

County of Boulder CO – Zero Waste Resolution

GOVERNMENT

- **Government** is ultimately responsible for leading by example and establishing criteria needed to eliminate waste, so that manufacturers produce and businesses sell materials that can be safely recycled or composted, creating the **economic** and **regulatory environment** in which to achieve it
- The city of Boulder has positioned itself as an **environmental leader among local governments** by:
 - Adopting **environmental initiatives, programs and policies** (including the broad community vision contained in the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan)
 - City recycling and environmental purchasing policies
 - City Master Plan for Waste Reduction
 - City Council's Environmental Sustainability Goal
 - Creation of a workforce available for green jobs through career and technical education training, and teaching and internship opportunities
 - Greenhouse gas emissions reductions and climate change adaptation planning, including unified carbon tracking and reporting
 - Identification of large-scale renewable energy opportunities
 - Pursuance of initiatives in furtherance of zero waste goals
 - Exploration of joint funding opportunities to further implementation of all of the above.
- Boulder County Commissioners are focusing on environmental sustainability as one of three major Commissioner goals
 - Article 30-11-107 of the Colorado Revised Statutes enables the Board of County Commissioners to make orders concerning the property of the County
 - Article 30-28-115 of the Colorado Revised Statutes enable the Board of County Commissioners to promote the health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the county

WASTE

- An estimated **300,000 tons of waste is generated annually** in the city of Boulder by residents, businesses and institutions and approximately **75%** of this amount **is sent for landfill disposal**
- Boulder has reached an overall recycling rate of more than 30% percent. They are working to get more done, especially in "**closing the loop**" by purchasing **products made with recycled content**
- **Avoid the creation of waste** or discards in the first place is the most economically efficient and environmentally sustainable resource management strategy
- A **resource recovery-based economy** will create and sustain more productive and meaningful jobs than a disposal-based economy
- Most types of waste streams can be eliminated through across-the-board minimum recycling content laws, the use of non-toxic alternatives in product design, and local composting facilities;
- The placement of materials in waste disposal facilities, such as landfills and incinerators wastes natural resources, transfers liabilities to future generations and has the potential to cause damage to human health
- Waste prevention, reuse, recycling, and composting are material management options that conserve resources while reducing environmental impacts
- Increased recycling and composting will increase the cost-efficiency of local, publicly-supported recycling facilities and programs
- Increased recycling saves energy, water, natural resources, reduces air and water pollution, reduces the damage caused by extracting resources from the environment, and reduces the need for landfill facilities

- Recognizing that some presently non-recyclable materials are necessary for public health and national security
- Recognizing that voluntary recycling goals have not, and in all probability cannot, achieve waste elimination;
- With the appropriate **economic incentives, manufacturers** can and will produce and businesses will sell products that are durable and repairable and that can be safely recycled back into the marketplace or nature

ZERO WASTE PLAN

- The guiding principles of zero waste are:
 - Managing resources instead of waste
 - Conserving natural resources through waste prevention and recycling
 - Turning discarded resources into jobs and new products instead of trash
 - Promoting products and materials that are durable and recyclable
 - Discouraging products and materials that can only become trash after their use

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BOULDER, COLORADO:

- The Boulder County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) hereby adopts Zero Waste as a guiding principle for all county operations and for outreach and actions within the community.
- The city of Boulder hereby encourages the pursuit of Zero Waste as a long-term goal in order to eliminate waste and pollution in the manufacture, use, storage, and recycling of materials.
- BOCC hereby directs staff to develop a Zero Waste Plan for Boulder County
- This goal must be addressed through the choices Council will make in the context of the city's Business Plan and annual budget processes, by initiating action plans and measures that significantly reduce waste and pollution.
- These measures will include encouraging residents, businesses and agencies through incentives and legislation to judiciously use, reuse, and recycle materials, as well as to motivate businesses to manufacture and market less toxic and more durable, repairable, reusable, recycled, and recyclable products.
- In all cases, the guiding principles of the city's Master Plan for Waste Reduction will be followed. Mandatory programs will be employed only if the infrastructure exists and if convenient, voluntary programs prove not to be successful.
- The city of Boulder will also review its own policies, contracts, and standard operating procedures to incorporate zero waste provisions and actions into all aspects of its organizational culture to encourage the use of materials and products that are durable, repairable, and reusable, have a minimum of packaging, toxic content or chemical hazard potential, are resource and energy efficient in their manufacture, use and disposal, and in their use or disposal minimize or eliminate the city's potential environmental liability.
- The Zero Waste Plan will be completed by **December 2006**, and will address Boulder County, "the organization," and Boulder County, "the community and geographic area." Boulder County is committed to promoting, facilitating, and modeling Zero Waste in the community.
- The Plan will be designed to achieve the initial goal of: increasing waste diversion for Boulder County government and for the county as a whole, to **50% or better by the year 2010. The ultimate goal of Boulder County's Zero Waste Plan is to eliminate waste (i.e. achieve Zero Waste or "darn near") by 2025.**
- The Plan will assess the county's current levels of resource use and wastage; identify objectives; and recommend short-, medium-, and long-term actions to reach these goals.
- The Plan will, within budget constraints, seek to effectively, efficiently, and quickly address the issues identified as well as allow for a public process to address recommended actions.

A. BOCC hereby directs staff to consider, for inclusion in the action plan, green purchasing and waste reduction measures targeting county facilities. The BOCC directs staff to consider the costs and costs savings associated with these actions; their impact on waste reduction and environmental purchasing practices; their educational value to the community; their operational feasibility; and the appropriate phasing of such actions. Actions to be considered include, but are not limited to:

1. Standardizing county purchasing practices to reduce cost, reduce unwanted surplus items, and increase operational and delivery efficiencies.
2. Revising the county Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) policy to clarify the county's intent to purchase environmentally friendly products whenever and wherever fiscally possible.
3. Changing procurement instructions to vendors requiring that bids and proposals do not waste paper or reduce paper use and plastic bindings or other packaging.
4. Using "take back" language in procurement documents to require that equipment suppliers take back old equipment for reuse or recycling.
5. Encouraging utilization of re-useable packaging.
6. Making waste reduction and diversion a priority through policies, improving inhouse equipment and collection services, and urging employees to conserve energy and save money.
7. Quantifying the county's mass balance of inputs (products and services) to outputs (solid wastes, hazardous wastes, recyclables, compostables).
8. Determining current waste diversion levels for county government and countywide.
9. Assessing construction practices and facility operation and maintenance practices for opportunities to reduce the quantity and toxicity of wastes produced and to increase diversion.
10. Assessing waste reduction opportunities at county meetings and events through the use of durable, recyclable, and compostable food service items.
11. Including in the action plan a requirement for an annual report to the BOCC that evaluates waste reduction efforts, progress in achieving Zero Waste and other efforts as identified in the plan.

B. BOCC hereby declares its intent to pursue green purchasing and Zero Waste countywide through education, regulatory measures, and public policy. The county will consider the impact of these measures on residents, businesses, and communities, and will conduct inclusive public processes incorporating affected parties. Measures to be considered include, but are not limited to:

1. Requiring volume-based residential trash collection and recycling in unincorporated Boulder County and determining opportunities for municipalities and the county to work together to pursue this countywide.
2. Requiring increased diversion of organic waste streams generated in unincorporated Boulder County for beneficial reuse (as wood mulch) or composting into soil amendments and other products; supporting the efforts of public, private, and nonprofit entities in providing infrastructure for organics recovery.
3. Supporting and promoting increased traditional and non-traditional recycling through modification of the recycling center to accept and process single stream materials, education and outreach, and support of facilities providing supplementary recycling opportunities.
4. Supporting increased diversion of construction and demolition waste streams.
5. Requiring new development to provide adequate indoor and outdoor space for recycling and other waste diversion containers.
6. Instigating and supporting legislation at the state and local level that supports Zero Waste.
7. Seeking public and private partnerships to leverage limited public resources to accomplish our Zero Waste goals.
8. Incorporating these principles into updates of the Boulder County Comprehensive Plan.

C. BOCC hereby directs members of the Sustainability Task Force to draft an action plan as outlined in this document, recommend actions for consideration in the upcoming budget cycle, and identify additional activities that merit consideration.

This resolution shall become effective upon adoption.