



Recycle Colorado State and Local Policy Framework

Recycle Colorado's 2018-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

Vision: To transform Colorado into a national leader in waste reduction, recovery, and diversion.

Mission: To advance infrastructure, end markets, and state and local policies in waste reduction, recovery and diversion.

Goals: More than 50% of Colorado's waste stream is recycled, composted or diverted into reuse /remanufacturing, with rural and urban community diversion achievements based on proximity to markets. The entire state has access to waste diversion infrastructure and programming.

Over the next 3 years the Recycle Colorado Policy Committee will monitor and advance waste reduction, recovery, and diversion policy at the state and local level, supporting local councils and members as needed.

The Policy Committee reserves the right to recommend other policy initiatives to the Recycle Colorado board outside of those listed below if they are deemed to support Recycle Colorado's mission.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide Recycle Colorado with a policy guide when:

1. Providing policy recommendations to elected officials, state agencies, local governments and other interested parties;
2. Requested to advocate for or against policy concepts (before they become legislation or executive orders) underway by other entities including state agencies, elected officials, state legislators, local governments and other interested parties;
3. Determine policy agendas for the organization at both state and local levels.

This document, approved by the Recycle Colorado Board, enables the Executive Director to participate in activities related to (1) and (2) listed above. It is to be assumed that Recycle Colorado is in support of these positions and the Executive Director may use her discretion to sign on, support and speak in favor of and oppose policy ideas, concepts or proposals (before they become legislation or executive orders) in concurrence with the position statements below. For example, she may sign on to a letter recommending a city adopt volume-based pricing for trash or the state increase funding for rural recycling collection programs.

These positions are to serve as a guide for the Recycle Colorado Policy Committee to use when determining its yearly policy recommendations, which require a two-thirds majority vote by the Recycle

Colorado board; Recycle Colorado may or may not choose to pursue active campaigns on all of these policies.

While this policy framework is intended to guide discussions of state and local legislation and executive actions, any involvement by Recycle Colorado in developing, supporting or opposing state and local legislation (i.e. city ordinances and state laws), policies made by governing bodies (i.e. Solid Waste Commission decisions) and executive actions (governor's executive orders) must be reviewed by the Board of Directors and a 2/3 majority vote is required for action.

CONTRIBUTORS

This draft policy framework was written by the Policy Committee Sector Representatives:

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* Reva Phillips was not part of the Policy Committee when this policy framework was drafted. She recently replaced Susan Gale.

STATE POLICY

In support of Recycle Colorado's 2018-2020 Strategic Plan, Recycle Colorado supports policies at the state level that:

1. **Improve the state's diversion rate above its current below-average rate. The goal is to make Colorado a leader in the nation when it comes to diverting waste and recovering material resources through reuse, reducing waste, recycling and composting.**

This may include policies that:

- 1-a. Provide funding to expand recovery efforts throughout the state
- 1-b. Provide technical assistance and/or funding to create actionable waste diversion plans on a local or regional level
- 1-c. Provide technical assistance to local communities and other stakeholders on diversion strategies/best practices
- 1-d. Identify gaps in recycling opportunities/drop-offs; provide funding to fill those gaps
- 1-e. Promote product stewardship for hard-to-recycle materials (such as packaging, paint, carpet, mattresses, fluorescents, pesticides, etc.) to increase the recovery of these materials and reduce the collection and management costs of local governments
- 1-f. Provide technical/financial assistance for food waste recovery
- 1-g. Support recycling and composting as a strategy to meet the state's climate action plan
- 1-h. Incentivize or promote the reduction of waste generation

2. **Assist rural communities with their specific diversion challenges.**

This may include policies that:

- 2-a. Designate state funding and other funding sources to assist rural communities with implementing their own waste diversion plans
- 2-b. Designate state funding and other funding sources to assist rural landfills with coming into compliance with state and federal regulations
- 2-c. Support rural recycling cooperatives, and solid waste authorities and other rural groups or entities working on waste diversion in rural communities

3. **Improve the state's collection of waste data to help measure improvement and compare diversion efforts within the state and with other states.**

This may include policies that:

3-a. Incentivize and/or require data reporting that enables a more accurate estimate of Colorado's recycling rate for both Municipal Solid Waste and non-Municipal Solid Waste

3-b. Provide technical assistance and/or funding for waste data collection and reporting at the municipal and county level

4. **Establish realistic and ambitious goals to guide decision making, drive funding and incentives, and measure progress.**

This may include policies that:

4-a. Adopt recycling rate goals for Colorado based on two-tiers—short and long term, Front Range and rest of state (based on distance to markets and infrastructure)

4-b. Provide technical assistance and or funding for local communities for development and implementation of local diversion goals

5. **Attract to the state new end market users and develop/support existing businesses in order to expand local recycling economies, create jobs and reduce costs of collection efforts**

This may include policies that:

5-a. Develop incentives, technical assistance and other programs to attract new end market users to the state and grow existing businesses including but not limited to use of compost in farming and reuse/repurpose of construction and demolition (C&D) materials

5-b. Develop partnerships—e.g., with colleges/universities, businesses, non-profits—to conduct R&D on potential new markets and recycled products

5-c. Develop waste processing infrastructure including but not limited to C&D and organic waste

5-d. Ban materials from landfills to drive recycling end markets, with support or exemptions from rural areas

6. **Require state government to lead by example in implementing waste diversion practices and procurement policies that help to drive recycling markets.**

This may include policies that:

6-a. Require all state agencies to recycle and compost

6-b. Strengthen the existing state green purchasing policy that is required for all state agencies

6-c. Require all state agencies to use compost in construction, highway and road projects and contracts

6-d. Require all state agencies to collect data on waste from state construction projects and contracts (C&D waste) to determine a baseline and then develop recycling goals for C&D based on the baseline

LOCAL POLICY

In support of Recycle Colorado's 2018-2020 Strategic Plan, Recycle Colorado supports policies at the local level that:

1. Establish realistic and ambitious waste diversion goals to guide decision making and measure progress.

This may include policies that:

1-a. Set recovery goals or develop actionable plans for waste diversion on a local or regional level

1-b. Provide incentives and use available resources and partnerships to help communities reach diversion goals

2. Improve the collection of waste data to help measure improvement, drive funding and incentives, and compare diversion efforts within the state.

This may include policies that:

2-a. Collect data on municipal (residential and commercial) and non-municipal recycling programs to measure program effectiveness and participation, and to set benchmarks for future programs

3. Improve local communities' diversion rates.

The following is a menu list of policies that local governments may consider for increasing diversion. These policies can have many variations and may not look the same between communities. Not all policies will be feasible in every community:

3-a. Help develop, establish and encourage recycling and composting infrastructure to improve the local community's diversion rates

3-b. Establish universal curbside recycling programs such that everyone who has trash service has recycling service automatically included

3-c. Require recycling services at multi-unit housing properties (greater than 7 units)

3-d. Provide ongoing funding for waste diversion and recovery programs

3-e. Provide yard waste collection (monthly or more frequently), drop off program or comprehensive compost program

3-f. Require or incentivize commercial recycling (available for all businesses, voluntary with incentives or obligatory through ordinance)

3-g. Require or incentivize commercial composting (available for all businesses, voluntary with incentives or obligatory through ordinance)

3-h. Require recycling and/or composting at public events

3-i. Charge for trash using variable rate, or unit-based pricing, so residents are rewarded for recycling

3-j. Provide curbside composting for yard debris and/or food scraps from residents

3-k. Create financial incentives or set requirements for the recovery of C&D waste, such as green building codes, financial deposits upon building permits, recycling quotas, or other policy mechanisms

3-l. Provide food waste collection program for food recovery

3-m. Provide education programs on proper recycling and composting with the intention of increasing awareness and improving the quality of diverted materials

3-n. Establish or expand recycling drop off centers

3-o. Require large landscape renovation projects to apply compost to disturbed soils to conserve water

3-p. Provide adequate space for recycling and composting containers in the design and construction of new commercial and multi-family properties

3-q. Ban or charge a fee for disposable products such as single use paper and plastic bags and service ware

3-r. Provide Hard-to-Recycle collection either through scheduled events or at permanent drop off centers

4. **Encourage local governments to lead by example in implementing waste diversion practices and procurement policies that help to drive recycling markets.**

This may include policies that:

4-a. Encourage local governments to recycle and compost

4-b. Encourage local governments to adopt green purchasing practices

4-c. Encourage local governments to use compost in construction, highway and road projects and contracts

4-d. Encourage local governments to collect data on waste from local government construction projects and contracts (C&D waste) to determine a baseline and then develop recycling goals for C&D based on the baseline.

Recycle Colorado does not support policies that:

- a. Define incineration or waste-to-energy projects as recycling or reuse
- b. Undermine source separation programs by using mixed waste recovery facilities
- c. Permit backyard burning of trash or other materials