

Residential Garbage Cart Pilot Status Report

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Transportation & Environment Committee
April 3, 2023



Environmental Services

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

Residential Garbage & Recycling Services



District C

District A

- Single-family recycling



District C

District A

- Single-family garbage



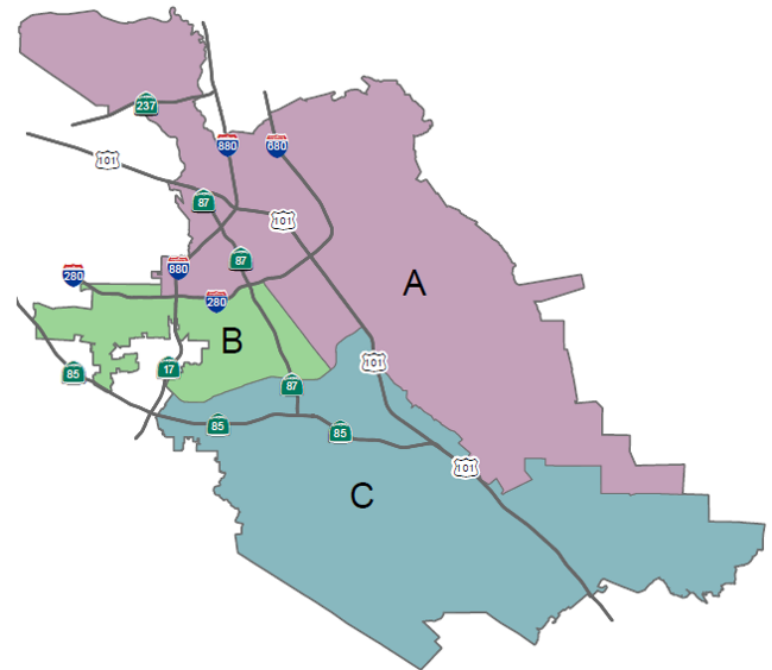
- Single-family garbage & recycling

District B

- Citywide Multi-family & City Facilities garbage & recycling



- Citywide yard trimmings
- Citywide garbage processing
- Citywide street sweeping



Single-family Households

A: 95,900

B: 54,100

C: 66,500

Multi-family Households

Citywide: 118,400

History of San José's Residential Program



Change to Single-Stream Recycling System

1993

2002

2008

2014

2019

2021

Start of SFD Garbage Processing

Amended and Restated Agreements

Multi-Container Recycling System

Start of MFD and City Facilities Garbage Processing

Outreach Responsibilities Transferred to City



Residential Garbage Cart Pilot

- Single-family recycling contamination was 32% in 2015 and 51% in Fall 2020
- 85% of homes subscribe to a 32-gallon garbage cart
- Pilot tests correlation between larger garbage carts and recycling contamination

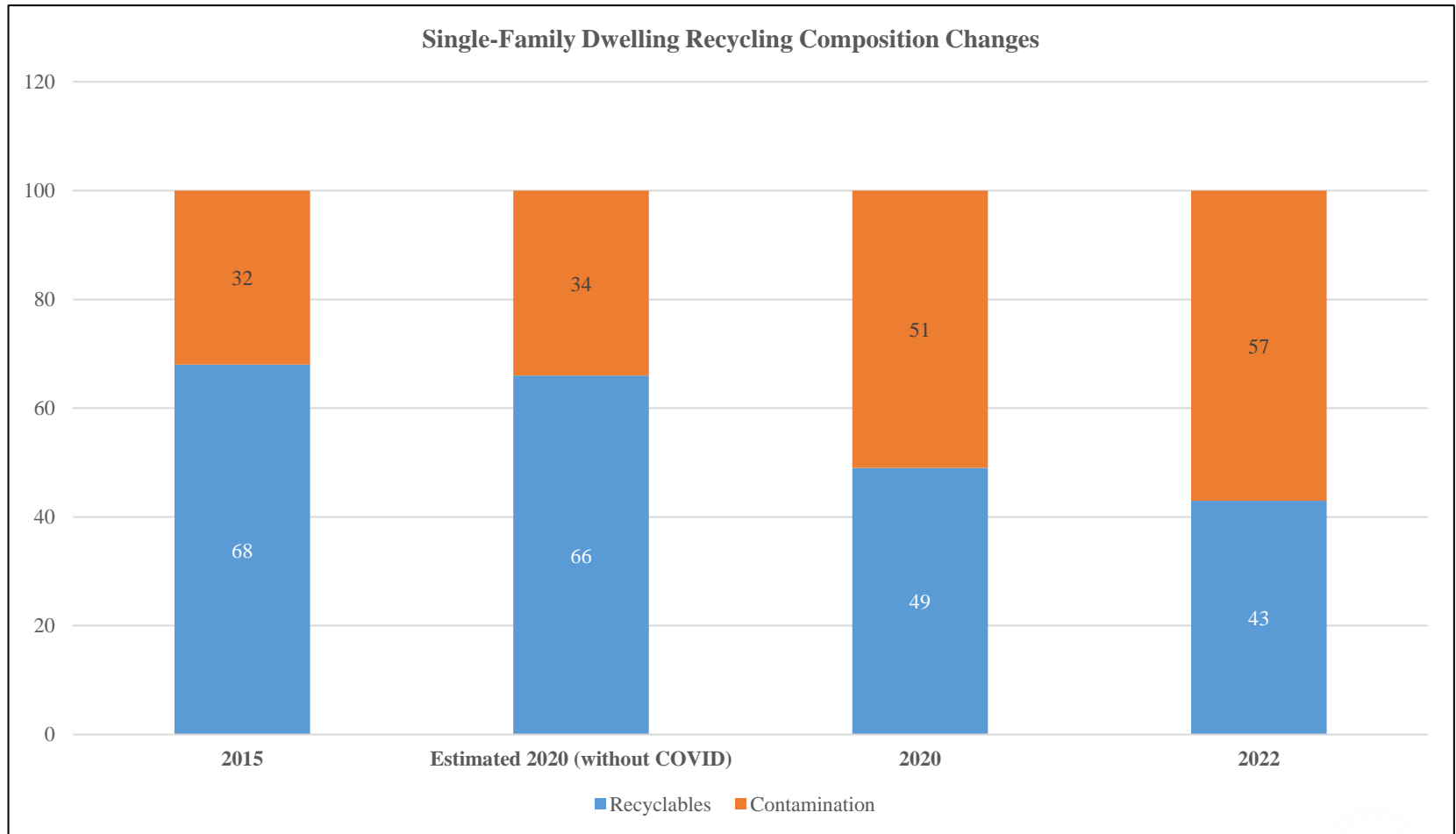


Residential Garbage Cart Pilot

- 4,200 homes offered larger garbage carts at no additional charge
- Recycling route selection based on:
 - Contamination rates
 - Location
 - Route coordination between garbage and recycling service providers
 - Number of homes per route
 - Spring 2021 recycling lid pilot

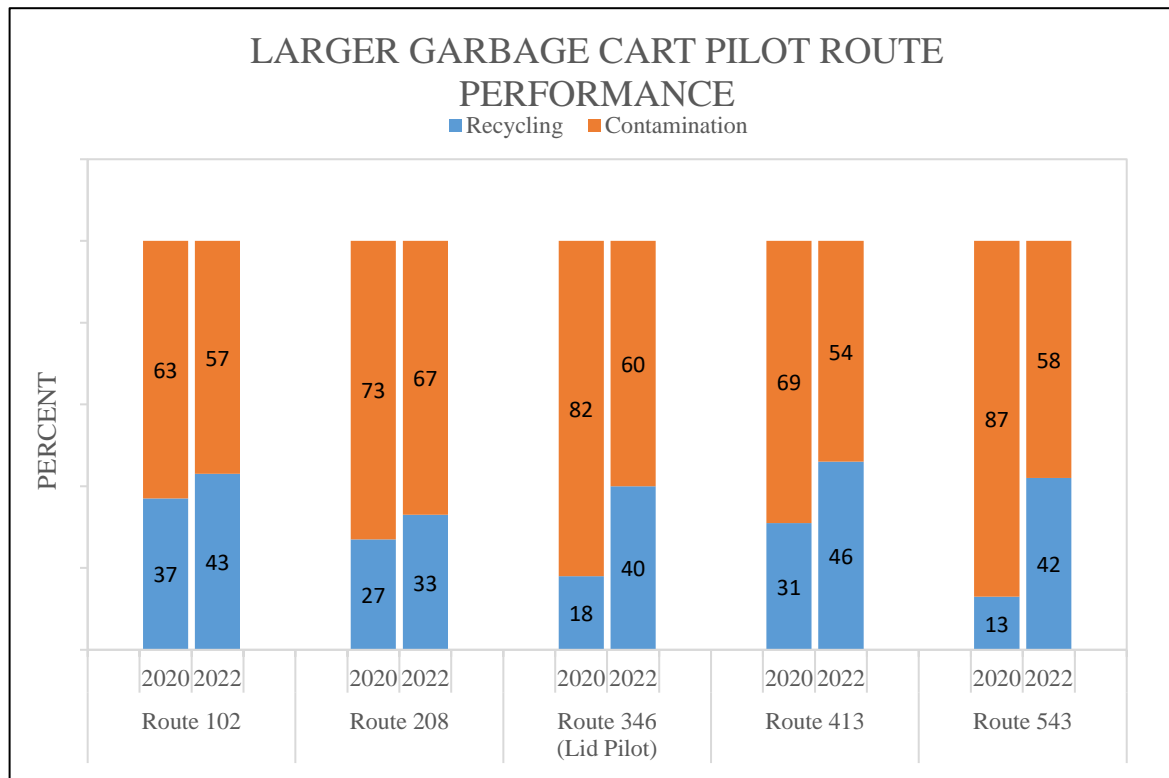


Single-Family Recycling Composition



Pilot Analysis: Third-Party Study

- All pilot routes showed decreased contamination
- Most routes' contamination rates remained above citywide 57% average



Pilot Analysis: Tonnage and Visual Assessments

- Garbage tons increased and recycling tons decreased
 - Material shifted to appropriate cart, supporting contamination study results
- Visual assessments of garbage carts
 - 45% of pre-pilot carts were “full” or “overflowing”
 - Almost all “overflowing” addresses reduced cart fullness after pilot
- Visual assessments of recycling carts
 - Less conclusive
 - 55% of pre-pilot carts contained bagged garbage or other contaminants
 - Mixed results for pilot carts containing bagged garbage and/or contaminants



Pilot Analysis: Resident Response

- All participants mailed a postcard to take a trilingual online survey
- Staff conducted in-person canvassing to 30% of participants in District C
- 259 survey responses (227 English, 25 Spanish, 7 Vietnamese)
- 77% felt their experience was “good” or “excellent”
- Most selected “3/4 full” for recycling and garbage carts
- Majority said they “sometimes” use the extra space in the larger garbage cart, followed by 26% who said “always”
- Interest in keeping the larger cart after the pilot but sited cost as a challenge

Next Steps and Areas of Future Study

- 2023-24 budget proposals
 - Pilot expansion
 - Contamination response team
- Continue installing educational recycling cart lids
- Recycle Right outreach updates
- Return to Council in June 2023 for proposed 2023-24 customer rates
- Return to Council and Transportation & Environment Committee with any future recommendations of programmatic changes



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