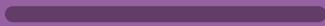


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zero waste





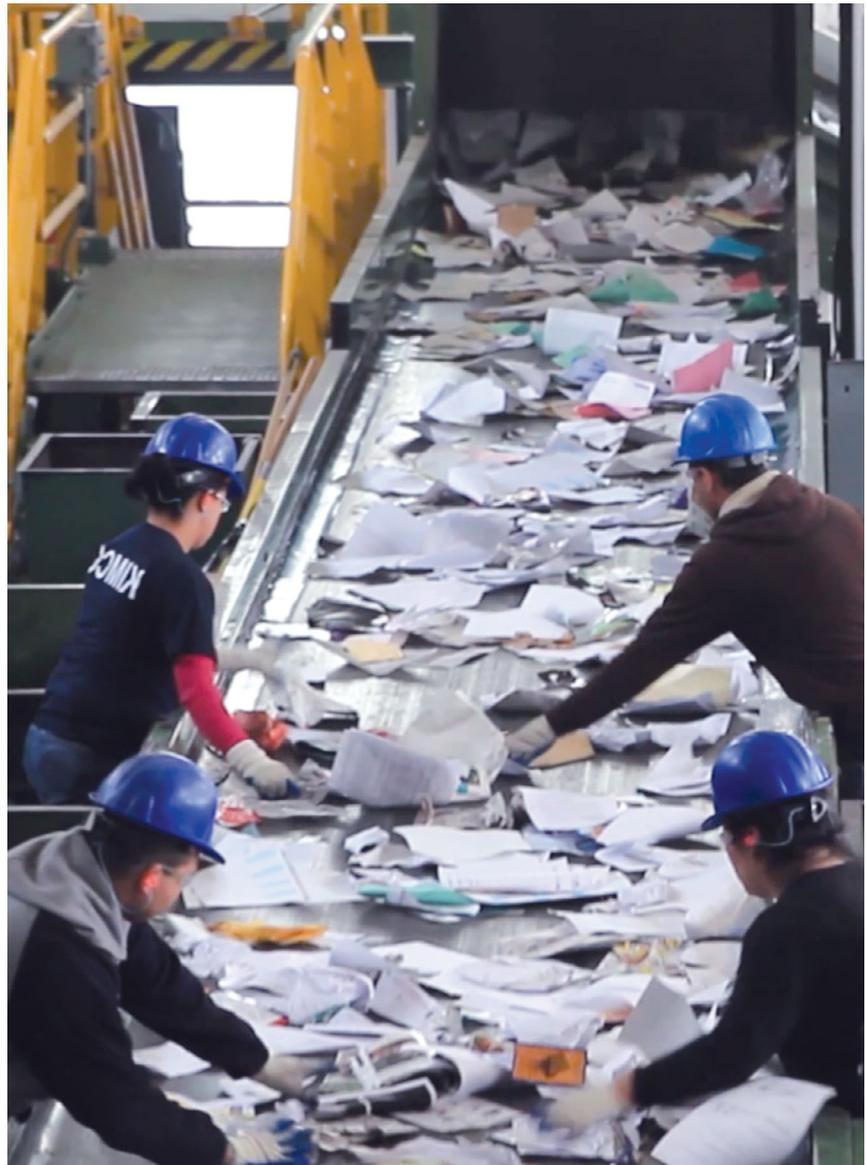
ZERO WASTE

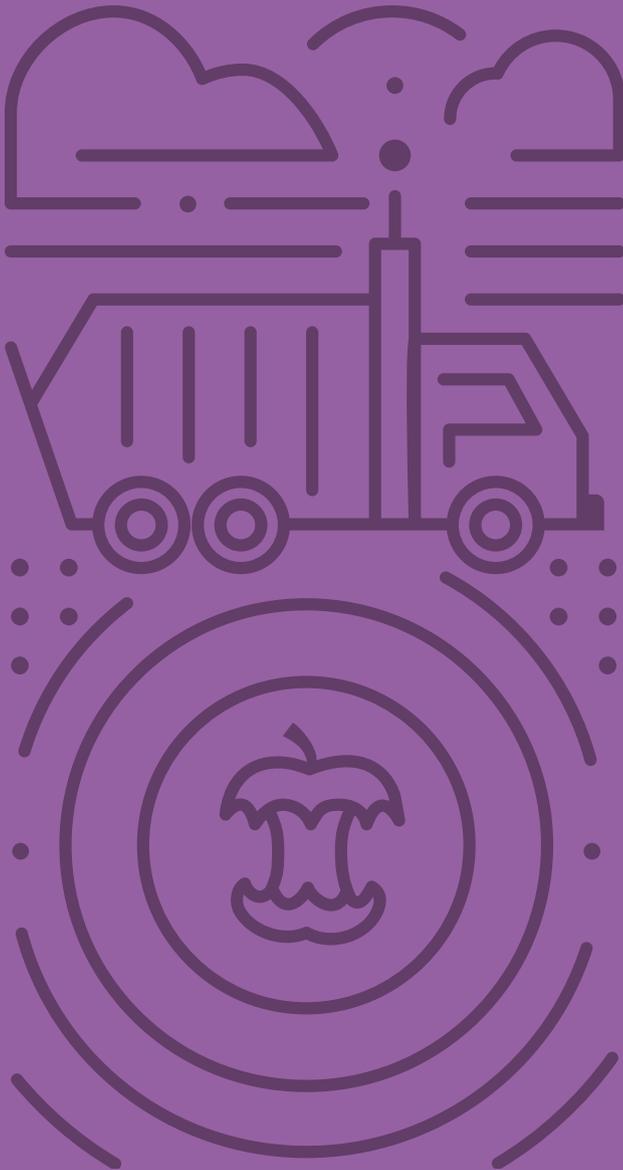
INTRODUCTION

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

Boulder County is 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. Boulder County is committed to ensuring accessible and affordable waste diversion opportunities to all residents countywide.

The jobs that are created in the reuse and recycling industries—from used building material outlets to creative reuse start-ups—help strengthen the Boulder County economy.





zero waste goal

Reduce the amount of materials consumed and discarded in the landfill and manage resources responsibly and effectively.



COUNTY OPERATION STRATEGIES

Increase internal county diversion to 90% by 2025

- Require 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.
 - Reduce contamination in compost and recycling streams.
 - Increase county employee participation in zero waste efforts through incentives and education programs.
-

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

- Educate county employees through waste audits, campaigns, and other programs.
 - Measure and reduce the waste per capita for Boulder County employees.
 - Encourage staff to participate in hard-to-recycle collection events, green purchasing practices, and reuse initiatives.
 - Work with county staff to follow the Environmental Protection Agency's Food Waste Hierarchy, which promotes redistribution of food before disposal.
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**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 Boulder County Purchasing Policy, Section 11.12 of the *Personnel & Policy Manual*.
- Support state and local development of end-use markets for recyclable/ recycled products and compost through county purchasing policies.
- Establish a list of environmentally preferable products, and explore enforcement strategies to ensure adherence to green purchasing policies.
- Purchase compost from permitted Colorado processors that show the U.S. Composting Council Seal of Testing Assurance. Purchase locally generated compost whenever feasible.
- Create policy to prohibit single-use or disposable products wherever possible.
- Work with county employees to reduce office supply and furniture purchases by following reuse protocols.





COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

Increase construction materials diversion

- Support capacity for construction and demolition materials transfer, sorting, processing, and reuse.
 - Work with municipalities within Boulder County to require residential and commercial deconstruction, and incentivize construction and demolition materials recycling and reuse.
 - Require construction and demolition materials recycling and reuse in additional sectors.
 - Create recycling opportunities for clean, damaged dimensional lumber.
 - 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.
 - Support at-home composting programs through education and incentives.
 - Support multifamily and business compost collection systems and education.
 - Support curbside collection or drop-off center collection of compostable materials throughout the county, including mountain regions.
 - Support opportunities for yard waste diversion.
 - Enforce current and future composting requirements.
-

**COMMUNITY STRATEGIES****Increase commercial diversion**

- Provide free waste audits for businesses and support for zero waste implementation by expanding outreach and advising services currently being provided through Boulder County Public Health's Partners for a Clean Environment (PACE) Program.
 - Update Land-Use Codes to improve commercial and multifamily recycling and composting requirements.
 - Support requirements for commercial and multifamily recycling programs and composting programs countywide.
 - Support requirements for commercial construction and demolition materials diversion.
 - 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 by expanding and increasing business drop-off at the Hazardous Materials Management Facility.
 - Educate consumers and businesses to reduce the purchase and use of toxic and hazardous products.
 - Educate students about hazardous materials through in-school presentations and projects.
 - Increase collection of residential and commercial hazardous materials at the Hazardous Materials Management Facility.
 - Increase awareness of electronics recycling opportunities.
-



COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

Support diversion through additional strategies

- Cultivate municipal contacts and advocates, and support municipal goal setting, policy work, and data tracking.
- Require zero waste planning for large events on public property countywide. Provide education and support for event planners.
- Develop zero waste branding and initiate comprehensive education program.
- Support food waste reduction and redistribution efforts countywide.
- Support requirements for residential volume-based collection with embedded recycling and composting countywide where feasible.
- Support opportunities for waste diversion and reuse at spring cleanup events.
- Provide zero waste education and support zero waste collection systems in schools.
- Offer metal and hard-to-recycle material recycling at additional locations.
- Share waste reduction efforts and correlation with climate change with the community.
- Support bans on sending recyclables, yard waste, and food waste to the landfill.
- Promote markets for county-generated recyclables and compost.
- Make waste diversion efforts 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 and other community partners identify a list of priority items to divert from the landfill.



ZERO WASTE GRANTS

Established in 1997, Boulder County's Zero Waste Funding program has awarded more than \$1.1 million dollars 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 Hazardous Materials Management Facility 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.



POLICY PRIORITIES

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

POLICY

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Achieve statewide waste diversion goals established by the Solid and Hazardous Waste Commission

Recycling and composting are proven to reduce carbon dioxide and methane emissions, and are key strategies in the fight against climate change. But Colorado’s waste diversion rate (the combination of recycling and organics diversion as a proportion of the solid waste stream) of 19% lags behind the national average of 35%. Boulder County supports the establishment of a meaningful and

achievable statewide solid waste diversion goal, as a tool for galvanizing statewide efforts, accompanied by legislation that grants Colorado’s Department of Public Health and Environment the authority to administer diversion programs, including, but not limited to, economic and technical assistance for local and regional waste diversion programs and facilities.



POLICY

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Support carbon sequestration practices

Emerging research indicates that carbon sequestration through forestry, land management, and agricultural practices is a potentially powerful tool to absorb excess carbon from the atmosphere and help mitigate the effects of climate change. In addition to reducing heat-trapping emissions, carbon sequestration in soils is shown to improve soil health and crop yields, increase water retention, and

help restore native plant and animal species. Carbon sequestration practices include, but are not limited to, applying compost to rangeland and croplands, using slow-release fertilizers and nitrification inhibitors, planting cover crops, reducing tillage or growing crops without tillage, planting trees and shrubs as windbreaks on cropland, and applying biochar to reclaim and restore land and boost soil fertility.

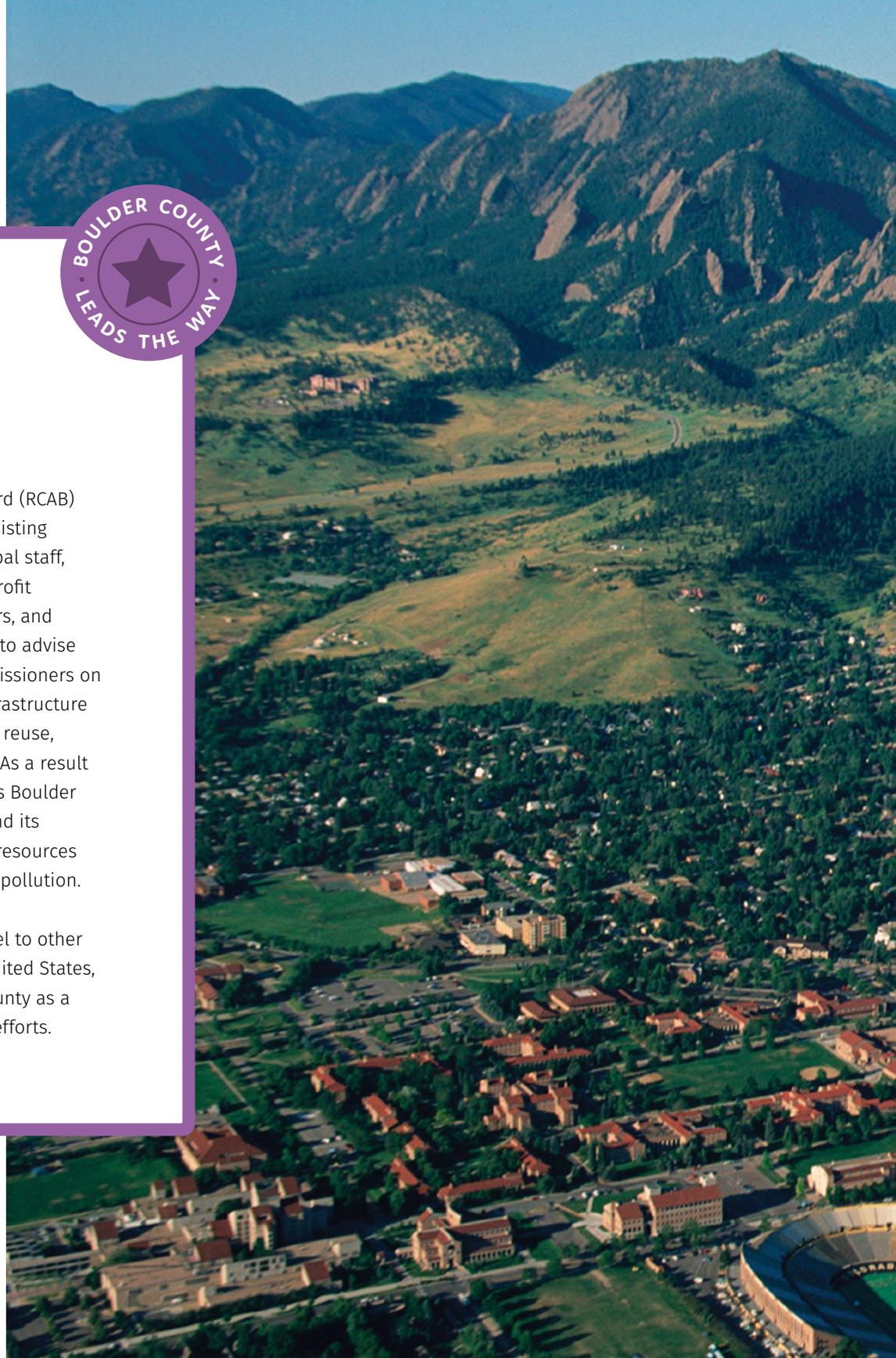




Advisory Board

Boulder County's Resource Conservation Advisory Board (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. As a result of these efforts, RCAB helps Boulder County, its communities, and its partners conserve natural resources and reduce environmental pollution.

RCAB has served as a model to other communities across the United States, as they look to Boulder County as a leader in waste reduction efforts.







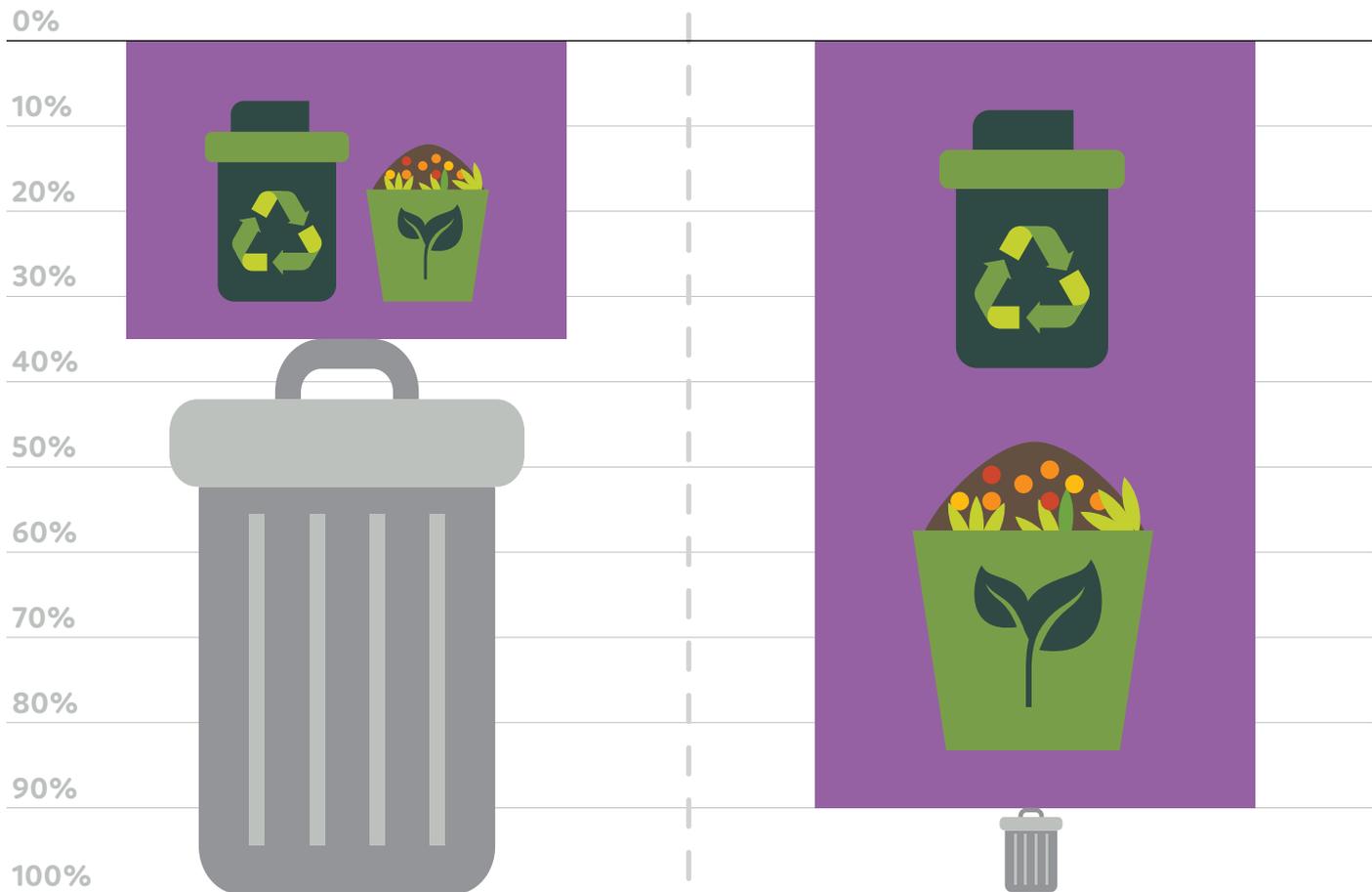
Waste reduction efforts play a large role in helping Boulder County work toward its climate goals. A global emissions perspective is missing from the standard protocol used to update the Boulder County greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory. The inventory can only account for the methane released from landfills, since most of the products we purchase are collected and manufactured outside of our county. However, zero waste efforts contribute to significant emissions reductions by avoiding “upstream” GHG emitted in the extraction, manufacturing, and transportation of raw materials.



Boulder County Diversion Rate

2017
35% Diversion

By 2025
90% Diversion





TAKE ACTION

How to achieve zero waste

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 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.





RESOURCES

More Information

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.org/food-waste

bouldercounty.org/environment/recycle

PACEpartners.com





THANK YOU!

Boulder County’s vision statement reads as follows:



As trusted stewards of Boulder County’s future, we provide the best in public service.



This sustainability plan is our community’s vision for a vibrant and healthy future. Join us in making great strides in meeting the aspirational goals. Thanks to everyone who has had a hand in crafting this plan!

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