

Brownsville ISD's Commingled Recycling Initiative

District Commitment to Recycling and Waste Reduction

In alignment with [Board Policy CL \(Legal\)](#), the District is committed to recycling the materials it uses and minimizing non-hazardous waste. Every member of the District shares responsibility for supporting these efforts to conserve natural resources and protect limited landfill space.

Recycling is one part of a broader sustainability effort through which the District promotes environmental awareness and long-term environmental preservation.

Alignment with Global, National, and State Standards

- Global: Supports United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including responsible resource use and climate action:
 - SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
 - SDG 13: Climate Action, which emphasize recycling, waste reduction, and the efficient use of natural resources
- National: Follows EPA and TCEQ guidelines for K–12 recycling and waste-diversion programs.
- State: Aligns with TEA Science and Social Studies TEKS on sustainability, waste management, and environmental system.

History of Recycling in BISD

In 2009, Brownsville ISD launched its first district-wide paper-only recycling program after successfully securing five grants from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) in partnership with the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (LRGVDC). These grants funded:

- Recycling education materials for elementary & secondary students
- 2,500 classroom bins and 150 rolling collection bins
- A baler for compacting paper
- A recycling garbage truck (2009 Sterling LT500)

Challenges of the Paper-Only Recycling Model

- The 2009 recycling truck needed constant maintenance.
- Fuel and operational costs continued to rise, increasing the cost per ton collected.
- The program required a dedicated driver, adding to staffing (payroll) and liability costs.
- It collected only paper, limiting environmental impact and generating very little revenue.
- The district never reached a break-even point... the program consistently cost more to run than it saved.

Transition to Commingled (Single-Stream) Recycling:

- Board approved the shift to commingled (single-stream) recycling in November 2020; implemented in January 2021.
- Paper, cardboard, plastics, aluminum go in one bin, eliminating campus sorting.
- The vendor handles collection, reducing district fuel, maintenance, and truck costs.
- Staffing for recycling needs decreased, allowing the district employees to support other tasks.

2020

Competitive Seal Proposal Process

- Summer 2020 – Developed specs
- October 2020 – Bid opening
- November 2020 – Board meeting
- December 2020 – Bins ordered & delivered

CSP #21-122 Commingled (Single-Stream) Recycling Services District-Wide was approved for a one (1) year term with an option to renew for one additional one (1) year term.

One proposal received & one no-bid.

2022

Competitive Seal Proposal Process

- Summer 2022 – Updated specs
- October 2022 – Bid opening
- November 2022 – Board meeting

CSP #23-160 Commingled (Single-Stream) Recycling Services District-Wide was approved for a one (1) year term with an option to renew for two additional one (1) year term (three years term in total).

Two proposals received & three no-bid.

2025

Competitive Seal Proposal Process

- Summer 2025 – Updated specs
- October 2025 – Bid opening
- November 2025 – Board meeting

CSP #26-160 Commingled (Single-Stream) Recycling Services District-Wide was approved for a one (1) year term with an option to renew for two additional one (1) year term (three years term in total).

One proposal received.

Trash & Commingled Recycling Service Costs

Effective 10/2015 to 09/2024	8 Yards Container	4 Yard Container
Trash Cost	195.60	97.80
Recycling Cost	120.00	60.00
Cost Savings	75.60	37.80

Effective 10/2024	8 Yards Container	4 Yard Container
Trash Cost	244.48	122.24
Recycling Cost	160.00	80.00
Cost Savings	84.48	42.24

New Trash Service

Commercial Trash Fees

The commercial dumpster rate adjustments result in significant cost savings for customers.

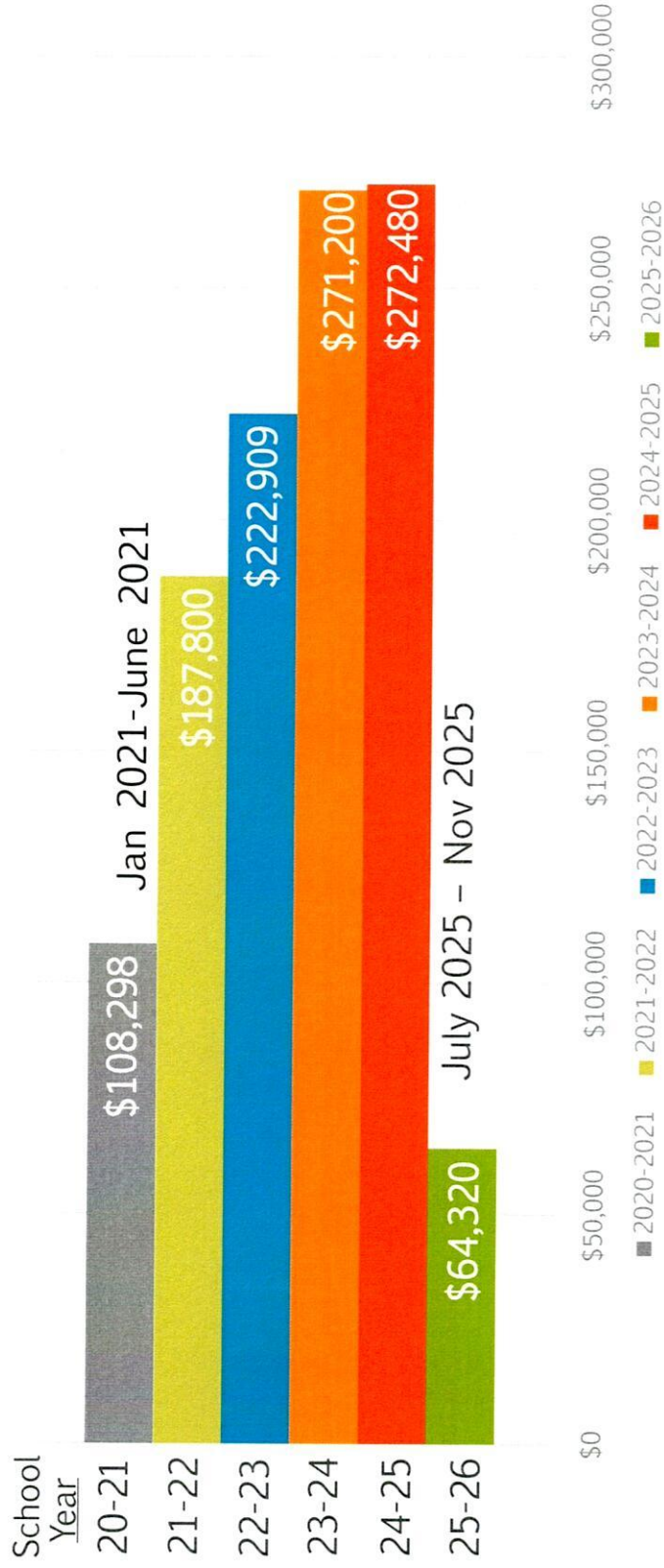
Decrease ranges from 32% to 44%
 • Larger container sizes reflect the greatest reductions

Average reduction of nearly 38% across all commercial service levels.

Rate Reductions by Dumpster Size

- 2-Yard dumpsters will see an average decrease of about 33%.
- 3-Yard dumpsters will decrease by about 32%.
- 4-Yard dumpsters will decrease by about 33%.
- 6-Yard dumpsters will decrease by about 38%.
- 8-Yard dumpsters will decrease the most, by about 44%.

Commingled (Single-Stream) Recycling Expenditures by School Year



Commingled (Single-Stream) Recycling Expenditures for CSP #23-160

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

Estimated Contract Usage from Local Funds.

\$725,389.03 (Amount expended – previous contract term)
 x 7% (Estimated increase as per current market trends)
 \$776,166.26

Amount expended during the previous 3-year contract term:

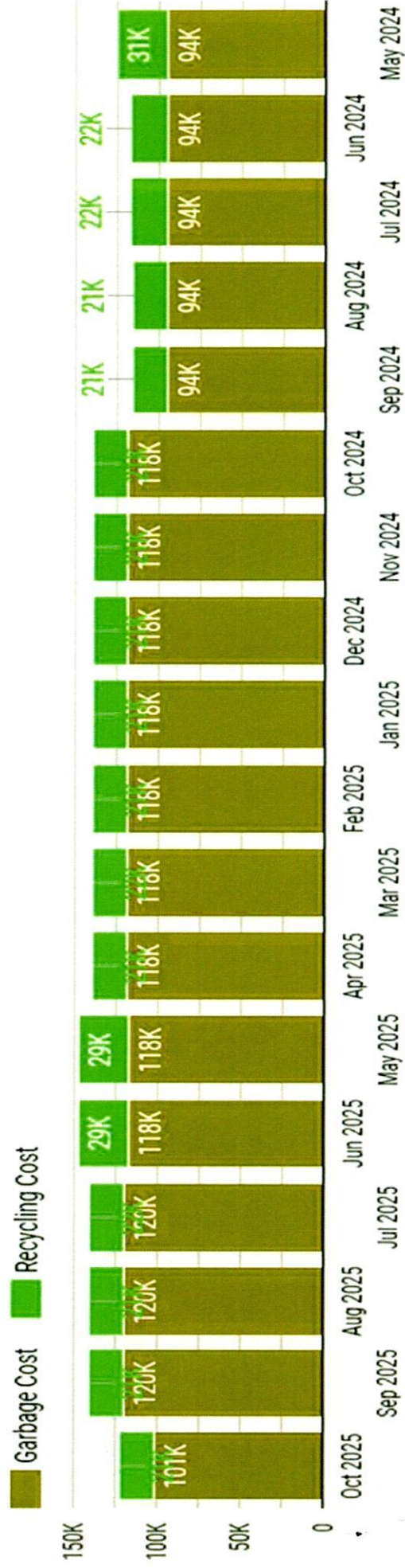
2022-2023 \$246,989.03
 2023-2024 \$269,920.00
 2024-2025 \$208,480.00
 \$725,389.03

2022-2023 contract term	
11/11/2022	P406562 \$160,269.03
8/4/2023	P421497 64,880.00
10/3/2023	P425176 21,840.00
	\$246,989.03

2023-2024 contract term	
12/5/2023	P428320 \$162,160.00
5/3/2024	P436259 22,320.00
7/10/2024	P437929 85,440.00
	\$269,920.00

2024-2025 contract term	
12/2/2024	P445798 \$187,040.00
Aug pymt	P453868 21,440.00
	\$208,480.00

Commingled (Single-Stream) Recycling Trash Cost vs Recycling Cost



Source: BISSD Resource Management Dashboard



3,282+
tons recycled

Commingled (Single-Stream) Recycling Tons Recycled by School Year

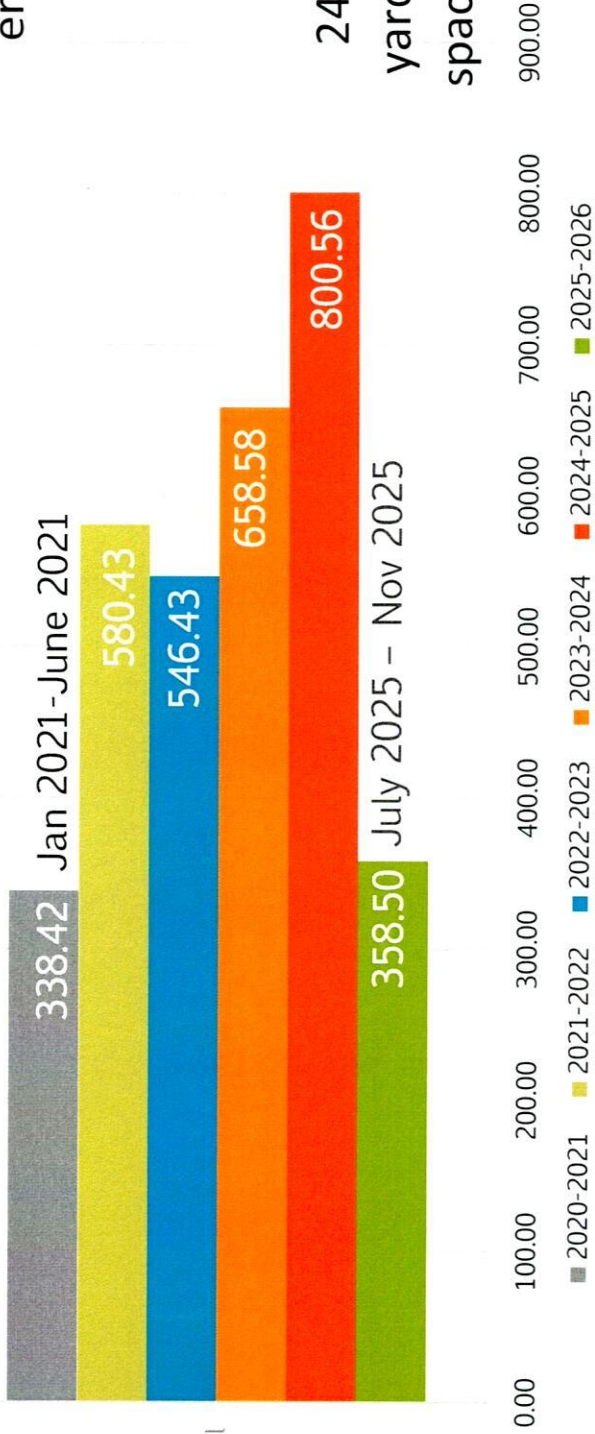
9+ million
kWh of
energy saved



33,096
trees saved^{Total}



24,476 cubic
yards of landfill
space conserved



11 million
gallons of
water saved

Based on the Natural Report for BISD between January 1, 2021 to June 30, 2025.

Other Key Updates

The City of Brownsville is preparing to launch its new Curbside Residential Recycling Program.

- Residential homes only will receive curbside recycling service.
- Multi-family housing and commercial buildings are not included.

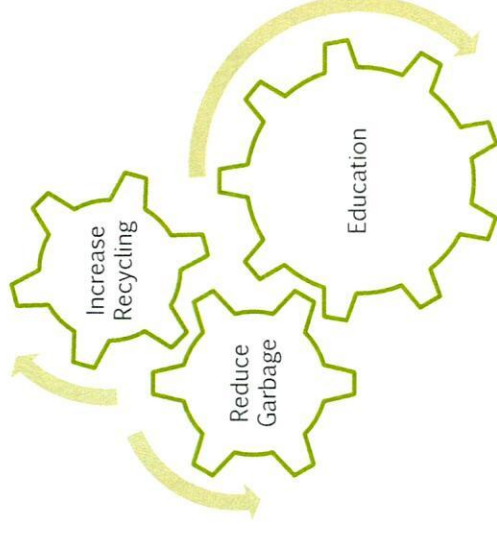
Source: myRGV.com (Aug 12, 2025)

- The city does not have its own recycling center. It's why they're contracting with Redfish Recycling in the effort.

Source: KRGV.com (Aug 28, 2025)

Opportunities for Improvement

- Learn the 3 R's of Sustainability: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.
- Practice and encourage proper placement of recyclables into designated recycling containers.
- Reduce overall trash volume, leading to fewer service pickups and lower disposal costs.
- Recognize campuses that demonstrate strong recycling participation.

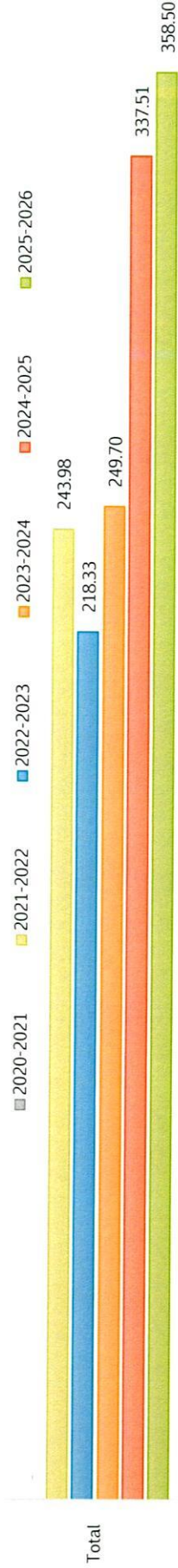


Recycle more, reduce trash volume, and lower overall waste-service costs.

School Year Comparison - Tons Recycled by Month



July - November



Thank you!

One Team
One Dream



Happy Holidays!

Reduce
Reuse
Recycle

Together
for a Greener
Tomorrow

Sustainability
Starts With Us