



# Program Report: Bobcats Give Back 2026

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# Office of Sustainability: Our Mission

The Office of Sustainability advances efficiency and stewardship at Texas State University by supporting responsible resource management and long-term operational effectiveness across the institution. Our team collaborates with academic, research, and administrative units to integrate sustainability principles into planning, operations, and educational activities in alignment with university goals and values.





# 2026 Report

# Introduction

# What is Bobcats Give Back?

Approximately 41.32 million tons of waste ended up in Texas landfills in 2024 (TCEQ, 2025). Led by the Office of Sustainability (OoS) and supported by the Department of Housing and Residential Life (HRL) and Texas State University Facilities, Bobcats Give Back (BGB) is Texas State University (TXST)'s premier move-out waste recovery program, aimed at diverting the sharp increase in unwanted items and materials produced during the move-out period from reaching local landfills.

## Importance of the Program

Bobcats Give Back addresses each of the three pillars of sustainability, Economy, Social Demand, and Environment - illustrating the intersectional benefits derived when institutions promote waste diversion in one of the fastest growing counties in the country (Axios, 2025).

### Economy

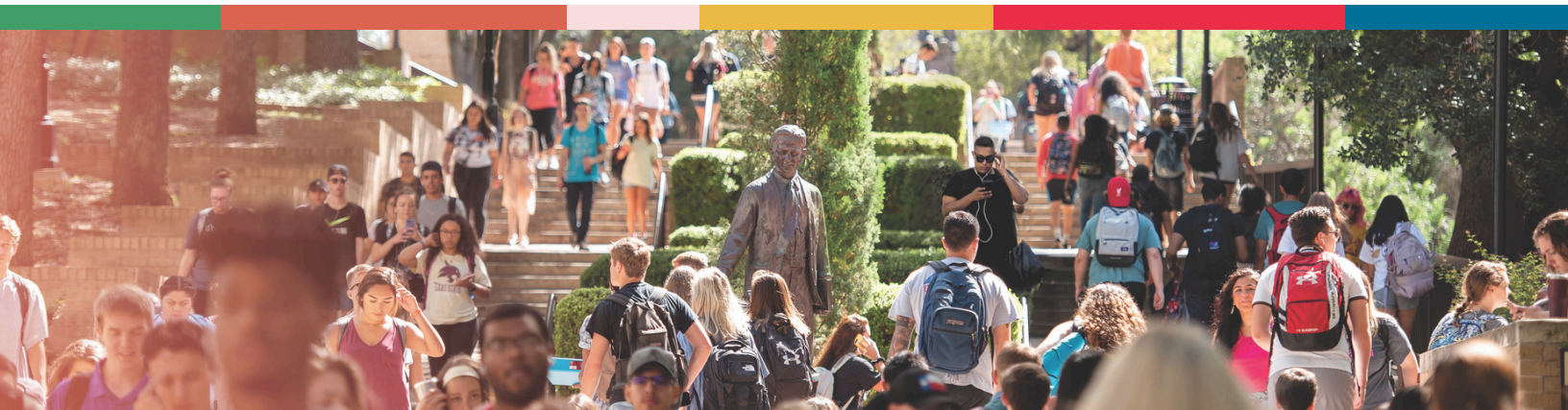
In a world of finite resources, it is both sustainable and increasingly necessary to promote a circular economy focused on limited raw material use and recapturing waste for continued reworking. Bobcats Give Back applies this concept by reducing the need for local residents and incoming students to purchase new items, and rerouting textiles, metals, plastics, and more to appropriate resource recovery sites for continued usage.

### Social Demand

As costs of living continue to rise, marginalized communities are impacted the most by increasing housing, food, school supply, and healthcare costs. Programs like Bobcats Give Back assist in alleviating socioeconomic inequality in the San Marcos community by redistributing excess materials towards those who would benefit from them most.

### Environment

According to a report on Texas municipal solid waste conducted by TCEQ, the estimated statewide landfill capacity in 2022 was 51 years. As the population continues to grow, expanding urbanization along the I-35 corridor will place greater pressure on the natural resources of Central Texas. At Texas State University especially, environmental sustainability initiatives are vital to effectively manage the impact of record-breaking student body growth.



# Program History

## Pre-2018

Bobcats Give Back has its roots in Texas State's former **Pack It Up Pass It On** program, which was managed by Kim Porterfield within the TXST Department of Housing and Residential Life. Organized in a very similar manner to today's Bobcats Give Back, Pack It Up Pass It On consisted of collecting donations from residence halls and redistributing them to San Marcos residents in a **"garage-sale setting"** at the LBJ Student Center.



Donated clothing displayed at the LBJ Student Center

## 2018-2021

From the years 2018 to 2021, the **City of San Marcos Resource Recovery Division**, under the Neighborhood Enhancement Department, managed the program with the assistance of TXST Office of Sustainability. It was **renamed Bobcats Give Back (BGB)**, and shifted focus to collecting donations from **student apartments**. The pilot program in 2018 serviced 11 student apartments and collected 467 pounds of items. By 2021, the number of apartments with donation sites increased to 13, with 2,296 pounds of material collected over a period of 5 weeks.



Bags of donations being transported in a passenger vehicle

## 2022-2023

In 2022, the City of San Marcos partnered with the **Texas State University Department of Housing and Residential Life** and **Office of Sustainability** to bring Bobcats Give Back to campus, servicing 20 residence halls in addition to 22 apartments. Operations for sorting, weighing, and redistributing materials took place in the City of San Marcos Reuse Warehouse. The duration of donation sites in on-campus housing increased from 1 week in 2022 to 2 weeks in 2023. Donations increased as well, with 17,686 pounds of material collected in 2023.



Donated items at City of San Marcos Reuse Warehouse

# Program History: 2024 - Present

## 2024-2025

The Office of Sustainability led Bobcats Give Back programming on TXST campus starting in 2024, reducing collection to 1 week and bringing collection to **all residence halls on campus**, servicing 19 residence halls in 2024 and 22 residence halls in 2025. Donations were collected and sorted by TXST staff and volunteers, and community organizations picked up donated items from storage facilities on campus. Donations grew from roughly 3,000 pound in 2024 to **over 10,000 pounds** of material collected, sorted, and distributed over just one week in 2025.



TXST staff and volunteers sort materials at Central Plant

## 2026

In 2026, the Office of Sustainability worked with HRL to target **20 on-campus residence halls** and reduce collection bins to only **4 categories**. A **10-day collection period** was followed by three days of courtesy checks at each donation site.

Donations were once again collected and sorted by TXST staff and volunteers, with community organizations picking up donated items from storage facilities on campus. Donations increased to **over 15,000 pounds** of material collected, sorted, and distributed to **16 community partners** over a two-week period.



TXST staff and volunteers with Helping Hands Warehouse staff

# Bobcats Give Back 2026



Logo of the Bobcats Give Back Program

## Implementation

Through a systematic donation collection process and redistribution network, Bobcats Give Back provides sustainable alternatives to students looking to dispose of materials as they move off campus, effectively reducing landfill waste while providing free non-perishable foods, household goods, and more to local residents and nonprofits.

The 2026 program was composed of three phases, each utilizing support from different university and community partners:

### **I. In-House Collection**



### **II. Sorting & Staging**



### **III. Nonprofit Pick-Up**





**2026 Report**

# **Phase I: In-House Collection**



## Preparation

### Forging Partnerships

The planning stage for Bobcats Give Back 2026 involved collaboration to a great extent between various university entities and partners within the San Marcos community. Thanks to support from these partners, the Office of Sustainability was able to not only execute BGB, but also lay infrastructure and establish essential relationships for future sustainability programming efforts.

Program Partners	Support
Department of Housing and Residential Life	Donation site placement and maintenance
Facilities Management	Warehouse space, supplies, equipment and staffing
Grounds and Waste Management	Collection and sorting staffing, supplies, & warehouse management
Community Partners	Coordinating distribution of donated items



Bobcats Give Back storage location at 1727 Old Ranch Road 12



Promotional Instagram posts and print flyers

### Promotion

Promotion for BGB reached students through a variety of different communication methods including:

- Sub-page on Office of Sustainability website
- Social Media Posts
- Calls to volunteer through student organizations
- Parent and Family Relations emails
- HRL emails to student residents
- Campus and residence hall digital signage

## Operation

### Donation Site Setup

Donation stations for the in-house collection period were placed in residence hall common areas and composed of 4 - 9 plastic Brute containers labeled with appropriate signage for each category of accepted item. The number of categories was reduced from 5 in 2025 to 4: clothing/accessories, home goods, non-perishable food items, and microwaves/minifridges. Larger capacity residence halls received extra bins for the most commonly donated materials.



Castro Hall Bobcats Give Back donation site, prior to collection

### Program Timeline

- **April 27th** - sorting bins from Recycling delivered to RR12 warehouse, warehouse cleaned and readied
- **April 27th through May 1st** - collection bins transported from RR12 warehouse to the Central Plant, where they were organized, labeled, and pre-stacked
- **May 1st** - Conex storage container delivered to RR12 warehouse
- **May 4th** - bins and signage set up in residence halls
- **May 4th through May 13th** - collection program fully conducted across all residence halls
- **May 13th** - bins and signage removed from residence halls
- **May 14th through May 15th** - daily courtesy checks on donation sites and collection of donations as-needed



### Site Monitoring

To manage the collection process efficiently, Halls were grouped, and teams were assigned responsibility for each group.

#### Day 1:

- Collection teams distributed extra bin liners to each hall, introduced themselves as points of contact to Resident and Desk Assistants on duty, and requested assistance with directing students with donations and to be notified when additional collection was needed.

#### Daily Operations:

- Teams of staff and volunteers were responsible for checking bins in their assigned halls, weighing bags and reporting collection weights, replacing full bags as needed, and transporting donations to the RR12 warehouse for weighing and sorting.

#### Final Day:

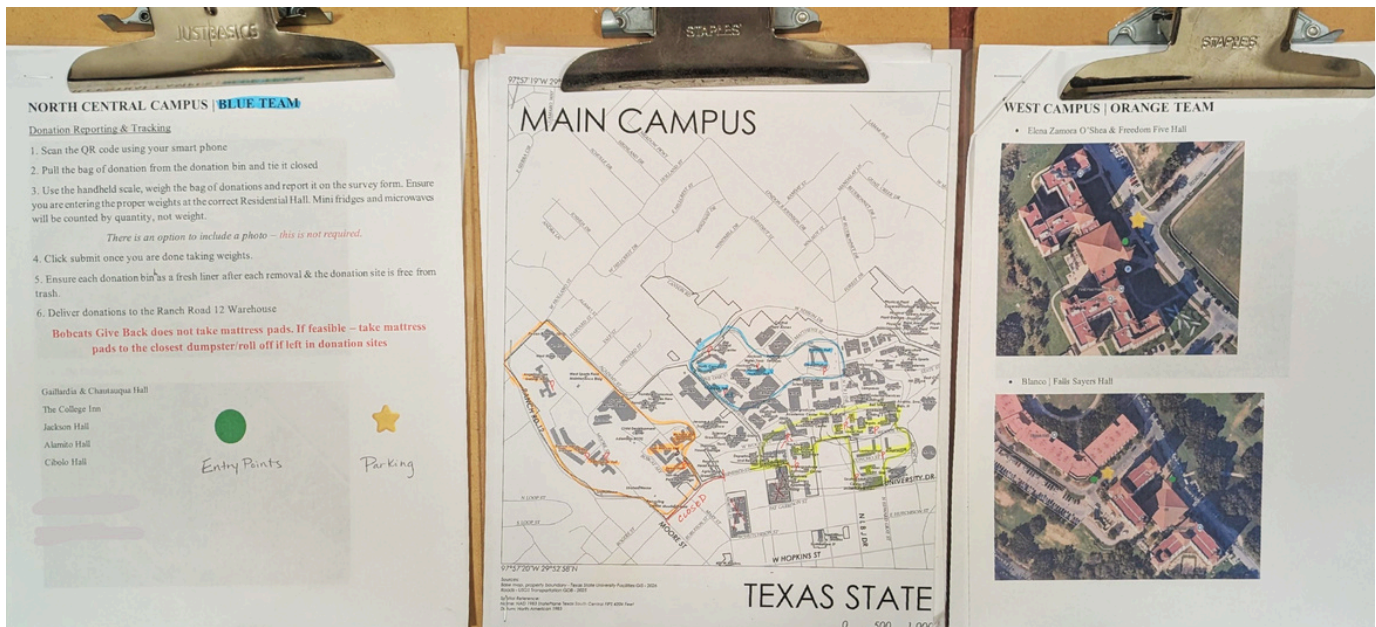
- Collection teams collected all donations, bins, and signage from each residence hall and brought them to RR12 warehouse. Resident Assistants on duty notified of the program's conclusion.

## Collection Teams

- **Team Orange:** O'Shea/Freedom Five, Blanco, Falls/Sayer, San Marcos, Bexar, Castro
- **Team Blue:** Chautauqua/Gaillardia, Alamito, Cibolo, Jackson, The College Inn
- **Team Yellow:** San Jacinto, Tower, Retama, Laurel, Mesquite, Brogdon, Butler, Lantana, Sterry, Bulky Items



Collection team and donations



Pages from printed collection guide

## Weights

Scales were provided to each collection team, along with a map, PPE, and printed guide to the collection process. These were grouped in a backpack to be picked up each morning. All teams met each morning at RR12 Warehouse to go over the collection and weight-taking process and get their backpack and food and drinks before starting routes.

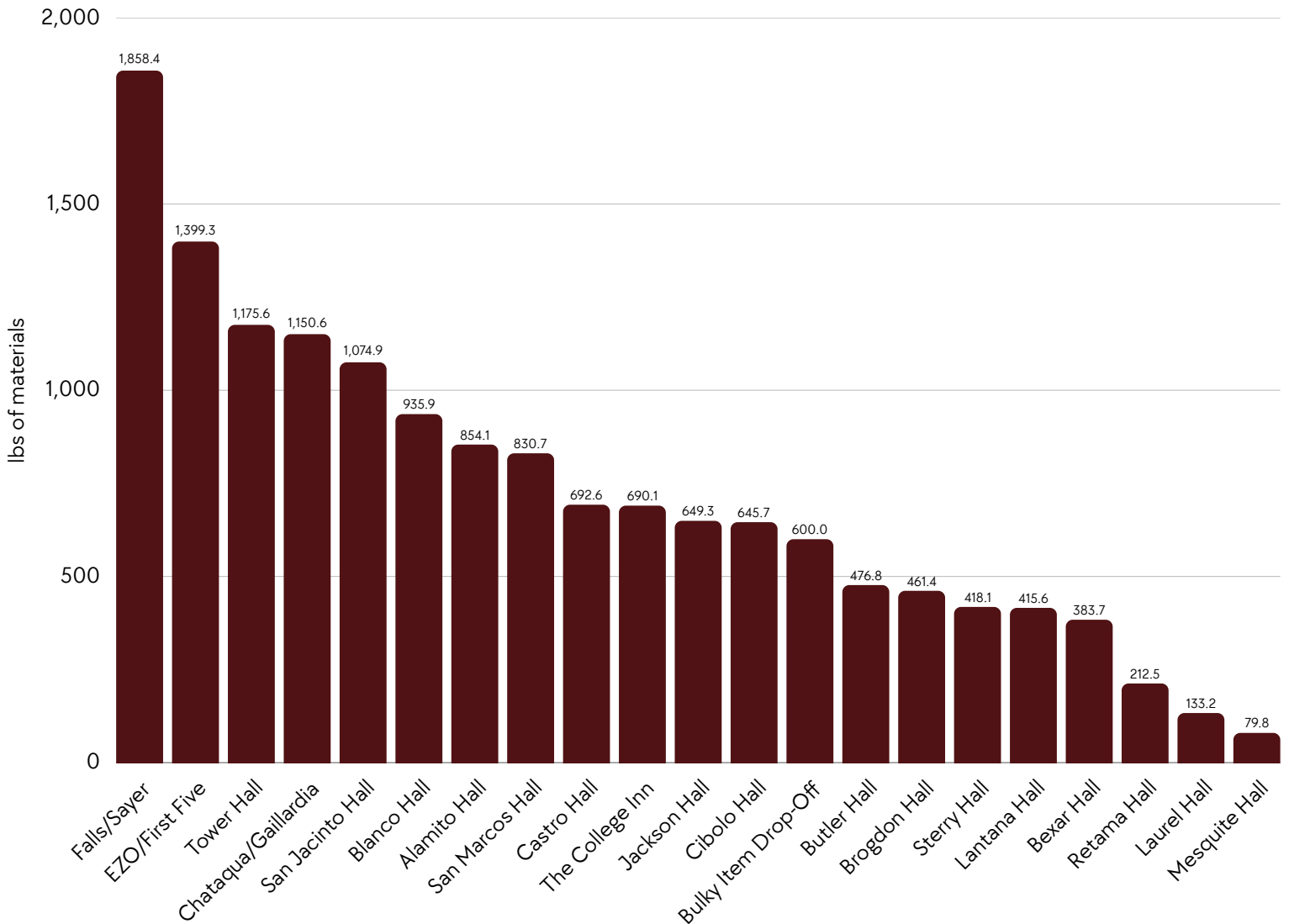
Staff and volunteers entered the weights and categories of collected donations, as well as any notes or pictures, in a fillable online survey form accessed on their phones via a QR code included in the guide.



Morning meeting of TXST staff at the RR12 Warehouse

# Results

Bobcats Give Back Donation Collection 2026  
Listed by Residence Hall Donation Site



**15,138.2 lbs total**

a 49% weight increase from 2025 (10,098.32 lbs)

2<sup>nd</sup> highest total weight collected in history of program  
(1<sup>st</sup> is 2023 with 17,686.5 lbs)



**2026 Report**

**Phase II: Sorting & Staging**



## Preparation

### Outreach

The Office of Sustainability utilized connections from previous years' programming to reach out to local organizations and nonprofits in need of donated materials. Contact information was gained through coordination with the City of San Marcos staff and began several months prior to collection.

Representatives of organizations were able to schedule pickup times using an emailed survey form and notify OoS which specific items they were in need of, so the requested materials could be set aside for their pick up.

### Categories

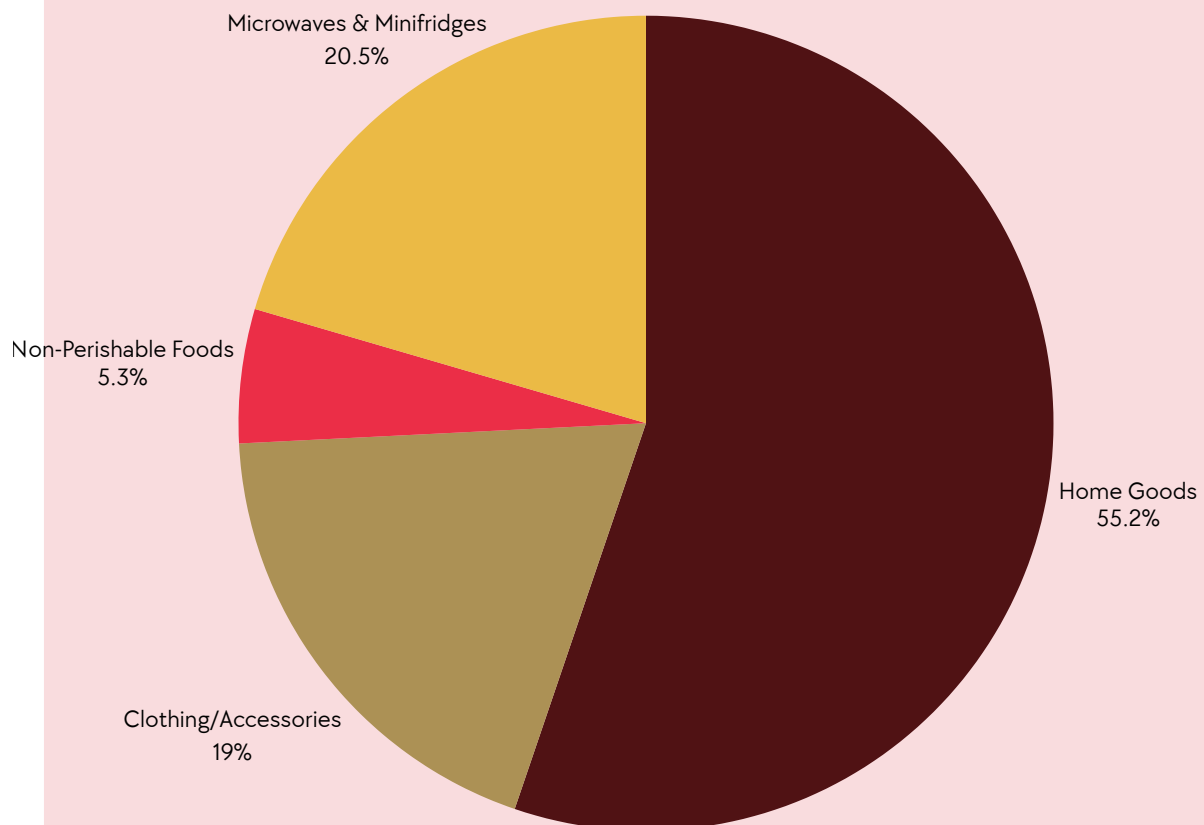
Four categories of items were collected from residence halls, these were then further sorted into sub categories to better meet the needs of our community partners.

Labels and warehouse space were designated for each subcategory.

#### Sub Categories:

- Clothing
- Accessories
- Small Furniture
- Organizing Supplies
- Bedding
- Curtains
- Towels
- Electronics
- Non-Perishable Food
- Microwaves & Minifridges
- Hygiene Items
- Cleaning Supplies
- Room Decor
- Books
- School Supplies
- Kitchen Items
- Scrap Electronics
- Scrap Metal & Plastics
- Scrap clothes
- Scrap shoes

BOBCATS GIVE BACK COLLECTION RESULTS, 2026  
percentage of materials collected



## Operation

### Transportation

Daily, full collection bags were weighed and transported from each Residence Hall and the bulky item site to the RR12 Warehouse by teams of TXST staff and volunteers. Teams utilized TXST vehicles from Facilities, rented box trucks, and the Office of Sustainability's golf cart for transport. Upon arrival, the bags were sorted and stored in categories to fulfill specific requests from our non-profit partners, streamlining the pick-up process.

### Sorting and Organization

TXST Utilities and Facilities staff, volunteers, and student interns meticulously sorted all collected materials into subcategories and organized at the Central Plant, making them easily accessible for pickup. Any items unsuitable for redistribution were responsibly recycled, trashed, or sent to other appropriate disposal facilities. To prevent accumulation and ensure that non-profit partners consistently received the specific items they needed, pickup days and times were strategically staggered.



Small furniture items staged under canopies for pick-up



TXST staff sort materials at RR12 Warehouse



Donations staged in Conex storage container for pick-up



**2026 Report**

**Phase III: Nonprofit Pick-Up**



## Procedure

Local nonprofits were contacted several weeks, if not months, prior to collection to ask about participation. They were asked to fill out an **online survey form** with what items their organization needed and their preferred pick-up dates.

Nonprofits were scheduled for staggered pick-up times as to not overlap with pick-up times of other organizations.

TXST staff and volunteers were provided with **pick-up forms** listing each nonprofit, their scheduled pick-up time, all requested items, and an approximate quantity with the requested items. Items were then staged at the appropriate time for easy pick-up.

**12,008 pounds** of collected donations were distributed to **13 nonprofit organizations** over 10 days, 992 pounds were taken as recycling, and about 1,500 had to be disposed of as trash.

Nonprofits reported to the RR12 Warehouse at their scheduled time, where they could easily load their vehicles with the assistance of TXST staff and volunteers.

## TXST HRL Custodial Staff "Shopping Days"

2026 was the first year where custodial staff with HRL were invited to "shopping days" where, outside of work hours, they were able to pick up donated items at no cost. **Registration via an email survey form was required**, and sorting staff and volunteers set aside specifically requested items as possible.

**19 individuals** took part in two different shopping days, where approximately 220 pounds of items were distributed. This was considered a successful pilot for future "shopping days," potentially open to more community members.



Teacher Reuse staff and volunteers



### BY THE NUMBERS



The first "Shopping Day," offered to TXST custodial staff registered for the event

## Item Distribution

**The following local nonprofits requested and picked up the following items:**

**Arms of Hope** - Clothing, bedding, small furniture, kitchen and bathroom items, microwaves & minifridges - **4,043 lbs**

**Comal County Crisis Center** - Clothing, kitchen items, cleaning supplies, bedding, small furniture, microwaves & minifridges, and cleaning supplies - **1,950 lbs**

**Salvation Army San Marcos** - clothes, bedding, small furniture - **976 lbs**

**Teacher Reuse** - Notebooks, organizational bins, art and school supplies, microwaves & minifridges - **865 lbs**

**Hays County Food Bank** - Non-perishable food items - **804 lbs**

**Project Graduation** - school supplies, kitchen items, microwaves & minifridges - **700 lbs**

**Helping Hands Warehouse** - Kitchen items, bedding, microwaves & minifridges - **640 lbs**

**San Marcos Housing Authority** - bedding, assorted home goods, microwaves & minifridges - **485 lbs**

**Luling Animal Welfare Society** - Small furniture items - **200 lbs**

**Southside Community Center** - Small furniture, microwaves & minifridges - **195 lbs**

**Hays Caldwell Women's Center** - kitchen items, cleaning supplies, room decor - **150 lbs**



**8.25** average miles traveled for all donations

When scheduling pick-ups, effort was taken to meet the needs of nonprofits in the local community first.



San Marcos Housing Authority staff and volunteers picking up donations

**12,008 lbs total donations**  
**992 lbs total recycling**

## Item Distribution, cont.

*Items that were not requested, but were donated or recycled to:*

**Green Guy Recycling** - Scrap metal and electronics for recycling - **650 lbs**

**Habitat for Humanity** - Small furniture - **550 lbs**

**JOSCO Products** - Scrap clothing for recycling - **300 lbs**

**Goodwill Central Texas** - Assorted home goods, room decor - **180 lbs**

**Nike Old Soles Never Die** - Shoes for recycling - **42 lbs**



Texas State Staff dropping off scrap shoes at Nike store

## Community Partners:



Non-Profit 501(c)(3) 88-1240132





**2026 Report**  
**Financial Summary**

## 2026 Financial Summary.

### Monetary Commitments

#### Office of Sustainability - \$3,481.41

##### **Equipment Rental:**

Conex Storage Container Rental (1 for 1 month): \$615.00

Uhaul Vehicle Rental (2 for 1 week): \$630.75

##### **Inventory:**

BRUTE Bins (10): \$430.00

Uline Bins (9): \$410.67

Uline Bin Dollies (19): \$665.00

Hand Trucks (3): \$234.00

##### **Consumables:**

Volunteer Refreshments: \$486.00

Colored Tape: \$9.99



### In-Kind Donations

#### Grounds, Recycling & Waste Mgmt.

Sorting Containers and Bins

Can Liners

Staffing



#### Facilities

TXST Box Truck

Staffing



#### Department of Housing and Residential Life

Planning and support

Staffing





**2026 Report**

# **Carbon Footprint Study**

## Quantifying Emissions

These data points are estimates based off of the measurements of diverted waste and factors sourced from EPA's Waste Reduction Model (2023).

Bobcats Give Back 2026 prevented the emission of approximately:

**42.1 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>**

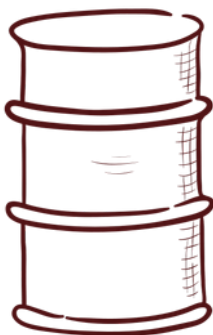


## Emissions Savings By Category:

- Household Goods = 20,166.64 lbs CO<sub>2</sub>
- Clothing = 10,318.74 lbs CO<sub>2</sub>
- Food = 748.18 lbs CO<sub>2</sub>
- Microwaves & Minifridges = 61,659.00 lbs CO<sub>2</sub>

## Visualizing Impact

42.1 Metric Tons of CO<sub>2</sub> is equivalent to:



burning 4,719 gallons of gasoline



Running 1,484 laptops non-stop for a year



Charging 10.9 million smartphones

This amount is equivalent to carbon sequestered by **1,098 tree seedlings** grown for **10 years**.



# 2026 Report Conclusion

## Program Successes

The Bobcats Give Back program achieved remarkable success in 2026, expanding to a new Residence Hall, **Castro Hall**, and a **bulky-item donation site** for the first time. The program offered a longer donation period of 2 weeks and saw a **49% increase in donations** collected compared to 2025.

This success is largely due to prior organizational work, full staffing, and enhanced coordination. The Office of Sustainability added two new full-time employees in the summer of 2025 and spring of 2026 and, with increased communication, successfully implemented improved processes from the prior year while implementing several operational changes and collaborating fully with established contacts both within the campus community and across San Marcos. OoS successfully collaborated with its community partners to not only meet their 2026 goals but also lay a strong foundation for future initiatives. This included the successful collection and redistribution of **over 15,000 pounds** of materials, demonstrating significant waste diversion and community support.

### Building on Prior Work

The Bobcats Give Back 2025 program successfully implemented a “team captains” approach to daily checks, collecting and redistributing over 10,000 pounds of materials from Texas State University's. Using a similar model in 2026, teams were assigned parts of campus and were given clear instructions on how to collect, organize, and weigh materials. This proactive approach was crucial in ensuring smooth operations, minimal dumping, and reduced contamination throughout the program. Clear communication with RAs at the beginning and end of the collection period also encouraged HRL staff to be proactive when addressing contamination or piling of items in their halls.

Previous partnerships established with local non-profits also allowed the distribution of donations to mirror the relatively smooth collection process. The active involvement of 13 local nonprofit groups and three recyclers helped the program divert waste from landfills and support local nonprofit work.

### Pilot Programs: “Shopping Days” and Bulky Item Collection

With the guidance of HRL, Bobcats Give Back was able to offer HRL custodial staff a new and unique opportunity to collect donated items from the RR12 Warehouse at two official “shopping days.” These shopping days were a way to include interested staff in the distribution of good quality items directly back into the Texas State community, closing the loop for materials on campus and inviting hard-working staff into the program in a new, rewarding way. Expanding the shopping day concept in previous years has the potential to increase the positive involvement of more campus community members.

Likewise, this was the first year that the Recycling and Waste Management team, who oversees waste collection during move-out, offered bulky item collection. Bulky items that were in good condition were brought to a drop-off location at the Recycling yard and taken by OoS staff to local nonprofit organizations that could put them to good use. This is a clear example of how increased involvement across many campus groups can expand the mission of Bobcats Give Back in an effective way.

## Areas for Improvement

### Support and Involvement

As student enrollment at Texas State University continues to grow, the need for more institutional support for sustainability initiatives also increases. For continuity, additional support is needed from those with direct roles in the on-campus move-out process. This includes recruiting volunteer participation from staff and students across the university population, as well as from the nonprofit partners we work with, and may also include increased involvement from RAs to monitor collection sites and assist their residents with properly disposing of materials.

More can also be done to encourage students to refuse, reduce, reuse and recycle items throughout the year, therefore lightening the load on the end-of-year move-out process. OoS, in coordination with other campus organizations, plays a crucial role in providing the outreach and education toward this goal.

The service capacity of Bobcats Give Back can be increased in future years only through greater involvement and investment from various university departments.



### Location and Communication

Several areas for improvement were identified to enhance future program efficiency. The RR12 Warehouse location, being removed from campus, presented a challenge for some volunteers to access, and increased the response time for teams to get to campus. Furthermore, the limited space for sorting and staging donations meant that some items were stored outdoors at risk of the weather, and access to parts of the Conex storage container were blocked by bagged donations. Starting routes on campus, or clearer communication with volunteers may be needed, and shifting the pick-up schedule can help the program use the warehouse space more efficiently.

Post-bin removal dumping by students highlighted a need for clearer communication regarding program end dates. Future programs should focus on clearly posting end dates, providing informative sheets at residence hall desks, and continuing courtesy checks after the collection period ends.



## Moving Forward

With the recent construction of new residence halls and plans for more in the near future, the population of TXST students living on-campus will increase, straining the natural resources and infrastructure of both the University and the San Marcos community. This growth will make large scale initiatives like Bobcats Give Back and other waste minimizing efforts increasingly essential to ensuring long term sustainability of campus life. The following are important ways the program can grow to meet this need:

### **Minifridges and Microwaves**

Bobcats Give Back collected 84 microwaves and minifridges in 2026, totaling 3,100 pounds. These small appliances are popular with campus residents, and the number of them donated to the program underscores the difficulty of taking them from one housing situation to the next. If residents were provided durable, efficient microwaves and minifridges permanently installed in their rooms, this potential waste stream would be eliminated. Additionally, the EPA lists proper preparation and storage as key ways to preventing food waste. With new residential halls under construction, the University has a chance to pilot a model where it provides residents with useful appliances that save energy and reduce waste.

### **Increased Storage Space and "Shopping Days"**

Immediately following the conclusion of Bobcats Give Back 2026, the Office of Sustainability received several phone calls and messages from the families of incoming students asking how to access used school supplies. They can access these items at local thrift stores for a cost, but if Bobcats Give Back were able to store donated materials over the summer and offer them for free to incoming students, it would provide the campus community an invaluable resource and create a truly closed loop for these materials.

### **Mattress Topper Recycling**

Bobcats Give Back does not accept foam and fabric mattress toppers as donations due to sanitation concerns. OoS is currently exploring options for recycling these items to keep them out of donation sites and out of dumpsters and compactors, where they take up a lot of space.



TXST Staff hauling mattress toppers for disposal as trash.

### **Expansion to Apartments**

Returning Bobcats Give Back to the three TXST apartments, Balcones, Cypress, and Bobcat Village, will require increased collections efforts and a streamlined process including, but not limited to, another collection team, donation bins and collection services provided by community partners, and effective reduction of contamination at all donation sites.

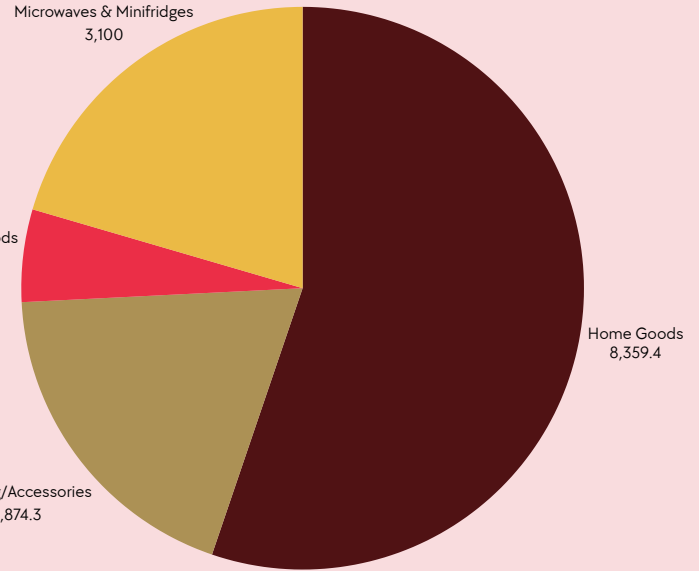
### **Staffing**

This program would not have been possible without the help of many generous volunteers! OoS does not have the ability to run the collection process without them and is exploring options for streamlining the staffing process to ensure adequate staffing to complement volunteer help.

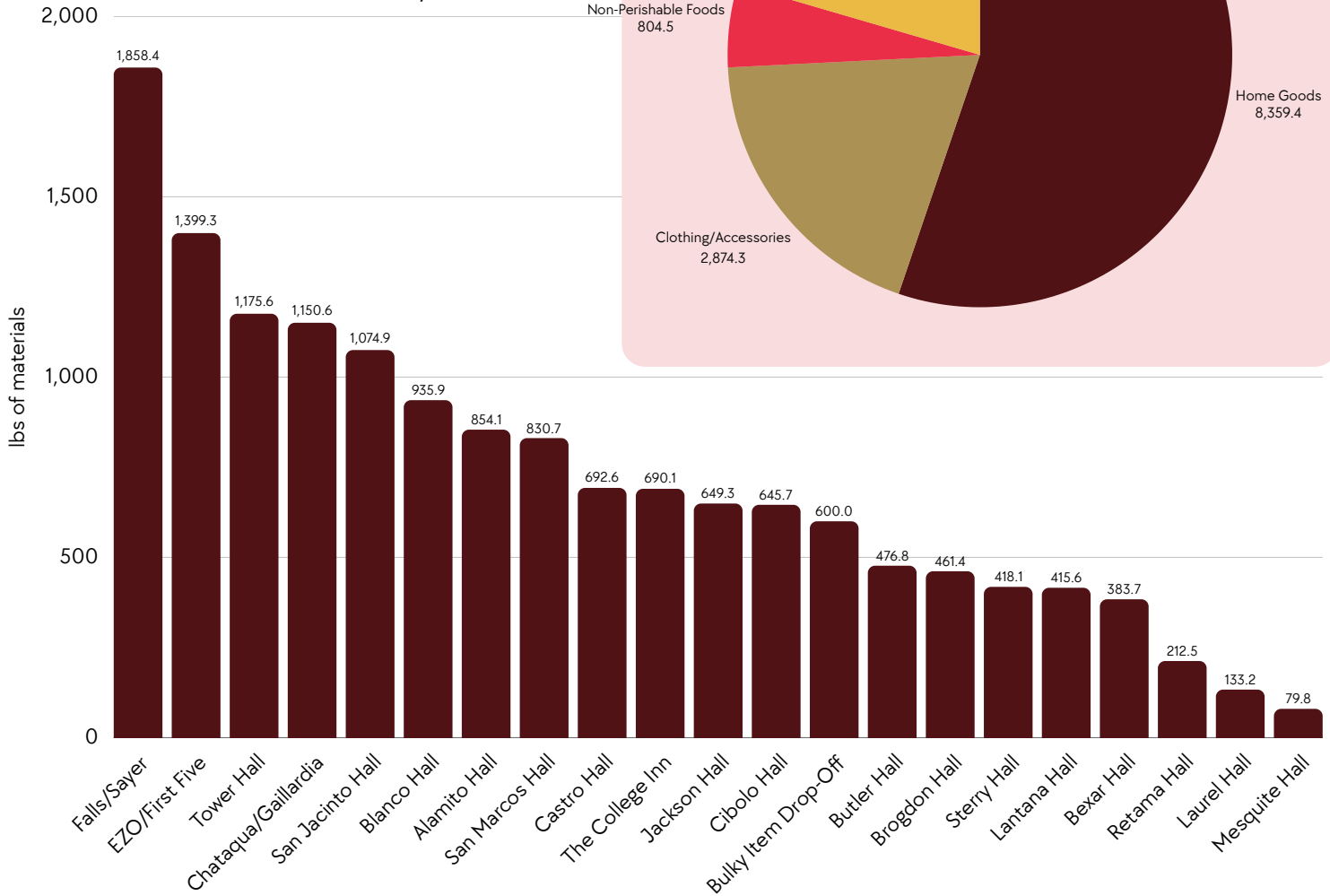
# Bobcats Give Back

## 2026 Fact Sheet

Donations Collected by Category  
lbs of materials



Donations Collected by Location



2

week on-campus collection period

20

residence hall donation sites

1

bulky item donation site

15,138.2

lbs. of materials collected from residence halls

### Coordinating Entities



TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Facilities



TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Housing & Residential Life



TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Office of Sustainability

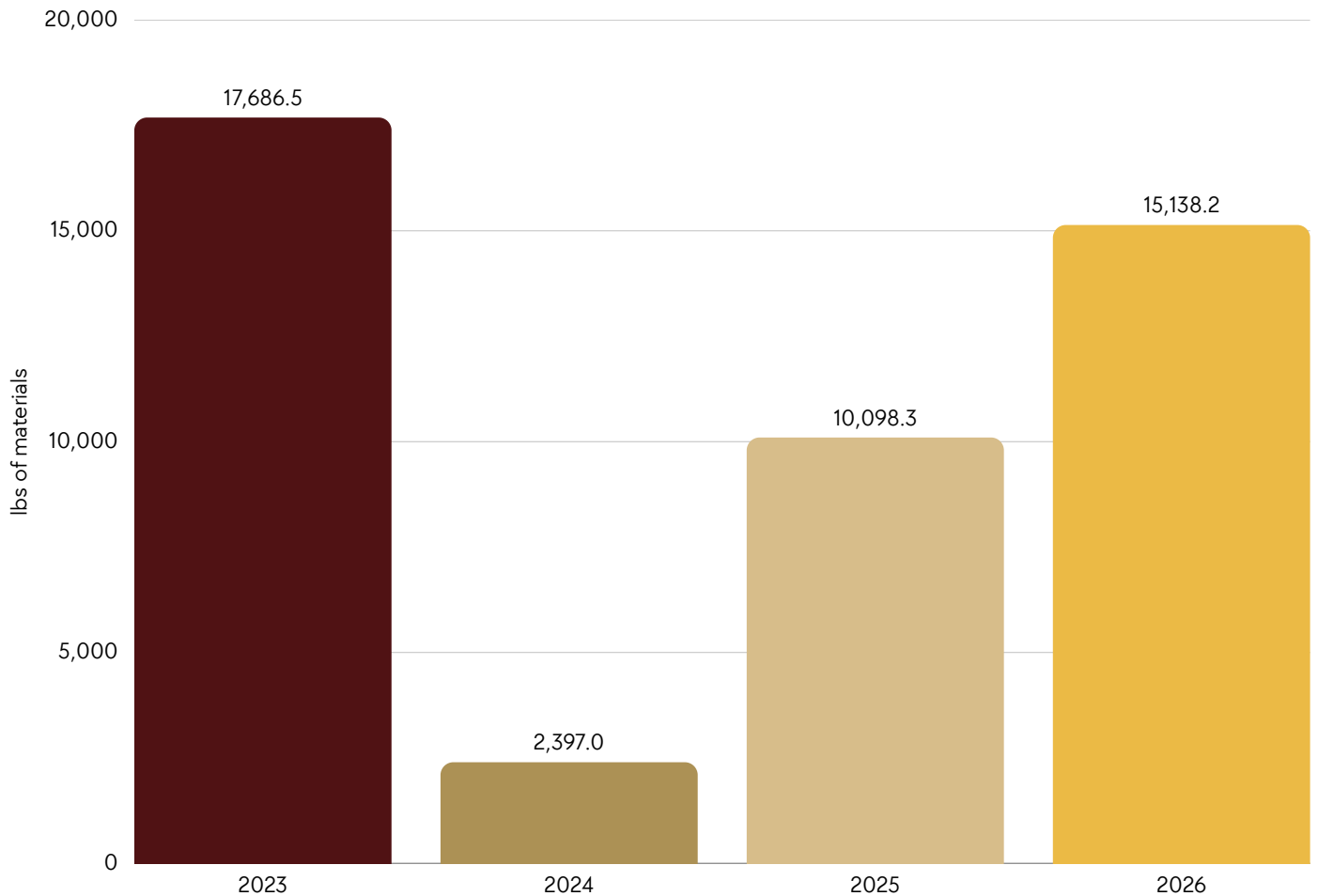
donations distributed to

16

community partners

# Comparison to Previous Years

Bobcats Give Back: Last Four Years  
Total weight of donations collected



**Continued Decrease in Categories Collected in Residence Halls: from 7 in 2023, 5 in 2025, to 4 in 2024.**

**The length of the collection program was increased to 2 weeks for the first time since 2023.**

TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
ESTABLISHED 1899



# Thank You

The success of Bobcats Give Back would not be possible without the support of our community partners, and especially our collaboration with the Department of Housing and Residential Life. We look forward to our continued collaboration and further opportunities to make meaningful impacts on campus together!

*For questions or comments, please contact the Texas State University Office of Sustainability at [sustainability@txstate.edu](mailto:sustainability@txstate.edu)*