

# Town of Woodbury

## Sustainable Materials Management Grant

### Final Report

January 28, 2025

#### Summary of Pilot Program

The Town of Woodbury applied for and received a Sustainable Materials Management Grant (SMM) from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) for up to \$159,100 to pilot principles of unit-based pricing and organics diversion at their Transfer Station. The contract (ID #2023-155) was executed on December 30, 2022. The Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG) entered into a separate contract with DEEP (ID #2023-180) to provide education and outreach services on behalf of Woodbury during the course of the grant.

The SMM pilot officially began on February 7, 2023. In the weeks leading up to the launch, contractor Waste Zero (WZ) and NVCOG distributed boxes of bags at the Woodbury Transfer Station to interested households. The boxes contained an explanatory info sheet with a message from the First Selectwoman (Attachment A).

During the grant period, NVCOG engaged in a number of outreach strategies on behalf of Woodbury. On the evening of 1/19/23, NVCOG held a Community Champions Dinner with pizza to educate residents about the upcoming pilot. A luncheon presentation with similar content took place at the Senior Center on 1/26/23. In partnership with RecycleCT, NVCOG held a “What’s In, What’s Out” recycling workshop at the Senior Center on the evening of 2/2/23. To generate excitement and momentum about the pilot, NVCOG held a Kickoff Fair on Saturday, 2/18/23 at the Library with refreshments, games, info sheets, and waste experts. Although NVCOG planned to table at Woodbury Earth Day to promote the pilot, the event was canceled due to inclement weather. Two “town hall” style feedback sessions were held – one in-person on 4/10/23 and one virtually on 5/22/23. These provided residents with valuable opportunities to speak directly to the Woodbury Board of Selectmen about the pilot. Finally, a Green Storytime event was held 8/9/23 to educate Woodbury children about the importance of recycling and doing their part for the earth.

Holding events was only one prong of the multifaceted outreach approach. WZ and NVCOG spent hours tabling at the Transfer Station to distribute additional boxes and speak one-on-one with residents. Tabling was also used to hand out flyers about upcoming events, such as the feedback sessions. Additionally, NVCOG maintained a Facebook presence at [@NVCOGReduceTheTrash](#), with regular informational and educational postings in Woodbury community groups (Attachment B). Phone calls from residents were answered throughout the entire grant period, with subject matters ranging from program logistics to recycling questions to wondering where to get more bags.

The Town used Waste Zero for program management services throughout the grant, relying on the original contract with DEEP rather than executing their own.

Woodbury’s Phase II deliverable, a letter expressing intent to plan for permanence, was submitted via email on 9/7/23 (Attachment C). Their Phase III deliverable, a letter stating a plan for permanence had been established and a summary of implementation actions, was submitted via email on 11/15/23 (Attachment D).

Once Woodbury entered its planning for permanence phase, the Town in partnership with NVCOG shifted engagement strategies to focus on stakeholder groups and supporting the Waste Advisory Committee. Below is a list detailing the outreach and education activities in support of planning for permanence:

<b>Woodbury Trash Reduction Program – Outreach for Decision-Making Process</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Public Input</b>	<b>How was it advertised?</b>
9/14	Public Meeting	Board of Selectmen	Public comment	Woodbury website
9/18	Stakeholder Meeting	Flanders Nature Center	Stakeholder group only	N/A
9/20	Voices Article	<a href="#">“In Woodbury: BOS Updated on Waste Reduction Program”</a>	N/A	Online, in print
10/3	Public Meeting, Stakeholder Meeting	Conservation Commission	Public comment	Woodbury website
10/4	Public Meeting, Stakeholder Meeting	Planning Commission	Public comment	Woodbury website
10/10	Materials Provided (declined meeting)	Republican Town Committee	N/A	Sent to President/Chair
10/10	Materials Provided (declined meeting)	Woodbury Lion’s Club	N/A	Sent to President/Chair
10/12	Public Meeting	Board of Selectmen	Public comment	Woodbury website
10/16	Press Release	Call for residents to join the Waste Advisory Committee	N/A	Woodbury website, Facebook post
10/18	Voices Article	<a href="#">“Selectmen Seek Town Residents for Committee”</a>	N/A	Online, in print
10/19	Public Meeting, Stakeholder Meeting	Woodbury Chamber of Commerce	Public comment	N/A
11/1	Public Meeting	Waste Advisory Committee Meeting	Public comment	Woodbury website
11/15	Public Meeting	Waste Advisory Committee Meeting	Public comment	Woodbury website
11/15	Stakeholder Meeting	Democratic Town Committee	Stakeholder group only	N/A
12/6	Public Meeting	Waste Advisory Committee Meeting	Public comment	Woodbury website
12/20	Public Meeting	Waste Advisory Committee Meeting	Public comment	Woodbury website
1/3	Public Meeting	Waste Advisory Committee Meeting	Public comment	Woodbury website
1/3	Voices Article	<a href="#">“Waste Advisory Panel Seeking Next Steps for Woodbury Trash”</a>	N/A	Online, in print
1/6	Public Meeting	Waste Advisory Committee Meeting	Public comment	Woodbury website
1/17	Public Meeting	Waste Advisory Committee Meeting	Public comment	Woodbury website
1/24	Public Meeting	Waste Advisory Committee Meeting	Public comment	Woodbury website
1/24	Voices Article	<a href="#">“Waste Reduction Document Presented”</a>	N/A	Online, in print

1/25	Public Meeting	Board of Selectmen	Public comment	Woodbury website, mult. Facebook posts, email to stakeholder list
1/29	Public Meeting	Board of Selectmen	Public comment	Woodbury website
1/31	Voices Article	<a href="#">“Selectmen Hear Permanent Waste Reduction Plan Ideas”</a>	N/A	Online, in print

The Waste Advisory Committee was an ad-hoc group formed under the aegis of the Board of Selectmen. Its membership consisted of 7 volunteer citizens, but was also regularly attended by First Selectwoman Perkinson, Woodbury Public Works staff, and NVCOG staff. WZ ran the meetings in partnership with Chair Richard Coates, providing financial modeling and sharing examples of successful programs in other jurisdictions. The Committee’s charge was to design and recommend a permanent program to the Board of Selectmen. They researched potential models, visited a transfer station in Portland, CT, investigated alternatives like on-site composting, and devised complementary recommendations for improvements at the transfer station (such as eliminating the fee for the annual permit). Their agendas and minutes are [on file here](#).

After much discussion and many rounds of revisions, the Waste Advisory Committee presented the Board of Selectmen with a recommendation for a permanent program (Attachment E). The Board discussed the recommendation at meetings on 1/25/24 and 1/29/24. At the latter meeting, they made a series of small amendments and clarifications (Attachment F), and voted unanimously to adopt the recommendation.

The permanent program will take effect July 1, 2024, concurrent with the start of the fiscal year. Until then, CT DEEP has provided a bridge grant to support Woodbury with education and startup costs to ensure the program’s success. The Waste Advisory Committee has been reauthorized with [a new mission](#) of promoting, monitoring, and recommending improvements to the permanent program.

### Appendix A Elements

Below please find a chart outlining all Appendix A deliverables and whether they have been completed.

Phase 1	
Deliverable	Completed
Pre-pilot planning	Yes

Phase 2	
Deliverable	Completed
Documentation of launch	Yes (Attachment A)
Documentation of 1 meeting with partners	Yes (Biweekly check-in meetings)

Letter of intent to plan for permanence	Yes (Attachment C)
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Phase 3	
Deliverable	Completed
Letter stating plan for permanence has been established	Yes (Attachment D)
Summary of implementation actions	Yes (Attachment D)

Phase 4	
Deliverable	Completed
Documentation of final report	Yes
All elements of Appendix A are met	Yes

Administration	
Deliverable	Completed
Funding released in accordance with Appendix A (DEEP: "No documentation is required to prove that Woodbury continued to use program management services after the initial 5 months.")	Yes

## Pre- and Post-Implementation Waste & Recycling Data

Waste and recycling data were tracked by WZ. Metrics included clean food capture rate, pounds of food scraps captured, contamination rate, and percentage waste reduction compared to the previous year.

Pilot Program	# of Weeks of Data	Collection Type	*Clean Food Capture Rate (prior week)	Food Scraps Captured (cumulative lbs)	Contamination Rate (prior week)	Waste Reduction	Curbside Diversion (Recycling + Food Scraps) Increase
Woodbury	47	Drop Off	22%	84,420	2%	12%	16%

The final set of data for Woodbury was made available by DEEP on 2/13/24 read as follows:

Waste Zero also tracked cumulative diversion rate change, weekly diversion change, weekly recycling increase, weekly food capture rate, and cumulative waste reduction. That data is displayed as graphs in Attachment G.

## Pilot Successes

- Hundreds of households in Woodbury were willing to give the pilot a try over the course of a year, diverting nearly 85,000 lbs of organic waste from landfills or incinerators.
- A 22% clean food capture rate meant that one out of every four or five pounds of food waste estimated to have been generated in the pilot area was put in a green bag. This is a strong start for a voluntary program.
- Both public feedback sessions (held 4/10/23 and 5/22/23) received no negative comments from the public – only questions, suggestions, or positive comments. Less formal feedback received during tabling sessions also trended positive.
- Resident interest in recycling increased as a result of this pilot. NVCOG received numerous phone calls and emails with recycling questions.
- A number of positive quotes were received from Woodbury residents, as recorded in NVCOG's progress reports and a testimonial video posted on Facebook.
- Outreach to particular stakeholder groups in the fall – Flanders, RTC and DTC, Chamber of Commerce, Planning Commission, Conservation Commission, etc. – went very well. Members of these organizations were very interested in learning more about the program and seemed to appreciate that their group was receiving direct communication about the planning for permanence process.
- The ad hoc Waste Advisory Committee of citizen volunteers was an excellent model to guide the decision-making process.
  - Meeting every other week for about two months in advance of producing a recommendation worked well.
  - Waste Zero's financial modeling and expertise during the deliberation process was very helpful.
  - The recommendation report was drafted by NVCOG (staff had been present for all WAC meetings) and then revised and finalized by the Committee. This arrangement worked well, because writing a full report is a lot of ask of an all-volunteer group, but they retained ultimate control of the content.
  - The Board of Selectmen was responsive to and respectful of the WAC's work.

## Pilot Challenges

- The most common feedback we heard from the residents: the green bags are too big. Rather than a single 8 gallon bag, they would prefer two 4-gallon bags. This would allow them to take out the decomposing food scraps more often, and better control odor/flies.
- Some residents were unwilling to interact with WZ or NVCOG staff at the Transfer Station. Although this is understandable (not many people are feeling chatty when throwing out their trash), it limited the ability to reach all potential participants.

- During the launch of the pilot, it was difficult to gather the names and addresses of existing Transfer Station users given that the records were hand-written and in three different places (public works, First Selectwoman’s office, and the tax collector).
  - As a result, we overestimated the number of households. Woodbury had a substantial number of unused bags at the end of the pilot (800ish boxes).
- NVCOG saw low attendance at several events, including an in-person Waste Trivia event and the virtual feedback session.
- Residents were very shocked near the end of the pilot to find out that unit-based pricing was being considered. Because of the way the pilot was designed (not paying for bags), it seems that people had a hard time grasping that UBP was part of what they were piloting.
- Throughout the pilot, Woodbury, NVCOG, WZ, and eventually the WAC struggled to determine the right amount of engagement with Facebook comments, which became a significant source of criticism and speculation near the end of the pilot.

## Metrics Applicable to Other CT Municipalities

Other Connecticut towns may be interested in the data listed in the blue chart, as an indicator of whether a similar pilot would make sense for their community. A demographic analysis can help those communities understand what similarities and differences they share with Woodbury, and whether its SMM metrics may be applicable. As a reminder, the pilot only applied to Transfer Station users, not every household in Woodbury.

<b>Metric</b>	<b>Woodbury</b>	<b>Comparable Communities (Census Designated Places with stats +/- 10%)</b>
<i>Population</i>	9,802	East Haddam, Woodbridge, Hebron, Thompson, Putnam, Portland, Prospect, Burlington, Somers, Canton, Winchester, Weston, Old Saybrook
<i>Population density</i>	268	Comparison unavailable
<i>Square mileage</i>	36.6	East Lyme, Ellington, Ridgefield, Griswold, Killingworth, Est Hampton, Southington, Madison, Barkhamsted, Hebron, New Hartford, Coventry, Stamford, Ledyard, Washinton, Stonington, Ashford, Voluntown, Wallingford, Southbury, Tolland, Torrington, Canterbury
<i>Median household income*</i>	\$120,577	Trumbull, Glensville, Ridgefield, Weatogue, Newtown, Southport
<i>Poverty rate</i>	4.3%	Comparison unavailable
<i>Owner-occupied rate</i>	77.1%	Comparison unavailable
<i>Language other than English spoken at home</i>	12.3%	Comparison unavailable

All Woodbury stats are from census.gov. Comparisons are from usa.com and connecticut-demographics.com. \*Income comparison data is from 2010-2014, so it is outdated.

Note that further investigation would need to be undertaken to determine if the comparable communities have a similar waste management system to Woodbury’s.

## Bridge Grant & Contract Amendment

When the Woodbury Board of Selectmen approved the plan for permanence, CT DEEP awarded a “bridge grant” of \$22,500 for the period of 2/8/24 (the end of the pilot) through 6/30/24 (when the permanent program begins). The SMM contract was amended in accordance. Funds were to be used for enforcement, public education, transportation of food scraps, and program management.

With support from the Waste Advisory Committee, Waste Zero, and NVCOG, Woodbury used the bridge period to educate the public about the upcoming program. The grant funded ongoing hauling of food scraps, a limited number sealable food-scrap collection containers (1 gallon buckets) for the home use of seniors, signage at the transfer station, and educational materials such as “what goes where” magnets. The grant also funded an enforcement/education contractor at the Transfer Station during open-hours for a period of three weeks at the beginning of the mandatory period, tasked with educating and directing users in the requirements of the new program and collecting compliance statistics on a daily basis.

During this time, Woodbury also went out to bid for contracts with a permanent food scrap hauler and bag manufacturer. Agreements were negotiated with local retailers (mostly grocery and hardware stores) to stock the designated bags ahead of the start date.

## Next Steps

The details of the permanent program are captured in Attachments D, E, and F.

## Attachments

- Attachment A: Woodbury Trash Reduction Pilot Info Sheet 2.7.23
- Attachment B: Selected Posts from NVCOG’s @NVCOGReduceTheTrash Facebook Account
- Attachment C: Woodbury Letter of Intent 9.5.23
- Attachment D: Woodbury Plan for Permanence Summary 11.15.23
- Attachment E: Waste Advisory Committee Recommendation to Board of Selectmen 1.25.24
- Attachment F: Board of Selectmen Modifications 1.29.24
- Attachment G: Additional Waste Zero Graphs 2.13.24

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# TOWN OF WOODBURY TRASH REDUCTION PILOT PROGRAM

## Starts February 7



**WOODBURY HAS A SUSTAINABLE,  
COST-EFFECTIVE SOLUTION TO  
CONNECTICUT'S WASTE CRISIS...  
AND WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

### A NOTE FROM THE FIRST SELECTMAN

As Connecticut's trash piles up, we are quickly running out of residential landfill space. Our disposal costs are rising as communities must ship waste out of state.

Woodbury has been awarded a grant from the CT Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) to run a year-long Trash Reduction Pilot Program.

We have to do something to address the waste crisis and get ahead of rising costs, so I am asking residents using the Transfer Station to participate in this **FREE** pilot program.

Your participation and feedback will help us decide if we want to make it permanent. Thank you for giving it a try.

**-FIRST SELECTMAN PERKINSON**



**DROP OFF ALL BAGS AT  
THE TRANSFER  
STATION.**

**PICK UP YOUR BOX AT THE  
TRANSFER STATION.  
USE THE COLOR-CODED  
TRASH & FOOD SCRAP BAGS.**

Green Bags for Food Scraps.  
Orange Bags for Trash.  
Keep Recycling.



**YOUR FOOD SCRAPS  
WILL BE TURNED INTO  
CLEAN ENERGY AT AN  
INDUSTRIAL COMPOSTER!**



[ReduceTheTrash@nvcogct.gov](mailto:ReduceTheTrash@nvcogct.gov)  
(203) 489-0368

[ReduceTheTrashCT.com/Woodbury](http://ReduceTheTrashCT.com/Woodbury)  
[WoodburyCT.org/Transfer\\_Station](http://WoodburyCT.org/Transfer_Station)

**LEARN MORE:  
<< SCAN TO DOWNLOAD  
THE MOBILE APP**



# HOW-TO: Trash Reduction Pilot Program Starts February 7



## Q: WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

A year's supply of free bags: **104 Orange Trash Bags** & **52 Green Food Scraps Bags!** As you reduce your trash, this should be enough bags. Local stores will sell them, too.



## Q: WHAT GOES IN THE GREEN BAG?

**Food Scraps:** Fruits & vegetables, meat & seafood (including bones), eggs & eggshells, leftovers & spoiled food, coffee grounds & tea bags, pastas, bread, grains, & napkins.  
**Please do NOT include plastic bags, pet waste or litter, sanitary items, or metal.**



## Q: WHAT GOES IN THE ORANGE BAG?

**Trash:** Anything that doesn't go in the Green Food Scraps Bag and can't be recycled.



## Q: WHERE DO I BRING MY BAGS?

To the **same** transfer station in town. There will be an area for the green bags.



## Q: WHY CAN'T I USE MY NORMAL TRASH BAGS?

We are asking you to **use ONLY the special heavy-duty Orange Trash Bags**. The color-coding allows for **sorting**. We are also building the habit of using special town trash bags that help "measure" each household's trash.



## Q: DO I STILL RECYCLE?

**YES!** Continue to recycle your paper, plastic (no bags!), cans, and bottles. Go to [RecycleCT.com](http://RecycleCT.com) with questions.



## Q: DO I NEED TO PUT ANOTHER GARBAGE CAN IN MY KITCHEN?

**Do what works best for your household!** You could get (or repurpose) a small container with a lid to hold the Green Food Scraps Bag, or you could keep the Green Bag loosely tied in your trash can and empty food scraps into it throughout the week. You can also request a countertop food scraps bin from the town.

## Q: IS THIS ACTUALLY GOING TO WORK?

- Turning all of our food waste into **clean energy** makes a huge difference. The program also introduces the idea of moving the cost to dispose of trash **OUT** of your taxes and **INTO** the bags. **The less trash you make, the less you would pay.** With these tools, you **can** reduce your trash and save money.
- You may be trying this for the first time, but cities all over the U.S. (and the world!) have **successfully** piloted similar trash reduction programs. **Woodbury will succeed with your participation!**



## NVCOG Reduce the Trash

Published by Christine O'Neill · February 3, 2023 ·

Woodbury, are you as excited about the Trash Reduction Pilot as we are? Join us on Saturday, February 18th at the [Woodbury Public Library](#) from 11am-1pm for the Kickoff Fair!

Learn more about the program, play fun games, and give us feedback on how things are going so far. We will have a limited supply of food scrap collection bins to give away on a first-come, first-served basis.

See you there! 🍌📖♻️

# Woodbury Trash Reduction Pilot Kickoff Fair

Saturday, Feb. 18th  
11 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
Woodbury Public Library



Snacks

Program  
information

Games & books  
for kids!



Experts to answer questions

Share your feedback



**Free food scrap  
collection bins!**

Limited supply, first come first served.

Funding provided by the Sustainable Materials Management Grants Program administered by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP).



## NVCOG Reduce the Trash

Published by Christine O'Neill · February 23, 2023 ·

We had a fabulous time at the [Woodbury Public Library](#) this weekend promoting the Trash Reduction Pilot with our Kickoff Fair! Over 100 attendees joined us to pick up a free food scrap collection bin, ask questions of our expert staff, and take home resources about the program. Thanks for participating Woodbury!





## NVCOG Reduce the Trash

Published by Christine O'Neill · January 27, 2023 ·



We had a delightful time presenting on Woodbury's new Trash Reduction Pilot at the [Woodbury Senior Center](#)! First Selectwoman Barbara Perkinson's opening remarks underscored the importance of everyone doing their part to compost food scraps, reduce trash, and keep recycling. 🌱🍏🗑️

Visit <https://reducethetrashct.com/woodbury/> for more information.



## NVCOG Reduce the Trash

Published by Christine O'Neill · February 14, 2023 ·



Adjusting our daily habits can be challenging - but I wanted to share some positive words I have heard from residents who are giving their Trash Reduction Pilots a try. Some loose quotes from phone and email convos I've had:

🌱 "I'm really glad we're doing this. I have two daughters, and I want to leave this world a better place for them." - Ansonia resident

🌱 "I used to live in [a different state], and we always separated our food scraps there. I was wondering when Connecticut would catch up!" - Woodbury resident

🌱 "I'm really proud of my town for stepping up to pilot this program." - Seymour resident

We appreciate the positivity and the willingness to make a small change for a big impact. ❤️🌱🍏

[Reduce The Trash CT](#) [Recycle CT](#) [City of Ansonia](#) [WOODBURY, CONNECTICUT TALKS](#) [Office of the First Selectwoman of Seymour, CT](#)



## NVCOG Reduce the Trash

Published by Christine O'Neill · January 25, 2023 ·



What do styrofoam, pill bottles, and plastic bags all have in common? If you said they're all recyclable... **XXX**

Then you need to attend Woodbury's Recycling Workshop to learn what's in and what's out! This informative presentation will get you up to speed on recycling in Connecticut, including a fun quiz at the end!

Join us at the Woodbury Community Center on Thursday, February 2nd at 6pm. Let's all do our part to reduce waste in this beautiful town.



**RECYCLING WORKSHOP**

Thursday, Feb. 2nd  
6pm - 7pm  
Woodbury Community Center

Bring your recycling questions!

Play recycling trivia!

Recording made available online afterwards

Woodbury  
Recycle CT






## NVCOG Reduce the Trash

Published by Christine O'Neill · March 22, 2023 ·



Woodbury Trash Reduction Pilot Participants - let us know how it's going! Join us on Monday, April 10th at 6:30pm at the Woodbury Senior/Community Center to share feedback with your local leaders. We will be there to answer your questions and listen to your comments. Please share with everyone who may be interested in attending. See you there!



Woodbury



**TRASH REDUCTION PILOT "TOWN HALL" SESSION #1**

Meet with Town leadership and architects of the Trash Reduction Pilot to share feedback, ask questions, and discuss the future of the program.

**MONDAY, APRIL 10TH AT 6:30PM**

**WOODBURY SENIOR CENTER**  
281 MAIN ST, WOODBURY

**CONTACT**  
[REDUCETHETRASH@NVCOGCT.GOV](mailto:REDUCETHETRASH@NVCOGCT.GOV)  
WITH ANY QUESTIONS

Funding provided by the Sustainable Materials Management Grants Program administered by CT DEEP

Did you miss Woodbury's first Trash Reduction Pilot Town Hall? No sweat! 😊 Join us on Monday, May 22nd at 6pm for a virtual feedback session from the comfort of your computer. 🖥️ Your elected leaders want to hear your thoughts, concerns, and questions about the orange & green bags! 🍊🍏

Use this link to register: [bit.ly/woodburyfeedback](https://bit.ly/woodburyfeedback)

**WOODBURY**

# TRASH REDUCTION PILOT

## TOWN HALL SESSION #2

Monday, May 22nd at 6:00 pm



Virtual Feedback Session  
Online or Call-In

A chance to speak directly to your elected officials about the trash reduction pilot.

Register for login credentials at:  
[bit.ly/woodburyfeedback](https://bit.ly/woodburyfeedback)

Contact [ReduceTheTrash@nvcogct.gov](mailto:ReduceTheTrash@nvcogct.gov) with any questions

Funding provided by the Sustainable Materials Management Grants Program administered by CT DEEP

Today we joined the [Town of Woodbury, CT](#) in welcoming our friends from Sharon & Salisbury. They had heard about our successful Trash Reduction Program and wanted to see it in action! 🎬

The Naugatuck Valley is emerging as a leader in sustainable waste management and attraction attention from around the state, thanks to residents like you. Thank you to everyone using the green & orange bags, recycling, and helping us Reduce The Trash! ♻️





## NVCOG Reduce the Trash

Published by Christine O'Neill · October 26, 2023 ·



The [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#) has released a new report on management pathways for food waste, along with a "Wasted Food Scale" graphic that demonstrates the most preferred and least preferred options for getting rid of food scraps. Here's what you need to know about how it relates to the Trash Reduction Pilots.

🌱 If you're using the green bags for your food waste, you're in the fourth tranche: "Anaerobic Digestion with beneficial use of digestate." Quantum Biopower uses its digestate to create fertilizer and soil for gardeners.

🤔 These Trash Reduction Pilots are also about changing behavior: by using the green and orange bags, we hope you are thinking more about buying less food in the first place, or donating what you cannot eat. Those are the top two options.

💧 "Down the drain" ranks last. We've heard a lot of people asking why they can't just use their garbage disposal instead of the green bags. As the EPA report reveals, the process to treat the food waste in these systems leads to "Methane emissions from sewer transport," "increased energy demand," and potential "bottlenecks and blockages" in sewer systems.

Thank you to everyone who is participating and making a difference in their community!

Read the report here: [https://www.epa.gov/.../part2\\_wf-pathways\\_report...](https://www.epa.gov/.../part2_wf-pathways_report...)

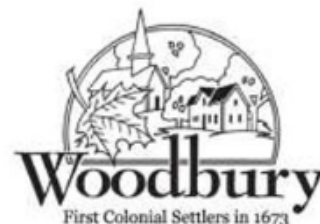


## NVCOG Reduce the Trash

Published by Christine O'Neill · October 16, 2023 ·



Calling all Woodburians! The Town is seeking motivated residents to learn about the Trash Reduction Pilot and help the Board of Selectmen decide if/how to transition into permanence. If you'd like to be part of the Waste Reduction Advisory ad hoc committee, please reach out to the First Selectwoman's office.



## Town of Woodbury Office of the First Selectman

281 Main Street South  
Woodbury, CT 06798

203.263.2141 [www.woodburyct.org](http://www.woodburyct.org)

### *For Immediate Release to the Press*

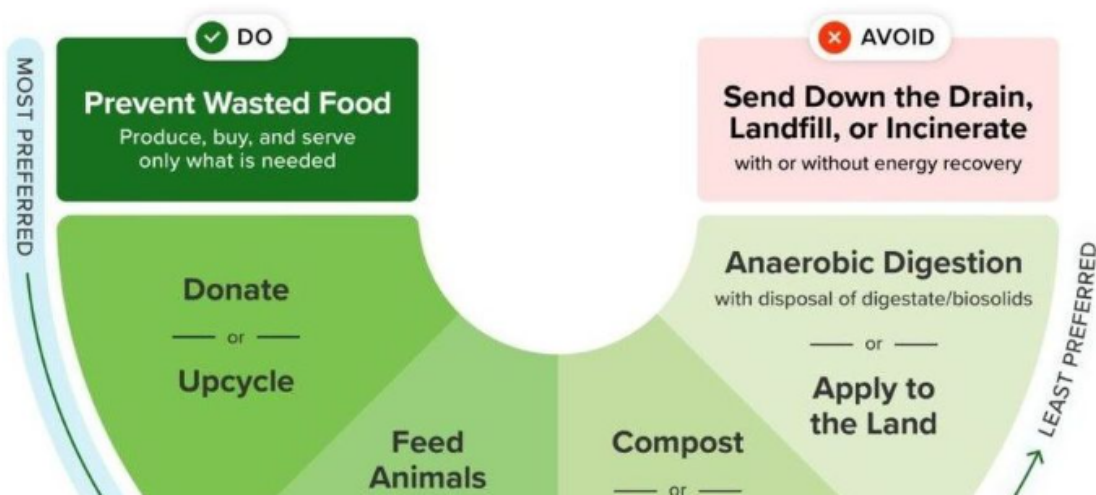
The Woodbury Board of Selectmen seeks volunteer members to participate on a Waste Reduction Advisory ad hoc Committee to study options for the continuation of the trash reduction program at the Woodbury Transfer Station. Committee members will consider a variety of options provided by our partners at WasteZero, conduct outreach with communities demonstrating success with their trash reduction efforts, and make site visits to assess the best approach for our community. The Committee's recommendations will then be presented to the Board of Selectmen for consideration and a final decision.

If interested in participating in this important initiative, please contact the First Selectman's office by October 25<sup>th</sup> at (203) 263-2141.



## Wasted Food Scale

How to reduce the environmental impacts of wasted food





Hello Woodbury Transfer Station users! As we prepare for the upcoming mandatory program starting July 1st, we want to share an essential benefit to the program.

This graphic shows a waste audit that was performed to see how much "trash" is really in the trash bags (pictured on the left). This audit demonstrates that when you take advantage of food scrap diversion and recycle properly, the amount of trash bags needed reduces greatly (pictured on the right). This will reduce your annual cost of waste disposal, and bring benefits to your community and the environment.

To find out more on Connecticut's waste crisis, please read this story map that describes why a program such as this one has been implemented in many communities across the country <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/.../be24e917780f42909ddb3248...>



Hello trash reduction champions! This article covers [Town of Woodbury, CT](#) decision to implement a full UBP and food scrap program! This is great news for the Naugatuck Valley region and a huge step towards sustainable waste practices. 🥳👍

"I am proud that Woodbury has been recognized as a forerunner in this area in reducing our trash." - First Selectwoman Barbara Perkinson



WASTETODAYMAGAZINE.COM  
**Woodbury, Connecticut, implements waste reduction program at transfer station**  
Starting July 1, transfer station users must purchase designated waste bags with distinct colors...



## Separating Your Trash In The Waste Reduction Program



10

13-gallon trash bags at \$1.00 each using the towns orange trash bags.

\$10

vs.



2

13-gallon orange trash bags = \$2.00

1

8-gallon green food scrap bag = \$0.25

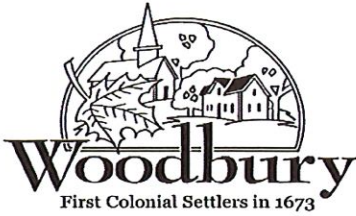
0

bags for recyclables

vs.

\$2.25

This example shows the waste *diversion* and cost *savings* that happen when you properly recycle during Woodbury's Waste Reduction Program.



**Town of Woodbury**  
**Office of the First Selectman**  
281 Main Street South  
Woodbury, CT 06798  
203.263.2141 ▪ [www.woodburyct.org](http://www.woodburyct.org)

September 5, 2023

Sent Via Email to: [deep.recyclingprogram@ct.gov](mailto:deep.recyclingprogram@ct.gov)

State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection  
Waste Engineering and Enforcement Division  
79 Elm Street  
Hartford, CT 06106-5127

**Re: Woodbury SMM Grant ID# 2023-168**

Dear DEEP Recycling Program,

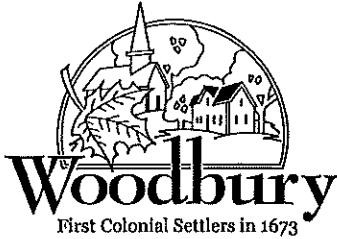
Please allow this letter to serve as notification that the Town of Woodbury will develop a plan for implementation of a permanent program for town-wide food scrap collection.

Sincerely,

Barbara K. Perkinson  
First Selectman

cc: Woodbury Public Works Department





**Town of Woodbury**  
**Office of the First Selectman**  
281 Main Street South  
Woodbury, CT 06798  
203.263.2141 • [www.woodburyct.org](http://www.woodburyct.org)

Members of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Recycling Program,

Woodbury has successfully participated in a pilot program which encouraged residents to reduce their trash generation down to just two bags per week and separate their food scraps into a green bag. The pilot program had five primary objectives:

- Assess data including waste tonnages before and after the pilot to determine reduction, food scrap contamination levels and participation levels.
- Assess resident feedback about the program.
- Provide resident outreach about materials management and the waste crisis.
- Determine if there is a sustainable savings opportunity through a UBP Food Scrap Drop-Off Program.
- Use the data collected, along with the resident feedback, to design a plan for the town to move from the pilot to adoption of a permanent program.

The town has achieved a cumulative recycling increase of 16% moving from our three-year average of 30% to a consistent 35%. We have decreased our waste by 11% and are capturing over 35% of available food scrap material. The participation rate varies from week to week.

Residents of Woodbury dispose of waste in two ways: through the town transfer station or by contracting with a private subscription hauler. The transfer station disposal option is covered through the property taxes. However, given the rising cost of waste disposal the town must consider options to mitigate costs and encourage waste reduction by those that utilize the transfer station.

The town has used the enthusiasm and momentum from this pilot as a springboard to discuss changes at the transfer station. The Woodbury Board of Selectman appointed a Solid Waste Advisory Committee in October 2023. The committee is tasked with evaluating pathways forward for the transfer station including UBP and food scrap collection. The committee is meeting bi-weekly and will work with both WasteZero and DEEP to finalize a program design. The committee plans to visit other transfer stations with similar programs to learn more about how the process works and to help convey the ease of use and efficiency to Woodbury residents and the Select Board. The committee plans to recommend a final pathway for consideration by the Board of Selectman at the end of January prior to the end of the DEEP grant. We are very hopeful that the town will move forward with a UBP and food scrap drop off program at the start of the next fiscal year, July 1 of 2024. Should the town decide to move forward will likely require a small bridge fund to cover costs from February 1<sup>st</sup> (the end of the grant) through the July 1<sup>st</sup> start date. An estimated bridge grant budget is forthcoming.

The town is very proud of the results yielded thus far and appreciates your ongoing support and assistance in implementing such a forward-thinking solution to the waste crisis. We are eager to continue this program and become a model for other communities interested in reduction strategies in Connecticut and nationally.

Thank you for your consideration and time,

*Sarah K. Pederson*  
*Town Selectman*  
*Town of Woodbury*

*11/15/2023*

# Town of Woodbury Ad-Hoc Waste Advisory Committee Recommendation Report

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## Executive Summary

The Ad-hoc Waste Advisory Committee was formed by the Woodbury Board of Selectmen in November 2023 to recommend a permanent waste, recycling, and food scraps diversion program for Woodbury to replace the existing pilot. *Waste Zero*, the CT Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP), and the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG) served as consultants and advisors to the Committee and the pilot. The Committee met eight times over the following three months, in addition to visiting the transfer station in Portland, CT, and reaching out to similar towns in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

The Committee's intent was to balance the priorities of minimizing waste, maximizing recycling, handling food waste in an environmentally and fiscally responsible manner, while fairly distributing the costs between users of the transfer station and town taxpayers.

The Committee recommends a full unit-based pricing (Full UBP) program combined with a food-scrap diversion program, as the optimum way to balance these priorities. Details of the recommended program, together with our reasoning, are presented in this report.

## Woodbury's Trash Reduction Pilot

The Town of Woodbury applied for and received a Sustainable Materials Management Grant (SMM) from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) for up to \$159,100 to pilot principles of unit-based pricing and organics diversion on a single trash collection route. The contract (ID #2023-155) was executed on December 30, 2022. The Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG) entered into a separate contract with DEEP (ID #2023-180) to provide education and outreach services on behalf of Woodbury during the course of the grant.

The Trash Reduction Pilot officially launched on February 7, 2023. In the weeks leading up to the launch, contractor Waste Zero (WZ) and NVCOG distributed bags and information leaflets at the transfer station to as many residents as possible. Residents were asked to use no more than two 15-gallon orange bags per week for trash, one 8-gallon green bag per week for food scraps, and to increase their recycling. Throughout the pilot period, NVCOG engaged in a number of outreach and educational activities designed to increase awareness and build support for this voluntary pilot, such as handing out flyers, holding listening-sessions, presenting to community groups, and distributing free countertop food scrap collection pails. WZ tracked data related to the pilot, which is displayed in Appendix E.

According to the most recent data, Woodbury's entirely voluntary program is capturing one out of every four pounds, *i.e.*, 25%, of food scraps. Woodbury has reduced overall waste being sent to an incinerator or landfill by 12% compared to last year. Most impressive of all, Woodbury has consistently maintained a contamination rate of just 2%, meaning that residents are putting only organic waste in the green bags which results in a higher value of feedstock for the anaerobic digester. So, it is clear that the pilot is meeting its intended objective of reducing waste.

The pilot is still running and is scheduled to conclude in February of this year. The Woodbury Waste Advisory Committee feels we have obtained enough qualitative and quantitative data from both the pilot and our own deliberations to present a recommendation to transition to permanence.

## Background and Justification

The mission of the Woodbury Waste Advisory Committee is to recommend a path to a permanent waste reduction program to the Board of Selectmen. The motivation for presenting the following recommendation is to increase Woodbury's economic resilience by insulating against rising costs of waste, promote a fairer way of managing waste, and increase environmental sustainability by reducing waste, increasing recycling, and removing food scraps from the waste stream.

### The Waste Crisis & Woodbury

New England's waste capacity crisis is well-documented. The [closure of the MIRA trash incinerator](#) in 2022 caused the amount of waste Connecticut ships out to state – routinely as far as Pennsylvania and Ohio – to skyrocket from [17% to 40%](#). Longer transportation routes lead to greater greenhouse gas emissions and environmental justice problems associated with sending our trash to someone else's backyard. Financially, the Town of Woodbury is also feeling the effects of this issue. From FY22-23 to FY23-24, the Town saw an [11.6% increase](#) in waste removal costs. The prior year saw a [33.2% increase](#). This untenable rate of rising costs – projected only to worsen as landfill and incinerator capacity dwindles – has put a significant burden on the municipal budget, and therefore the taxpayers.

### Doing Nothing is Not an Option

The Waste Advisory Committee is in strong agreement that doing nothing is not a tenable option. To demonstrate the unsustainability of Woodbury's current waste system, WZ has put together a "do nothing" scenario for 2024. The projection accounts for a higher tipping fee than last year while assuming the same amount of trash is produced and acts as a baseline against which to compare other options. This projection is for illustrative purposes only, and should not be construed as a recommendation:

**Woodbury Budget and Pro Forma**

WASTE / RECYCLE (10133)	2023-2024	2024-2025
		"Do Nothing"
<b>Expense</b>		
<i>Transfer Station Operators Salary</i>	\$56,208	\$56,208
<i>Landfill Monitoring</i>	\$5,434	\$5,434
<i>Hauling Fees - Bulk</i>	\$18,150	\$18,150
<i>Hauling Fees - Recycle</i>	\$27,000	\$27,000
<i>Bulky Waste/Wood Chipping</i>	\$81,589	\$81,589
<i>Tire Disposal</i>	\$7,250	\$7,250
<i>Freon Disposal</i>	\$3,408	\$3,408
<i>Food Scrap Collection</i>	\$0	\$0
Sub Total Expense	\$199,039	\$199,039
<b><i>Tipping Fees &amp; Haul</i></b>	<b><i>\$140,642</i></b>	<b><i>\$151,812</i></b>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$339,681</b>	<b>\$350,851</b>
<b>Revenue</b>		
<i>Revenue from Fees</i>	\$54,891	\$54,891
<i>Revenue From Bags</i>	\$0	\$0
<b>Net General Fund Budget</b>	<b>\$284,790</b>	<b>\$295,960</b>
<b>Net Benefit</b>		<b>(\$11,170)</b>

Waste Advisory Committee Guiding Principles

The committee’s guiding philosophy is to reduce Woodbury’s overall waste to save taxpayer money, protect the environment, and maintain a municipal waste management structure that is sustainable in both the short- and long-term. We believe that raising awareness among the community empowers residents to make better choices at the point of generation, resulting in lowering our waste footprint. We also believe that the goal of a waste reduction program should be to cover the costs of hauling, tipping, and administration in a fair and transparent manner and encouraging residents to connect the volume of waste they produce with a dollar amount. There is no intent to design a program that generates a financial surplus or profit.

## Community Support

Building consensus and support in the community has been of paramount importance to planning efforts. NVCOG has worked closely with the town of Woodbury to both educate and gather feedback. Below are some positive quotes from Woodbury residents regarding the pilot:

- *"I used to live in [a different state], and we always separated our food scraps there. I was wondering when Connecticut would catch up!"* - Woodbury resident, at an event
- *"My husband and I have been participating in the trash reduction program and we like it very much ...It feels good to be a part of a positive activity that actually creates energy from trash. It's now part of our routine, and we would like to see it continue."* – Woodbury resident, email
- *"For a few weeks now, I've been following the guidelines for the Trash Reduction program. What I'm finding is that I use fewer trash bags. Since the compost goes into its own bag, the other garbage doesn't get stinky, and I can wait and put more trash in the bag. A win-win!"* – Woodbury resident, Facebook
- *"I love the program. I can't believe how much this has reduced the amount of trash I produce each week."* – Woodbury resident, email
- *"I am a Woodbury, CT resident and very happy that we as a town are participating in this trash reduction pilot."* – Woodbury resident, through the app
- *"My daughter and I are absolutely in favor of this program! It has been an eye-opening experience for us, and we have been much more thoughtful regarding our consumption habits and the waste byproduct. I truly hope the Town of Woodbury implements this program on a permanent basis!"* – Woodbury resident, email
- *"I am so proud of Woodbury for taking this on. I feel proud of myself, too. Please continue to offer Earth-friendly, sustainable options. I am here, and I appreciate the efforts."* – Woodbury resident, email

In addition to abundant outreach directed to residents, NVCOG and WZ have presented information regarding permanence planning to the following community groups:

- 9/14 – Board of Selectmen
- 9/18 – Flanders Nature Center
- 9/27 – Board of Finance
- 10/4 – Planning Commission
- 10/5 – Conservation Commission
- 10/19 – Chamber of Commerce
- 11/15 – Democratic Town Committee

NVCOG summarized the reactions of these community groups in this excerpt from their grant report to CT DEEP: "In Woodbury, I have been pleasantly surprised by how well the stakeholder groups (listed above) responded to both the food scrap and UBP components of planning for permanence. The questions I received were relevant, and the great majority of people appeared to be in support of a permanent program with both components. Most of the comments I received were questions about particulars." The Board of Selectmen even received a support letter from Flanders Nature Center after their meeting, encouraging adoption of a permanent program.

## Recommended Program: Full Unit-Based Pricing and Food Scrap Diversion

After deliberations that have taken place over three months and seven meetings, the Woodbury Waste Advisory Committee recommends that the Town adopt a full unit-based pricing and food scrap program for its transfer station users. The details of this plan are outlined below.

1. Residents will be required to use town-branded bags for all waste brought to the transfer station. Other bags will not be accepted.
2. Woodbury will work with a provider to design color-coded, Town-branded bags for trash and separate bags for food waste. These bags will be stocked directly with local retailers.
  - a. Bags will be priced to include the price of the bag and the true cost of disposal for the material that is in the bag. Bag revenue will therefore cover the cost of municipal waste disposal rather than drawing on tax income. Bag prices are shown below.
3. Residents will still need to purchase \$25 transfer station permits.
4. Residents will bring trash and food waste in their respective bags to the transfer station, and place them in separate receptacles.
  - a. Only Town-branded bags will be accepted for trash.
  - b. Food waste may be brought either in town- branded (green) bags or no bag at all (per anaerobic digester specifications).
5. Woodbury will enter into a contract with a food scrap hauler to bring those bags to an anaerobic digester or compost facility. Trash will be sent to its regular destination.

Thus, residents will be incentivized to maximize recycling, divert food scraps, and change their behavior to minimize their own costs and save tax money by reducing trash.

With the help of WZ, the Committee has determined the following bag costs and sizes:

Bags	Gallons	Cost
<b>Trash</b>		
Large Bag	33 gallons	\$1.65
Medium Bag	13 gallons	\$1.00
Small Bag	8 gallons	\$0.75
<b>Food Scraps</b>		
Small Bag	8 gallons	\$0.25
Mini Bag	4 gallons	\$0.15

Local retailers who have confirmed agreement to stock town-branded bags include New Morning Market, LaBonne’s Market, and Woodbury Saw & Motor. Additional, potential retailers include Agway, Ace Hardware, and other grocers and hardware stores throughout the town.



In the subsections below, we expand upon the strategies informing this plan, particulars around education and enforcement, expected cost to residents, and the projected benefits to Woodbury.

### Financial Projections

WZ has developed the following financial projections for this program:

<b>Woodbury Budget and Pro Forma- 2024/25</b>	
<b>WASTE / RECYCLE (10133)</b>	<i>Lg \$1.65 , Sm\$1.00, Mini, \$0.75</i>
<b>Expense</b>	
<i>Transfer Station Operators Salary</i>	\$56,208
<i>Landfill Monitoring</i>	\$5,434
<i>Hauling Fees - Bulk</i>	\$18,150
<i>Hauling Fees - Recycle</i>	\$27,000
<i>Bulky Waste/Wood Chipping</i>	\$81,589
<i>Tire Disposal</i>	\$7,250
<i>Freon Disposal</i>	\$3,408
<i>Food Scrap Collection</i>	\$18,000
Sub Total Expense	\$217,039
<b><i>Tipping Fees &amp; Haul</i></b>	<b><i>\$75,906</i></b>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$292,945</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	
<i>Revenue from Fees</i>	\$54,891
<i>Revenue From Bags</i>	\$73,213
<b>Net General Fund Budget</b>	<b>\$164,840</b>
<b>Net Benefit</b>	<b>\$119,950</b>

### Unit-Based Pricing

The term Unit-Based Pricing (UBP), also called “Pay-as-You-Throw”, refers to a system where the cost waste disposal is built into the price of designated town-branded bags that residents must purchase at local retailers. Connecting the amount of waste produced to the price paid by residents motivates behavior change and when implemented has effectively reduced waste in communities across New England and the world.

This represent a departure from Woodbury’s current system, where a household pays a flat fee for a transfer station permit and the balance of disposal costs are paid for by taxes. There is no connection

between the amount of waste a household produces and the amount they pay. This system would be considered unfair if we used it for other utilities, like electricity. It also provides no incentive for a household to reduce its waste – indeed, those who produce more than the average amount of waste in Woodbury actually benefit from being subsidized by their less wasteful neighbor’s taxes and the taxes of residents who do not use the transfer station, such as condo residents and those who contract with a private waste hauler.

In addition to redistributing the payment structure more fairly, UBP has an additional key benefit – it incentivizes waste reduction at its source. Take, for instance, Brattleboro, Vermont. When they implemented UBP, their average weekly waste generation dropped 59% from 15.5 tons/wk to 6.4 tons/wk. For reference, Brattleboro is roughly the same size as Woodbury (population of 12,000 compared to Woodbury’s 10,000). Other examples include Sandwich, MA which saw a 49% drop; Hanson, MA which saw a 64% drop; and Duxbury, MA which transformed from having three times as much trash as recycling to equal amounts. Charts for these communities are available in Appendix A.

It is reasonable to ask where is all the waste no longer collected under UBP going? According to the 2015 DEEP Waste Characterization study, around 22% of the waste stream is food scraps. Additionally, another 38% of the waste stream is material that could and should have been recycled in single-stream recycling. When people are incentivized to separate out food scraps and recycle as much as possible, that leaves only the 40% of what is currently being thrown out as waste. Additionally, consumers make better choices, use reusable bags for groceries, opt for products with less packaging, and change their habits – because of the price incentive and raised awareness. We have copious examples of UBP programs working well across the United States and beyond. Finally, we also know that illegal dumping has not been observed to increase with the implementation of such programs, although Woodbury already has ordinances in place to fine violators (more detail on this later).

For these reasons, the Waste Advisory Committee agrees that any successful waste reduction program must be founded upon unit-based pricing.

### Food Scrap Diversion

Food scraps comprise 22.3% of the average Connecticut trash can, according to a 2015 Waste Characterization Study. CT DEEP describes organics as “the largest opportunity to increase Connecticut waste diversion” in its Comprehensive Materials Management Strategy. Just a few months ago, the EPA released a report that found that even though food waste makes up only 24% of landfill contents in the U.S., it is responsible for a staggering 58% of methane emissions.

Woodbury’s trash reduction pilot demonstrated that it does not have to be this way. The voluntary program captured as much as one third (33%) of the food scraps estimated to be produced by transfer station users during its most successful week (the average was closer to one quarter, 25%), even without the financial incentive of UBP. The collected organics were hauled by Blue Earth Compost to the Quantum Biopower anaerobic digester in Southington, where they were depackaged and processed into both biogas and digestate. The biogas is converted to electricity to run the plant and the excess is sent into the grid, while the digestate is turned into compost and other similar products. Unlike waste-to-energy incinerators, this process does not involve burning trash and does not result in air pollution.

As listed above, food waste bags would be available in two sizes (8 gallons and 4 gallons) and would be sold at the cost of manufacture in order to incentivize organics diversion. The pricing structure is designed so that income from the trash bags would fund hauling and tipping fees for food waste. Participants would be asked only to use the town-branded bags – just like during the pilot – or no bags at all, *i.e.*, tipping from their personal bucket or container into the food dumpster.

Although this is how the Committee recommends the food scrap program handles food waste removal from the transfer station at this time, there are a variety of other options that could be considered now or in the future (when the quantity of food waste under the new program is more accurately known). See Appendix C for other potential organics haulers, destinations, and end-uses.

### Expected Cost to Residents

The following table represents examples of costs that two typical households might incur under the proposed program, compared to the cost of hiring a private hauler.

	Expected Cost to Residents	transfer station Sticker	Cost of trash	Cost of food	Annualization	Final Annual Cost
Average Household	One large trash + one small food bag per week	\$25	\$1.65	\$0.25	52	\$ 123.80
Single person/couple Household	One medium trash bag + one mini food bag per week	\$25	\$1	\$0.15	52	\$ 84.80
	Private hauler collection annual fee	<i>Note: hauler collection fee does not include cost of grocery store bags</i>				\$ 480.00

It is important to note that although a municipality can never promise a tax *decrease*, the above chart does not account for the fact that residents will no longer be funding waste disposal through their taxes, nor the savings from no longer purchasing generic, non-town-branded, trash bags. Even if this does not result in a decreased mill rate, the money can go towards more productive uses for Woodbury.

### Transition Period

With the pilot and SMM grant scheduled to conclude next month, and the new program not expected to take effect until the beginning of the fiscal year, The Town of Woodbury applied to CT DEEP for bridge funding to fill the five-month gap. In an email dated 1/11/24, CT DEEP committed to awarding up to \$22,500 in bridge funding. This budget consists of the following:

Enforcement	\$ 5,000
Outreach & Education	\$ 3,600

Transportation Support	\$ 4,500
Program Management	\$6,000
<b>Bridge Funding Total</b>	<b>\$ 22,500</b>

Funding will cover the food scrap hauler to continue food scrap separation until official program launch. The program management funds will allow WZ to continue their work with Woodbury, while NVCOG will use their own funding to extend certain outreach services throughout the transition.

During this transition period, free bags will still be available on a limited, as-needed basis, however, use of the bags will become mandatory on July 1.

### Equity

The Committee recommends that subsidies/assistance be made available for individuals and families with real economic need. We recommend developing a partnership and procedures in collaboration with Community Services Council to identify criteria to determine who would qualify for free town-branded bags and how the bags be distributed.

### Education

The Waste Advisory Committee acknowledges that no program will achieve success without thorough and sustained education.

The “Community Support” section above explains how NVCOG worked with various stakeholder groups to raise awareness about the planning for permanence process. Once a finalized program is decided upon and prior to and during its implementation, NVCOG and WZ will engage in a similar circuit of presentations to communicate the information to the public. Public information sessions, presentations to municipal boards and commissions, and appearances at community group meetings will help spread the word. Newspaper articles and social media posts will ensure that multiple informational channels are saturated with this information. Content will be generated by NVCOG and WZ with oversight from the Town of Woodbury.

The Town website will also serve as a repository of information on the program, including FAQs. We believe the best place for this information is under the [transfer station webpage](#), where residents currently go to access information about waste and recycling.

We intend to have a presence at Woodbury’s Earth Day celebration, as it is an invaluable opportunity to spread the word and talk about the many benefits of this program.

The Committee believes that one of the most effective ways to reach people about this program will be during their annual transfer station permit renewal. Along with their permit, residents will be provided with a sheet or brochure that enumerates the details of the program, including where bags can be purchased and at what price. This will ensure that every person using the transfer station has been provided with information on the program.

WZ, NVCOG, and the Waste Advisory Committee are deeply committed to the success of the program. We are open to other ideas regarding education.

## Enforcement

As demonstrated in the breakdown of bridge funding, CT DEEP will provide money for enforcement that can be used through the initial launch of the program.

The Committee recommends that some of this money will be used for permanent signage at the transfer station indicating that only official town-branded bags are allowed.

This money can also be used to fund a temporary worker who will be stationed full-time at the transfer station for the first 4 weeks of the program to monitor compliance and continue education. Assuming that most residents will have been informed of the new program during the initial Feb-June education & permit purchase, this worker will be continuing conversations with residents who still are not purchasing orange bags. This worker will also be tasked with collecting data on compliance (e.g., the number of non-compliant residents) to inform future action, and for chronic non-compliers, they can record license plate numbers, so that the town can follow up with further enforcement action.

The Committee heard complaints that current windshield adhesive transfer station permits are disliked, and hence not displayed, because they are difficult to remove when the vehicle is sold and/or that residents may use two or more vehicles when coming to the transfer station. To mitigate these concerns the Committee recommends that the town transitions to a review mirror hanging tag system (such as that used in other CT towns and for disabled parking and that display of the transfer station permit be made mandatory and enforced.

The Committee believes that the town possesses the legal authority to fine repeat and persistent violators of the new program's provisions. [The Woodbury Town Code](#) already includes a section related to waste and littering, and gives the Board of Selectmen the ability to establish rules and penalty fines. Section 205-9 through 205-10 empower the Board of Selectmen "to establish rules and regulations it deems necessary for the public health, safety, and welfare concerning the separation, collection, removal, storage, and disposition of refuse, garbage, trash, commercial and industrial waste, and all other solid waste." Furthermore, section 205-11 states that "any person who shall violate any provision of this article or the regulations adopted hereunder shall be fined not more than \$100 for each violation."

Of course, we only envision the use of a monetary penalty in extreme situations. Our hope is that between education, a grace period, and positive peer pressure, the great majority of Woodbury residents will pick up on the system quickly.

We can adjust the level of enforcement based on what is observed during the transition period. If residents seem to understand and comply with the program, as WZ anticipates and most other programs suggest, the measures listed above should be adequate. If there are large numbers of users that refuse to use the bags, we are prepared to work with the Selectmen to consider other options, such as erecting a barrier at the base of the waste ramp to ensure each vehicle is checked and turned away if necessary. There is also potential to increase the bag price to fund a longer-term enforcement role. Again, we hope that such measures will be necessary.

## Projected Benefits

The Waste Advisory Committee has concluded that full UBP with food scrap diversion will yield the greatest benefits for Woodbury. As part of our outreach and research, we conferred with the Planning Commission. They provided our Committee with their findings and excerpts from the [Plan of Conservation and Development](#) that direct the Town in relation to waste and resources:

- *“The Town should also seek to improve its facilities, services, and schools to make Woodbury more attractive to new residents and to retain residents who might otherwise move for better schools or services”*. pg. 12
- *“The town’s residents and its leadership are strong advocates for protecting the unique qualities of the community and are unwilling to sacrifice the town’s rural landscape and historic charm for expansion of its tax base”*. pg. 12
- *“Woodbury should continue its stewardship of the town’s historic resources, land, open space and environment”*t. pg. 13
- *“Residents also feel that the Town has been a good steward of Woodbury’s environmental resources and that it should continue this vigilance”*. pg. 16
- *“The Town should implement sustainable practices at Town properties, facilities, and rights-of-way. .... Consideration should be given to local, regional, and global environmental impacts in identifying and selecting sustainable practices”*. pg. 21
- *“Proactively manage, maintain, and expand infrastructure to meet the community’s needs while preserving rural character”*. pg. 40
- *“Support the deployment of energy efficient systems and renewable energy systems in a manner consistent with the historic and rural character of the Town”*. pg. 52

We feel that these sections of the POCD support the waste reduction program we are recommending.

Furthermore, the financial projections shared above represent a path forward in which the municipal budget will no longer be weighed down by the costs it currently allots for waste. Instead, that cost will be redistributed in an equitable manner so that those households producing the greatest amount of trash will shoulder the largest share – just as with other utilities and commodities, like electricity or groceries. For most families, the cost of bags would be no more than a two extra dollars a week.

Woodbury would be in good company by adopting our recommended program; over [150 municipalities in Massachusetts](#) use a UBP system, and [Vermont bans food scraps from trash](#) as part of its universal recycling law. Here in Connecticut, [Middletown](#) (another SMM grant recipient) recently adopted a UBP and food scrap program, joining other UBP communities like [Stonington](#) and [Voluntown](#). NVCOG held a recent [webinar](#) with a discussion panel of three waste management professionals who run transfer stations with UBP and food scraps, which can serve as a resource for more information.

## Alternative Plan: Overflow Unit-Based Pricing and Food Scrap Diversion

During a structured decision-making exercise that the committee undertook, Full UBP was narrowly adopted as our recommendation over Overflow UBP. We have decided to provide the details of an overflow model as an alternative for your consideration.

In an overflow UBP model, a number of town-branded waste bags are provided free to transfer station users when they purchase their permit. The Town covers the cost of these bags from taxes. If and when residents use all of these free town-branded bags, then they are required to purchase additional town-branded bags for waste disposal. Other details of the Overflow UBP would be similar to the recommended Full UBP program.

It should be noted that under Overflow UBP the trash reduction, recycling increase, and food diversion effects of this program are significantly less than that of the recommended Full UBP option. While Woodbury would realize some of these benefits, they would not realize them to the same extent. Additionally, the monetary benefits of this option are less, as shown below, and in the comparison table in Appendix B.

We emphasize that the Waste Advisory Committee remains in agreement that our recommended program is the Full UBP program.

### Financial Projections

WZ has developed the following financial projections for the Overflow UBP that is presented in comparison with the “Do Nothing” and Full UBP recommendation below:

Woodbury Budget and Pro Forma				
WASTE / RECYCLE (10133)	2023-2024	2024-2025		
		Do Nothing	Lo \$1.65, Sm\$1.00, Mini, \$0.75	Overflow
<b>Expense</b>				
<i>Transfer Station Operators Salary</i>	\$56,208	\$56,208	\$56,208	\$56,208
<i>Landfill Monitoring</i>	\$5,434	\$5,434	\$5,434	\$5,434
<i>Hauling Fees - Bulk</i>	\$18,150	\$18,150	\$18,150	\$18,150
<i>Hauling Fees - Recycle</i>	\$27,000	\$27,000	\$27,000	\$27,000
<i>Bulky Waste/Wood Chipping</i>	\$81,589	\$81,589	\$81,589	\$81,589
<i>Tire Disposal</i>	\$7,250	\$7,250	\$7,250	\$7,250
<i>Freon Disposal</i>	\$3,408	\$3,408	\$3,408	\$3,408
<i>Food Scrap Collection</i>	\$0	\$0	\$18,000	\$18,000
<b>Sub Total Expense</b>	<b>\$199,039</b>	<b>\$199,039</b>	<b>\$217,039</b>	<b>\$217,039</b>
<b>Tipping Fees &amp; Haul</b>	<b>\$140,642</b>	<b>\$151,812</b>	<b>\$75,906</b>	<b>\$106,268</b>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$339,681</b>	<b>\$350,851</b>	<b>\$292,945</b>	<b>\$323,307</b>
<b>Revenue</b>				
<i>Revenue from Fees</i>	\$54,891	\$54,891	\$54,891	\$54,891
<i>Revenue From Bags</i>	\$0	\$0	\$73,213	\$0
<b>Net General Fund Budget</b>	<b>\$284,790</b>	<b>\$295,960</b>	<b>\$164,840</b>	<b>\$268,416</b>
<b>Net Benefit</b>		<b>(\$11,170)</b>	<b>\$119,950</b>	<b>\$16,374</b>

## Comparison to Recommended Plan

To summarize, the key differences of this plan compared to our preferred recommendation include:

- An allotted number of free trash and food waste bags will be distributed to transfer station households during the permit renewal process, funded through the municipal budget (taxes).
- Only residents who exceed their free allotment must purchase “overflow” bags at local retailers.

Compared to our Full UBP recommendation, here are the advantages of Overflow UBP:

- An overflow model may be more palatable to the public, as they will need to spend less money out of pocket.

Compared to our Full UBP recommendation, here are the disadvantages of Overflow UBP:

- Without full UBP, the magnitude of waste reduction will be considerably lower. Providing an allotment of free bags does significantly reduce the effect of “UBP” in trash reduction and recycling increase.
- In an overflow model, waste disposal costs will still eat into the municipal budget, albeit not as much.
- The logistics of distributing free bags to transfer station users may be time consuming and puts more of a strain on municipal staff, compared to stocking all bags with retailers.

## Continuation of the Ad-hoc Committee

During the deliberations of the Committee a number of topics arose that the Committee did not feel could be addressed within the time constraints of the current committee. These topics include:

- A food scrap program for condos and/or condo residents
- A food scrap program for Region-14 schools
- A food scrap program for the Senior Center
- A full consideration of on-site composting of food waste.

Since, the charter of the Committee expires with the delivery of this report and the recommendations contained within it, the Committee further recommends the Board of Selectmen consider reconstituting the Ad-hoc Waste Advisory either effective immediately, or at some point in the near-future, to address the and topics related above and any other related topics.



## Appendices

Appendix A: Supporting Information from Waste Zero

Appendix B: Summarized Financials for All Options

Appendix C: Alternative Food Disposal Options

Appendix D: Waste Advisory Committee Membership & Meeting Dates

Appendix E: Waste Zero Pilot Data

1. Residents will be required to use town-~~branded-designated~~ bags for all waste brought to the transfer station, ~~except for food scraps, for which a bag is optional~~. Other bags will not be accepted.
2. Woodbury will work with a provider to design color-coded, Town-~~branded-designated~~ bags for trash and separate bags for food waste. These bags ~~will~~ may be stocked directly with local retailers ~~or by the Town~~.
  - a. Bags will be priced to include the price of the bag and the true cost of disposal for the material that is in the bag. Bag revenue will therefore cover the cost of municipal waste disposal rather than drawing on tax income. ~~Current b~~ Bag prices are shown below.
3. Residents will still need to ~~purchase \$25~~ obtain transfer station permits.
4. Residents will bring trash and food waste in their respective bags to the transfer station, and place them in separate receptacles.
  - a. Only Town-~~branded-designated~~ bags will be accepted for trash.
  - b. Food waste may be brought either in town-~~branded-designated (green)~~ bags or no bag at all. ~~(per anaerobic digester specifications)~~.
5. Woodbury will enter into a contract with a food scrap hauler to bring those bags to an anaerobic digester or compost facility. Trash will be sent to its regular destination.

Thus, residents will be incentivized to maximize recycling, divert food scraps, and ~~change their behavior to~~ minimize their own costs ~~and to~~ save tax money by reducing trash.

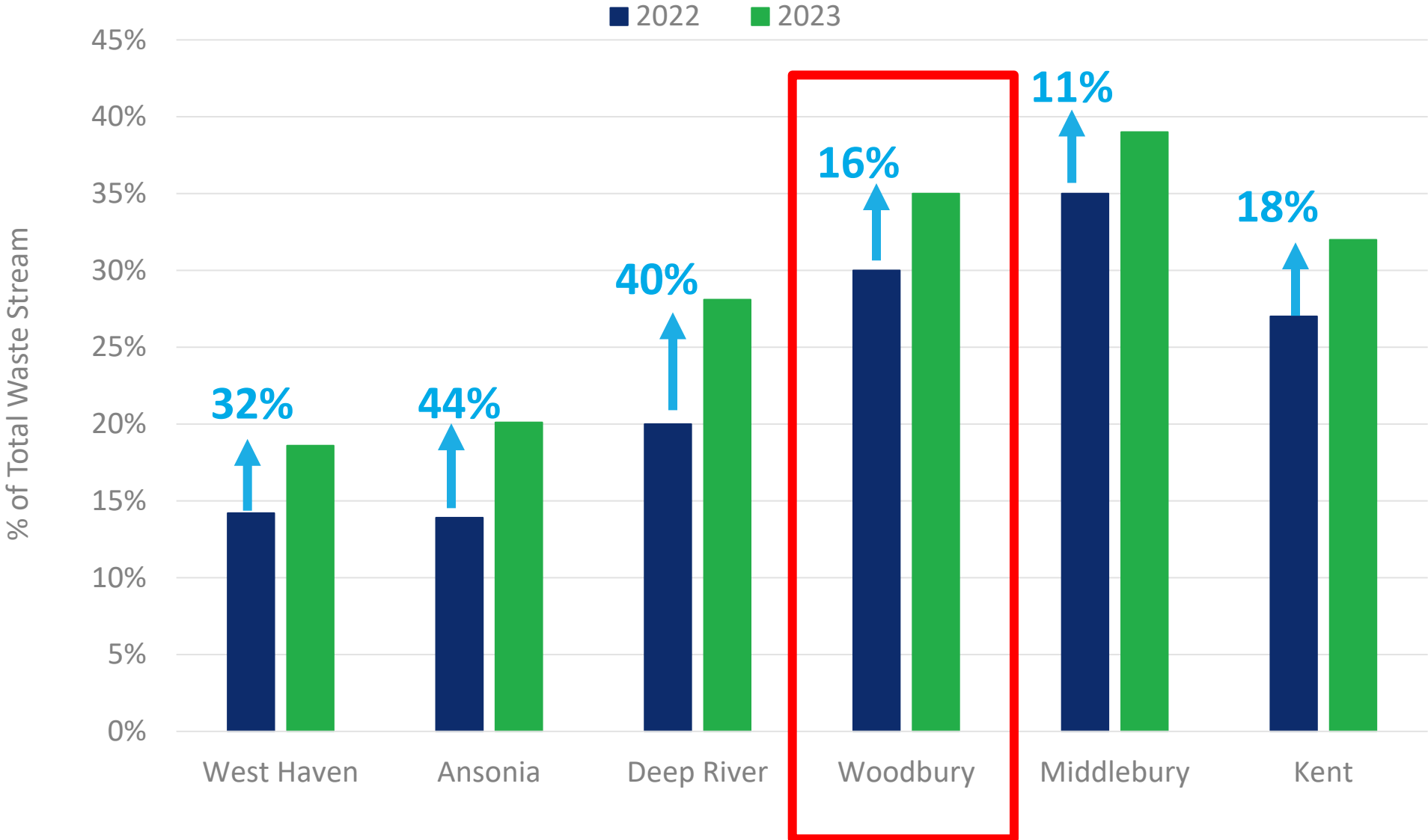
~~With the help of WZ, the~~ The Committee has determined the following bag costs and sizes:

Bags	Gallons	Cost
<b>Trash</b>		
Large Bag	33 gallons	\$1.65
Medium Bag	13 gallons	\$1.00
Small Bag	8 gallons	\$0.75
<b>Food Scraps</b>		
Small Bag	8 gallons	\$0.25
Mini Bag	4 gallons	\$0.15

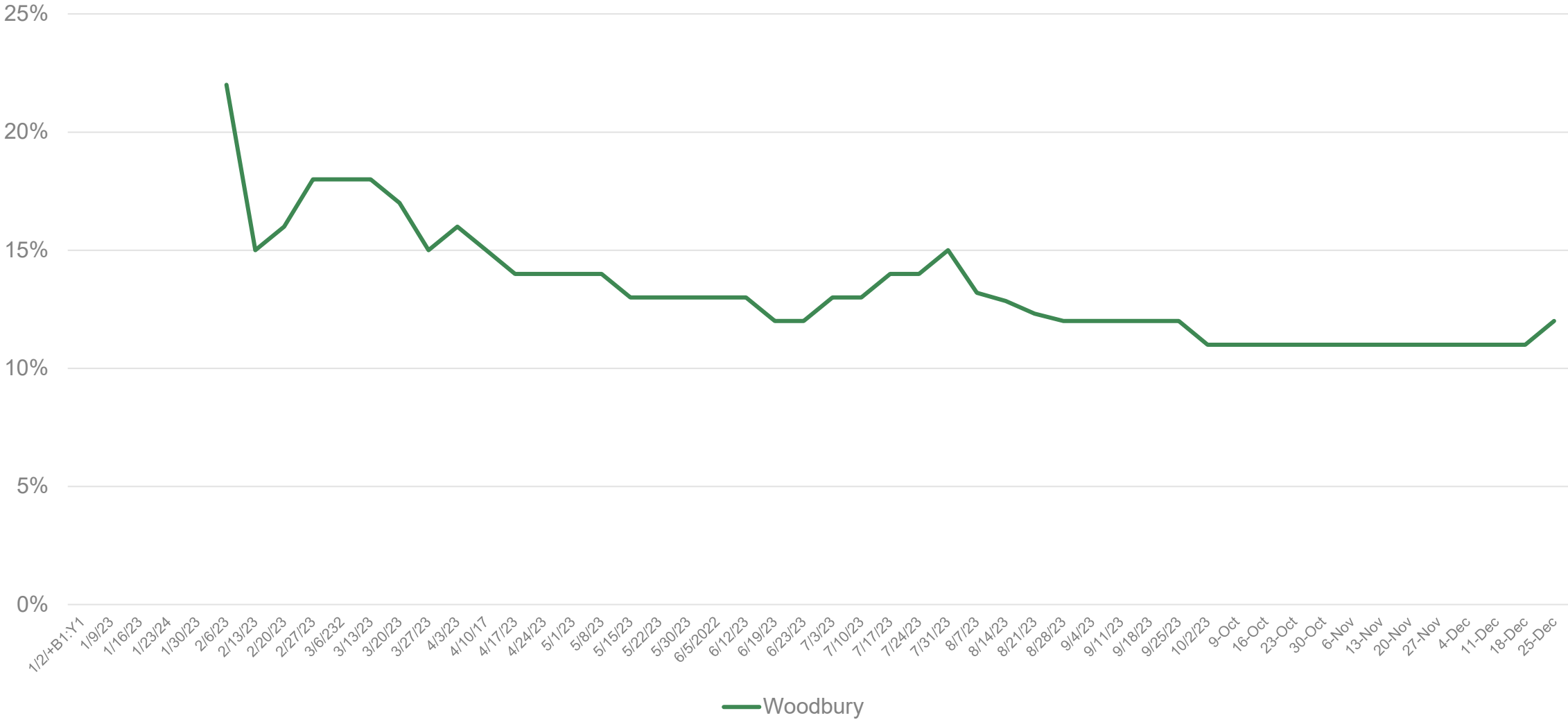
# SMM GRANT PROGRAM – KEY INDICATORS

Pilot Program	# of Weeks of Data	Collection Type	*Clean Food Capture Rate (prior week)	Food Scraps Captured (cumulative lbs)	Contamination Rate (prior week)	Waste Reduction	Curbside Diversion (Recycling + Food Scraps) Increase
Ansonia	30	Co-Collection	15%	234,758	9%	17%	44%
Deep River	30	Drop Off	33%	87,660	0.6%	19%	37%
Middletown	39	Co-Collection	15%	103,110	15%	N/A	N/A
Seymour	26	Co-Collection	20.1%	17,930	13%	N/A	N/A
Stonington	47	Separate Collection	53%	483,100	1%	10%	6%
West Haven	38	Co-Collection	12%	495,858	19%	9%	32%
Woodbury	47	Drop Off	22%	84,420	2%	12%	16%
West Hartford	31	Separate Collection	61%	96,040	2%	N/A	N/A
Middlebury	25	Drop Off	25%	47,880	NA	4%	11.4%
Meriden	22	Co-collection	9%	13,000	48%	N/A	N/A
Madison & Guilford	32	Separate Collection	69%	NA	1%	NA	NA
Kent	23	Drop Off	31%	24,142	NA	NA	21%
Bethel	20	Drop Off	23%	7,866	NA	NA	NA
Newtown	16	Drop Off	15%	3,200	NA	NA	NA

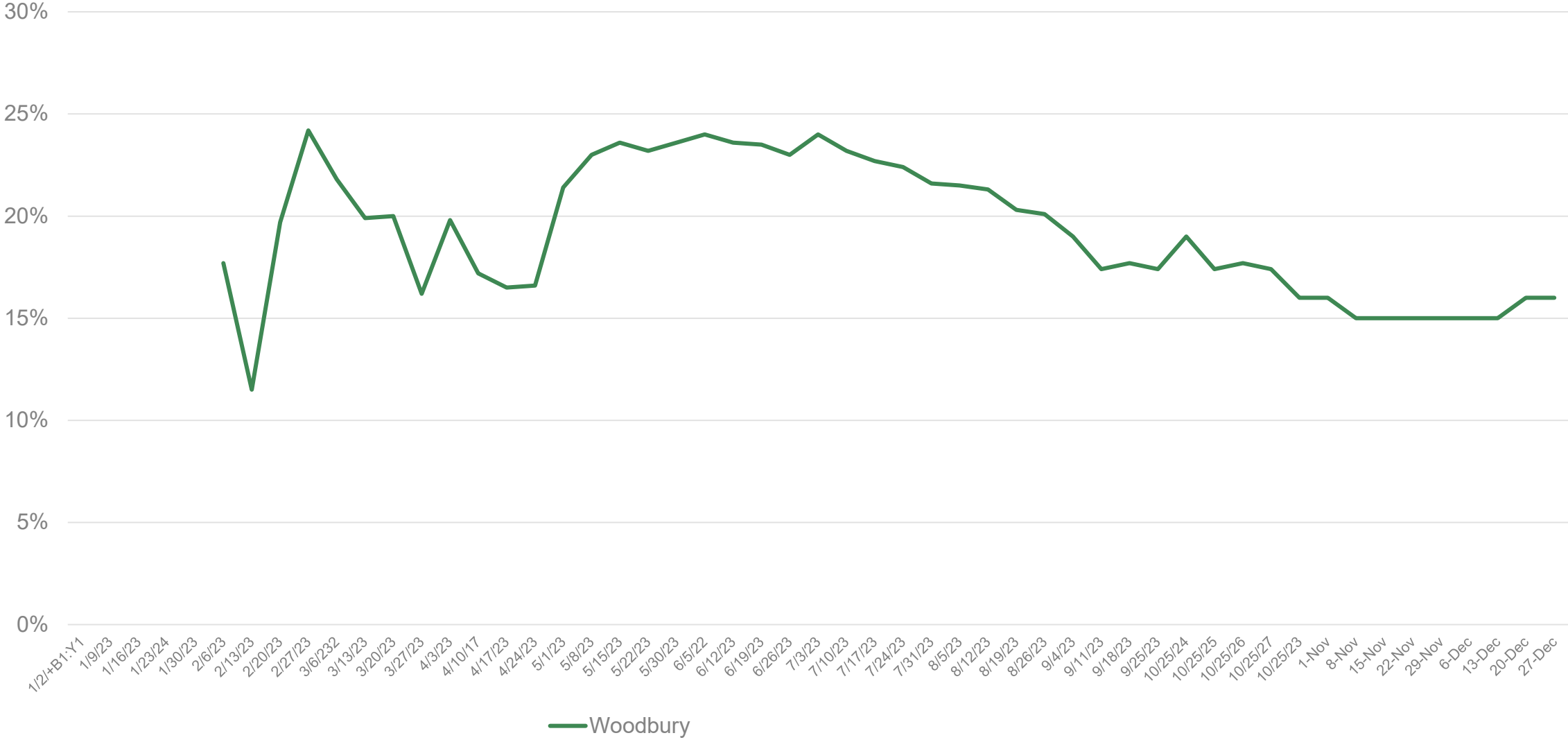
# SMM GRANT PILOT CUMULATIVE DIVERSION RATE CHANGE (RECYCLING + FOOD SCRAPS)



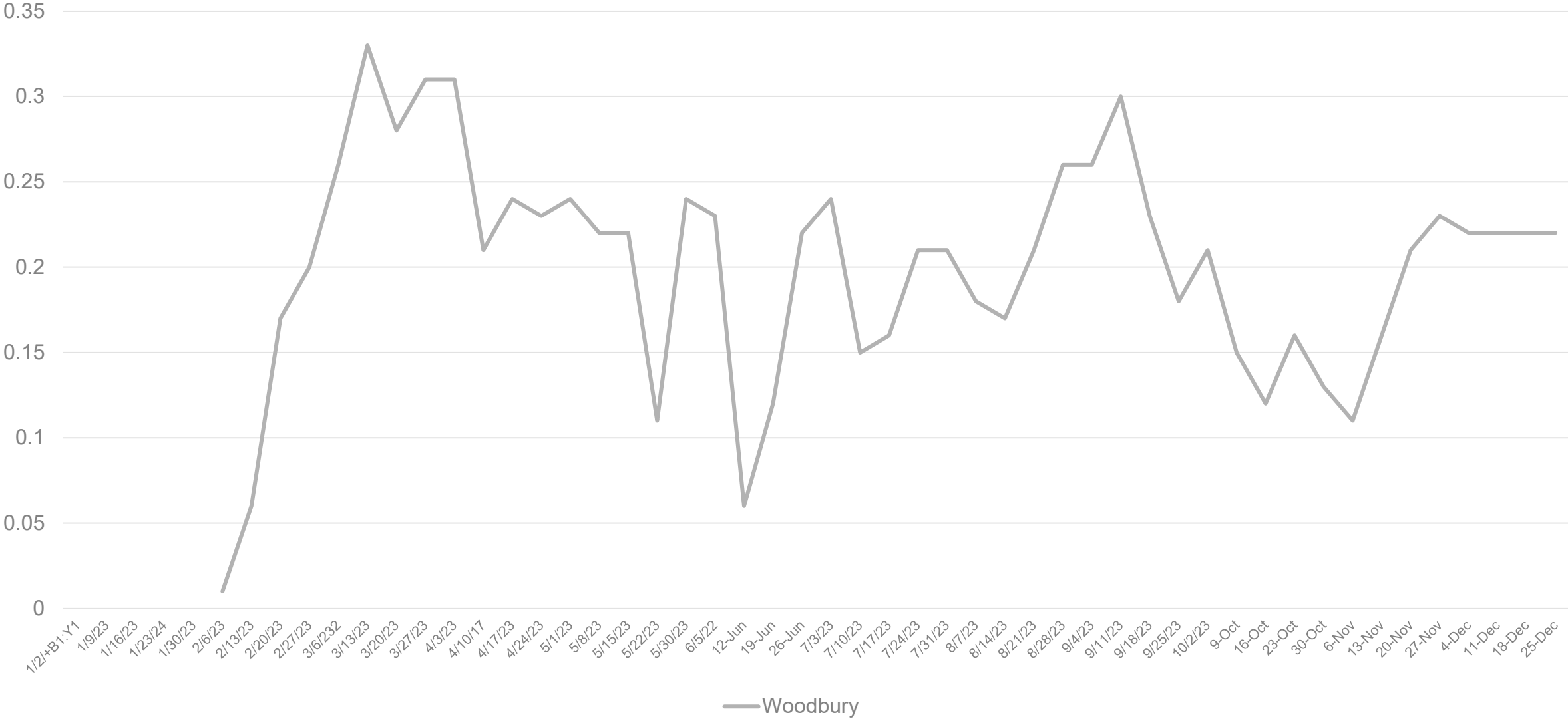
# SMM GRANT DIVERSION CHANGE (CUMULATIVE WEEKLY TREND 2022 TO 2023)



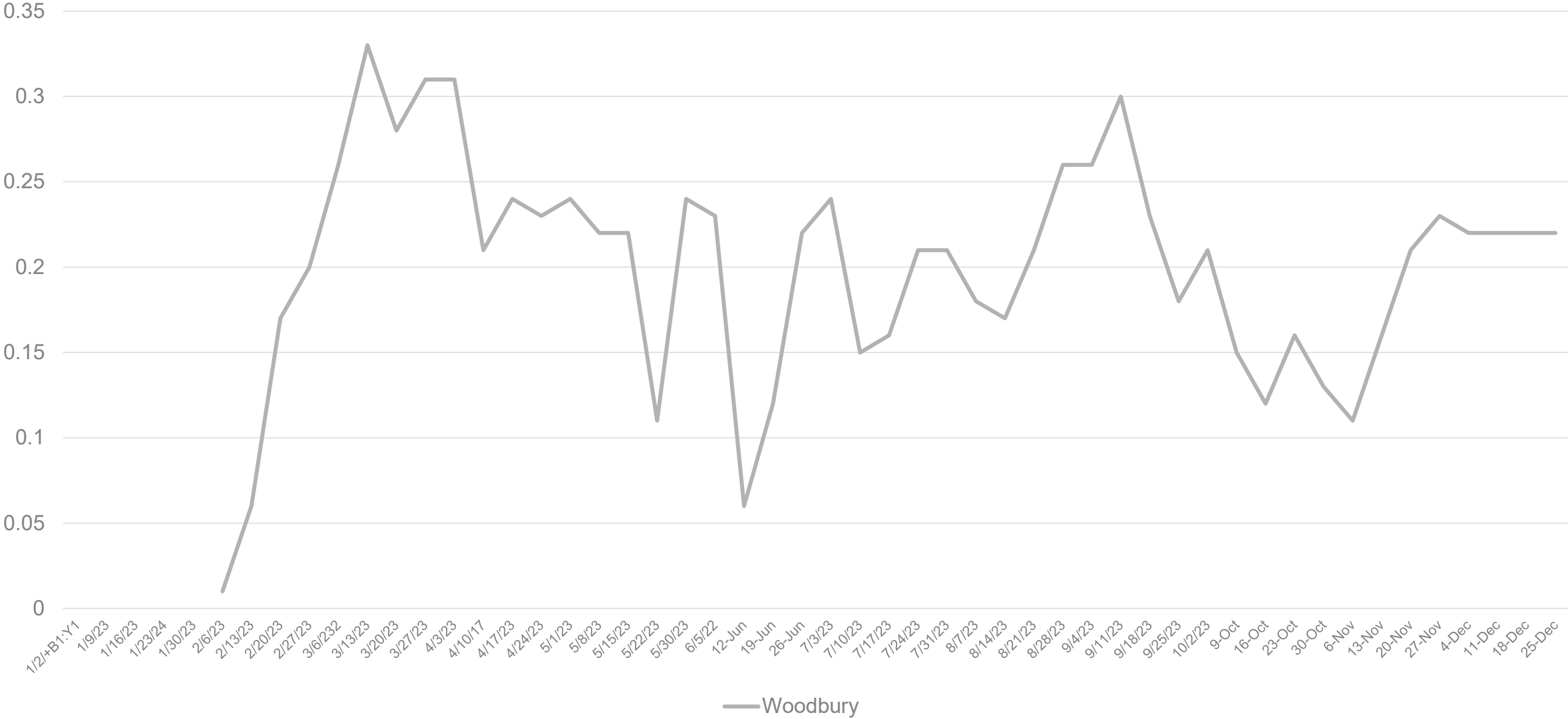
# SMM GRANT RECYCLING INCREASE (CUMULATIVE WEEKLY TREND 2022 TO 2023)



# WEEKLY FOOD CAPTURE RATE (CLEAN FOOD MINUS CONTAMINATES)



# WEEKLY FOOD CAPTURE RATE (CLEAN FOOD MINUS CONTAMINATES)





# SMM GRANT PILOT CUMULATIVE WASTE REDUCTION

