

August 11, 2025

Subject: NGAB Support for the South Metro Waste Diversion Plan

On behalf of the Next Generation Advisory Board, we are writing to express our strong support for the South Metro Waste Diversion Plan. As a group of young residents and future leaders, we're deeply invested in the long-term sustainability of our communities, and we believe this plan is an important step forward in continuing the mission of keeping Littleton a sustainable and beautiful community.

We appreciate the collaborative effort between Littleton and the Cities of Centennial, Englewood, and Sheridan to produce the first comprehensive analysis of waste services for the nearly 194,000 people who live across the South Metro region. This kind of shared vision, built over a year of research, modeling, public input, and coordination, reflects the kind of regional thinking we know is necessary to create meaningful environmental change. Based on our review of the plan and associated studies, we also consider the analysis to be robust and methodologically sound.

As members of a generation that will live with the long-term impacts of today's decisions, we believe adopting the South Metro Waste Diversion Plan will position Littleton for a more sustainable and resilient future. Specifically, we want to highlight several reasons this plan overall resonates with us.

- **Align and Complete Key Goals in ESB's Environmental Stewardship Action Plan:** In June 2024, the Littleton City Council endorsed the Horizon 2027 Strategic Plan, which includes the implementation of the ESB's Environmental Stewardship Action Plan. The South Metro Waste Diversion Plan directly supports Section 3.0, "Consumption and Waste Diversion." Adopting it helps lay the foundation for long-term progress and a healthier environment for future generations, while also demonstrating the ability and building trust in Littleton's ability to follow through on its commitment to environmental stewardship.
- **Promote Community Collaboration in Littleton and the Region:** The South Metro Waste Diversion Plan encourages community engagement and awareness of sustainability practices, fostering a culture of environmental stewardship. Additionally, the plan outlines how the region can continue to collaborate, cultivating connections across cities and championing waste diversion together. These partnerships are essential to building systems that endure beyond short-term goals, creating a shared legacy of broader sustainability for years to come.
- **Leverage Colorado's Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Recycling Programs:** HB22-1355 was signed into law on June 3, 2022. The state law requires covered producers to join a Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO), and through it, fund and manage the end of life for packaging and paper, including collection, processing, and recycling or composting. To fully access the benefits of EPR, it is recommended that the city consider adopting key elements of the plan. Communities that have an open market recycling collection system, such as Littleton, will have to wait

significantly longer for those payments and benefits. Taking early steps now ensures Littleton can receive equal benefit from these new policies and initiatives

- **Have a Meaningful Impact on Emissions Reduction & Infrastructure Maintenance:** By reducing waste and increasing recycling rates, Littleton can protect the ecosystem, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and minimize landfill use. These efforts not only support current climate goals but ensure Littleton has efficient and effective waste disposal for many years to come. Reduced waste disposal and especially organized haulers also helps reduce wear and tear on our streets, helping with other key goals of maintaining safer streets and lowering resurfacing costs.

Aligning with state and regional goals may also unlock funding opportunities, enhancing our resources for waste management improvements. Furthermore, adopting the South Metro Waste Diversion does not commit Littleton or the region to any specific action. All strategies would be brought back to council before implementation. This plan outlines high-level goals and suggestions for the next ten years for Littleton to focus on, granting the city flexibility in how specific goals are implemented based on how needs and priorities continue to grow. Ultimately, this plan establishes a resilient framework that enables our community to successfully take actions to continue to improve a key area of sustainability for our city.

We urge your favorable consideration to adopt the South Metro Waste Diversion Plan.

In addition to supporting the adoption of the plan as a whole, the NGAB wanted to call out some specific ideas mentioned in the plan that have been discussed and wished to provide additional perspectives for.

- **Support transition to organized collection.** While the board overall supports this component of the plan, we also recognize that this issue can take time and careful implementation in order to make this a smoother resident experience. Therefore, we recommend starting action on this part of the plan sooner rather than later, knowing it will likely be a process that requires some feedback and adjustment from residents, as well as leaning on other municipalities in the area to pull lessons from their experience transitioning to single hauler systems.
- **Construction & Demolition Recycling Ordinance.** As a concept the board believes this a meaningful path to waste diversion and also recognizes that exact implementation of this part of the plan might have broader economic, housing, and infrastructure impacts, so the board would like to be included in future conversation around this aspect of the plan as implementation begins over the coming years.
- **Ordinance for Commercial & Multi-family Recycling Access.** The board fully supports this initiative, it both impacts waste diversion as the key impact and also creates equal access to recycling resources to residents across different housing types in our city.

Sincerely,

Next Generation Advisory Board