

## The City of Boulder is adopting a new Zero Waste Plan. They need to hear from you.

Give your feedback at <http://www.inspireboulder.com/envisioning-a-zero-waste-boulder>

### Did you know?

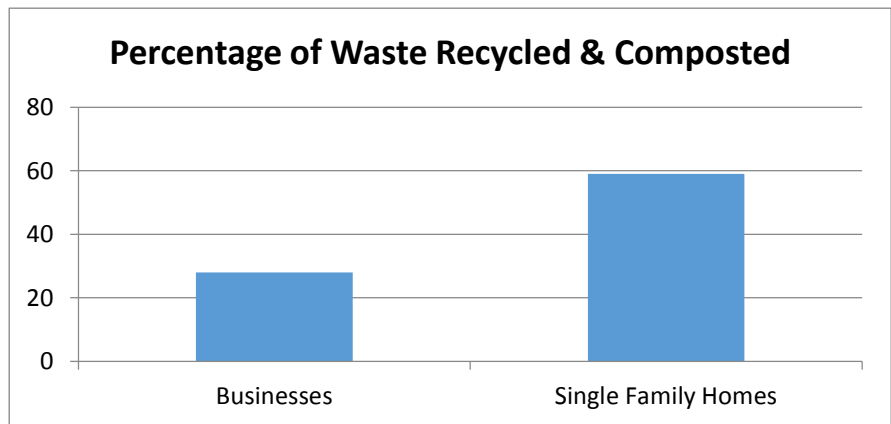
- We are currently only recycling and composting less than 50% of our total waste.<sup>1</sup>
- We have a long way to go to meet our goal of recycling and composting 85% by 2017.
- 42% of our greenhouse gases come from making, transporting, consuming and disposing all our food and “stuff.”<sup>2</sup> Recycling and composting are one of the fastest and cheapest ways to reduce greenhouse gases and fight climate change.

## It’s time to move forward and make Boulder Zero Waste!

### Tell Council you support prioritizing the following greenhouse gas reduction steps:

#### 1. Require all businesses to recycle and grocery stores and restaurants to compost.

- **Only 28%** of the business waste stream is recycled and composted.<sup>1</sup> In comparison, single-family homes and Green Star Schools are recycling and composting close to 60% of their waste.<sup>3</sup>
- Boulder businesses send **three times more trash** to the landfill than single-family homes.<sup>4</sup>
- By requiring businesses to recycle, we could easily **double the amount of commercial material recycled** and reduce GHG emissions by 17,000 to 36,600 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year<sup>5</sup>, the equivalent of taking more than 4000 cars off the road for a year.<sup>6</sup>
- A mandatory business recycling policy in Boulder would **create 15 to 33 new jobs.**<sup>5</sup>



<sup>1</sup> City of Boulder 2013 Waste Diversion Data

<sup>2</sup> Opportunities to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions through Materials and Land Management Practices, U.S. EPA, Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, 2009

<sup>3</sup> City of Boulder 2013 Waste Diversion Data and Eco-Cycle

<sup>4</sup> Calculated from City of Boulder Waste Diversion Data

<sup>5</sup> 2013 Zero Waste Evaluation Study: Final Report, Kessler Consulting

<sup>6</sup> Eco-Cycle calculation based on 2013 Zero Waste Evaluation Study: Final Report, Kessler Consulting and EPA Calculator

## 2. Develop a local public composting facility

- Composting, more than any other effort, **reduces the greatest number of tons of waste** going to the landfill.
- **Composting avoids methane gas emissions.** In the landfill, food scraps and yard waste break down and release methane.
- **Methane is a greenhouse gas that traps 84 times more heat** in our atmosphere than carbon dioxide.<sup>7</sup>
- More than **90,000 tons of foods scraps and yard waste** are landfilled in Boulder County every year.<sup>8</sup>
- Currently, there is no infrastructure in the county to take all of this organic material.
- The city and the county need a local public composting facility that supports all haulers equally.

## 3. Expand the CHaRM and ReSource facilities at 6400 Arapahoe

- “Problem wastes” such as electronics, appliances, furniture and mattresses are 15% of Boulder County’s waste stream, and the largest component of the waste stream outside of the materials collected from recycling and composting.<sup>8</sup>
- Expanding the Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials will enable Eco-Cycle to expand its ability to recycle new materials such as **mattresses, carpet and furniture.**
- Additionally new re-use programs can be added to CHaRM and ReSource such as the fix-it clinics that help residents learn to fix their own slightly-broken products.

## 4. Build a Construction & Demolition Transfer Station

- Currently there is no place in the County for contractors and builders to recycle construction and demolition materials such as concrete, asphalt, ceiling tiles and wood. It is extremely costly to transport such materials out of the County, making it a lot easier and more financially viable to landfill them than recycle them.
- A construction and demolition transfer station would greatly increase our community’s abilities to recycle valuable building materials and save resources.

## 6. Expand and Upgrade the Boulder County Recycling Center

- Facility improvements at the Boulder County Recycling Center have been needed for some time to increase capacity and better sort material for sale.
- Expansion and upgrades will enable the recycling center to accommodate the additional material expected from businesses as a result of a mandatory commercial recycling ordinance.
- Additionally, upgrades to the Boulder County Recycling Center would allow all Boulder County communities to recycle more types of plastics such as berry tubs and “clam shells.”

## 7. Expand Public Outreach and Education Efforts

- Community-wide Zero Waste education and outreach are essential to creating long-lasting behavior change, instilling sustainability values, and achieving high rates of community recycling and composting.
- Funding for Zero Waste education programs should be preserved and not diverted to other programs.
- Educating and engaging the younger generation is one of the most effective ways to change behavior in the household. The city should double its investment in school-based education and services through Eco-Cycle’s Green Star Schools program, the most comprehensive Zero Waste schools initiative in the nation.

For more information contact Randy Moorman at 303-444-6634 or [randy@ecocycle.org](mailto:randy@ecocycle.org)

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<sup>7</sup> Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2014

<sup>8</sup> The 2010 Waste Composition Study prepared for Boulder County