BUILDING ZERO WASTE COMMUNITIES

KATE BAILEY ★ ECO-CYCLE
NRC ZERO WASTE CONFERENCE ★ MARCH 2020
Who is Eco-Cycle?

- One of oldest and largest NGO recyclers in the world
- Located in Boulder, Colorado, USA
- 65 employees, 50,000 tons/year
- Hands-on experience in every aspect of Zero Waste
ZERO WASTE INFRASTRUCTURE

Six facilities to replace landfills

**RECYCLABLES**
Materials recovery facility (MRF) for traditional recyclables

**ORGANICS**
Organics recovery facility (ORF) for composting and energy production

**CONSTRUCTION**
Construction, demolition and deconstruction (CDD) facilities for recycling and reuse of building materials

**HARD-TO-RECYCLE**
Center for hard-to-recycle materials (CHaRM) for non-traditional recycling

**REUSE & REPAIR**
Reuse and repair facilities for highest and best use before recycling

**WHATEVER’S LEFT**
Materials recovery biological treatment (MRBT) facility for “whatever’s left”
PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP: BOULDER COUNTY MRF
COMMITTED TO CLEAN, HIGH QUALITY MATERIALS
CENTER FOR HARD TO RECYCLE MATERIALS (CHaRM)

- Opened in 2001
- 24 types of materials
- 41,000 customers per year
- 5 million pounds per year
- Goal: one new material per year
COMMUNITY ZERO WASTE ROADMAP

Three phases:
1. Access
2. Participation
3. Whatever’s left

www.ecocyclesolutionshub.org/how-to-get-there/

PHASE 1
Access to Services
YEARS 1-5
Commit to the Zero Waste path and start measuring your progress
Universal household recycling with unit-based pricing (PAYT)
Universal recycling for all businesses and multi-family units (MFUs)
Universal composting programs for households, MFUs and some businesses
Product fees and bans
Public space, school and government initiatives including Zero Waste events
Incentives for construction, demolition and deconstruction (CDD) recycling
Community education

PHASE 2
Building Participation
YEARS 6-9
Recycling required for all businesses, homes and MFUs
Composting required for all businesses, homes and MFUs
Expand waste reduction and reuse initiatives
Biweekly trash service for residents
Landfill and incinerator disposal bans
Producer responsibility for hard-to-recycle (HTR) materials including electronics, paint, mattresses, carpet, batteries and other misc. products.
Recovering materials from mixed construction loads
Community education

PHASE 3
Recovering Whatever’s Left
YEARS 10+
Enforcement of source-separation requirements
Public policy support for sustainable consumption
Economic policy changes and full-cost accounting
Residual waste processing and ban on incineration
Community education
Recycling and composting for all households, apartments and businesses

City-wide diversion jumped 17% in three years: 40% → 57%

Business diversion up from 26% to 58%

Goal: 85% waste diversion from landfill by 2025

- **59%** Single-Family Households
- **44%** Multi-Family Households
- **58%** Commercial

waste diversion from landfill in 2018

City of Boulder Organics Collection

- Commercial
- Multifamily Home
- Single Family Home
EVERYONE HAS A ROLE

Government  Businesses  Schools  Individuals  Events
All public schools in Boulder have recycling, composting, waste reduction programs.

2,000 presentations/year
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: ECO-LEADERS

1000 Eco-leader volunteers
Trained community ambassadors for Zero Waste
Adopt a business
Zero Waste events
Tabling
Advocate at local, state level
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: CARBON FARMING

Nearly 300 citizen scientists measuring carbon storage in lawns, gardens.
Bridging connection with soil health, climate.

https://ecocycle.org/take-action/community-carbon-farming
CHANGING THE NARRATIVE: FASTEST, EASIEST CLIMATE SOLUTION

- SAVES ENERGY
- REDUCES LANDFILL EMISSIONS
- STORES CARBON IN SOIL

CO₂
BOULDER, CO: ROADMAP TO A CIRCULAR CITY

FLOW OF MATERIALS THROUGH THE CITY

www.metabolic.nl/publications/circular-boulder/
THE ROLE OF RESPONSIBLE RECYCLING

AMBR
Alliance of Mission-Based Recyclers

ecology center

EUREKA!
RECYCLING

eco-cycle

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ecocycle.org
Building our Zero Waste future and a circular economy

- Community Zero Waste Roadmap
- Best practices and model policies
- Hands-on experience

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