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**circular
economy**



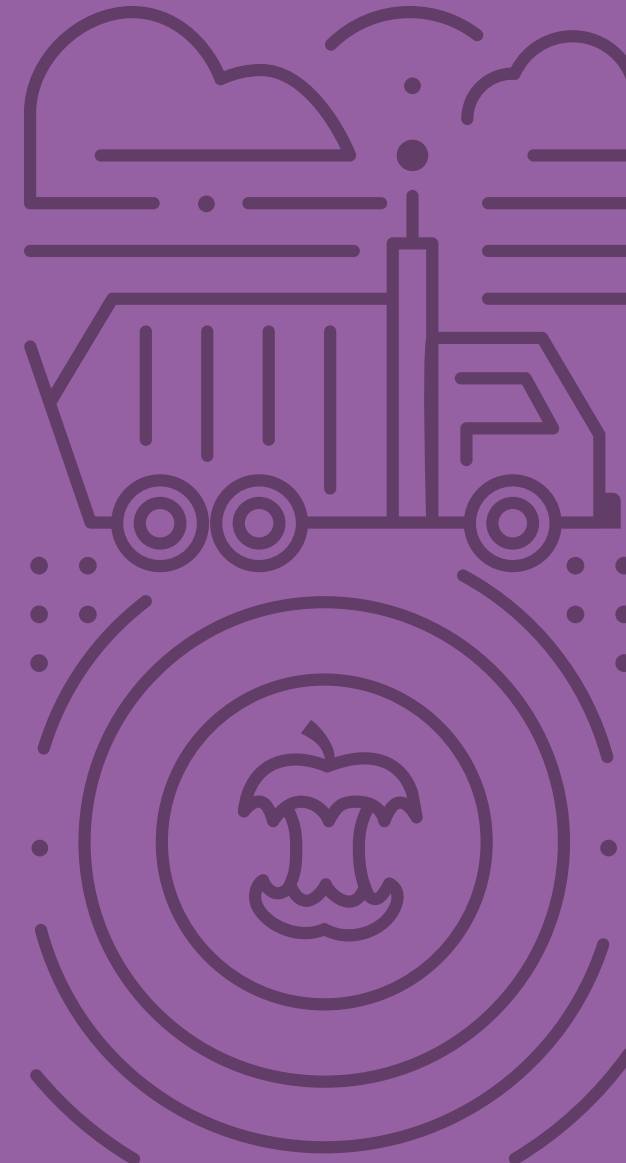
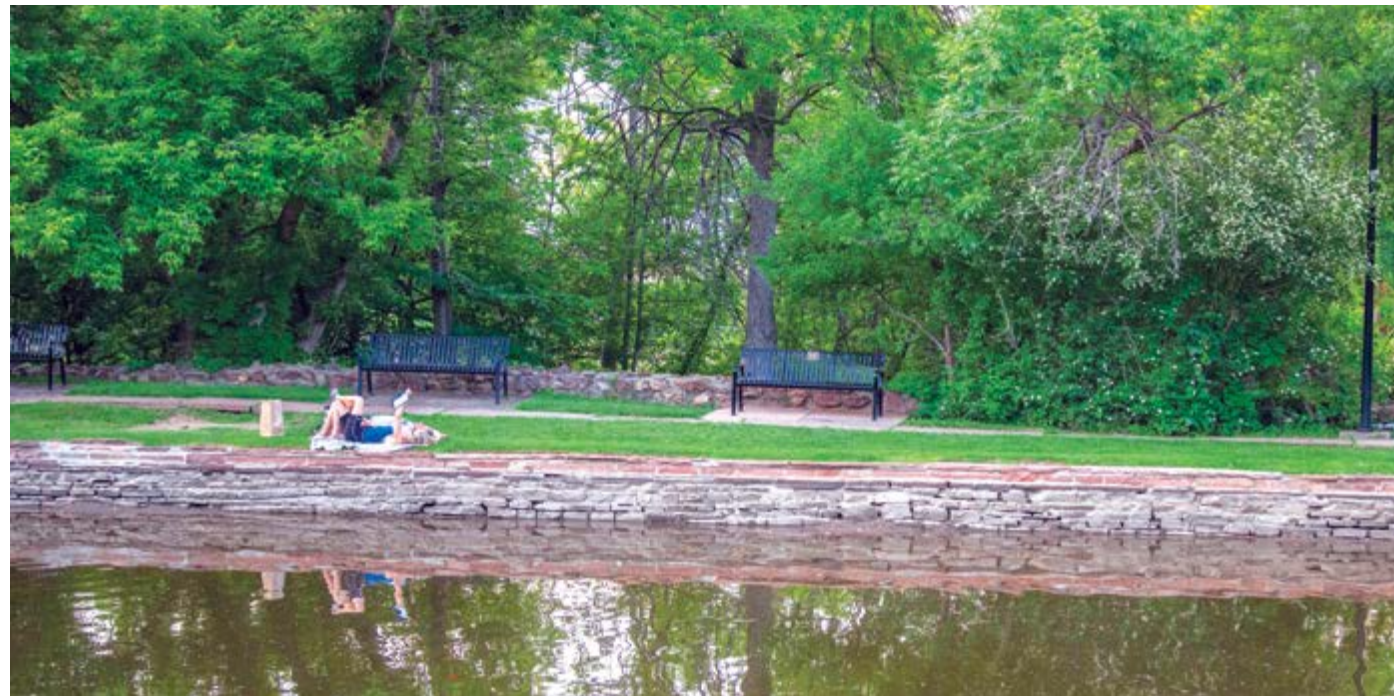
INTRODUCTION

Boulder County’s goal of “Zero Waste or Darn Near” reflects a commitment to responsible and sustainable management of its waste streams.

We are working to achieve this goal through its policies, programs, and infrastructure to help our community reduce, reuse, recycle (traditional and hard-to-recycle materials), compost,

and safely manage hazardous materials. The county is committed to ensuring accessible and affordable waste diversion opportunities to all residents countywide, as well as

supporting municipalities in Boulder County to advance circular economy policies, programs, and infrastructure. We are also investing resources to better understand the link between county supply chains and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, which will drive future work toward a more circular economy. Recycling creates nine times more jobs than landfills.³²



**circular
economy goal**
Reduce the amount of materials consumed and discarded in landfills, manage resources responsibly and effectively, promote reusability, and support a circular economy.

COUNTY OPERATION STRATEGIES

Increase internal county diversion to 90% by 2025

- Require Boulder County employees and contractors to divert construction materials from internal county building and road projects, including new construction, deconstruction projects, large capital improvement projects, and remodels.
- Increase composting by county employees through continued education.
- Increase county employee participation in zero waste efforts through incentives and educational programs.
- Reduce contamination in compost and recycling streams.

Decrease the amount of total waste going to the landfill and reduce overall consumption

- Educate county employees through waste audits, campaigns, and other programs.
- Encourage staff to participate in hard-to-recycle collection events, green purchasing practices, and reuse initiatives.
- Measure and reduce the waste per capita for Boulder County employees.
- Provide convenient drop-off locations in county buildings for hard-to-recycle materials.
- Work with county staff to follow the Environmental Protection Agency's Food Waste Hierarchy, which promotes redistribution of food before disposal.

COUNTY OPERATION STRATEGIES

Comply with Boulder County's internal zero waste purchasing policies and create new policies to further waste reduction

- Ensure that county employees purchase supplies, equipment, and parts that are reusable, locally recyclable, BPI-certified compostable, and/or made of 100% post-consumer recycled content where available, in accordance with the Boulder County Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy.
- Establish a list of environmentally preferable products and explore enforcement strategies to ensure adherence to green purchasing policies.
- Create policy to prohibit single-use or disposable products wherever possible.
- Purchase compost from permitted Colorado processors that show the U.S. Composting Council Seal of Testing Assurance. Purchase locally generated compost whenever feasible.
- Support state and local development of end-use markets for recyclable/ recycled products and compost through county purchasing policies.
- Work with county employees to reduce office supply and furniture purchases by following reuse protocols.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

Increase construction materials diversion

- Boulder County municipalities will require residential and commercial deconstruction, and incentivize construction and demolition materials recycling and reuse.
- Support capacity for construction and demolition materials transfer, sorting, processing, and reuse.
- Create recycling opportunities for clean, damaged, and dimensional lumber.
- Require construction and demolition materials recycling and reuse in additional sectors.
- Enforce construction and demolition requirements and work with municipalities to develop a tracking and reporting system.

Increase food and yard waste diversion through composting

- Support local infrastructure for additional composting.
- Encourage curbside and drop-off center compost collection throughout the county, including mountain regions.
- Promote at-home composting programs through education and incentives.
- Support multifamily and business compost collection systems and education.
- Expand composting in rural and mountain communities.
- Enforce current and future composting requirements.
- Promote opportunities for yard waste diversion.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

Reduce countywide supply chain GHG emissions

- Offer programs to help educate the public and support carbon insetting for local business manufacturers.
- Support and advocate for Scope 3 GHG emission analysis at the state and local levels.
- Implement strategies from the consumption-based GHG emissions inventory



COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

Increase commercial diversion

- Provide free waste audits for businesses and support for zero waste implementation through Boulder County Public Health’s Partners for a Clean Environment Program.
- Update land-use codes to improve commercial and multifamily recycling and composting requirements.
- Support requirements for commercial construction and demolition materials diversion.
- Support requirements for commercial and multifamily recycling programs and composting programs countywide.
- Provide zero waste building planning assistance.
- Provide incentives for businesses to adopt zero waste collection programs.

Reduce the amount of toxic materials purchased and increase safe disposal

- Increase diversion of hazardous materials through increased drop-off opportunities at the Hazardous Materials Management Facility (HMMF).
- Educate students about hazardous materials through in-school presentations and projects.
- Explore hazardous materials home pick-up programs for older adults, homebound persons, and underserved communities.
- Reduce the use and purchases of toxic and hazardous products by educating consumers and businesses.
- Increase collection of residential and commercial hazardous materials at the HMMF.
- Promote opportunities for electronics recycling.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

Support diversion through additional strategies

- Cultivate municipal contacts and advocates, and support municipal goal setting, policy work, and data tracking.
- Support requirements for volume-based residential collection with embedded recycling and composting countywide where feasible.
- Support bans on sending recyclables, yard waste, and food waste to the landfill.
- Require zero waste planning for large events on public property countywide. Provide education and support for event planners.
- Support opportunities for waste diversion and reuse at spring cleanup events.
- Promote local markets for county-generated recyclables and compost.
- Develop zero waste branding and initiate a comprehensive education program.
- Provide zero waste education and collection systems in schools.
- Offer metal and hard-to-recycle material recycling at additional locations.
- Provide food waste reduction and redistribution efforts countywide.
- Share waste reduction efforts and how they correlate with climate change in the community.
- Provide waste transfer stations to mountain communities.
- Implement the Plastic Pollution Reduction Act through education, outreach, and enforcement.
- Make waste diversion opportunities accessible to all Boulder County residents.

Increase waste prevention through product stewardship programs

- Promote voluntary product stewardship opportunities offered by retailers and manufacturers.
- Support and advocate for product stewardship initiatives at the state and local levels.
- Have the Resource Conservation Advisory Board (RCAB) and other community partners identify a list of priority items to divert from the landfill.

POLICY PRIORITIES

The following are environmental sustainability policy priorities within Boulder County’s legislative agenda:

POLICY	WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW	
<p>Grant Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) authority to implement a plan for meeting Colorado’s statewide and regional solid waste diversion goals</p>	<p>Recycling and composting are proven to reduce carbon dioxide and methane emissions and are key strategies in the fight against climate change. However, Colorado’s waste diversion rate (the combination of recycling and organics diversion as a proportion of the solid waste stream) of 15% lags behind</p>	<p>the national average of 32%. Boulder County supports legislation that grants CDPHE the authority to administer diversion programs, including, but not limited to, economic and technical assistance for local and regional waste diversion programs and facilities.</p>
<p>Reduce the use of disposable and single-use products and promote the reuse of materials</p>	<p>Single-use products cause contamination in Boulder County’s recycling and organics waste stream. Boulder County supports statewide legislation that limits single-use products and creates a standard</p>	<p>across businesses. The plastic bag and styrofoam bans were an excellent start, but legislation must continue to expand and support reusable alternatives where feasible.</p>

POLICY

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Foster infrastructure, policies, incentives, and programs for recycling and composting

The successful intersection of statewide policy, programs, and infrastructure is critical to achieving waste diversion goals. Without a uniform approach, it becomes a patchwork of local government

decisions to achieve zero waste. This makes it much more difficult to site infrastructure, hone educational messaging, and bring economies of scale to all aspects of the waste diversion economy.





ZERO WASTE GRANTS

Established in 1997, Boulder County’s Zero Waste Funding program has awarded more than \$1.1 million to 240 unique projects throughout the county for education and infrastructure initiatives that promote waste reduction and diversion. Municipalities, nonprofit organizations, and businesses have the opportunity to apply for this funding each year.

Zero Waste Funding has helped support a number of innovative zero waste projects like these throughout the county:

- For its Reusable Plate Program, Planet Bluegrass purchased a mobile dishwasher trailer to move from disposable plates and utensils to reusable ones at all their music festival events.
- ReSource Central expanded the tools in their tool library.
- The Boulder County HMMF increased the waste diversion of controlled substances and needle sharps.
- The City of Louisville built zero waste stations for their weekly summer Downtown Louisville Street Faire event.
- Eco-Cycle’s Green Star Schools Program expanded zero waste education services at Boulder County schools.



Boulder County Diversion Rate

**2017
35% Diversion**

**By 2025
90% Diversion**





Resource Conservation Advisory Board

Boulder County's RCAB is a 21-member board consisting of elected officials, municipal staff, representatives from nonprofit organizations, waste haulers, and citizens. RCAB's purpose is to advise the Board of County Commissioners on policies, programs, and infrastructure related to waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and composting. RCAB helps Boulder County, its communities, and its partners conserve natural resources and reduce environmental pollution.

TAKE ACTION

How to achieve zero waste and support a more circular economy

Residents and businesses in Boulder County can do more than recycle and compost to help the county achieve zero waste. Try these steps:

- ❑ Ditch the disposables! Take a reusable mug, water bottle, and shopping bag when you go out.
- ❑ Look into joining a local zero waste advocacy organization or advisory board.
- ❑ Shop smart. Whether it's clothing, electronics, or household goods, look for items that are high quality, repairable, and long-lasting.
- ❑ Volunteer at a food rescue, food bank, or at a zero waste event.
- ❑ Reduce your food waste. It saves not only food but also money, water, and other resources.
- ❑ Visit the HMMF to find free reusable products such as cleaners, paints, automotive products, and more.
- ❑ Visit Eco-Cycle's Center for Hard to Recycle Materials (CHaRM) to recycle materials such as electronics, block Styrofoam, mattresses, and more.

- ❑ Check out ReSource Central's ReSource Yard to donate or purchase used building materials or to become a member of their tool library.
- ❑ Take advantage of zero waste education opportunities around Boulder County such as composting workshops and U-fix-it clinics.
- ❑ Know before you throw. Understand what goes into each waste stream within Boulder County to reduce contamination.

RESOURCES

More Information

32 tellus.org/pub/More%20Jobs,%20Less%20Pollution%20-%20Growing%20the%20Recycling%20Economy%20in%20the%20US.pdf

Resolution for Zero Waste
assets.bouldercounty.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/zw-resolution-2005-138.pdf

Resource Conservation Advisory Board

bouldercounty.org/government/boards-and-commissions/resource-conservation-advisory-board

BuildSmart

bouldercounty.org/property-and-land/land-use/building/buildsmart

Resources for Homes and Businesses

bouldercounty.org/environment/hazardous-waste

bouldercounty.org/environment/recycle/drop-off-centers

bouldercounty.gov/environment/sustainability/food-waste/

bouldercounty.org/environment/recycle

PACEPartners.com

