



# ZERO WASTE ROADMAP

Environmental Services Department





## BACKGROUND

In September 2020, the Tucson Mayor and Council declared a Climate Emergency. The Climate Emergency set clear goals two of which related to waste diversion:

- Attain 50 percent waste diversion by 2030
- Achieve zero waste by 2050

# ROADMAP: ON TRACK



# WHAT IS ZERO WASTE

In Tucson, our goal is to develop and implement Zero Waste programs that are practical, feasible, scalable through structured strategies to reduce, reuse, and recycle waste while promoting and enhancing resource recovery and circular economic opportunities, environmental sustainability and stewardship





# BREAKING DOWN THE PHASES

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## Short Term Strategies

- Recycling Education & Enforcement
  - Residential & Commercial Organic Waste Collection
  - Brush & Bulky Service
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## Long Term Strategies

- Expanded Curbside Organics Collections
  - Diversion of Construction and Demolition Debris
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## Future Investment

- New Materials Recovery Facility



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# RECYCLING EDUCATION & ENFORCEMENT



**148,000** Single-Family Homes have blue bins for recycling



Approximately **24,000** tons collected annually



Contamination has decreased from **29% to 19.6%**



## Education

- K-12 Classroom
- Master Recyclers Program
- Recycling 101 Presentations
- Know Where to Throw Website

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# RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL ORGANICS COLLECTION



- **FoodCycle Commercial Collections** began in 2014
  - Customers include restaurants and grocery stores
- Approximately **15-20 tons** collected monthly
- January 2024 Residential Drop-off sites established for **FoodCycle at Home**
- More than **3000 households** participating
- Started with 6 sites – currently have **15 sites**
- Approximately **8-9 tons** monthly
- Mixed with ZooDoo and green waste diverted at landfill
- Currently planning a pilot program for **Curbside FoodWaste Collection**

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# BRUSH & BULKY COLLECTIONS



**148,000** households eligible for collection

- No waste diversion option



**26 areas**, 2x per year collection



Currently running pilot program with **By Appointment** schedule





2

# WHAT'S NEXT

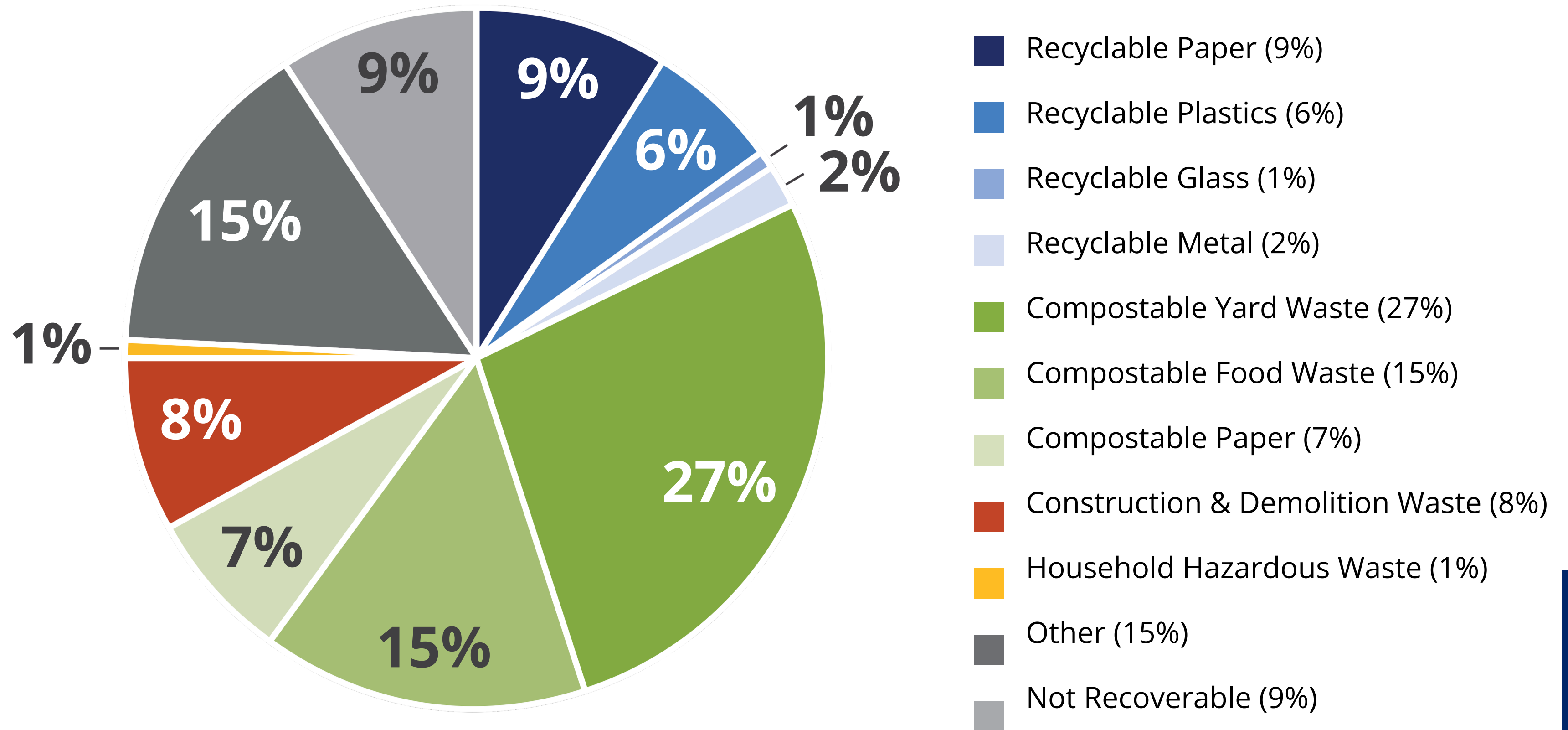
## Expand organics composting efforts

- Significant potential for waste diversion
- Example: City of Portland – composting made up 74% of diverted waste
- Opportunity for major waste reduction in Tucson
- Proven programs available to guide future implementation

## Construction & Demolition Debris

- Reduces landfill use and conserves space
- Lowers greenhouse gas emissions
- Conserves resources through reuse and recycling
- Supports a circular economy
- Encourages sustainable building practices

# WASTE STREAM IN TUCSON



# CURRENT WASTE DIVERSION

Jan-Sept 2025



**1,500**  
tons of  
Glass



**219**  
tons of  
HHW



**529**  
tons of  
Compost



**83**  
tons of  
Hard-to-  
Recycle  
Plastics



**22,351**  
tons of  
Recyclables

# CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

## Opportunities

- Recycling
  - New technology for plastics
  - End markets and economy
  - Contamination
- Organics
  - Curbside organics collection
  - Structure landfill fees to promote green waste diversion

## Challenges

- Recycling
  - End markets and economy
  - Contamination
- Organics
  - Separate brush from bulk
- Staff shortages

# CLOSING

Advancing zero waste and diversion initiatives strengthens our environmental commitment. Together, we can reduce landfill dependence and create a more sustainable future. Continued collaboration and innovation are key to achieving our waste reduction goals. Let's keep moving forward toward a cleaner, greener Tucson.

