

8:15 am Pacific Time
October 2, 2024

The logo for the National Zero Waste Conference is a blue circle with a white border. Inside the circle, the word "NATIONAL" is at the top, "ZERO" is in the middle, and "WASTE" is at the bottom. To the right of "ZERO" is a circular icon with a green arrow pointing clockwise. Below "WASTE" is the word "CONFERENCE".

NATIONAL
ZERO
WASTE
CONFERENCE

Plenary #1

Zero Waste R(Evolution): Transitioning from Obscurity to Ordinary

Speakers:

Matt Carter
Ashlee Baker

Moderator: Leah Tischler

Marie Mourad
Susan Blachman

Day 1 • Zero Waste Businesses & Institutions

Hosted by:



**8:15 am Pacific Time
October 2, 2024**



Leah Tischler

Sustainability Manager

CBRE

(Moderator)

**Plenary #1 – Zero Waste R(Evolution):
Transitioning from Obscurity to Ordinary**



National Zero Waste Conference 2024

Day 1 • Zero Waste Businesses & Institutions

Hosted by:



**8:15 am Pacific Time
October 2, 2024**



Matt Carter

Manager, Recycling and Waste Diversion

Cox Enterprises

**Plenary #1 – Zero Waste R(Evolution):
Transitioning from Obscurity to Ordinary**



National Zero Waste Conference 2024

Day 1 • Zero Waste Businesses & Institutions

Hosted by:



8:15 am Pacific Time
October 2, 2024



Ashlee Baker

Co-Founder & Director of Sustainability

Waste Not Consulting

**Plenary #1 – Zero Waste R(Evolution):
Transitioning from Obscurity to Ordinary**



National Zero Waste Conference 2024

Day 1 • Zero Waste Businesses & Institutions

Hosted by:



**8:15 am Pacific Time
October 2, 2024**



Marie Mourad, Ph.D.

**Zero (Food) Waste Consultant
Independent Researcher and
Food Waste Expert**

**Plenary #1 – Zero Waste R(Evolution):
Transitioning from Obscurity to Ordinary**



National Zero Waste Conference 2024

Day 1 • Zero Waste Businesses & Institutions

Hosted by:



**8:15 am Pacific Time
October 2, 2024**



Susan Blachman
Zero Waste Consultant
Blachman Consulting

**Plenary #1 – Zero Waste R(Evolution):
Transitioning from Obscurity to Ordinary**



National Zero Waste Conference 2024

Day 1 • Zero Waste Businesses & Institutions

Hosted by:





COX AT A GLANCE

Cox Automotive

Manheim Automotive Auctions

Kelly Blue Book

Autotrader

Dealer.com

Dealertrack

Cox Communications

Cox Communications

Cox Business

Cox Mobile

Cox Farms

BrightFarms

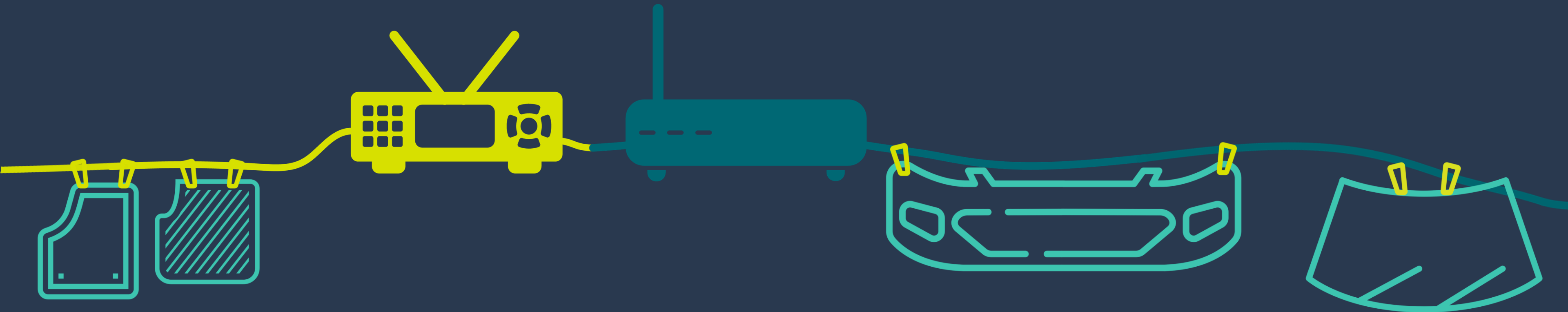
Mucci Farms

Cox Enterprises

Atlanta Journal Constitution

Axios

OpenGov





ZERO WASTE AT COX

Cox Conserves

According to Cox Enterprises, driving positive environmental change – inside our company and within the communities we serve – is one of the most important things we do.

Cox Conserves, our national sustainability program, launched in 2007 by Jim Kennedy, chairman emeritus and chairman of the James M. Cox Foundation. Since then, we've made meaningful progress in our journey to become a more sustainable company through operations, partnership and grants to non-profits.

Cox Conserves' primary focus areas include energy conservation, water conservation, waste diversion and recycling and community engagement.

Cox Conserves Goals

Set in 2007

- Carbon Neutral by 2034
- Water Neutral by 2034

Set in 2012

- Zero Waste to Landfill by 2024

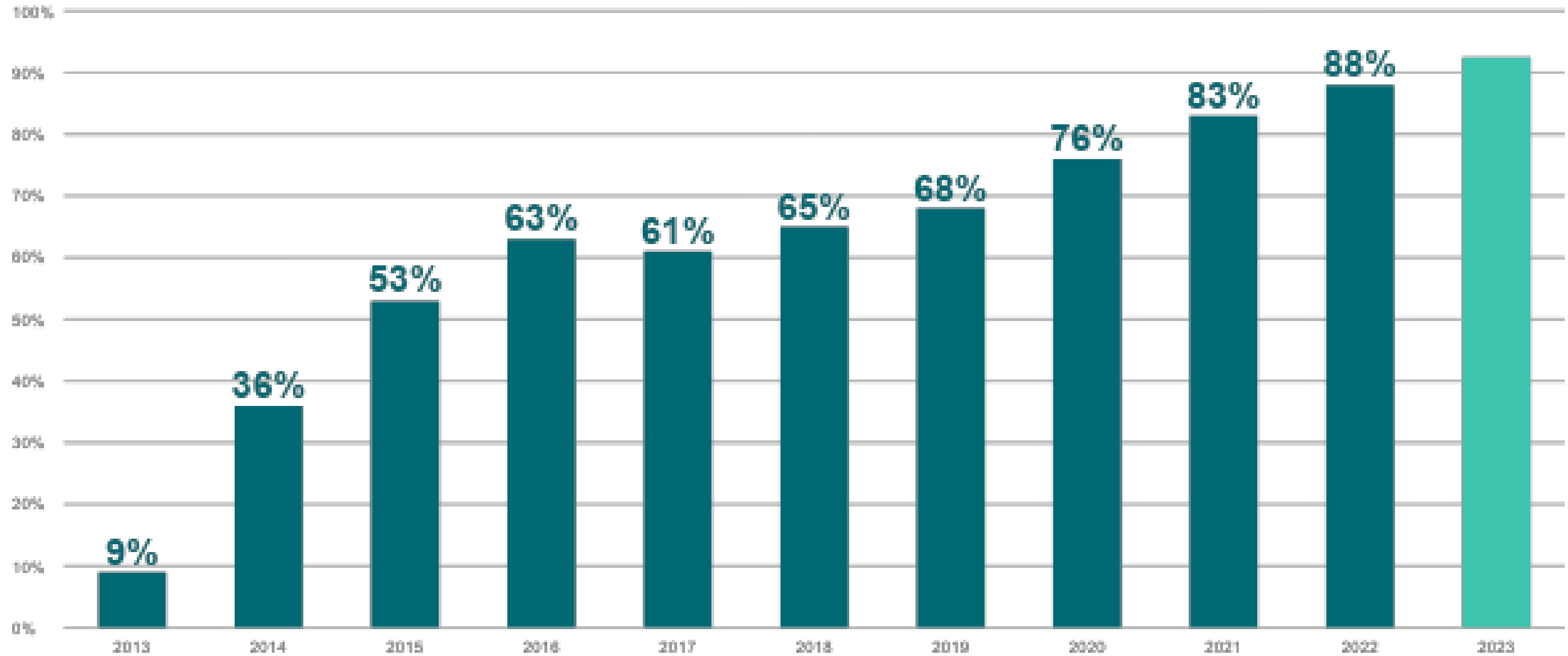
Zero Waste Definition

Cox defined Zero Waste to Landfill as 90%+ diversion from landfill without the use of WTE or incineration





DIVERSION RATE





A DECADE OF DIVERSION - ZERO WASTE AT COX

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
—	9%	36%	53%	63%	61%	65%	68%	76%	83%	88%	92%	Goal!
<p>Jim Kennedy establishes Cox's three sustainability goals and launches our Zero Waste journey.</p>	<p>2013 marks the first wave of recycling programs nationwide with 90 programs being deployed with the help of vendor partner, Rubicon. The RWD team deploys its first waste capital project, a food dehydrator at Manheim Atlanta.</p>	<p>The AJC achieves a 90% diversion rate, making it the first zero waste newspaper. CCI New England and CCI Arizona are chosen as pilot locations for CCI zero waste.</p>	<p>Cox reaches 25k tons of waste tons diverted annually, driven by the rollout of 54 recycling programs across the business.</p>	<p>The inaugural Zero Waste to Landfill Report is released. A partnership with Safelite is executed to begin recycling windshields at Manheims, which added 480,000 pounds of diversion.</p>	<p>After signing a tire recycling agreement with Liberty Tire in 2016, tire recycling tonnage increased by 200%. The Midwest and West PDCs are zero waste certified, adding 6.7M pounds of diversion.</p>	<p>Cox reaches 200 sites across the enterprise with single-stream recycling programs, accompanied by a 150% increase in single-stream recycling tonnage.</p>	<p>Cox reaches 100 sites recycling metal, accompanied by a 650% increase in metal recycling tonnage. The partnership between Manheim RIM and Cox Conserves yields a 600,000-pound increase in diversion. At the Atlanta campus, the deployment of a food shredder results in a record 3.1M pounds of organics diversion.</p>	<p>The First Chairman's Challenge is dedicated to waste. 40 projects across the business yield a 112,000-pound reduction in trash.</p>	<p>Cox joins The Recycling Partnership Inclusion Fund, which yields a total of 22,000 tons diverted. Cox also founds (and wins!) the inaugural CHaRM Corporate Challenge. The RWD team works closely with locations to execute 240 service changes that optimize our waste containers and keep 1600 tons out of the landfill.</p>	<p>The first certified zero waste Manheim, Manheim Riverside, is verified by GreenCircle Certified. One Less Cup launches and adds 40,000 pounds of diversion. The enterprise-wide ZW training launches on Learn@Cox.</p>	<p>Manheim teams drive the largest automotive core (batteries, brake calipers, and alternators) recycling increase in the history of the program with 15x the core tonnage reported in 2016 being recycled .</p>	<p>Cox's achievement of a 92% diversion rate at the enterprise level is verified by GreenCircle Certified. Cox is recognized by Zero Waste USA as a Zero Waste Business, and is the first enterprise-wide service company to be certified by GreenCircle with a 92% diversion rate.</p>

INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS



CERTIFICATES



GreenCircle Certified = 92% Diversion



ZW USA = Zero Waste Business



Final Approved Statement

Cox is the first U.S.-based, enterprisewide service company to be verified by GreenCircle Certified as achieving a 92% waste diversion rate. This achievement meets Zero Waste USA's definition of a zero-waste business.

- Not inclusive of any wholly owned acquisitions made since 2021 or international locations.
- Diversion rate reached without the use of incineration or waste to energy.



ANNOUNCEMENT

Announcement Preparations

- Began with leadership statement from EY supporting stance that Cox was first to achieve ZWTL
- Partnered with internal partners (Corp Comms, Creative, and Legal) to refine achievement claim
- Initial creative
- Took to GCC for review using their name/mark (92% diversion rate certified by GCC)
- Engaged with Zero Waste USA to become recognized as a Zero Waste Business (90+% diversion with no incineration)
- Back around with internal partners
- Creative round 2
- Back around with external partners
- Give feedback to creative to finalize assets (Press release, presentations, social posts, etc.)
- Creative round 3
- Back to external partners for final approval
- Launch of assets

Cox Social Media

Cox Enterprises
101,021 followers
1w · 🌐

Cox Enterprises has been recognized as a Zero Waste business by **Zero Waste USA**. With a 92% waste diversion rate, we are the first enterprisewide service company verified by **GreenCircle Certified**.

Since 2013, Cox has diverted 750M+ pounds of waste, equivalent to:

- 📄 10M reams of paper
- 🍏 60M apples
- 🚗 Metal from 4K vehicles

#purposeatcox #zerowaste #sustainability

Cox Enterprises Recognized for Achieving 92% Waste Diversion from Landfill

coxenterprises.com

Cox Enterprises Website

Home > News
> Cox Enterprises Recognized for Achieving 92% Waste Diversion from Landfill, Becoming the First Enterprisewide Service Company Verified by GreenCircle

Cox Enterprises Recognized for Achieving 92% Waste Diversion from Landfill, Becoming the First Enterprisewide Service Company Verified by GreenCircle

04/15/2024

ATLANTA (April 15, 2024) — Cox Enterprises has announced the achievement of its ambitious goal to send Zero Waste to Landfill by 2024. Cox is the first U.S.-based, enterprisewide service company to be verified by GreenCircle Certified as achieving a 92% waste diversion rate. This achievement meets Zero Waste USA's definition of a zero-waste business.

"When our Chairman Emeritus Jim Kennedy set us on the path to zero waste, he did so because he knew it was a way we could positively impact our communities and our world," said Alex Taylor, chairman and CEO, Cox Enterprises. "Since then, virtually everyone in our company has contributed in one way or another. Reaching this goal required us to make major shifts in how we do things, but we knew it was important for our planet and future generations. I want to thank everyone who helped — it all mattered, and it's making a big difference."



ACHIEVED: ZERO WASTE TO LANDFILL BY 2024

A Decade of Diversion

Impact By The Numbers

Zero Waste (90%) achieved Q3

- 750 million pounds kept out of landfills since 2013
- Enough to counteract the annual waste of Monaco, Belize, and Iceland combined
- 71 locations have achieved Zero Waste
- IRR: 33.9% | Net benefit: \$338.9M+*

Walking the Walk

- First company ever to have an entire program verified with a Zero Waste diversion rate
- Final certification issued March 2024

First Across the Line

- First service-based company to achieve Zero Waste across an enterprise
- First Zero Waste:
 - Telecommunications provider
 - Newspaper
 - Auto auction

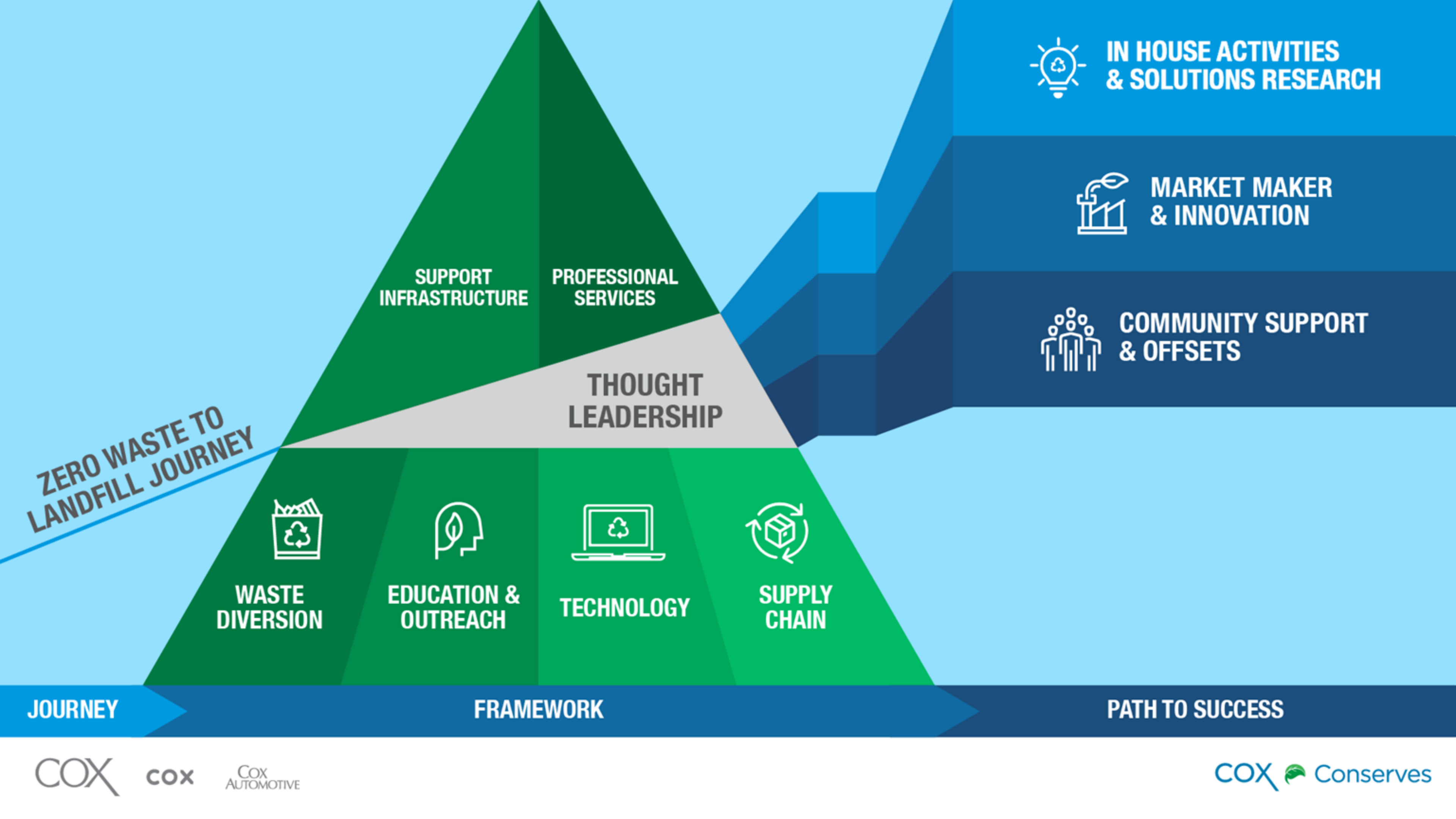
Looking Forward and Outward

- 100K+ recycling bins deployed in Cox offices and communities
- \$1.9M invested with non-profit partners for recycling infrastructure creation
- Founding member of The Recycling Inclusion Fund



*CCI/CAI Electronics Deployment, Recycling, and Investment Recovery





ZERO WASTE TO LANDFILL JOURNEY

IN HOUSE ACTIVITIES & SOLUTIONS RESEARCH

MARKET MAKER & INNOVATION

COMMUNITY SUPPORT & OFFSETS

SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

WASTE DIVERSION

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

TECHNOLOGY

SUPPLY CHAIN

JOURNEY

FRAMEWORK

PATH TO SUCCESS

Zero-Waste Multi-Tenant Buildings:

Navigating Challenges
and Maximizing
Opportunities Post-Pandemic

Ashlee Baker,
TRUE Advisor
Co-Founder & Director of
Sustainability

WNC
Zero Waste Solutions

October 2, 2024

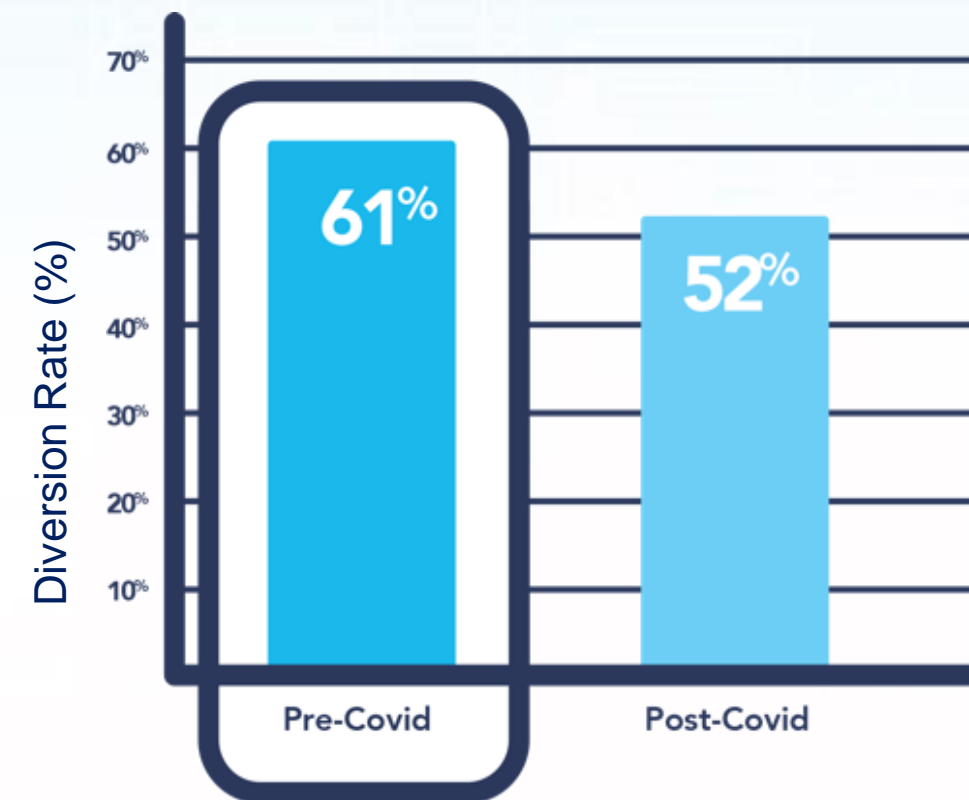


Before the Pandemic:

Sustainability Progressing

Sustainability and zero waste initiatives were gaining momentum in multi-tenant buildings.

- LEED, TRUE Zero Waste
- ESG
- AB 341, Plastic Bag Ban, US 2030 Food Loss & Waste Reduction Goal, AB 1826
- Participation and awareness around waste diversion was increasing
- Food waste recycling programs coming online
- Closed-loop programs increasingly popular
- Waste audits averaged **>60%** diversion



The World Stopped

and so did all the progress!

- Offices were empty
- Recycling programs were abandoned
- Waste reduction strategies paused
- Food waste plans and programs were discontinued
- Waste hauling services were disrupted
- Some state regulations rolled back
- Sustainability and zero waste were NOT priorities during quarantine.



The collage contains the following news items:

- California's Urban "Doom Loop"**: A thumbnail showing a tall office building with "RETAIL FOR LEASE" signs. Subtext: "The West Coast's major cities are overrun with empty office space—all while the homeless population keeps growing." Author: SARAH ABRAMSKY. Date: JANUARY 9, 2020.
- Protector or polluter? The impact of COVID-19 on the movement to end plastic waste**: A thumbnail showing a young girl wearing a face mask. Date: May 6, 2020.
- Governor Newsom Declares State of Emergency to Help State Prepare for Broader Spread of COVID-19**: A text-based thumbnail with subtext: "Emergency proclamation builds on work already underway across state government to protect public health and safety." "Proclamation includes increased protections against price gouging, offers more assistance to local governments and allows health care workers to come from out of state." "All levels of state government are being deployed to tackle this evolving situation." "SACRAMENTO – As part of the state's response to address the global COVID-19 outbreak, Governor Gavin Newsom today declared a State of Emergency to make additional resources available, formalize emergency actions already underway across multiple state agencies and departments, and help the state prepare for broader spread of COVID-19. The proclamation comes as the number of positive California cases rises and following one official COVID-19 death."
- Oregon posts workplace outbreaks, California has no such plan**: A thumbnail showing a banner that reads "SOCIAL DISTANCING - DISTANCIAMIENTO SOCIAL" with icons for a person, a house, and a person with a house. Subtext: "BY LAWRENCE DU SAULT" "NOVEMBER 21, 2020" "UPDATED APRIL 22, 2022".
- In COVID-era trash surge, waste management ingenuity, circularity, and investments are key**: A thumbnail showing a large pile of trash. Subtext: "Published on Sustainable Cities" "GIANLUCA FORLANI & LAMIN NJIE | AUGUST 23, 2022" "This page in: English".
- A struggling recycling industry faces new crisis with coronavirus**: A thumbnail showing workers in a recycling facility. Subtext: "Danmark Recycling Center in 2018. (Times Community News)".



Priorities shifted quickly to:

- Survivability
- Health and safety
- Economic stability



Return to Work

The new realities

Less people in the workplace

Fear of Covid-19 exposure

- Reluctant to wash and reuse durable items
- Heavy reliance on SUP and other disposables

Significant increase in overall waste generation

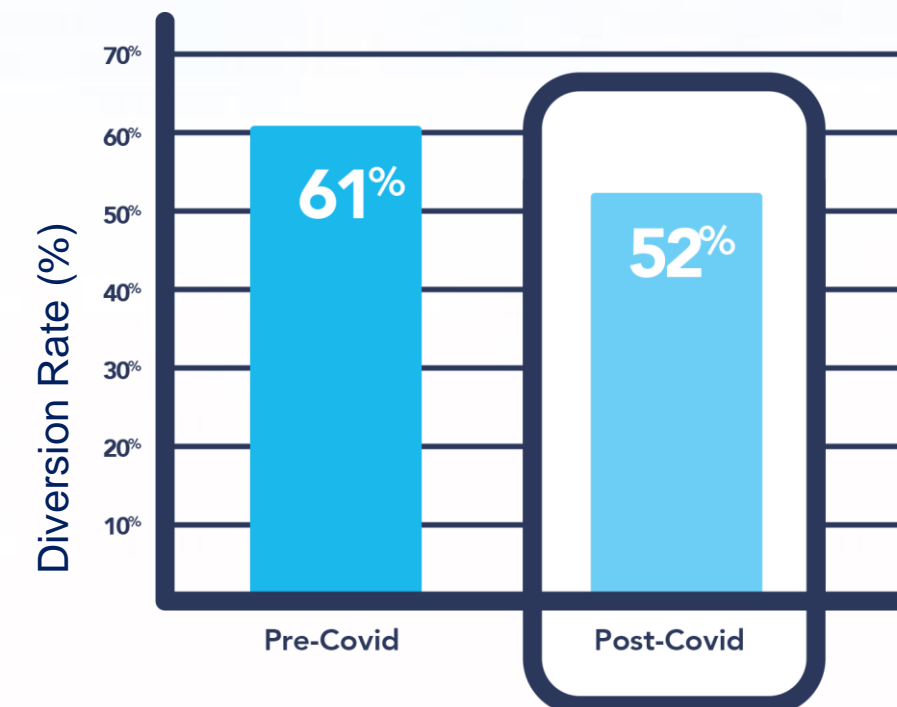
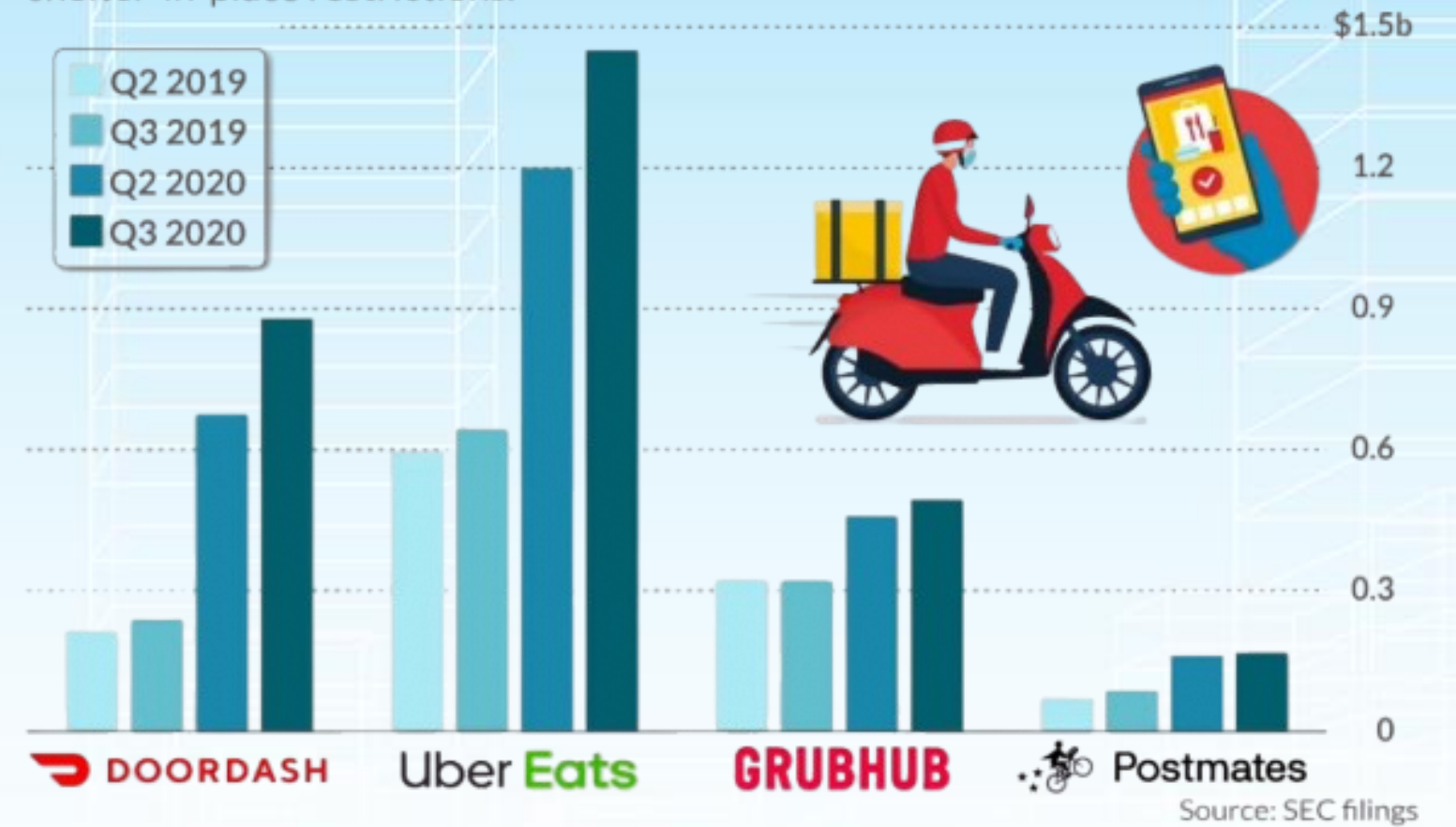
- Packaging waste
- Single-use PPE
- Takeout waste
- Sanitizing wipes
- Pre-packaged food waste
- Single use medical waste

Recycling programs were disrupted

- Little to no interest in recycling or diverting food waste
- Waste diversion % decreased
- Less recycling paired with higher contamination
- Tenant participation nearly stopped

The COVID-19 delivery boom

The four top U.S. food-delivery apps saw revenue rise \$3 billion collectively in the second and third quarters, as the coronavirus pandemic required shelter-in-place restrictions.



Big Questions

Post-Pandemic for Buildings & Occupants

- Is sustainability non-essential?
- Is zero waste incompatible with a quarantined society?
- Should the short-term risk of exposure take precedence over the long-term risk of climate change?



We adapted

to the changes,

what was

working...

Online platforms

- Zoom, Google Meet, Teams
- Meetings, trainings, workshops, conferences, classrooms

Contactless/paperless operations

- QR Codes
- EM/Text receipts
- Digital documents

Reusable items: masks, cleaning cloths, and bottles

Reusable take out containers

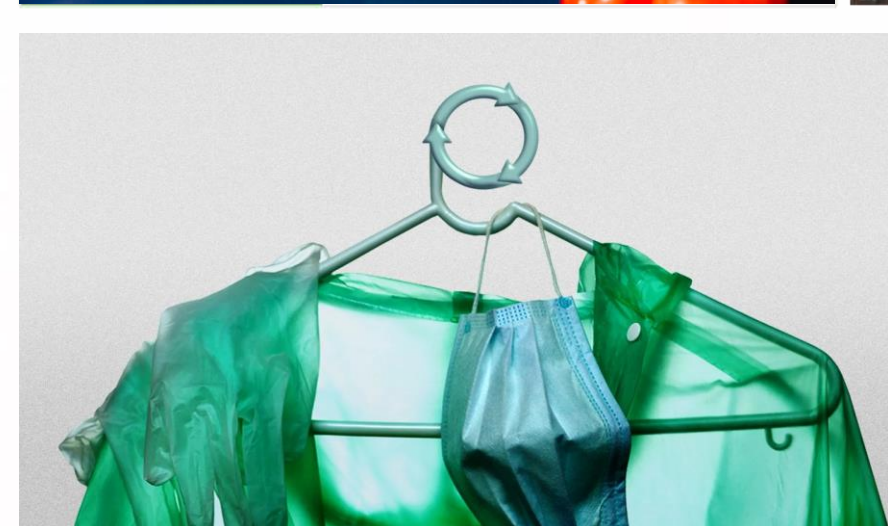
(Deliver Zero, Buoyzero, and FoodWare)

Closed loop recycling programs for hard-to-recycle items

(TerraCycle & Kimberly Clarks' Recycle Right)

“The future of restaurant delivery could lie in plastic-free take-out.”

- Jeff Kart, Forbes Sustainability Contributor



Sustainability & Zero Waste

Are Possible in a Pandemic

Companies proved that Zero Waste is possible!

USGBC HQ (Washington DC)

- Baseline year: 12/2020 – 11/2021
- TRUE Certified 2022 – 94.3%

Great Forest (New York City)

- Baseline year: 2019 – 2020
- TRUE Certified 2021 – 91.3%

Cities proved that planning for Zero Waste is necessary.

City of Oceanside

- 2020 Zero Waste Plan (approved in 2021)

City of Chicago

- 2021 Waste Strategy (approved in 2021)

WNC was founded during the pandemic, further proving sustainability is possible in a crisis.



U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) Headquarters Office



Location: Washington, D.C.
Certification level: Platinum
Percent of Overall Diversion Achieved: 94.3%
Facility Size: 16,498 sq. ft.
Project Owner: USGBC

SEPTEMBER 20, 2021 IN ALL

TRUE Certified Case Study: How Great Forest Achieved Zero Waste



TRUE CERTIFIED ZERO WASTE CASE STUDY

Project: Great Forest, Inc.
Certification Level: Gold
Diversion Rate: 91.3%
Type of Facility: 5-story Brownstone
Facility operations: Office floors

In March 2021, Great Forest became TRUE certified to the Gold level for Zero Waste, with a diversion rate of 91.3%. This was verified by the GBCI (Green Business Certification Inc.), which administers the TRUE (Total Resource Use and Efficiency) process.

Over 30 years in business, Great Forest has followed a tried and tested system of sustainable waste management best practices that we have put into practice not only for our clients, but for our own business operations as well. By certifying our office headquarters in New York, we hope our experience can be an example to others to pursue Zero Waste. As noted by the GBCI in their 2020 review:



Lessons

in the Aftermath

And we must keep environmental programs active in a crisis.

Waste Reduction Strategies

- Reusable items: PPE, take out trays, cleaning cloths
- Continued availability and participation in recycling programs
- Support companies for that recycle hard-to-recycle items such as gloves, masks, medical waste, etc. (TerraCycle, Ridwell, and RecycleRight)

Update Policies

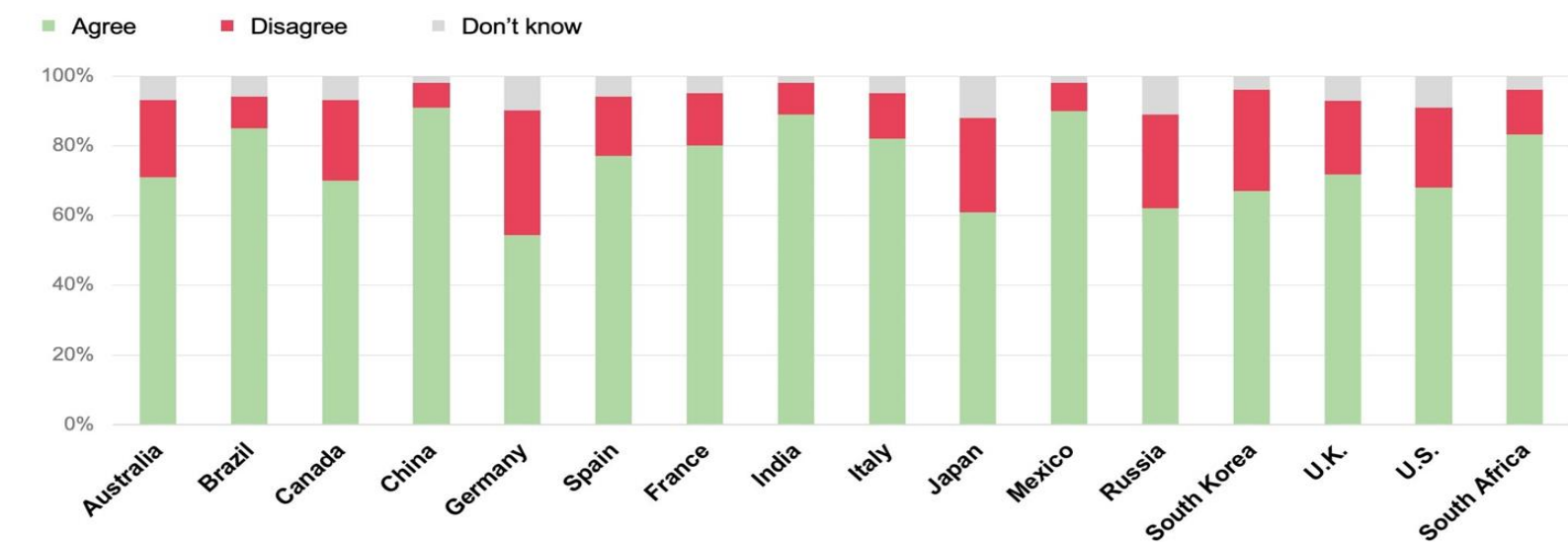
- Green purchasing policies (EPP)
 - Sustainable product options (Amazon Climate Pledge Friendly, Staples Green Products)
- Paperless operations
- Virtual platforms for trainings, meetings, workshops

“Companies with robust sustainability programs are more likely to perform well during economic downturns.”

- Thomas Singer, Harvard Law School



Should your government make environment protection a priority in recovery from COVID-19?



Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
I expect my government to make protection of the environment a priority when planning for the post COVID-19 recovery.

15,951 adults polled in 16 countries from May 21 to 24, 2020



Sustainability Must Remain Essential

especially during a crisis

Environmental consultants must lead efforts to prevent governments and corporations from abandoning sustainability initiatives.

We must not compromise years of progress during crises.

Our collective failure to act will result in irreversible climate change.

We have

the potential for rapid environmental improvement.



8:15 am Pacific Time
October 2, 2024

The logo for the National Zero Waste Conference is a blue circle with a white border. Inside the circle, the word "NATIONAL" is at the top, "ZERO" is in the middle, and "WASTE" is at the bottom. To the right of "ZERO" is a circular icon with a green arrow pointing clockwise. Below "WASTE" is the word "CONFERENCE".

NATIONAL
ZERO
WASTE
CONFERENCE

Learning from California: Using regulations to prevent food waste and improve food access

Marie Mourad, PhD
Susan Blachman

Moderator: Leah Tischler

Hosted by:



Day 1 • Zero Waste Businesses & Institutions



Products dumpster dived in New York City, 2021-2023



Fighting Food Waste Impacts

- **Significant impacts of food waste** on resources & the environment: 4% of U.S. annual GHG emissions
- Food Waste Reduction as **#1 solution to limit global warming** to 2°C by 2100
- **United Nations SDG Target 12.3.** of halving Food Waste by 2030
- National commitment by EPA, USDA, FDA
- Growing interest by State/local governments & businesses



France & California as role models

Sources: Refed, Project Drawdown, UNEP/FAO.



Illustration: Dorothee Pierrard



California Senate Bill 1383: Regulating Pollution from Organic Waste

- 2016: Regulation on short-lived climate pollutants (methane)
- **Targets:** Reduce organic waste by 75% and **recover 20% of edible food**

Requirements

- **Jurisdictions:** Set up **food recovery programs** and make sure edible food is eaten by people and not discarded
- **Food businesses:** **Prevent** food waste or **donate** the maximum amount of surplus edible food to food recovery organizations, in addition to composting organics





Phased Implementation: Tier 1 in 2022 & Tier 2 in 2024

Commercial Edible Food Generators

Tier 1

January 1, 2022

Tier one businesses typically have more produce, fresh grocery, and shelf-stable foods to donate.



Tier 2

January 1, 2024

Tier two businesses typically have more prepared foods to donate, which often require more careful handling to meet food safety requirements (e.g. time and temperature controls).





California Inspiring Others

- **23 states** working on introducing **91 unique bills** targeting food loss and waste
 - 23 passed & **only 11 failed**, other bills still under consideration
 - See [Food Waste Legislative Tracker](#)
- **Top policy areas**
 - Tax incentives for food donations,
 - State grant funding,
 - Organic waste bans
- **Federal:** Farm Bill, Food Date Labeling Act



divert



SB1383 is Working

- **Reducing quantity** of organic material going to landfill
- **Increasing awareness** by businesses and employees
- More organizations engaging in **recovering surplus edible food** in the short-term
- More **food waste prevention** in the longer-term



San Francisco wholesale market
food recovery program, 2023



Tips for Motivating Businesses

▪ Carrots

- **Cost savings and tax deductions**
- **Pride for achieving** environmental & social benefits (ESG goals)
- **Employee satisfaction** contributes to retention
- **Rewards and recognition** for exemplary entities or champions



▪ Sticks

- **Penalties** for non-compliance
- **Guilt, bad reputation**





Lessons Learned



- **Identifying regulated food establishments**
 - Complex definitions, arbitrary thresholds and scope, data management issues
- **Determining who is responsible for compliance**
 - Ex: Food Service vs. Client vs. Event Organizer vs. Venue
- **Educating organizations** through various channels
- **Coordinating outreach to businesses located in multiple jurisdictions**
- **Ensuring inspections, compliance and enforcement, and reporting**
- **Recovering prepared food** from events, hospitals, hotels, etc.
 - Food safety, transportation & temperature control, quality issues
- **Lack of capacity and economic instability of food recovery programs**



Need for Financial Sustainability of Food Recovery

- Most jurisdictions rely on **CalRecycle grant funds** (and some waste management fees)
- Most food recovery operations rely on **short-term funding** (grants & donations) and volunteer labor





Suggestions to Improve Financial Sustainability

▪ Secure more stable funding

- **For jurisdictions:** Taxes & fees (ex: County fee for food recovery)

- **For food recovery organizations and services:**

- Long-term grants, including for staff

- Fee-for-service models: Charging edible food generators (ex: Food Donation Connection, Copia, Replate, etc.) or charging jurisdictions (ex: Careit)



▪ Reduce operational costs

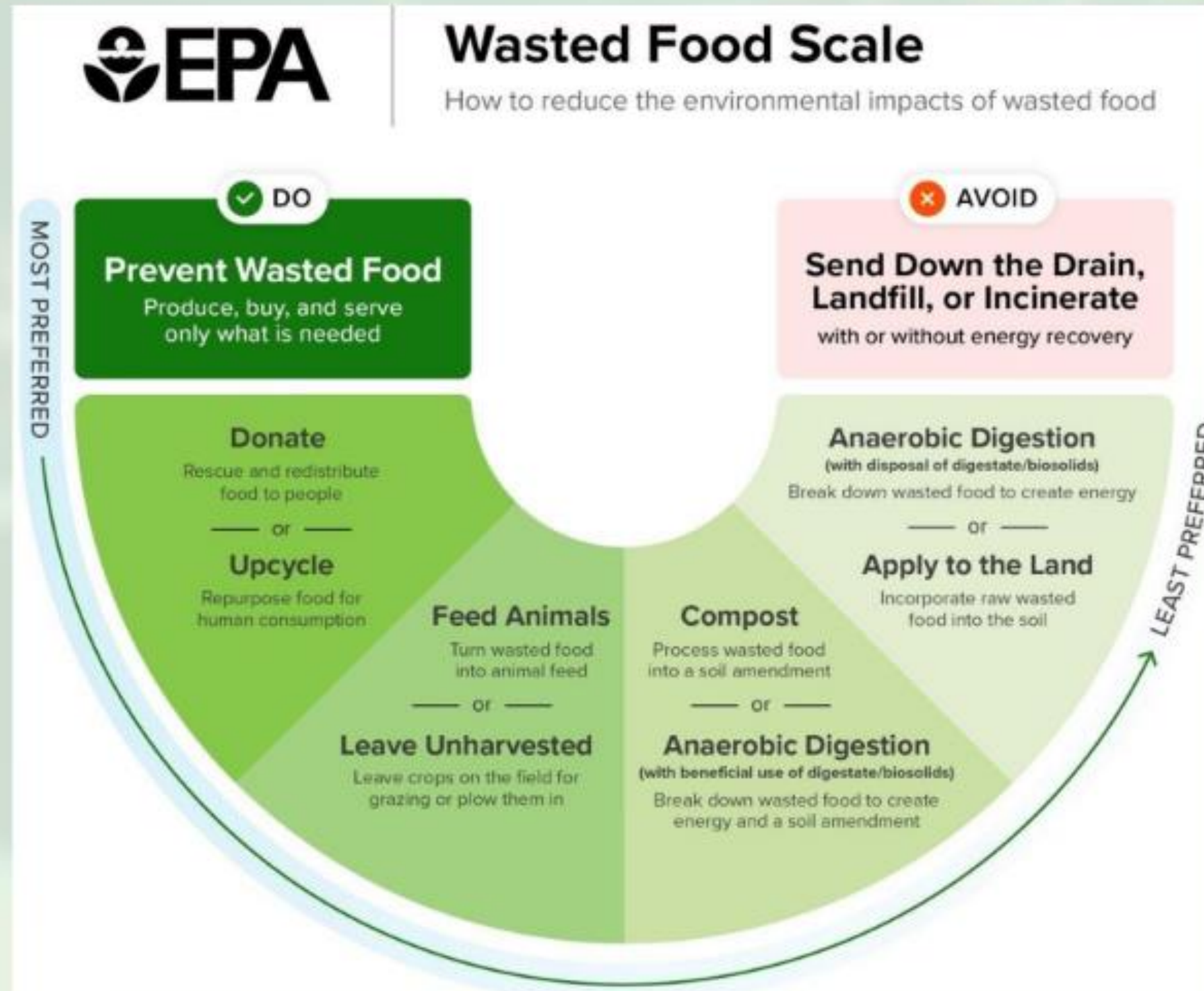
- Improve routing and processes connecting donors & recipients

- Identify & share logistics resources (transportation, storage, etc.)





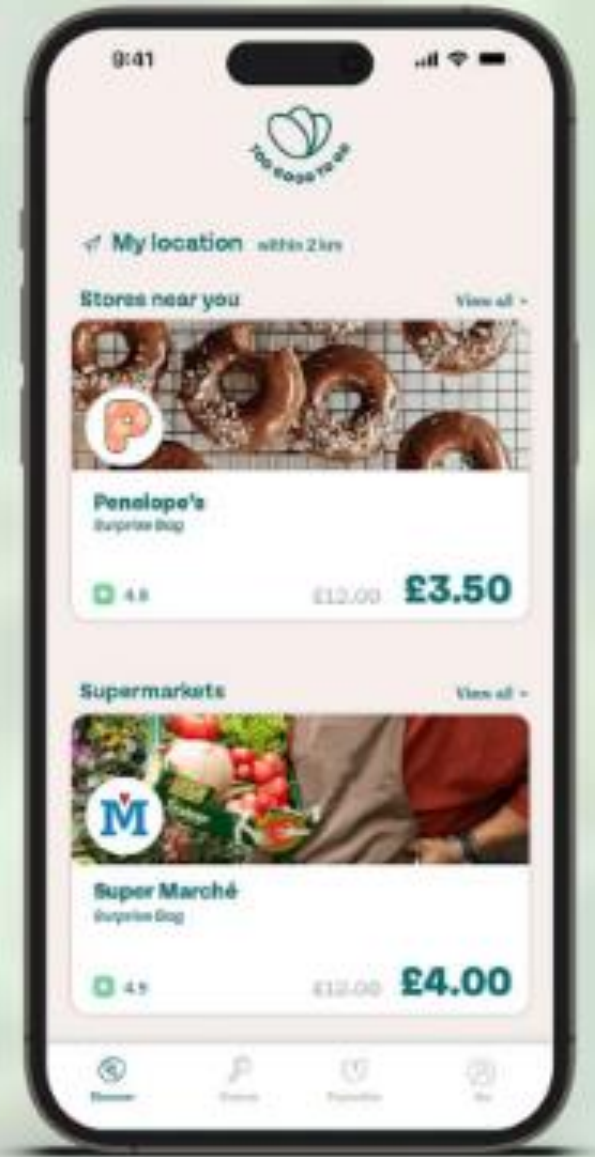
Remembering Priorities: Highest and Best Use of Food Waste





Prioritizing PREVENTION

- Prevention tends to be neglected by food recovery programs
- **Educating staff and clients**
- **Repurposing** food ingredients or leftovers
- Importance of **giving food to staff**
- **Discount sales:** in-store, in an institution, or through apps like Too Good To Go or Flashfood
- **Communicating broadly** as a marketing strategy





Thank you!



Marie Mourad, PhD
Sociologist, Zero Waste
and Sustainability
Consultant
marie.mourad@sciencespo.fr



Susan Blachman
(Blachman Consulting)
Zero Waste and
Sustainability Consultant
susan@blachman.org



[linkedin.com/in/marie-mourad-b2234124/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/marie-mourad-b2234124/)

Author of [From Dumpsters to Dinners: 10 Years Fighting Food Waste in France and the United States](#)

See [5-min book presentation](#)

[linkedin.com/in/susanblachman/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/susanblachman/)

