



WASTE DIVERSION

2019

STRATEGIC PLAN

FOR ROUTT COUNTY

Six-Month Progress Report



YAMPA VALLEY
**SUSTAINABILITY
COUNCIL**
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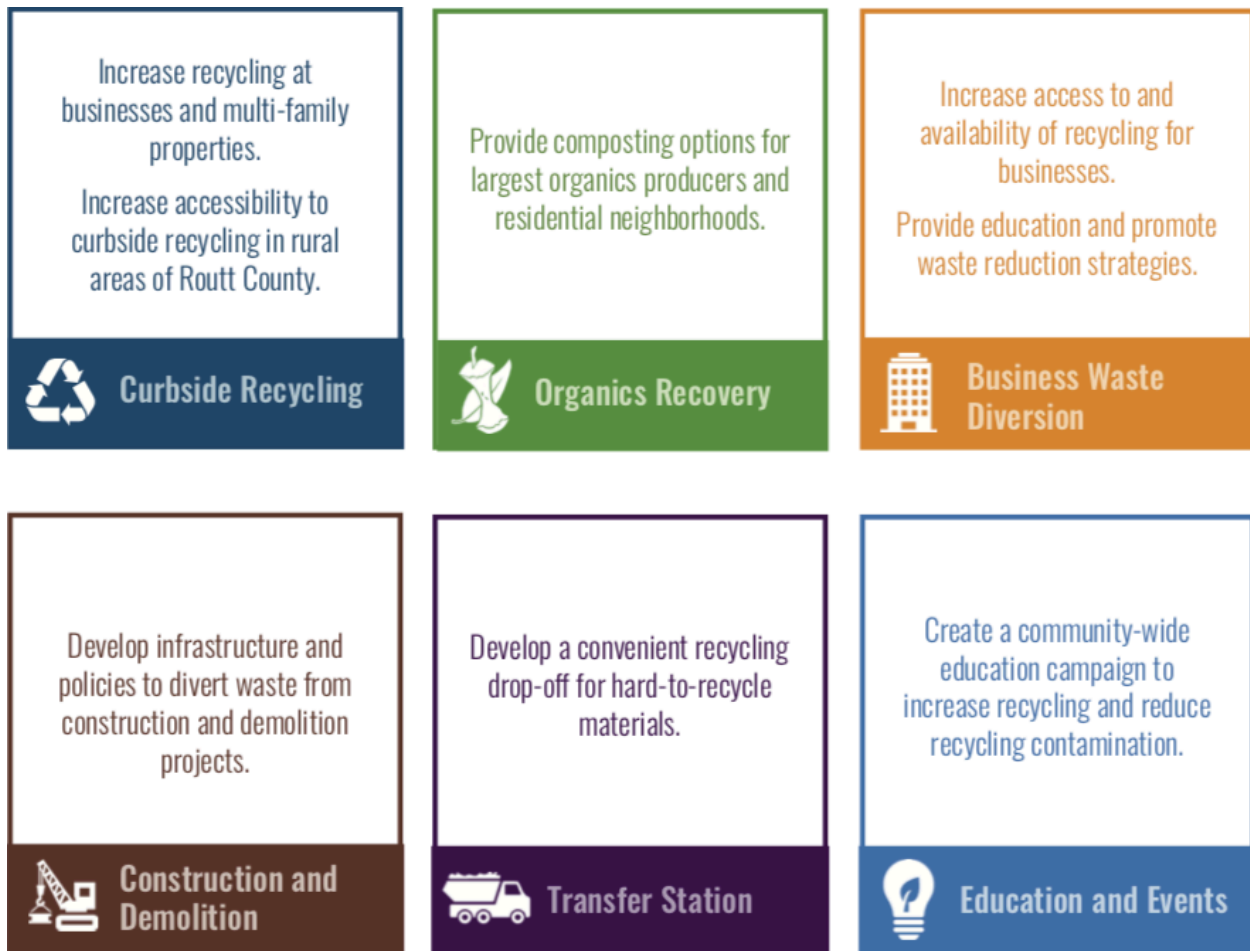
Responsible solid waste management is a critical component of meeting community goals for an economically, culturally and environmentally sustainable future. The Routt County Vision 2030 report identified sustainability as a core community value. This sentiment is echoed in the vision statement for the City of Steamboat Springs, Steamboat Springs City Council’s 2019 goals, and in the 2019 Routt County Strategic Plan.

In response to the desires of the community for a commitment to responsible and sustainable management of waste streams, Yampa Valley Sustainability Council (YVSC), with support from Routt County and a comprehensive group of community stakeholders, developed a Waste Diversion Strategic Plan, approved by the Routt County Board of Commissioners and adopted by the Steamboat Springs City Council.

The plan is designed to support State requirements for core environmental health services and statewide waste diversion goals, with an intent to reduce waste and increase material recovery over the next five years and beyond. As a part of the planning process, and as a basis for the plan, the group developed the following mission, vision and goal statements.



During the strategic planning process stakeholders identified six key areas in which increases in waste reduction, recycling and reuse could be achieved throughout the county. Short and long-term objectives and action steps were identified for each priority area. Objectives and action steps were then shared with Routt County Board of Commissioners, Steamboat Springs City Council, residents and community stakeholders to collect feedback and suggestions for revision. With the completion of the plan, six task force groups were formed to address each priority and to develop work plans for implementation to achieve objectives.



This six-month progress report serves as a checkpoint and highlights the progress that has been made since the plan was implemented. The task force groups have been very active and have already accomplished a great deal within the past six months. At the year mark, we will report on goals, future changes and waste diversion progress at the state level.

Curbside Recycling

Objectives:

1. Provide curbside recycling to all residents, including multi-family units
2. Increase accessibility and convenience of recycling for rural residents of Routt County

2019 Task Force Project Goals:

Goal 1:

- *Collect data on what areas in Routt County have access to curbside recycling and which hauler(s) services these areas*

Status: In progress

The measurements of success for this goal are: 1. to establish the current extent of access to curbside recycling in rural areas of Routt County and 2. to identify and reduce barriers to curbside recycling in these areas.

South Routt is a low-density area, with little access to curbside recycling. For one week each month, a recycling container (green machine) is available for residents to drop off their recycling. However, it is very contaminated with trash. To better understand the barriers for recycling in rural areas of the county, the group conducted surveys of residents and businesses in South Routt. Results from the survey indicate little access to curbside recycling for residents or businesses. Next step is expanding the survey to the North Routt area.

The group is also helped the community of Stagecoach gain curbside recycling for the whole community by providing a single hauler bid and working with community members to find the best option.

Goal 2:

- *Update the City of Steamboat Springs recycling ordinance to include a requirement for multi-family unit (MFU) recycling*

Status: In progress

The measurement of success for this goal is to provide recycling access to all MFUs in Steamboat Springs through education, outreach, and changes to the current recycling ordinance. The current recycling ordinance requires haulers to provide recycling services only to single family homes. This leaves MFU residents with limited or no ability to recycle. The group has created a single hauler bid document that HOAs and MFUs can use to bid out hauling services to include trash and recycling for the entire housing complex. The next step will be assisting the City in updating the residential recycling ordinance to include MFU recycling and start recycling education and outreach to these housing complexes.

Goal 3:

- *Enforce existing City of Steamboat Springs residential recycling ordinance*

Status: In progress

The measurement of success for this goal is obtaining consistent and accurate reporting of diversion rates from each hauler. The current City recycling ordinance requires haulers to report on their diversion rates. However, the ordinance language is inconsistent with requirements for how haulers collect data and, therefore, difficult to enforce. The group is working on gathering information to modify the ordinance language to require more specific and accurate waste data from the haulers. Next step is updating the reporting requirements for haulers.

Organics Recycling

Objective:

1. Provide composting options within Routt County for largest producers of organic waste and residential neighborhoods

2019 Task Force Project Goals:

Goal 1:

- *Collect data on total quantities of food waste generated in Routt County*

Status: Completed/Expanding

The measurement of success for this goal is to estimate the total quantities of food waste in Routt County. The study, “Estimating Quantities and Types of Food Waste in Routt County” has been completed. This study was conducted by a local graduate student, with help from YVSC, CMC work study students and community members. Out of the participants studied, the average household wastes 6 pounds of food per week. In a year, residential households waste approximately 312 pounds. Next steps for this goal are to collect food waste quantity data from local restaurants and continue collecting data from more residents to obtain a total quantity.

Goal 2:

- *Conduct a feasibility study to determine what model of commercial composting makes sense economically for Routt County*

Status: On hold

The measurement of success for this goal is having completed the feasibility study and obtained recommendations for the best compost facility model for Routt County. The RFP has been written and the task force group is currently working on getting signed support from the community backing the idea. The next step is to present the community support for composting to elected officials and move forward with the feasibility study.

Goal 3:

- *Assist in pilot project for a food waste drop-off site*

Status: In progress

Through an innovation grant provided by the City of Steamboat Springs, a task force group member, who is also a City staff member, has received funding to start a pilot project to collect food waste for composting. A sub-committee from the organics task force group has formed and has been working out the details and supporting the pilot. YVSC will be helping with education for the launch of the pilot to avoid contamination. The pilot will begin with restaurants that have indicated interest in being a part of the program.

Business Waste Diversion

Objectives:

1. Make recycling and composting convenient and feasible for all businesses
2. Collect data on the types and volumes of waste being produced and recycled at businesses
3. Incentivize businesses to increase their waste diversion by connecting diversion potential to economic benefit

2019 Task Force Project Goals:

Goal 1:

- *Collect data and information from local businesses on barriers to recycling and composting through a comprehensive survey and focus groups*

Status: Completed/Expanding

The measurement of success for this goal is collecting data from a representative number of businesses in the City of Steamboat Springs. This group completed a downtown business survey for recycling. The study received valuable data on both barriers and opportunities that downtown businesses face with recycling. The data revealed a lack of single stream recycling access for downtown businesses. A full report of the data is available upon request. The group is working on expanding the survey to include more businesses in the City and County. The next step is expanding the survey to mountain area businesses.

Goal 2:

- *Support City of Steamboat Springs staff as they develop and implement a bag ban on single-use plastic bags; support businesses during implementation*

Status: In progress

The measurement of success for this goal is providing support and outreach to businesses throughout the bag ban process. YVSC is supporting the education and outreach of the bag ban and fee. The task force group is willing to help the City staff in the implementation in any capacity needed. The next step is to encourage businesses that are not subject to the ban to opt-in to the bag ban program once it has been finalized.

Success story: Bag ban

The City of Steamboat Springs City Council passed an ordinance banning single-use carryout bags and placed a 20-cent fee on paper bags. The ordinance will go into effect on October 1, 2019. This is a great achievement for waste diversion in our community and is an important step in reducing the amount of unnecessary single-use plastic.

Construction and Demolition (C&D)

Objectives:

1. Develop a location for reusable C&D materials to be salvaged and redistributed
2. Set a waste diversion goal for C&D projects

Taskforce Project Goals:

Goal 1:

- *Collect data on quantities of materials being generated at C&D sites (waste generated/square foot) from:*
 - *Calcon*
 - *Fair & Square*
 - *Gerber Berend*

Status: Redirected

The measurement of success for this goal is to gain local C&D waste quantities and diversion rates. The group was working with local construction, demolition and deconstruction businesses in an effort to obtain these numbers. However, data has been difficult to obtain at this time. Therefore, we are going to redirect and use state C&D numbers in the interim until we can obtain local numbers. Next step is to compile state data for C&D waste.

Goal 2:

- *Collect data on the total number of building permits distributed in Routt County annually*

Status: In progress

The measurement of success for this goal is obtaining the number of permits, representing both commercial and residential builds, within Routt County. We will use these numbers to calculate the amount of waste generated by permit and then calculate the total volume of C&D waste generated annually. The data is currently being collected. Next step is to compile the building permits from the past year to date.

Goal 3:

- *Research sustainable construction and deconstruction programs and requirements in other communities*

Status: In progress

The measurement of success for this goal is building a portfolio of policies and practices, drawing from other communities, that can be used locally. The group is reaching out to other communities and looking into programs that could be modeled locally to increase C&D waste diversion. We have added construction and deconstruction materials to the free mobile and desktop Yampa Valley Recycles app, so that deconstruction companies can easily search where hard-to-recycle items can be taken locally. In addition, the task force has successfully worked with the City of Steamboat Springs to include recycling on the Construction Site Management Plan Checklist. Next steps are to continue researching other communities and begin implementing more deconstruction practices locally.

Goal 4:

- *Forecast waste generated and set measurable goals for construction site diversion*

Status: In progress

The measurement of success for this goal is creating a current C&D site waste diversion rate goal. The group is working on getting accurate waste generated metrics. We have asked local companies to start collecting data on their waste generated. Next steps are to continue to work with local haulers to obtain numbers and calculate a Routt County C&D waste quantity.

Success story: Recircle

This new platform from Recycle Colorado is a promising tool for C&D waste diversion. We are currently doing a pilot test with a local construction company to see if it could be a good tool to use in Routt County. Two more local companies will start using the platform soon.

Transfer Station

Objectives:

1. Provide an accessible, one-stop-drop, year-round recycling facility for bulky and hard-to-recycle materials
2. Partner with surrounding counties and other regional players to co-develop infrastructure and end markets and increase the volume of recyclable materials

This task force needs more group members before it will start meeting on a consistent basis. If you are interested in joining this group, please reach out to madison@yvsc.org.

Education and Events

Objectives:

1. Reduce recycling contamination in Routt County
2. Increase waste diversion at special events

2019 Task Force Project Goals:

Goal 1:

- *Test the effectiveness of different types of signage at a large special event.*

Status: Completed/Expanding

The measurement of success for this goal is collecting data from local events to better understand the effectiveness of signage and staffed waste stations at events. The Steamboat Pilot & Today's Balloon Glow on July 13, 2019 was used as the test event and provided stark data on the effectiveness of staffed, signed and flagged waste stations. The stations with staff/volunteers helping attendees sort their trash and recyclables had contamination rates under .05%. Stations that did not have staff or signage, had contamination rates of 25% for recycling and 40% for trash (40% of the material in the trash bin was recyclable, but it ended up going to the landfill). Next step is to work with City to implement changes to the City of Steamboat Springs' special event permit.

Goal 2:

- *Update special event permit to include language on waste diversion requirements.*

Status: In progress

The measurement of success for this goal is the inclusion of specific waste diversion requirements, such as signage, in the City's special event permit. The task force group is looking forward to helping the City work on this goal. From the test event, the group has gained valuable data on the most effective waste diversion practices for events. Next steps are working with the City to update the permit application before it is distributed to summer 2020 event coordinators.

Goal 3:

- *Collect baseline data on curbside recycling contamination rates in Routt County.*

Status: In progress

The measurement of success for this goal is collecting baseline data that can be used to improve education, outreach and requirements for curbside recycling programs. The town of Hayden is in the process of conducting a curbside contamination rate audit. Their initial audit found that out of 800 bins and 2,000 residents studied, the contamination rate was 35%. Next steps include gathering contamination rates from all local haulers that service Routt County and assessing the rate of contamination for the City of Steamboat Springs.

APPROVED BY ROUTT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
ADOPTED BY STEAMBOAT SPRINGS CITY COUNCIL



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