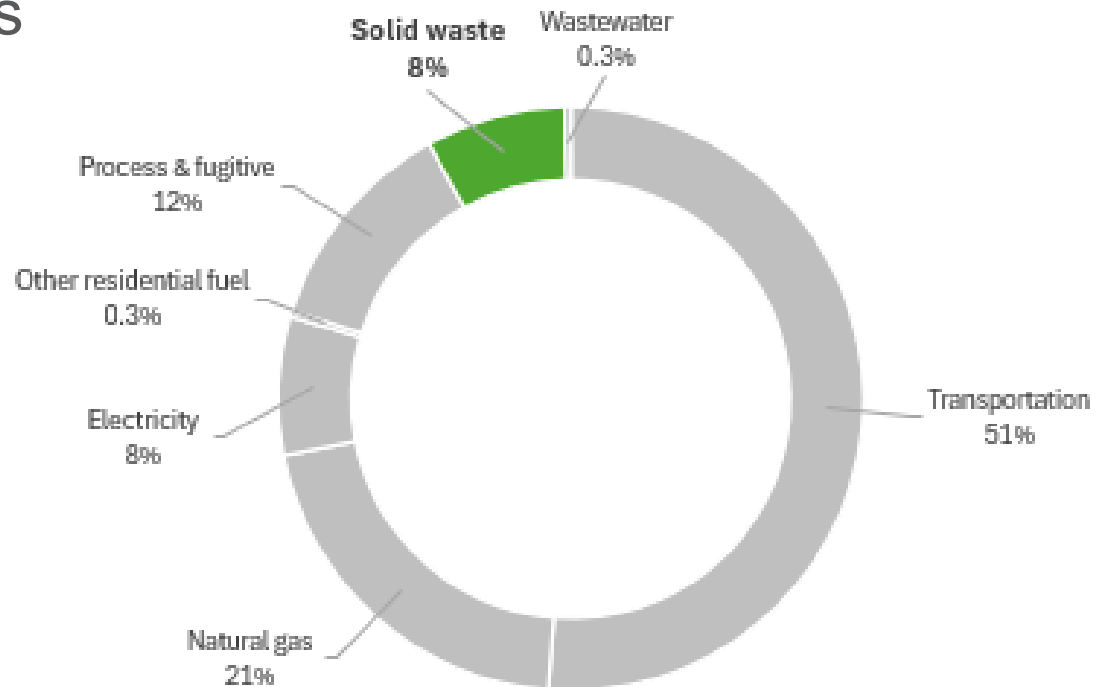


Environmental Services

Delivering world-class utility services and programs
to improve our health, environment, and economy.

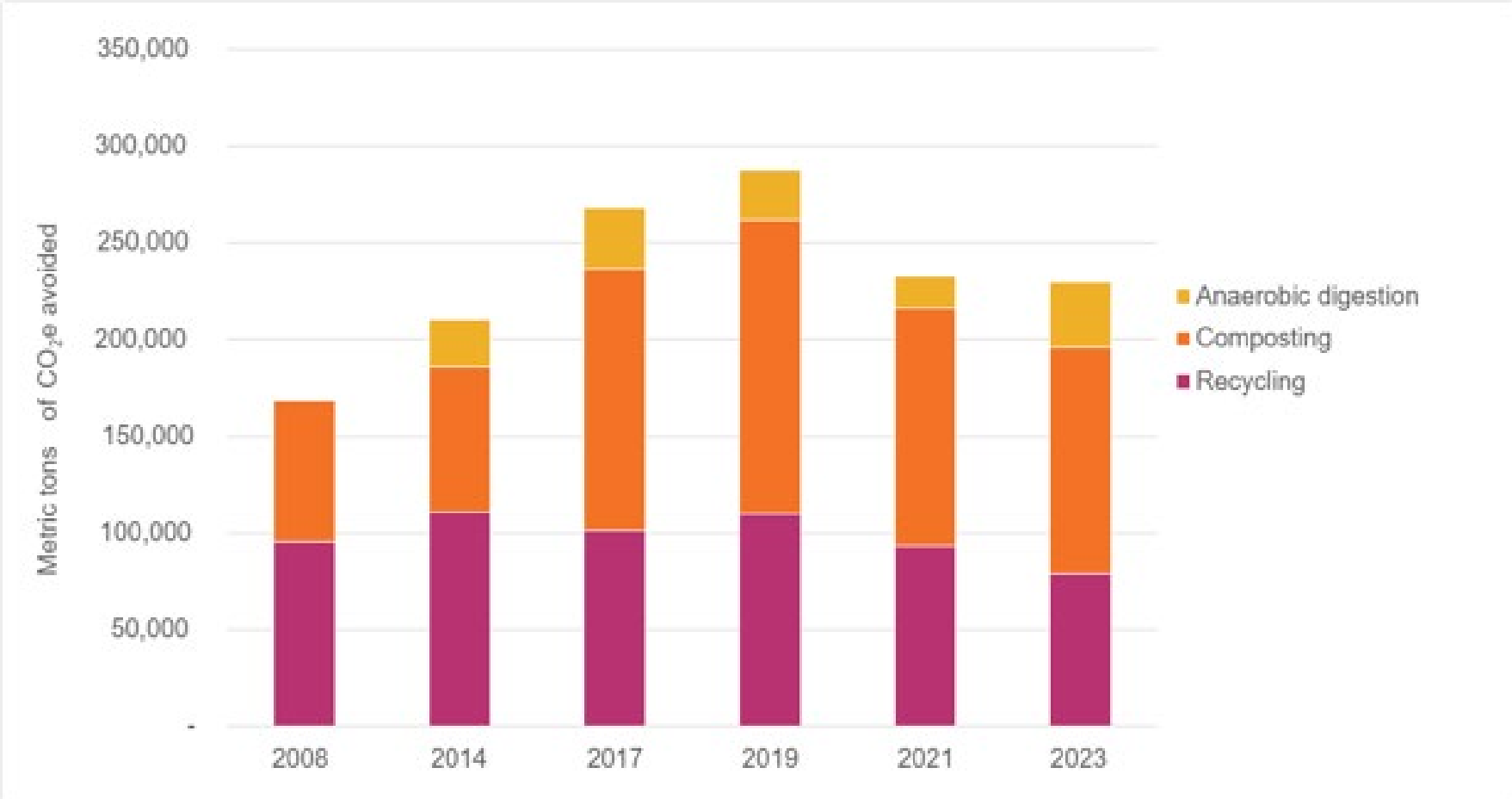
Background

- 2018 ClimateSmart plan: Solid waste identified as a topic for future research
- Update to City's 2008 Zero Waste Strategic Plan
- Landfill capacity
- Long-term contracts

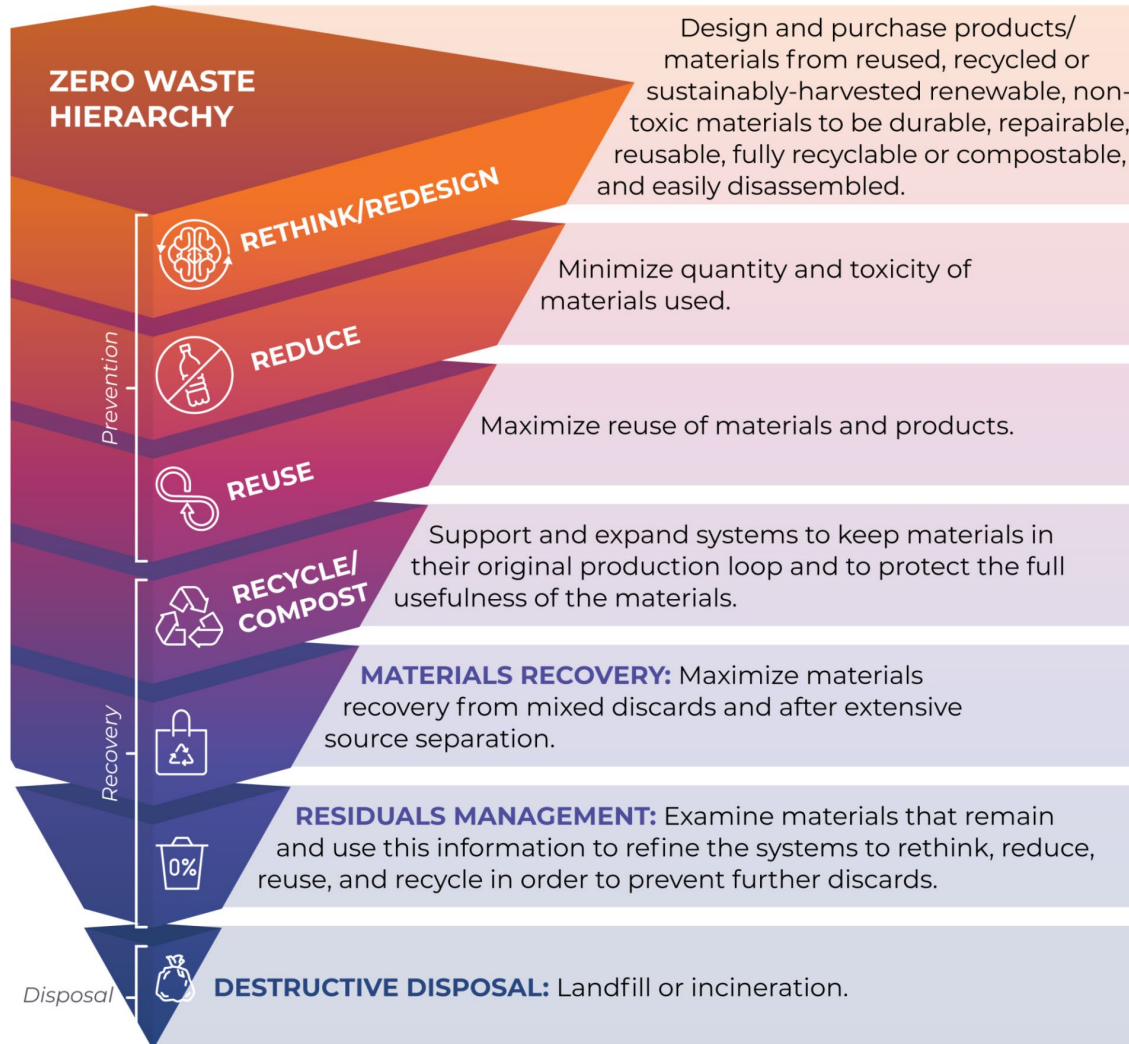


2023 Community-wide GHG inventory

Solid Waste: Connection to Climate Goals



What is Zero Waste?



Zero Waste Element Development Process



Stakeholder Engagement Overview

- Multilingual engagement (English, Spanish, Vietnamese)
- Digital outreach: ads and newsletters
- Engagement channels: survey, Konveio comment platform
- **200+ comments received** on the Element

Barriers	Opportunities/Interest
Limited access to recycling in public spaces	Participating in repair clinics
Difficulty disposing of household hazardous waste and hard-to-recycle materials	Access to free community compost
Convenience of single-use plastics	
Confusing product labels	

Zero Waste Element Strategies



FOUNDATIONAL

- Community Engagement
- Materials Characterization
- Research & Development



RETHINK/REDESIGN

- Sustainable Products & Packaging
- Sustainable Purchasing Citywide



REDUCE

- Lead by Example
- Food Waste Prevention



REUSE

- Surplus Food Recovery
- Repair & Reuse



RECYCLE/COMPOST

- Construction & Demolition Recycling
- Reduce Disposal of Compostable Materials in Landfills
- Recycling Market Development



MATERIALS RECOVERY

- Technology for Higher Diversion

Metrics: Tracking Progress

INDICATORS	PER CAPITA WASTE GENERATION	CITY PROGRAM DIVERSION PERCENTAGE	WASTE TO LANDFILL	CARBON EMISSIONS
METRICS	Tons of waste generated per person per year	Percentage of waste diverted from landfill across all City programs	Landfill disposal across all City programs	Emissions from these strategies

Current Projects



**Decreasing
Recycling
Contamination**



**Compost Hub
Pilot**



**Construction &
Demolition
Diversion
program**



**Zero Waste
Innovation Grant
program**



**Pilots to increase
diversion from
landfills**

Recommendation

- Accept the Zero Waste Element
- Direct staff to incorporate into the Climate Smart San José plan

Questions?

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