



Chapter 7: Waste Management & Resource Recovery



Why this matters

Municipal solid waste, and especially food waste, is a large source of greenhouse gases. Methane and carbon dioxide are emitted from landfills as organic material decomposes. Daily truck traffic that collects, hauls, and delivers solid waste for screening and landfill disposal also generates vehicular emissions. As population and resource demands grow, waste streams will continue to grow as well, increasing disposal costs and harmful emissions. Rather than going to waste, organic material can be diverted for beneficial uses like composting.

What's happening here?

Without waste diversion, reuse, and composting infrastructure investments, more solid municipal and food waste will continue to be sent to the New River Regional Landfill 35 miles north of Gainesville. A key objective to minimize waste and maximize resource recovery is to shift from this linear process to a “circular economy”: a system in which fewer raw materials are consumed for production of goods, and more goods remain in use through recycling and repair.

The CAP prioritizes two approaches for sustainable waste management:

Reduce waste generation at the source in homes and businesses

Expand diversion and resource recovery programs and infrastructure

What does the CAP include?

Alachua County is working toward developing a circular economy by expanding recycling, composting, and reuse programs. It is also investing in local composting businesses and encouraging waste reduction through education and outreach. Future strategies include:

- **Setting a goal to reduce solid waste countywide**
- **Supporting local businesses that repair, reuse, or recycle materials**
- **Expanding composting and recycling options across the county for both residents and businesses**

Program Highlight

The Alachua County Zero Waste Grant supports innovation and development of waste reduction programs. Second-round grant recipients include Lost and Found GNV LLC, O-Town Compost, Inc. and The Repurpose Project, Inc.

How can residents contribute?

Reduce waste on the front-end

- Reduce consumption of single-use plastics
- Buy products made from recycled materials

Dispose of waste properly

- Compost food scraps and yard waste at home
- Drop off food scraps and organics at a local compost center like UF Compost Cooperative, a County Rural Collection Center, or community garden
- Follow proper recycling guidelines

Shop secondhand

- Buy pre-owned thrift or consignment clothing and household goods