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- Chad Townsend

Banff environmental services coordinator

## Town of Banff, Canada

Balance is key for the Town of Banff, located inside Banff National Park in Alberta, Canada. This beautiful UNESCO World Heritage Site, nestled into the awe-inspiring Canadian Rockies, must juggle the often conflicting responsibilities of running a municipality while also serving as the gateway to Canada's oldest – and one of the world's most visited – national parks.

As part of this balancing act, Banff operates under a zero waste mandate, collecting, sorting and recycling all of its trash. While littering is illegal, traditional garbage cans are often a culprit – overflowing during the busy tourist seasons and unable to contain trash blown by the breeze or pulled out by birds and animals. The town needed a solution that would maintain the pristine beauty that attracts 5 million hikers, skiers and wildlife lovers each year, while still meeting the needs of its residents and furthering the town's commitment to sustainability.



### Big Savings and Zero Waste

The town found that solution in the form of 17 *BigBelly*® Solar Trash Compactors, which met their requirements perfectly. The machines, outfitted with bear-proof latches and two separate recycling bins (one for bottles and cans, another for paper and cardboard) are fully-contained units that keep trash in and animals out – even Banff's large bear population. The *BigBelly* keeps the streets clean while protecting both animals and humans from the dangers of foraging trips through the town. The addition of *BigBelly* recyclers will greatly help Banff's zero waste initiative, as it will allow bottles, paper and cardboard to be sorted when deposited. The town estimates that revenues generated from bottle redemption alone will be between \$4000 to \$5000 a month.

### Working with Nature

The *BigBelly* machines were part of a comprehensive, \$22 million redevelopment of the downtown, for which town planners carefully selected custom street furniture, trees, and finishes to complement the majesty and beauty of the surrounding national park. "We are fortunate in terms of what we had to work with," said Randall McKay, Banff's planning and development manager. "The street now celebrates our authentic sense of place and will stand the test of time," he said. "We have brought nature back into the built environment."

### Clean Air

Solar compaction allows Banff to control their waste stream while decreasing the number of trips needed to collect sorted recyclables. "It is not only an operational savings, but it's also an environmental savings from less fuel," said Banff environmental services coordinator Chad Townsend. By reducing trips, the town decreases emissions from collection vehicles, helping to protect the crisp mountain air, streams and abundant flora and fauna that make Banff National Park one of the world's great treasures.