



**City of Gainesville  
Clerk of the Commission  
Office of the City Commission**

PO Box 490, Station 19  
Gainesville, FL 32627-0490  
200 E. University Avenue  
P: (352) 334-5015  
F: (352) 334-2036

## **City of Gainesville Policy Program Memorandum**

**TOPIC:** Mandated Reuse  
**PREPARED BY:** Lacey Lingelbach, Research and Prototyping Fellow  
**DATE:** February 17, 2020  
**REQUESTED BY:** Commissioner Hayes-Santos

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Overall, there are no other jurisdictions that specifically mandate businesses and apartments to donate reusable products before placing them in the recycling or waste streams. Some jurisdictions indicate these mandates are ineffective because they are hard to enforce and not well received by community members. Nonetheless, some jurisdictions have implemented strategies with a similar goal of encouraging reusing before recycling. These jurisdictions have indicated it would be useful to work with the community's businesses and apartments to promote this type of behavior as well as exemplify that behavior with the city's own actions. Along with this, some of the programs implemented are opportunities for cities to form partnerships with their local universities.

### **PRELIMINARY RESEARCH AND FINDINGS**

#### APARTMENT/MOVE-OUT PROGRAMS

##### *Davis, California – Apartment Move Out Waste Reduction Program<sup>1</sup>*

As a way to meet the state requirement to divert 50% of a city's waste from the landfill, the City of Davis' Public Works Utilities and Operation Department partnered with property managers at apartment communities. Together, they created this optional program in which donation stations are set up at apartment properties for residents moving out (usually in August) to leave their good, usable items. The City staff provides managers with advertising fliers for residents to know about the event. Then, when the program begins, City staff marks an area near the dumpster with blue

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cityofdavis.org/city-hall/public-works-utilities-and-operations/solid-waste-and-recycling/apartments/apartment-move-out-waste-reduction-program>

## City of Gainesville Policy Program Preliminary Research & Analysis Mandated Reuse

tape to indicate where to place these reuse items. During this time, non-profits, other residents, and apartment staff are able to take what they want from the station. Volunteers from the city help maintain the donation stations.<sup>2</sup> Once completed on September 1<sup>st</sup>, staff removes the signs and blue tape.

### *Madison, Wisconsin – Goodwill Donation Stations<sup>3</sup>*

The City of Madison partners with Goodwill to set up donation stations at apartments that have signed up for the program. These stations are available during move out times in August.

### *San Marcos, Texas – Bobcats Give Back<sup>4</sup>*

The City and Texas State University have a partnered donation program for when students move-out during the summer months. Students and the city's residents can donate non-perishable foods, pet supplies, hygiene products, clothing, small appliances and furniture at participating apartment complexes. For other residents not at these complexes, the City holds designated resident drop-off events during different times through July and early August. All items are distributed to local organizations by the City. During the pilot launch in 2018, the program collected 107 pounds of non-perishable food and 40 bags of clothing. A similar program was launched in the Austin, Texas, between the City and the University of Texas.<sup>5</sup>

### *University of Florida – Collection Days<sup>6</sup>*

At the end of every semester, the University of Florida hosts a Collection Day right before final exams in the O'Connell Center Parking Lot. This collection day is where any students, faculty or staff can donate unwanted household items, clothing, hazardous waste, old or broken electronics, furniture, appliances, school supplies and non-perishable food items. The university sorts through the items to ensure that they are recycled or disposed of safely. Food donations are given to the campus Field & Fork pantry. Along with this, clothing, furniture and household items are sent to Habitat for Humanity. Similar programs at other universities across the country are gaining traction.<sup>7</sup>

## DONATION SHOPS

### *Newton, Massachusetts – Swap Shop<sup>8</sup>*

In the City of Newton, the Department of Public Works' Sustainable Materials Management Division created a Swap Shop at the Resource Recovery Center. Citizens can drop off clean, usable items at no cost. However, items like large furniture, large appliances, building materials, and TV/Computer monitors are not able to be dropped off. Citizens are also able to take something from this shop for free. The program is ran from May to October on Fridays and Saturdays. The reason for these hours is that they rely on volunteers to manage the shop.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cityofdavis.org/home/showdocument?id=5818>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cityofmadison.com/streets/refuse/movingdays.cfm>

<sup>4</sup> <http://sanmarcostx.gov/2782/Bobcats-Give-Back>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.moveoutatx.org/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://news.hr.ufl.edu/events/collection-day/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www3.bostonglobe.com/metro/2018/06/25/every-spring-students-throw-their-lives-away-now-colleges-are-recycling-that-old-stuff/XTUlmzwKzIM98pmK6xbVII/story.html?arc404=true>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/dpw/recycling/reuse/default.asp>

*University of Wisconsin – Swap Shop*<sup>9</sup>

Similarly, the University of Wisconsin-Madison has a Surplus Property Store. This place is where unused surplus property from the University is stored and available for purchase by the general public or non-profits. However, this time is limited to just Fridays or the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month. They also use an online auction system, where the general public can pick up their purchased items from this location. For these purchases, the store is more open. A similar program can be found at Harvard's Recycling and Surplus Center.<sup>10</sup>

## CITY WASTE PROGRAMS

*San Francisco, California – Surplus Program*<sup>11</sup>

The City of San Francisco has a virtual warehouse for all surplus city-owned property. Items like appliances, electronics, office furniture, and office supplies are posted on to the online inventory for other city departments, schools and non-profits to request and reuse. Items that are broken or obsolete items can be recycled. They have estimated that since 2004, the Virtual Warehouse has redistributed and recycled over 900 tons of city-owned products worth over \$6 million. This has helped them save money on purchasing and disposal costs as well as assist them in achieving their zero waste goal.

*The City of Gainesville*

The City of Gainesville has a similar policy, whereby the City disposes of surplus equipment by public auction. This equipment includes vehicles, heavy equipment, yard equipment and office furnishings. Items are collected by the Weeks Auction Company and are auctioned two to three times a month. Surplus items are also being disposed of through GOVDEALS.com. Through the online Resource Recovery Program, the city has raised more than \$70,000 last year and eliminated a portion of storage cost for the surplus items.<sup>12</sup>

## COMPREHENSIVE/MULTI-STRATEGIC PROGRAMS

*Fort Collins, Colorado*

The City of Fort Collins has a Road to Zero Waste Plan that incentivizes reuse over recycling habits. A few ideas, that have yet to be implemented, include: (1) building a reuse warehouse where jobs are created and businesses and nonprofits can use donated materials, (2) requiring multi-family developments and neighborhood community centers to include a secure location for reusable items to be easily accessed for move-ins and move-outs, (3) adopting a used clothing collection bin ordinance to ensure quality services are provided and bins don't become a nuisance or create a public safety issue, (4) providing startup funding for a network of repair and refurbishing businesses or nonprofits to upgrade materials and products that are collected through large-scale reuse

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<sup>9</sup> <https://swap.wisc.edu/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://green.harvard.edu/tools-resources/green-tip/free-furniture-supplies-equipment-harvard-recycling-and-surplus-center>

<sup>11</sup> <https://sfenvironment.org/virtualwarehouse>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.cityofgainesville.org/BudgetFinance/SurplusProperty.aspx>

programs, and (5) forming a reuse collaborative with businesses and nonprofits throughout the region to help market products collected.

Although they have not started on some of these initiatives, the City has a few other similar actions that have promoted reuse habits.

1. Recycling Concrete through Crushing Operations<sup>13</sup>

The City of Fort Collins' Crushing Operations recycled more than 1000,000 metric tons of material in 2009. This program accepts pit run, asphalt, concrete, and toilets and sells them for other jobs including: road resurfacing, parking lot resurfacing, driveway resurfacing, material use for under buildings, build-up ground for special products. This program provides revenue from the city and diverts these materials from entering the landfill.

2. Cardboard Recycling Ordinance<sup>14</sup>

In 2013, the City of Fort Collins became the first community that required corrugated cardboard to be recycled or reused. This ordinance is enforced by City staff in the Code Compliance and environmental Services realm that are responsible. Also, trash haulers have an obligation to identify when a customer's dumpster is filled with cardboard, and they are not mandated to provide service when more than 25% of recyclable cardboard is included in the trash.

3. Website with A-Z Recycling List<sup>15</sup>

On the City's website, there is a tool that helps residents see where (curbside recyclable, drop off, trash, reuse, compost, etc.) they can drop off specific types of materials. This helps residents find local diversion options for household items. It was created by the City's Waste Reduction & Recycling Team.

4. Waste Reduction and Recycling Assistance Program (WRAP)<sup>16</sup>

In this program, the City of Fort Collins Environmental Services Department works with businesses and apartment complexes to start or increase recycling or composting. They operate free of charge and perform on-site assessments as well as provide communication materials, in-person education, and rebates for those starting new compost programs.

5. ClimateWise Reporting<sup>17</sup>

This program is free and voluntary for Fort Collins Businesses to reduce their impact, save money, and gain recognition for achievements in energy and water conservation, waste reduction, alternative transportation, and social responsibility. In partnership, they provide those businesses with recognition at an annual recognition event, free advertising, plaques with badges, and featured placement on the webpage.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.fcgov.com/streets/crushing>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.fcgov.com/recycling/cardboard>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.fcgov.com/recycling/atoz/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.fcgov.com/recycling/wrap.php>

<sup>17</sup> [https://www.fcgov.com/climatewise/reporting\\_guide.php](https://www.fcgov.com/climatewise/reporting_guide.php)

6. Timberline Recycling Center<sup>18</sup>

This center is a drop-off site for a variety of materials for those in the city who are not contracted with haulers or have harder to recycle materials. This center diverts waste materials, like paint, motor oil, and batteries, from the landfill and recycles them through proper processes.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.fcgov.com/recycling/dropoff.php#cb-34368-5653>