

In a few sentences, give a summary of the project and why it was needed.

For many years the City of Muscatine, Iowa, used recycling trailers located throughout the community for the recycling needs of our residents. Concurrently, as citizen demand for curbside recycling grew, City staff was investigating options to provide a high quality, cost effective program for our residents. The community identified two main goals - increased recycling and increased landfill capacity/lifespan. In order to achieve these goals, it was clear any new program had to be easy for the consumer to use. City staff reviewed multiple options for providing service to residents. These options included contracting, bringing the program in-house, and several options for curbside recycling such as single-sort, traditional curbside recycling with a multi-bin divided truck, and multiple variations of each.

In the spring of 2010, City staff recommended to the Muscatine City Council that outsourcing the service to a private recycling company would be the most cost effective means to provide curbside recycling. The program would be single-sort, use an automated collection mechanism, and provide residents (including apartment complexes) one of three different sized recycling containers. Single-sort recycling gave us the best chance for success. A public hearing was held in June 2010. The public turned out in mass to support curbside recycling. The City Council supported this green initiative and put the project out to bid. Allied Waste was awarded the bid on October 21, 2010. Implementing this single-sort, curbside recycling program (after identifying savings from the current program) added just \$21.00 annually (\$1.75 per month) to refuse collection fees for our residents.

The City of Muscatine and Allied Waste collaborated to provide the residents of Muscatine (and Fruitland whom we service via contract) with a high quality and cost effective recycling program. Public outreach/education has and continues to be an important part of our recycling program. Over 3,000 students have viewed the recycling truck in operation at area presentations. Recycling information, schedules, and containers were distributed in March 2011 to all households and all of the Muscatine School District facilities in the service area in preparation for the start of the recycling program on April 4, 2011.

To date, the City's curbside recycling program has collected 1,160 tons of recycling with a participation rate of 95% (percent of total households utilizing service in the Muscatine area). Residents have praised the program as being convenient and easy to use allowing them to recycle more! Clearly, this has been a win-win for our community!

Explain the specific role of your city in this project.

The City of Muscatine's key roles were in identifying a need for increased recycling and curbside service, working with residents and providers to identify a program that could work here in Muscatine, and in writing and administering the request for proposals for the single-sort curbside recycling program. Other key but shared roles include public education and outreach, collection routing with MAGIC (Our area GIS provider housed with our local municipal utility), and customer service. This significant program rolled out within a short time frame and with minimal challenges.

In a few sentences, what future impact will this project have on your community?

Curbside recycling has been a great sustainability initiative that we know will have a lasting impact on our community, our residents' ability to recycle, as well as positive effects on the Muscatine County Landfill, its capacity and its ability to be a long-term asset for our community. The more material that is recycled the less waste is placed at the landfill. Landfill cells will have a longer capacity, which in the long term will save future construction costs associated with landfill expansions. Based on early projections, the City expects to gain an additional one-year of landfill life to the current landfill cell and for every 12 months of recycling, the City expects to gain an additional one-year of landfill or cell capacity. With curbside recycling, there is now only one drop-off site located at the Muscatine Recycling Center and Transfer Station. The former drop-off locations required additional expenses and were less efficient. In addition, many of the sites had litter and illegal dumping issues that negatively impacted beautification efforts in our community.