BURNS McDONNELL

JOPLIN
RECYCLING EDUCATION & OUTREACH PLAN

July 7, 2025

Joplin City Council Meeting

Agenda

1. Project Overview
2. Current System Overview
3. Community Survey Results
4. Community Input Results
5. Recommended Strategies & Messaging
6. Next Steps

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Overview

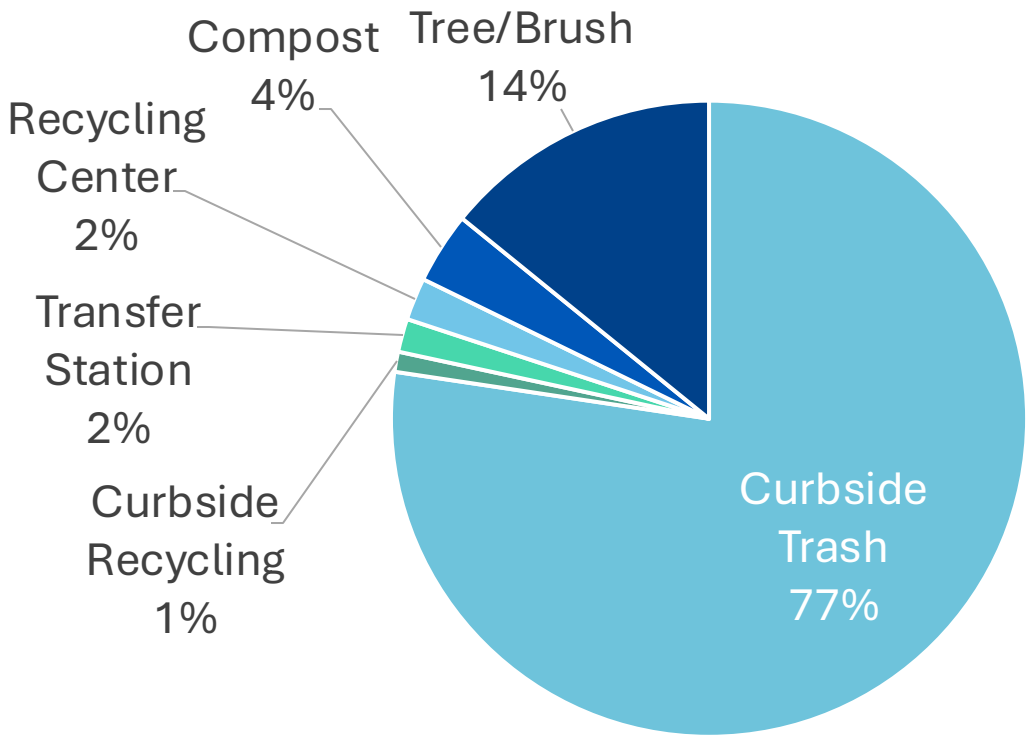
- The City of Joplin received $1.7M from the EPA for REO (June 2024)
  - Burns & McDonnell was contracted in October 2024
- Researched Best Management Practices
- Evaluated Benchmark Communities
- Conducted Community Engagement Activities
  - Third Thursdays (x2)
  - Community Open House
  - Focus Group
  - Hauler Interviews
  - Community Survey
- Developed REO Plan



CURRENT SYSTEM OVERVIEW

Current System Overview

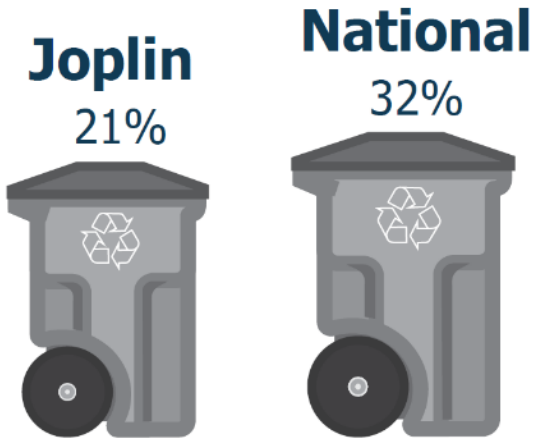
Residential Waste Generation



Two Ways to Recycle

- Optional Curbside Subscription
  - $4.77 / month
  - Only 10% of residents currently subscribe
- Recycling Center
  - Popular and well utilized

Recycling, Brush, and Yard Waste Diversion Rate Comparison



Current System Overview

Best Management Practices

- Accessibility
  - Provide Bins
- Consistency
  - Repeated Messaging
- Direct Engagement
  - Face-to-Face and Door-to-Door
- Motivating Language
  - Easy, Smart, Natural, Simple

Granite Falls, Minnesota

89% increase in tonnage when recycling bins were introduced for all residents



COMMUNITY SURVEY

RESULTS

Community Survey Results

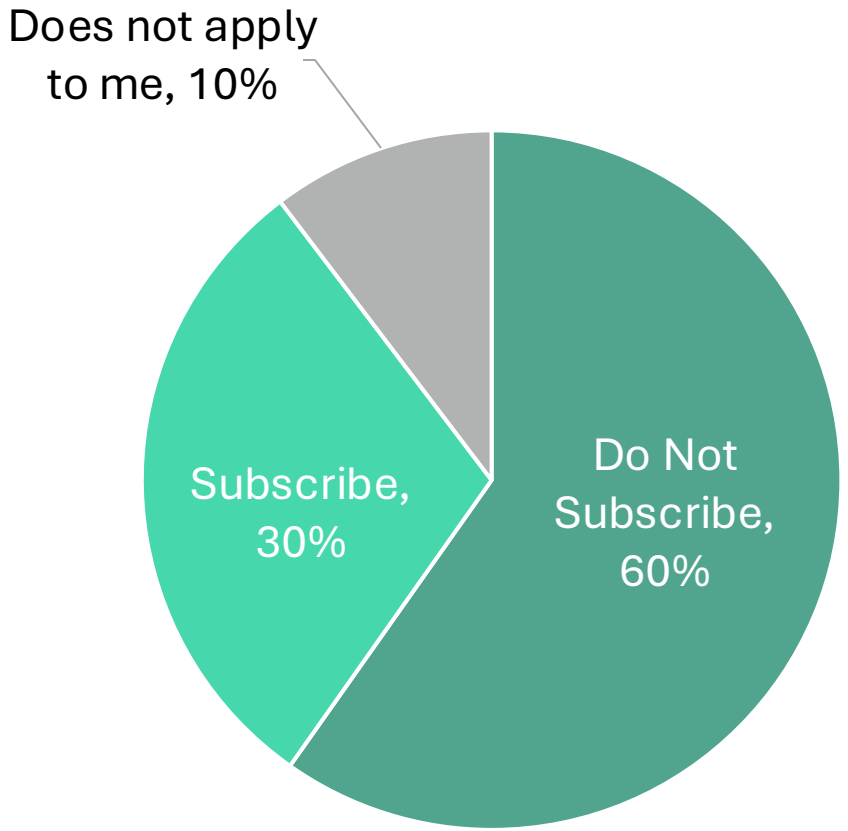
Demographic Overview

- 241 survey respondents
  - April 17 to May 19
- 77% were residents of Joplin
- 85% live in a single-family home
- Even distribution across age groups
- Even distribution of household sizes 1-5+

- Evaluated results for both sets of data: subscribers and non-subscribers

Survey Response:

Subscribe to Curbside Recycling?



Challenges to Recycling

- Recycling is confusing for over a quarter of respondents – 27%
- Not aware of the curbside program – 29%
- Cost is a barrier for over half of respondents – 38%
- Strong majority find recycling important and makes a difference – 77%
- Mistrust that recyclables get recycling and don't end up in a landfill – 21%



Community Survey Results

Trust in Sources

- Subscribers are trustful of all entities
- Overall, both subscribers and non-subscribers have strong trust in all sources

Sources of Information – Subscribers vs Non-Subscribers

	Trust	
Source	**Subscribers**	**Non-subscribers**
City of Joplin	80%	57%
Trash / Recycling Provider	80%	47%
Neighborhood or Community Groups	62%	47%
School (Child's school or university)	69%	50%
Environmental Advocacy Group	70%	53%
News Outlets	52%	43%
Friends	62%	53%
Family	59%	57%

COMMUNITY INPUT

RESULTS

Activities & Key Findings

Community Input Activities

- Third Thursdays – April and May
- Open House – Library, 15 attendees
- Focus Group – Wildcat Glades, 15 attendees
- Hauler Interviews – Republic Services and GFL



Overall Key Findings

- Community lacks information about recycling options
- If they have information its often misinformation or distrust
- The community has the desire to recycle and believes it is the right thing to do
- Recycling needs to be easy for them to participate

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES & MESSAGING

Recommended Strategies & Messaging

Proposed Objectives

- Build Trust in Recycling
- Increase Awareness of Recycling Programs
  - Increase participation in curbside
  - Increase participation in drop off
  - Educate the next generation
  - Increase awareness of cardboard recycling service for businesses / commercial
  - Promote diversion of yard waste and food waste



Recommended Strategies & Messaging

Key Message:

Recycling is easy and makes a difference

- Curbside recycling is easy.
- Drop-off recycling fits your schedule
- Businesses can recycle cardboard too
- Compost yard and brush
- Recycling materials are truly recycled

Recommended Strategies & Messaging

Methods of Communication

- Branded Joplin Recycling –
  - Consistency in messaging across all recycling options
  - Reposition curbside recycling as Joplin's service (powered by Republic)
- Robust presence on Joplin's website
- Social and online
- Direct mail
- Earned and paid media
- Community Events
- K-12 / Commercial Toolkit

NEXT STEPS

Next Steps

Implementation of the Recycling Education and Outreach Plan

- City request for proposals for a marketing firm
  - Proposals Due July 11th.
- Burns & McDonnell will continue to support implementation and tracking data

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

Regional Case Studies

Municipality	Level of Service	Dedicated Recycling Education and Outreach Staff	Qualitative Level of Engagement with the Public	Qualitative Participation in Curbside Recycling
Columbia	Residents receive vouchers for free recycling bags 2X/year and can request additional vouchers through the City's vendor.	No, but a volunteer program specialist is available to assist with education and outreach efforts.	Medium	Medium
Olathe	Residents are provided with a 95-gallon recycle cart and can request additional carts for free.	No, but a communication & marketing specialist is available to assist with education and outreach efforts.	Low	High
Springfield	Residents have optional curbside recycling with an associated fee.	Yes, they have an education and outreach coordinator.	High	Low

Community Survey Results – Trusted Sources

- Key Opportunities to Increase Recycling
  - Willing to participate but need to see what the results
  - Respondents want to participate – 70% would be more likely to participate if service was reduced or free
- Sources of Information
  - Both recycling participants and non-participants responded consistently to these questions – methods are not impacting participation
  - TV – interested or neutral
  - Websites and email – 60% interested
  - Social Media – preference towards Instagram and Facebook
  - Physical Mail – interested or neutral
- Methods of Communication by Age
  - Online (websites) is the overall strongest method
  - Community – all ages are interested
  - Television – all ages are moderately interested