



City of Littleton: South Metro Waste Diversion Plan

July 22, 2025

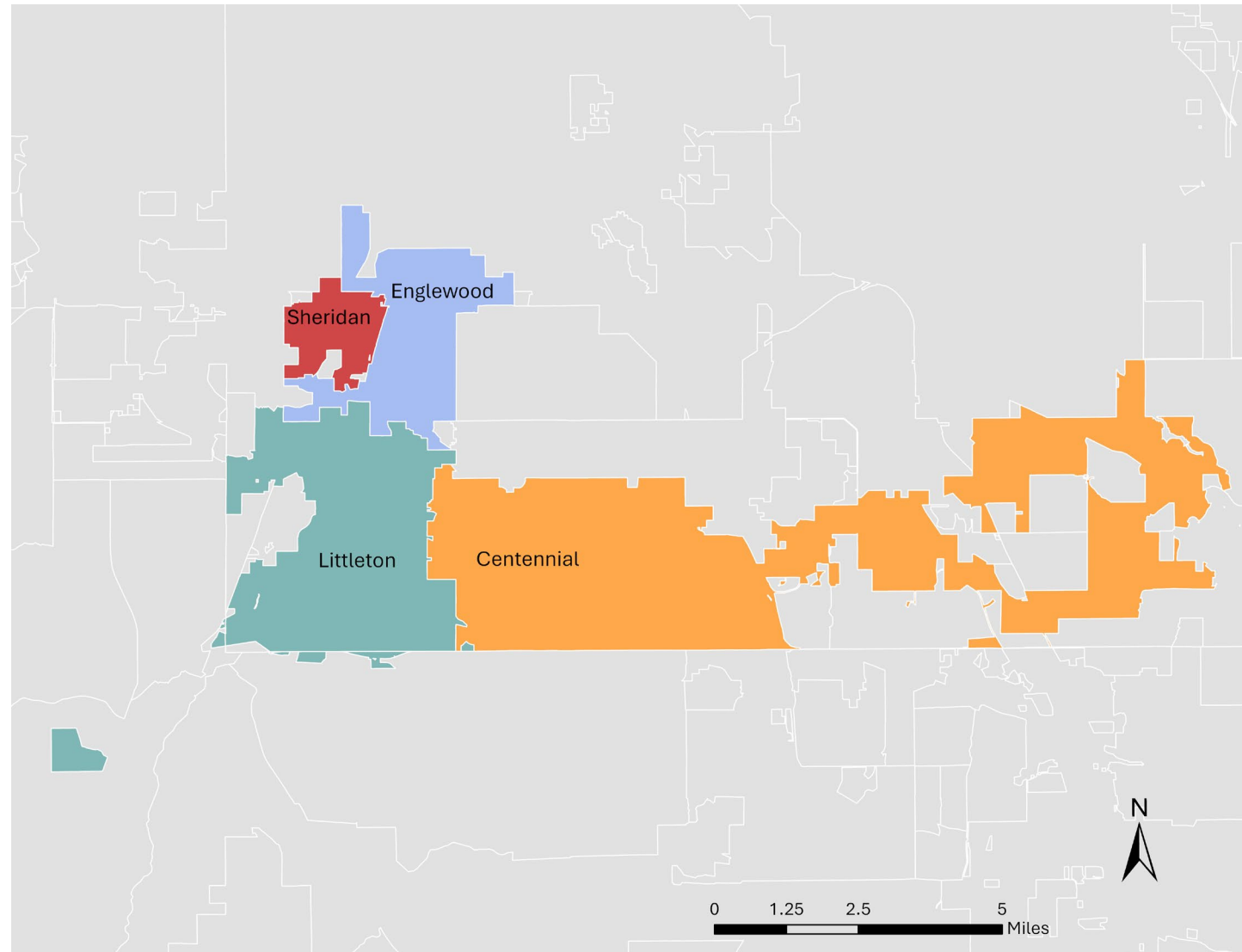


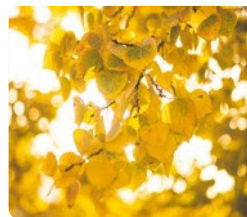
STEPS
Strategic Technical
Expertise for the
Public Sector



Agenda

- Plan Mission
- Plan Development Process
- Waste Composition and Generation
- Regional Waste Diversion Actions
- City of Littleton Waste Diversion Actions





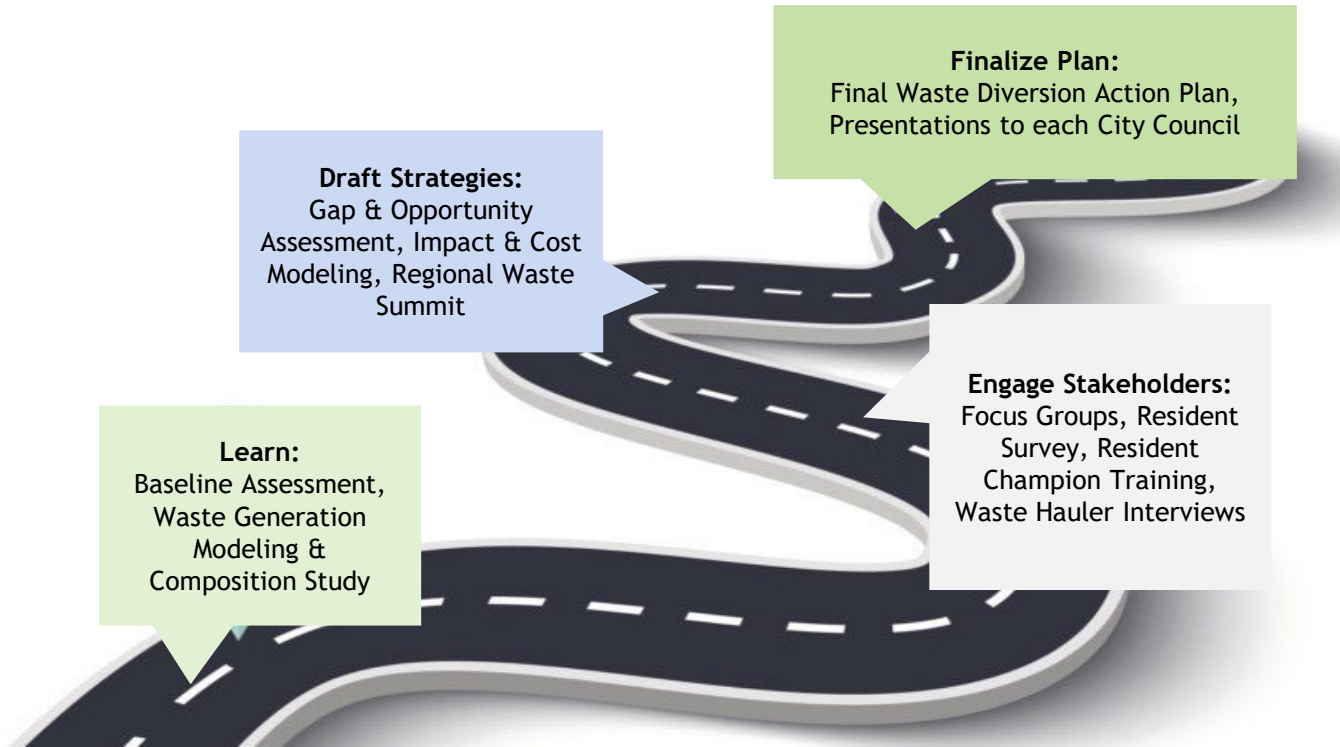
Mission

The South Metro Region, including the cities of Centennial, Englewood, Littleton, and Sheridan of Colorado, has set an ambitious goal of **progressing to a system favoring equitable waste reduction and waste diversion strategies driven by data and best practices.**

90%

Littleton residents agree or strongly agree they support efforts to increase recycling and composting.

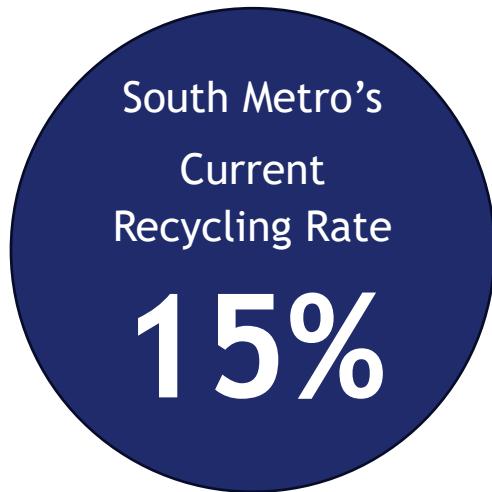
Plan Development Process



The engagement processes reached over 43,500 community interactions in the region

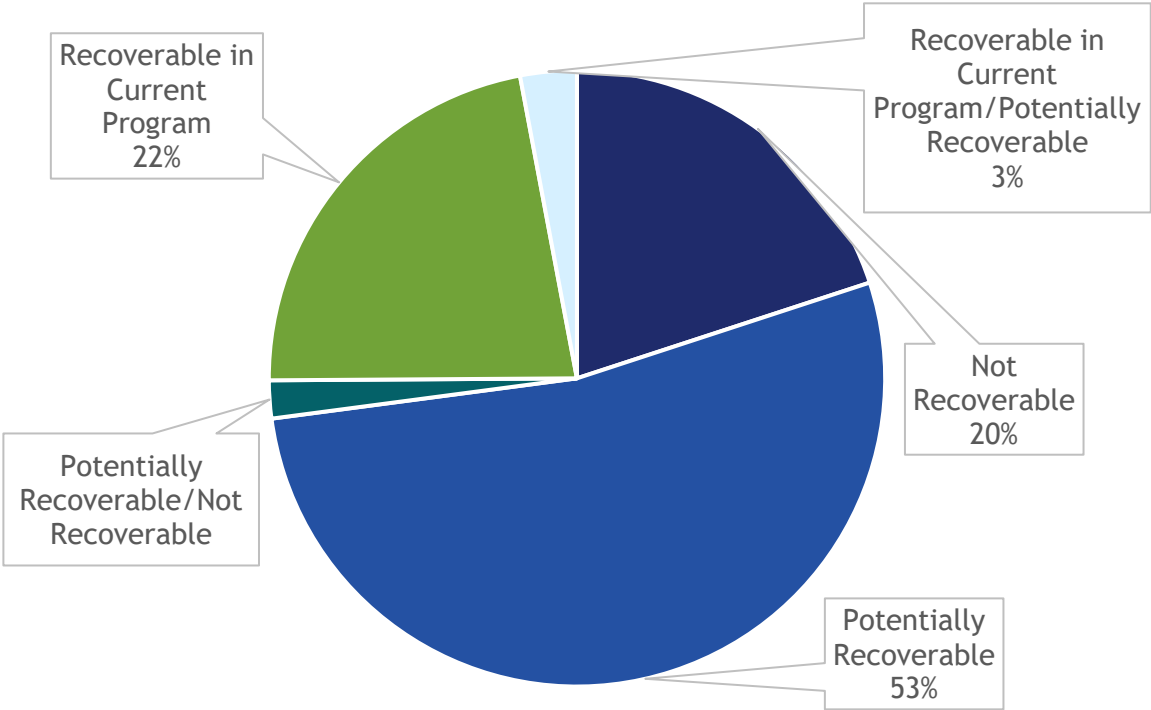
- 20 meetings with industry stakeholders including 7 local hauler interviews
- Surveys sent out to ~15,000 households with over 1,300 responses
- 34 participants at the Waste Summit with City elected officials
- 3 focus groups with participants from businesses, multifamily residences, and disadvantaged communities
- 23 resident champions trained
- 2,700+ unique site visitors on South Metro's website.
- Social media engagement of 26k

South Metro Waste Composition and Generation



- Waste tonnages were modeled and projected for each city and the South Metro Region from 2023 to 2035.
- Currently, the South Metro Region diverts approximately **15.2%** of waste from landfills.
- The majority of waste continues to be landfilled due to low recycling and composting rates.
- Projected total waste generation: **260,000 tons by 2035**
- Without changes in strategies, policies, operations, or community engagement: **85%** of waste will continue to be landfilled
- Equivalent to approximately **221,000 tons of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW)** sent to landfills

South Metro Waste Recoverability



Approximately
78%
of South Metro’s waste is recoverable through recycling, composting, or special collections.

Regional Strategies

ID	Action	Fiscal Impact	Diversion Impact	Implementation Timeline		
				FY26-30	FY30-35	FY35-40
5.1	Support and/or develop a regional recycling drop-off center within South Metro	\$\$\$	♻️			
5.2	Work together regionally towards improving organic diversion access and supporting a large-scale organics processing infrastructure that accepts food scraps and other compostables	\$\$\$	♻️♻️♻️♻️			
5.3	Support efforts to increase multi-family and commercial access to recycling / compost services	\$\$	♻️♻️			

Diversion Impact	
Diversion Impact on Tons Diverted	Estimated Additional Diversion Rate %
♻️	< 1.5%
♻️♻️	1.5% - < 3.5%
♻️♻️♻️	3.5% - < 5.5%
♻️♻️♻️♻️	≥ 5.5%

Fiscal Impact	
Fiscal Impact on Tons Diverted	Estimated Fiscal Range
\$	< \$10,000
\$\$	\$10,000 - < \$100,000
\$\$\$	≥ \$100,000

1. Regional Recycling Drop-Off Centers

- Best practice with populations over 100,000 is to establish drop-off centers per 50,000 residents
- Four drop-off centers are recommended
- Identified as a need from focus groups and residential surveys



2. Improve Organic Diversion Access and Support a Large-Scale Organics Processing Infrastructure that Accepts Food Scraps and Other Compostables



- The South Metro region is projected to generate approximately 74,500 tons of organic waste in 2035
- This represents nearly 29% of the total waste generated in the region.
- If the region does not take any additional action to support the diversion of organics, 72,700 tons of organic waste is estimated to be disposed of in the landfill in 2035 (97% of the generated organic waste).

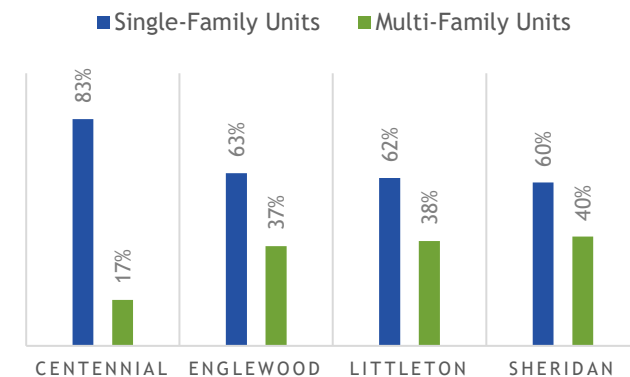
3. Support Multi-Family and Commercial Recycling and Composting

In Littleton, 38% of housing is multi-family and there are over 1,800 employer firms. This strategy will:

- Encourage or require by ordinance commercial and multi-family property owners and/or managers to submit a recycling implementation plan
- Leverage existing green business programs
- Offer technical assistance for property managers



SOUTH METRO POPULATION BY SECTOR (2023)



City of Littleton Strategies

ID	Action	Fiscal Impact	Diversion Impact	Implementation Timeline		
				FY26-30	FY30-35	FY35-40
8.1	Implement yard debris curbside services for composting for single-family residents	\$\$\$	△△△△			
8.2	Implement food scraps curbside services for composting for single-family residents	\$\$\$	△△			
8.3	Leverage Colorado's Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for recycling programs	\$	△△△△			
8.4	Require hauler licensing, including the requirement for haulers to track and report tonnage data	\$	△			
8.5	Pass an equal space ordinance to ensure commercial recycling access	\$	△△△△			
8.6	Support the transition to organized collection (single hauler)	\$\$	△△			
8.7	Ongoing community group outreach and engagement. Update websites with guidelines, events, and sorting tool	\$\$	△△△△			
8.8	Explore adopting a universal recycling ordinance	\$	△△			
8.9	Establish a construction & demolition (C&D) recycling ordinance	\$	△△△△△			

Diversion Impact	
Diversion Impact on Tons Diverted	Estimated Additional Diversion Rate %
△	< 1.5%
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Fiscal Impact	
Fiscal Impact on Tons Diverted	Estimated Fiscal Range
\$	< \$10,000
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\$\$\$	≥ \$100,000

1. Implement Yard Debris Curbside for Single-Family

- Yard debris comprises 20% of Littleton's single-family waste stream (approximately 3,000 tons/year by 2035)
- Littleton is capturing less than 1% of yard debris for diversion
- A1 Organics in Sheridan accepts and processes yard waste
- Adding a third curbside bin for organics helps reduce landfill waste and supports composting



2. Implement Food Scraps Curbside for Single-Family

- By 2035, the City of Littleton's single-family sector will generate roughly 2,900 tons of food scraps and other compostables per year, or roughly 20% of its total waste generated.
- A dedicated curbside service for food scraps can significantly divert the amount of landfill-bound material and contribute to the environmental benefits of composting.



Producer Responsibility in Colorado

Colorado's Producer Responsibility Program (HB 22-1355) will require companies that sell products in packaging and paper products to fund a statewide recycling system to recycle those materials.

- Implementation of Colorado's EPR law will start in 2026. This will set a framework for reimbursing service providers, which will cover **100% of eligible net costs associated with recycling covered materials.**
- Circular Action Alliance's Colorado Plan Proposal says that “reimbursement of **drop-off and curbside collection costs** will cover costs such as **capital costs**, base-level **education and outreach**, operational costs, reasonable profit margin, and eligible **administrative expenses.**”
- While this draft Plan Proposal is currently under review, South Metro should continue to monitor and stay engaged for potential funding for regional recycling drop-off centers.

3. Leverage Colorado's EPR Law for Recycling

- Colorado's Producer Responsibility program will fully fund recycling services for all households starting in 2026, beginning with communities that have organized (non-open market) systems.
- To fully benefit, cities should consider policies like equal space ordinances, hauler licensing with bundled recycling, Pay-As-You-Throw pricing, and organized hauling contracts.

Colorado's EPR Program

Circular Action Alliance will fund recycling services and infrastructure across Colorado.

Starting in 2026 under the Producer Responsibility Program, CAA will launch a strategic, phased plan to transform Colorado's recycling system and more than double recycling rates for packaging and paper.

Reimburse
for Existing
Curbside
Service

Boost
Participation
Where Access
Exists

Build
Capacity in
Underserved
Areas

Enhance
Systems &
Recycle More
Items

By 2030, recycling
should be just as
convenient as trash
pickup, no matter
where you live.



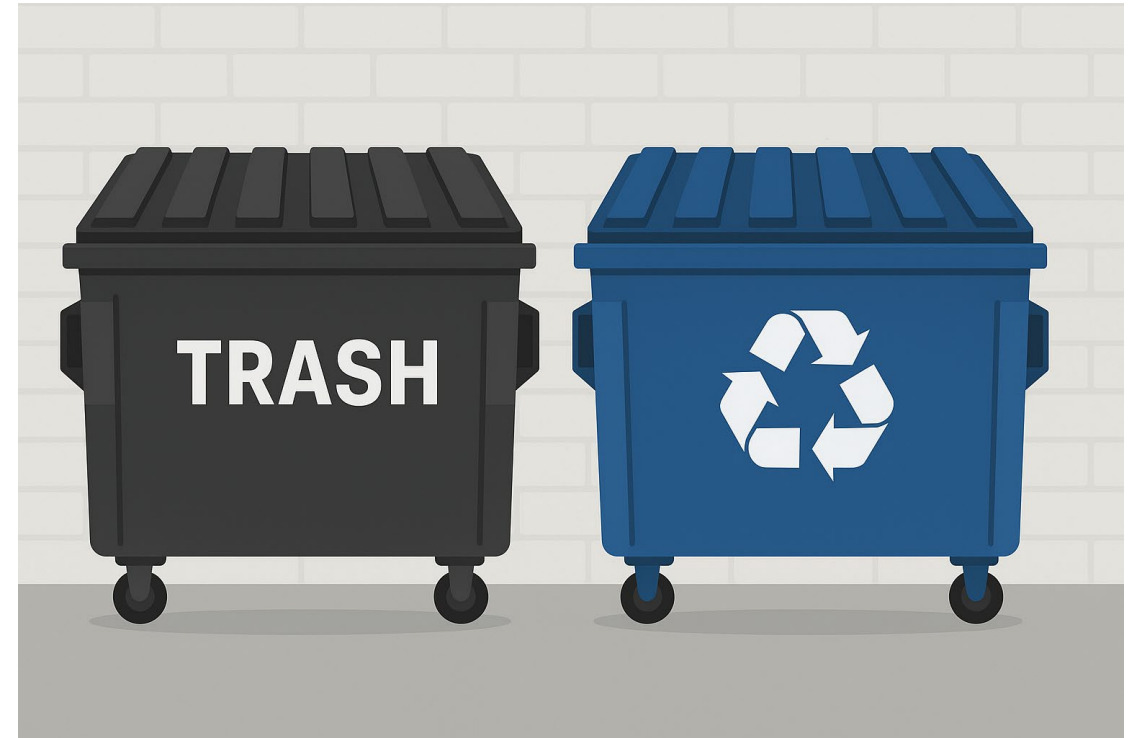
4. Require Hauler Licensing, Require Haulers to Track and Report Tonnage Data

- **Hauler licensing ordinances** require waste haulers to obtain a local license and comply with standards such as proof of insurance, volume-based pricing (PAYT), safety measures, and designated operating days.
- Best practice includes requiring haulers to report trash, recycling, and organics tonnage to support baseline data, track progress, and inform greenhouse gas inventories.
- **Example ordinances:**
 - City of Lafayette (Ord No 21. Series 2020)
 - Town of Vail ([5-12-5](#))
 - City of Broomfield ([8-04](#))
 - City of Boulder ([Title 6, Chapter 12](#))
 - City of Denver ([Ord. No. 892-15](#))



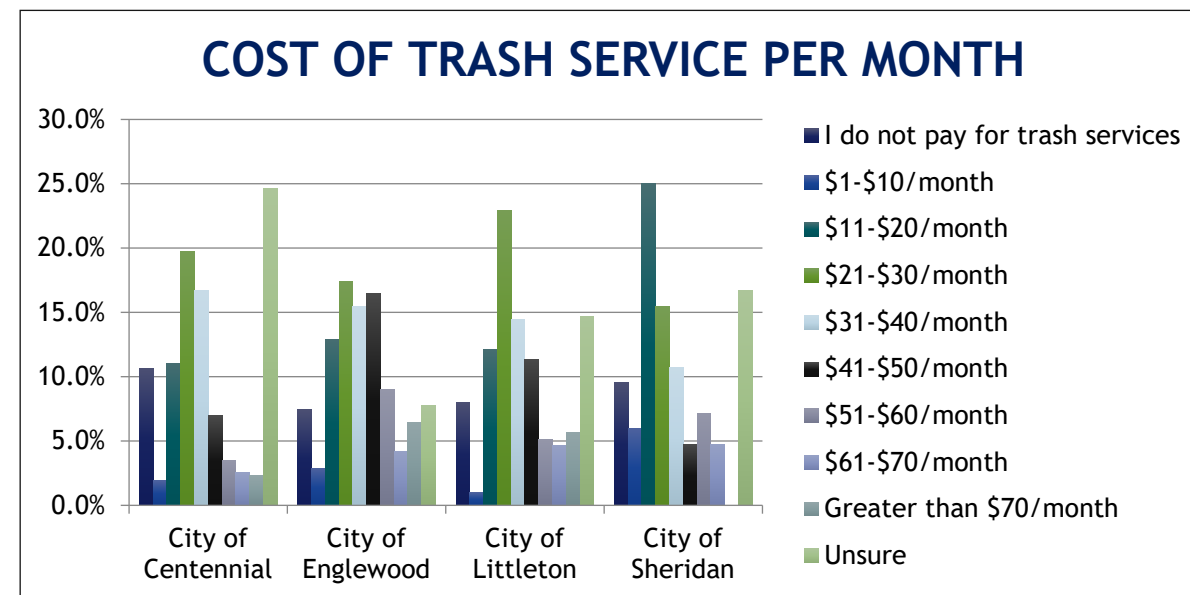
5. Pass an Equal Space Ordinance to Ensure Commercial Recycling Access

- In Littleton, 38% of housing is multi-family and there are over 1,800 employer firms.
- **Equal Space Ordinances** require new commercial buildings to provide the same amount of space for recycling infrastructure as for trash, ensuring future developments support recycling access.
- **Example ordinances:**
 - City of Superior ([16-23-30](#))
 - City of Broomfield ([17-34-060](#))
 - City of Boulder ([6-3-13](#) and [6-3-14](#))
 - City of Fort Collins ([Ordinance 109](#))



6. Support the Transition to Organized Collection

- **Organized Residential Collection** is when a municipality contracts with a hauler (or haulers) for curbside trash and recycling services, often including mandatory recycling, Pay-As-You-Throw pricing, and optional services like composting or bulky item pickup.
- **Benefits:** can lower and stabilize costs for residents, reduce truck traffic, improve safety, reduce wear and tear of roads, and expand access to services for single-family homes and small multi-family buildings.
- **Example ordinances:** Cities of [Sheridan](#), [Fort Collins](#), [Denver](#), [Boulder](#), [Morrison](#), [Broomfield](#)

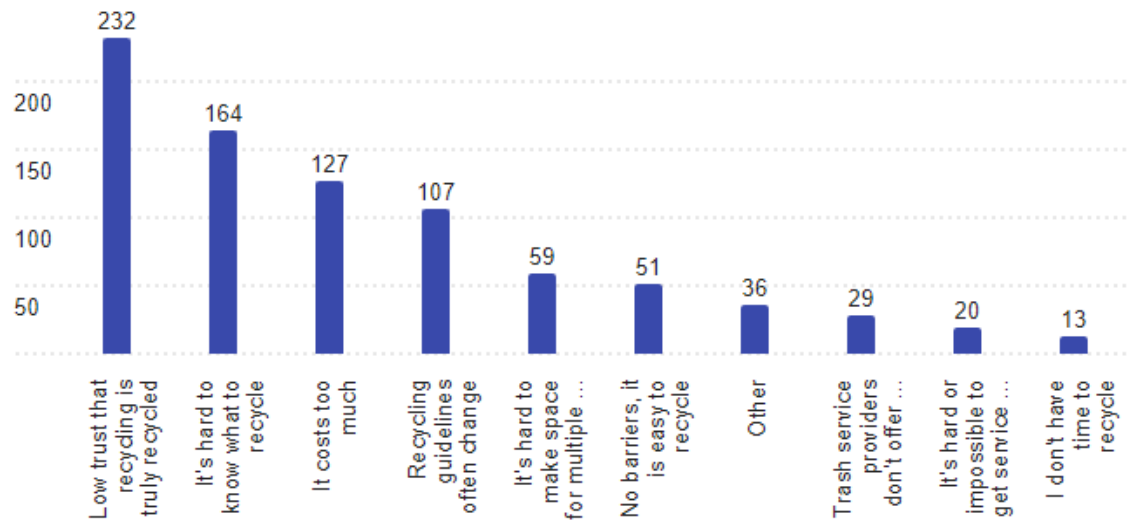


Residents expressed strong concerns about the current open hauling system, citing safety, pollution, and lack of accountability, and voiced support for more coordinated service.

7. Ongoing Community Group Outreach and Engagement

- According to Littleton residents, the biggest barriers to recycling are: Low trust that recycling is truly recycled, followed by not knowing what to recycle.
- Steps to Increase Ongoing Outreach and Engagement:
 - Update Websites with Guidelines, Events and Sorting Tool
 - Create and Widely Distribute Graphic and Bilingual Guidelines and Train Municipal Staff on Waste Guidelines
 - Table at Community and Recycling Events to Distribute Resources and Answer Questions

LARGEST CHALLENGES TO RECYCLING FOR RESIDENTS IN THE CITY OF LITTLETON



8. Explore Adopting a Universal Recycling Ordinance

- **Universal Recycling Ordinances** require businesses and multi-family buildings to provide access to recycling services.
- Successful implementation involves **outreach to businesses, multi-family property managers, and haulers** to build awareness and support.
- Pilot programs and technical assistance help ease the transition and improve compliance with new recycling requirements.
- Complements Strategy 5: Equal Space Ordinance.
- **Example ordinances:**
 - Longmont, CO - [Universal Recycling Ordinance](#)
 - Boulder, CO - [Universal Zero Waste Ordinance](#)
 - Avon, CO - [Recycling Ordinance 22-13](#)
 - Town of Vail, CO - [Recycling Ordinance § 5-12-7](#)
 - Austin, TX - [Universal Recycling Ordinance](#)



9. Establish a Construction & Demolition Ordinance

- **C&D Recycling Ordinances** require contractors to sort and recycle materials like wood, metal, and cardboard from demolition projects, often applying only to projects above a certain size threshold.
- Effective programs rely on infrastructure, end markets, contractor coordination, and may include a deposit-refund system to ensure compliance.
- Deconstruction offers a complementary approach by preserving materials for reuse.
- **Example ordinances:**
 - City of Fort Collins ([Sec 12-22](#))
 - City of Lakewood ([Chapter 14.02.040 Par. J](#))
 - City of Boulder ([Ordinance 8366](#))

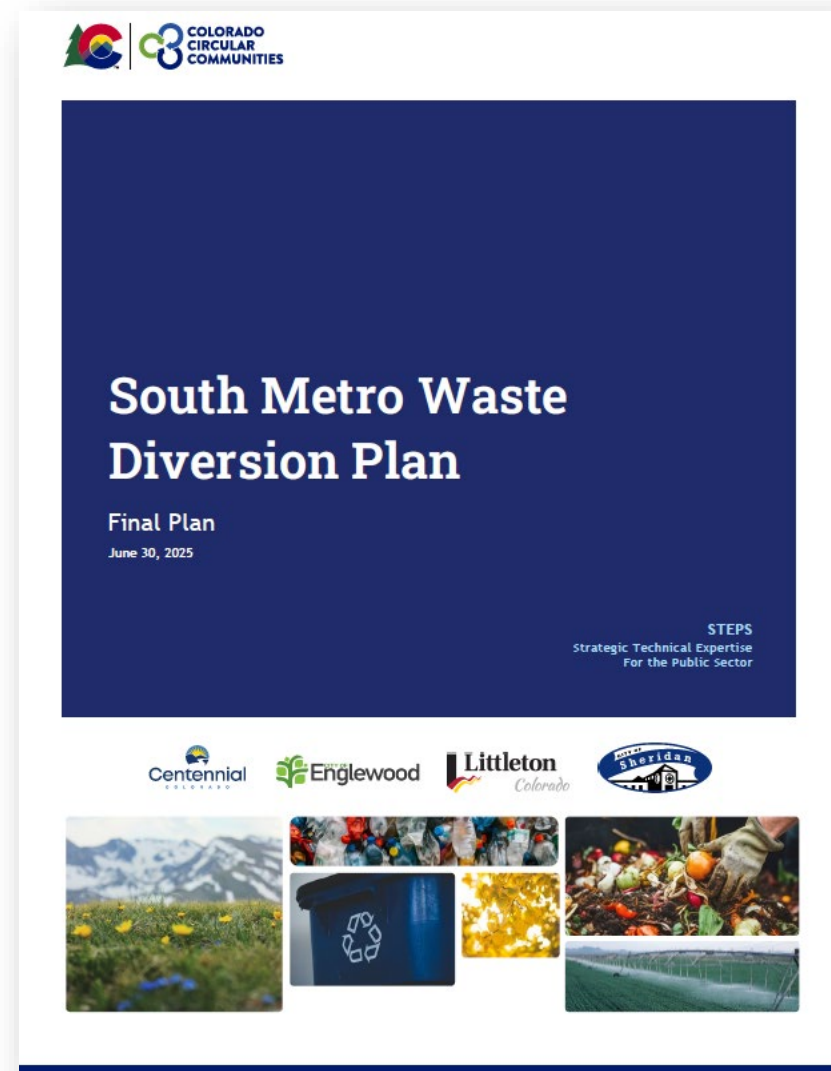


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Next Steps

- Pass a resolution to adopt the South Metro Waste Diversion Plan.
- Continue working collaboratively with the region to promote waste reduction and waste diversion activities.
- Work with the other South Metro Cities for grant funding to further evaluate and accomplish strategies.



Thank You!

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Appendix

South Metro Baseline and Background

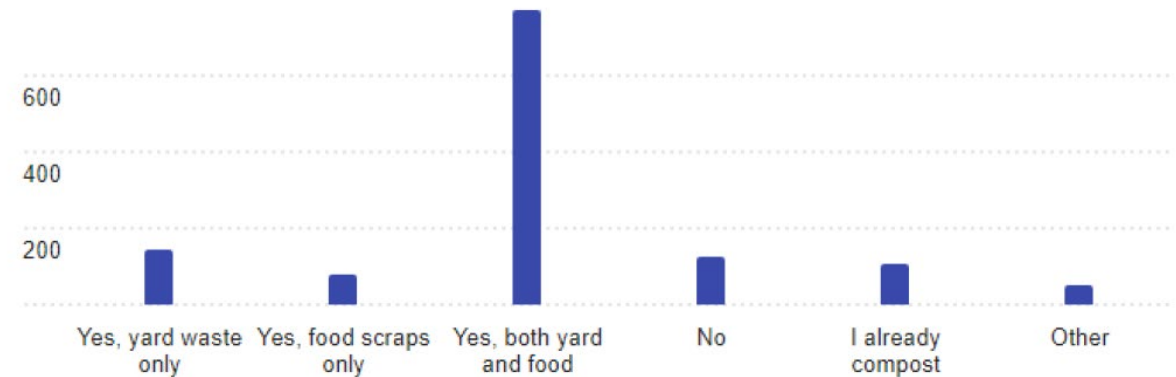
- Cities of Centennial, Englewood, Sheridan, and Littleton
- Collectively South Metro Cities have a population of ~190,000 residents

Description	Centennial	Englewood	Littleton	Sheridan
Area (square miles)	26.9	6.7	13.8	2.3
Population	105,865	33,642	44,755	5,970
Households	40,952	15,686	20,484	2,442
Median Household Income	\$124,617	\$79,375	\$90,273	\$53,707
Persons Below Poverty Level	3.1%	8.3%	7.6%	11.9%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	61.3%	44.3%	56.0%	19.0%
Language other than English spoken at Home	12.4%	12.2%	9.7%	31.7%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	9.0%	18.5%	12.2%	41.7%
Multi-family Units*	16.8%	36.6%	38.4%	40.1%
Total Employer Firms (2017)	3,633	1,475	1,825	423

Survey Key Takeaways

- **85%** of respondents **have a recycling bin at home and recycle.**
- **58%** of respondents shared they would be **willing to compost both yard and food waste.**
- **Emphasis on food waste** reduction and recovery
- **Low trust** is the largest challenge perceived by residents in Centennial, Englewood, and Littleton, while not knowing what to recycle is the largest challenge perceived by Sheridan residents.
- **Recycling Drop Off Locations** were identified as a need

Q. Would you be willing to save yard waste or food scraps for composting?



Focus Group Key Takeaways

- **Every** participant had access to trash services, **fewer than half** had curbside recycling services, and **one** business had contracted composting services.
- The most common barriers to recycling were:
 - **Multi-Family Complexes:** Lack of access, space and dumpster capacity
 - **Businesses:** Lack of access to the decision-making process
 - **Disadvantaged Communities:** Lack of available reliable resources and services and cost as a barrier
- All three focus groups brought up concerns about there being **too many haulers** in the community, citing child safety and property and road damage
- All three focus groups brought up a desire to expand access to **hard-to-recycle** materials in the community

Waste Characterization Study

- 10,175 pounds of trash and recycling sorted
- Thank you to host facilities and partners:
 - Jordan Road Transfer Station
 - Waste Connections
 - STS Services
 - STS South
 - Republic Services



What's in South Metro's Residential Trash?



Organics
(48%)

Food Waste, Yard Waste, Other
Organics



Recyclables
(18%)

Recoverable Paper,
Plastic, Glass, Metal



Other
(34%)

Liquids, textiles, electronics,
batteries, Construction waste,
Household hazardous waste,
fines, residual, non-recoverable
plastics, paper, metal, glass



What's in South Metro's Commercial Trash?



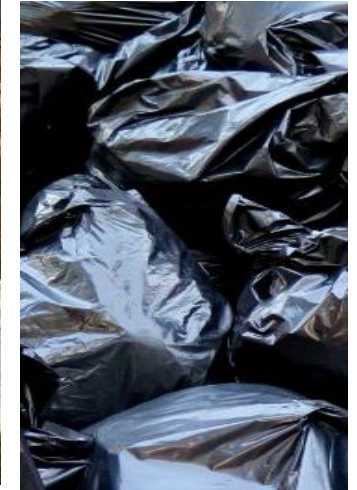
Organics
(23%)

Food Waste, Yard Waste, Other
Organics



Recyclables
(33%)

Recoverable Paper, Plastic,
Glass, Metal



Other
(44%)

Liquids, textiles, electronics,
batteries, Construction waste,
Household hazardous waste,
fines, residual, non-recoverable
plastics, paper, metal, glass