



WESTMINSTER

Staff Report

TO: The Mayor and Members of the City Council
DATE: February 17, 2016
SUBJECT: Briefing and Post-City Council Briefing Agenda for February 22, 2016
PREPARED BY: Donald M. Tripp, City Manager

Please Note: Study Sessions and Post City Council briefings are open to the public, and individuals are welcome to attend and observe. However, these briefings are not intended to be interactive with the audience, as this time is set aside for City Council to receive information, make inquiries, and provide Staff with policy direction.

Looking ahead to Monday night's Briefing and Post-City Council meeting briefing, the following schedule has been prepared:

Dinner	6:00 P.M.
Council Briefing (<i>The public is welcome to attend.</i>)	6:30 P.M.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

POST BRIEFING (*The public is welcome to attend.*)

PRESENTATIONS

1. Residential Community Recycling Options Update

CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

None at this time.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. An Executive session to review and discuss City facility security measures pursuant to WMC 1-11-3(C)(6) and CRS 24-6-402(4)(d) – **Verbal**
2. Discussion of strategy and progress on negotiations related to the Downtown Westminster Redevelopment and the possible sale, trade or exchange of property interests and provide instructions to the Authority's negotiators as authorized by WMC 1-11-3(C)(4) and (7) CRS 24-6-402 (4)(a) and (e)(I) – **Verbal**

INFORMATION ONLY

None at this time.

Items may come up between now and Monday night. City Council will be apprised of any changes to the post-briefing schedule.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald M. Tripp
City Manager

NOTE: Persons needing an accommodation must notify the City Manager's Office no later than noon the Thursday prior to the scheduled Study Session to allow adequate time to make arrangements. You can call [303-658-2161](tel:303-658-2161) /TTY 711 or State Relay) or write to mbarajas@cityofwestminster.us to make a reasonable accommodation request.



Staff Report

City Council Study Session Meeting
February 22, 2016



SUBJECT: Residential Community Recycling Options Update

PREPARED BY: Martee Erichson, Risk Manager
Mark Ruse, Facilities CIP and Operations Manager
Nick Butel, Environmental Health and Safety Analyst

Recommended City Council Action

Provide staff direction on the City's role and level of resources to be applied to residential community recycling.

Summary Statement

- In 2008, City Council directed Staff to assess community recycling. The research identified low rates of recycling in Westminster. As a result, Staff and the Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) commissioned studies and held numerous community meetings with stakeholders regarding waste and recycling. Multiple options to increase community recycling were considered and resulted in the following actions.
 - City Council redefined residential services to include Homeowners' Associations (HOAs) in the Westminster Municipal Code.
 - City Council approved a code change that requires haulers to offer residential and business recycling as a service option.
 - City Council authorized the construction of a recycling center and the closure of the four drop-off locations around the City. This staffed recycling center was to be constructed in three phases. Code changes and construction of a recycling center's first phase were authorized by Council in 2012 and 2013, respectively, but only partially funded.
 - Construction of the recycling center was delayed due to an extensive street project nearby.
- In 2015, the initial phase of the recycling center was estimated to be \$364,192 and \$180,000 was initially budgeted for this project. With the funding gap of the initial construction phase of the recycling center being \$285,000 and with operating expenses increasing as a result of dropping commodities prices for raw recyclable material, the information used to support the 2013 Council choice is no longer accurate.
- Building upon previous reports and stakeholder meetings, Staff has reviewed five broad models of residential community recycling. All five models or combinations of the models exist in neighboring Front Range communities.
 - Model 1) Close current recycling drop-off locations
 - Model 2) Continue current recycling drop-off locations with service enhancements
 - Model 3) Construct a single, staffed recycling center

Staff Report – Residential Community Recycling Options Update

February 22, 2016

Page 2

- Model 4) Require inclusion of curbside recycling by haulers
- Model 5) City contracted curbside trash and recycling service

Expenditure Required: None at this time

Source of Funds: Not Applicable

Policy Issue

What is the City's role and level of resources to be applied to residential community recycling?

Alternative

Although five wide-ranging models of community recycling are presented individually, Council could choose to authorize any combination of these models or direct Staff to develop other unidentified options based on desired outcomes.

Background Information

In 2008, at the direction of City Council, Staff began assessing community recycling and found low rates of recycling in Westminster. The Environmental Advisory Board and Staff commissioned studies and held numerous community meetings with stakeholders regarding waste and recycling. Multiple possibilities to increase community recycling were explored. This comprehensive assessment resulted in Westminster Municipal Code changes that:

- Redefined the definition of residential to include HOA's.
- Requires haulers to offer recycling to residential and business customers.
- City Council also authorized the construction of a staffed recycling center and when the new center was complete, to close the four drop-off locations.
- This single recycling center was to be constructed in three phases and included segregated and comingled recycling opportunities.
- Code changes were authorized by City Council in 2012 and construction of a recycling center's first phase was authorized by Council in 2013. Construction of the recycling center was delayed due to an extensive street project nearby.

The June 4, 2012, Staff Report (Attachment 1) outlines in detail the Environmental Advisory Board's recommendations to City Council related to recycling.

Current Conditions

Following Council's approval in 2013 to proceed with the initial phase of the recycling center, the project was delayed due to the street and extensive bridge work on 72nd Avenue and Raleigh Street. The original construction and staffing cost estimates for this project are now several years old. In 2015, a Staff taskforce was formed to evaluate possible models of community recycling. The Staff taskforce evaluated the following five models: 1) close current recycling drop-off locations; 2) continue current recycling drop-off locations with service enhancements; 3) construct a single recycling center; 4) require inclusion of curbside recycling by haulers; and 5) City contracted curbside trash and recycling service. Each of the five models were assessed based on ten possible policy objective considerations. A description of each policy consideration is listed below.

- Diversion Rate – The amount of waste that is diverted from a landfill and put to beneficial use or is recycled.
- Expense to Residents – A direct monetary expense to residents of Westminster.
- Expense to the City of Westminster – A direct monetary and staff expense to the City of Westminster.
- Street Damage, Air & Noise Pollution – Damage to residential streets by heavy trucks. Air and noise pollution by heavy diesel trucks in residential streets.
- Level of Service – The perceived level of service that residents feel they receive.
- Accessibility (proximity) – The distance a service is to residents.

- Alignment with Strategic Plan – The City’s vision of becoming “one of the most sustainable cities in America” and Strategic Plan goal of a “beautiful, desirable, safe, and environmentally responsible city.”
- Feelings of Choice – The perceived amount of choice residents feel they have.
- Ease of Use – The level of convenience to residents.
- Private Business (haulers) – The feelings that haulers may have in reaction to a model.

These five models and their considerations are discussed in detail below. For each model, policy considerations are presented in a table that indicates an overall qualitative assessment of the ten considerations as compared to current conditions only.

Model 1: Close Current Recycling Drop-off Locations. The City currently operates four unstaffed comingled recycling drop-off locations. The recycling drop-off locations are located at Fire Station No. 1, Municipal Service Center, Municipal Court, and West View Recreation Center. These four locations have a combined total of 27 recycling bins. Details regarding each location is provided in the table below.

Name	Address	# of Containers	Size of Containers	Monthly Cost	Service Days
Fire Station #1	3948 W 73 rd	11	6 Yards	\$1,716	6 days Mo - Sa
Municipal Service Center	6575 W 88th	5	8 Yard	\$1,040	6 days Mo - Sa
Municipal Court	3030 Turnpike Dr.	5	6 Yard	\$780	5 days Mo - Fr
West View Rec Center	10747 W 108 th	6	8 Yard	\$1,248	6 days Mo - Sa

Three of the four locations are serviced every day of the week except for Sundays, as service is not available on Sundays. The total amount of recyclables collected in 2015 from the four current recycling drop-off locations is estimated to be 1,000 tons or 2,000,000 pounds. Bins at the facilities are frequently filled to capacity and have to be temporarily closed until they can be serviced. While these locations are not staffed, staffing is needed for tidying the locations, monitoring the recycling hauler, and opening/closing facilities when they are filled to capacity. The City currently pays \$57,408 per year to a refuse hauler and has a dedicated 3/8 of a Fulltime Employee (FTE) (approximately \$16,875 per year) to maintain these four drop-off locations. In 2015, the Colorado Department of Health and Environment (CDPHE) awarded \$3,663 in rebates to the City for diverting waste from landfills. Closing the four drop-off locations would reduce city expenditures approximately \$70,600 per year, including the rebates offered by CDPHE.

Consideration	Improvement/ Neutral/ Downgrade	Notes
Diversion Rate	Downgrade	Those using the current facilities are expected to either find alternatives to continue recycling or stop recycling. Those who stop recycling would decrease Westminster’s diversion rate.

Expense to Residents	Downgrade	Those using the current facilities are expected to either find alternatives to continue recycling or stop recycling. Alternatives to continue recycling will likely result in an increase in expenses for those individuals.
Expense to City	Improvement	This model would result is a reduction in City expenditures.
Street Damage, Air & Noise Pollution	Downgrade	It is anticipated this model would result in increased heavy truck traffic on residential streets from more trips by haulers.
Level of Service	Downgrade	This model would decrease the level of service to the public.
Accessibility (proximity)	Downgrade	Those using the current facilities that do not choose to recycle at the curbside (if available to them) would have to travel outside of Westminster to recycle.
Alignment with Strategic Plan	Downgrade	This model would decrease the public perception of Westminster being an <i>Environmentally Responsible City</i> .
Feelings of Choice	Downgrade	This model would decrease the choices available to the public.
Ease of Use	Downgrade	This model would decrease the ease of recycling in Westminster.
Private Business (haulers)	Neutral	This model would not result in significant change.

Model 2: Continue Current Recycling Drop-off Locations with Service Enhancements. As described in Model 1, the City currently operates four unstaffed comingled recycling drop-off locations. These four locations are frequently utilized beyond their current capacity, causing temporary closures. When a location is closed, some individuals continue to drop-off recyclables, which results in overflowing bins and material placed around the bins. Overflowing bins and material placed around bins, result in a disheveled appearance and allows for wind to blow material around. In addition to being an eyesore, overflows result in increased maintenance to collect debris and broken glass. To address over capacity issues, additional collections would be preferred; however, as three of the four locations are already dumped daily except for Sundays, this is not an option. Therefore, additional bin(s) are needed. Sufficient space is available at Fire Station No. 1, Municipal Court, and West View Recreation Center. The Municipal Service Center location does not have space for any additional bins. This location is the location that most frequently needs to be closed due to capacity issues. Additionally, traffic congestion is a concern at this location as the recycling bins are next to the main gate. Many near miss traffic incidents occur at this location. To enhance service to the public and create a safer setting for both the City and the public, Staff recommends an alternate location be sought at an existing City facility. This location could be either within a parking lot or an expansion of a paved area. Staff anticipates expansion of a paved area will be needed for this option, representing a onetime cost of approximately \$26,000. As a new location has yet to be selected, the cost estimate is only a preliminary estimation based upon a typical square footage cost without construction complications and located on level ground. Increasing the total number of bins by 20 percent represents an approximate increased annual cost of \$10,000. Servicing these four locations to maintain a tidy appearance requires additional staffing of approximately five (5) hours per week or 1/8 of an FTE, resulting in an annual cost increases

of \$5,625. The total estimated additional operating cost would be \$15,625 per year, for an estimated total cost of \$86,225 per year.

Consideration	Improvement/ Neutral/ Downgrade	Notes
Diversion Rate	Neutral	This model would not result in significant change.
Expense to Residents	Neutral	This model would not result in significant change.
Expense to City	Downgrade	This model would result is an increase in City expenditures.
Street Damage, Air & Noise Pollution	Neutral	This model would not result in significant change.
Level of Service	Improvement	This model would increase the level of service to the public, as locations would be open more often.
Accessibility (proximity)	Neutral	This model would not result in significant change.
Alignment with Strategic Plan	Neutral	This model would not result in significant change.
Feelings of Choice	Neutral	This model would not result in significant change.
Ease of Use	Neutral	This model would not result in significant change.
Private Business (haulers)	Neutral	This model would not result in significant change.

Model 3: Construct a Community Recycling Center. This model involves constructing a recycling location where the public could sort their recyclables into designated bins or do comingled recycling. Numerous alternatives for a community recycling center are possible. Those possibilities range from a basic facility to a comprehensive education and hard-to-recycle center. Additionally, the location of this facility is variable. The location (Attachment 3) and designs (Attachment 4) previously provided to Council for a community recycling center were presented in the *Community Recycling Project Update Staff Report* on March 4, 2013 (Attachment 2). The intent of this completed project was to not only provide a location for recycling, but also to function as hub of sustainability education in a setting that fosters synergy with its surroundings. The completed project was to be a multi-function facility that has the ability to adjust its roles as community needs change. The proposed single multi-function recycling center was divided into three construction phases. Phase 1 would construct a basic recycling center where recyclables are either sorted by type or as a comingled recyclable. Phase 1 of construction was estimated in 2015 to cost approximately \$364,192, \$18,492 more than the original 2013 estimate of \$345,700. This initial phase is currently funded at \$180,000. Subsequent phases incorporate additional capacity, xeriscaping, and permanent structures to fulfill its multi-function mission. Phase 2 and Phase 3 of construction was estimated in 2015 to cost an additional \$64,010 and \$84,790, respectively. The total cost to complete all three phases was estimated to be \$512,992.

Ongoing costs for a community recycling center are dependent upon services offered, the commodities market, and partnership/ grant opportunities. A staffed center with basic recycling services would be open approximately 80 hours per week, requiring approximately two FTE. The annual expense of two

FTE would be approximately \$90,000. Prior reports originally anticipated that annual cost for transportation of recyclables will be offset by the sale of the recyclables and upkeep costs would be negligible. Recent commodity prices for recyclable materials has declined and this may no longer be an accurate assumption. As a result of fluctuating commodity prices, an accurate estimation of total operational cost is not possible at this time. The CDPHE currently offers grant money for projects that increase the diversion rate. Grant funding, if awarded, would partially offset costs. Partnerships with community organizations to supplement staff or sponsor the facility are also possible. Given the uncertainties in operational costs, they are estimated to be anywhere between revenue neutral and \$145,000 per year to operate a center.

Consideration	Improvement/ Neutral/ Downgrade	Notes
Diversion Rate	Neutral	This model would not result in significant change.
Expense to Residents	Neutral	This model would not result in significant change.
Expense to City	Downgrade	This model would result in an increase of City expenditures.
Street Damage, Air & Noise Pollution	Neutral	This model would not result in significant change.
Level of Service	Improvement	This model would increase the level of service to the public by means of having a dedicated facility that is staffed.
Accessibility (proximity)	Downgrade	A single facility would result in some residents needing to travel further to access the recycling center.
Alignment with Strategic Plan	Improvement	Construction of a community recycling center would display an increase in a level of commitment to recycling.
Feelings of Choice	Neutral	This model would not result in significant change.
Ease of Use	Improvement	While separation of recyclables would be required, a staff member would be able to assist the public.
Private Business (haulers)	Neutral	This model would not result in significant change.

Model 4: Require Inclusion of Curbside Recycling By Haulers. This model would require haulers to provide a recycling bin to all residential curbside customers, whether requested by the homeowner or not. Currently, haulers are required to only offer recycling to curbside customers. This model would be accomplished through changing the Westminster Municipal Code. For example, an excerpt of Boulder, Colorado, Municipal Code reads as follows:

Each hauler that provides residential trash collection shall provide for the collection of the following no less frequently than every other week:

(1) Unlimited recyclables...

An optional addition to this model could include requirements on bin size pricing to promote economic incentives to increase the diversion rate. Again, an excerpt of Boulder, Colorado, Municipal Code is an example:

Each hauler shall provide each residential customer with a base unit of service which shall include a maximum of thirty-two gallons of trash collection service and which shall also include the collection of recyclables...

- (1) *A hauler may charge any amount for the base unit of service.*
- (2) *A hauler may charge, in addition, a flat periodic fee. This flat periodic fee may not exceed the charge for the base unit of service and shall be itemized separately on customer billing statements.*
- (3) *No hauler may charge less than a prorated portion of the charge for the base unit of service for each additional volume of trash that may be collected from a customer during one or more collection periods.*

Consideration	Improvement/ Neutral/ Downgrade	Notes
Diversion Rate	Improvement	When both trash and recycling is available at the curbside, the diversion rate will increase. Additional increases to the diversion rate will increase if variable rate pricing is implemented.
Expense to Residents	Downgrade	This model would result in an increase for residents who currently do not subscribe to recycling services. This increase would be minimized if variable rate pricing was implemented, and may result in decreased prices for those who currently utilize curbside recycling and pay for more trash service than they use.
Expense to City	Improvement	This model would result in a decrease of City expenditures.
Street Damage, Air & Noise Pollution	Downgrade	This model would likely not increase the number of trash or recycling trucks on the roads but it would increase the number of stops recycling trucks make and it may result in additional routes for recycling trucks.
Level of Service	Improvement	To those who currently do not receive curbside recycling service this would be an improvement.
Accessibility (proximity)	Improvement	As residential customers would have recycling at their curbside, they would not have to travel to a recycling center.
Alignment with Strategic Plan	Improvement	All residents receiving recycling bins at the curbside would demonstrate a community's commitment to recycle and its importance. Variable rate pricing is commonly regarded as the 'way of the future.'

Feelings of Choice	Downgrade	The feelings of choice may be reduced by requiring recycling bins be provided. At the onset, variable rate pricing is typically met with a degree of uncertainty from the public; however, once introduced, the overall satisfaction is commonly higher than what it was before.
Ease of Use	Improvement	Recycling at the curbside is the simplest form of recycling.
Private Business (haulers)	Neutral	Haulers are currently required to offer recycling, but under this model that service would be automatically provided. Variable rate pricing could be more challenging for some haulers than for others.

Model 5: City Contracted Curbside Trash and Recycling Service. In this model, the City would contract with one or more haulers to provide trash and recycling service to residential curbside customers, like many Homeowners Associations (HOAs) currently do for their members. The model is often used by cities to reduce the overall cost to residents by achieving economies of scale. The City could have the majority of the program administrative tasks (collecting payments, receiving communications, etc.) performed by the hauler(s) or the City could perform those tasks directly. Other municipalities with similar programs who have chosen to administer the program, commonly cover their expenses with a nominal fee. This fee is also used for education about the program and for related waste reduction efforts. Implementation of this model could be phased in over period of time to respect current residential contracts. An optional addition to this model could include variable rate pricing to give residents an opportunity to select a level of trash service that best suits their needs. This optional addition promotes economic incentives to increase the diversion rate.

Consideration	Improvement/ Neutral/ Downgrade	Notes
Diversion Rate	Improvement	When both trash and recycling is available at the curbside, the diversion rate increases. Additional increases to the diversion rate are seen when variable rate pricing is implemented.
Expense to Residents	Improvement	Economy of scale benefits would decrease expenses to residents. The greatest decreases in expenses would result from a variable rate pricing structure.
Expense to City	Improvement	This model would result in a decrease of City expenditures.
Street Damage, Air & Noise Pollution	Improvement	This model would result in less trucks on City streets. Studies show one trash truck causes the equivalent damage of 350 to 10,000 cars. The City may choose to include items like alternative fuel (compressed natural gas) vehicles be part of the bid process, further reducing noise and air pollution.

Level of Service	Improvement	Simplicity of having a City contracted hauler(s) would be seen as an improvement. To those who currently do not receive curbside recycling service, this may be viewed as an improvement. Add on services (large item pickup, in drive pickup, carryout, carryback, composting, etc.) provided by the hauler(s) would be simple to implement under this model.
Accessibility (proximity)	Improvement	As residential customers would have recycling at their curbside, they would not have to travel to a recycling center.
Alignment with Strategic Plan	Improvement	All residents receiving recycling bins at the curbside would demonstrate a community’s commitment to recycle and its importance. Variable rate pricing is commonly regarded as the ‘way of the future.’
Feelings of Choice	Downgrade	By the City contracting with a hauler(s), the ability of a resident to personally select their hauler would not be possible. At the onset, variable rate pricing is typically met with a degree of uncertainty from the public; however, once introduced, the overall satisfaction is commonly higher than what it was prior. While choosing the company who provides the service would not be possible, services available to residents by the chosen hauler(s) would be expanded.
Ease of Use	Improvement	Recycling at the curbside is the simplest form of recycling.
Private Business (haulers)	Downgrade	Haulers would bid for a contract with the City. Haulers who do not receive a contract will have less customers. Variable rate pricing could be more challenging for some haulers than for others.

Environmental Advisory Board Recommendations to Council and Staff. Westminster Municipal Code §2-13-3 has assigned the Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) the power and duty to advise Council and Staff on matters such as residential community recycling. The EAB has the following recommendations to Council and Staff:

Recycling (waste diversion) is a major component in reaching the City’s vision of becoming one of the most sustainable cities in America. The present diversion rate in Westminster is well below a level that would allow this vision to become a reality. Fortunately, this component of sustainability can be addressed by implementing all or parts of the following recommendations.

The City should set a goal of becoming a zero waste city. Zero waste would involve diverting a large percentage (perhaps 85%) of waste from landfills and would require participation by the city, single family and multi-family residences, as well as all businesses. We realize that

this is a goal that will take time to plan for and implement, but we recommend you keep this goal in mind as you consider the direction you will provide City staff.

The board reviewed all of the material and the presentation by City staff at the January 27, 2016, EAB meeting. The EAB has several recommendations, all of which utilize all or part of the five models presented.

The EABs recommendation to achieve zero waste is to implement Model 5, City contracted curbside trash and recycling service, with a variable rate pricing structure for curbside collection for single family homes, and to include multi-family housing and businesses through code changes for collection of trash and recycling. Model 5 ultimately provides the most benefit to the community both financially and in diverting recyclables from the landfill.

Additionally, Model 5 should require the haulers to offer compost collection at the curbside at an additional fee to the homeowners that wish to have it. Approximately 70% of material in landfills is organic matter (<http://compostingcouncil.org/admin/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Keeping-Organics-Out-of-Landfills-Position-Paper.pdf>). Offering recycling without offering composting will fall short of achieving the goal of becoming one of the most sustainable cities in America.

Adopting Model 5 would allow for the phased implementation of Model 1, closing the current recycling locations, as the need for community recycling sites diminish. The EAB is concerned that closing the current recycling centers without having recycling required for multi-family housing will leave those residents without a convenient alternative to recycle.

While Model 5, with the integration of multi-family and businesses, is being implemented over time, the multi-family desire to recycle could be addressed by implementing Model 2. Model 5 will take time to implement as the City has to allow the HOA's to negotiate an early termination or complete any existing contracts.

The 2008–2012 research study resulted in the Environmental Advisory Board's (EAB) recommendation to build a recycling center at the former England Water Treatment Plant (EWTP) (Model 3). At the time of that recommendation, two of the options presently being proposed (effectively Models 4 and 5) were removed from consideration by that City Council. The EWTP area was selected for a variety of reasons, including a needs assessment of the surrounding communities and financial consideration that the location already being owned by the City and not being utilized.

With the implementation of Model 5, Model 3, constructing a single recycling center, could then be redesigned and modified to be a drop-off location for the primary purpose of hard to recycle items and provide an area for community recycling education programs. It could be a simple warehouse facility, staffed by an outside agency, City of Westminster staff, volunteers, or a combination, and operational costs would be greatly reduced and still provide for an education component to recycling and waste reduction.

City Council should consider asking City staff about involving current trash haulers in the process as early as possible, not only to get their input but to create a working model (partnership) that is favorable for all parties. We believe that this proactive approach would not only help expedite the process, but also lessen possible resistance to any change.

Given the development at the new transit center and at our new downtown, now is the time to plan for the inclusion of all residences and businesses in recycling in order to achieve the City's vision of becoming one of the most sustainable cities in America.

This response was drafted and agreed upon by all EAB board members.

Community recycling and diverting waste from landfills supports the Council's Strategic Plan goals of a *Beautiful, Desirable, Safe, and Environmentally Responsible City* and *Financially Sustainable Government Providing Excellence in City Services* and supports the Council's vision of becoming *one of the most sustainable cities in America*. Staff looks forward to making a brief presentation at the post-meeting on February 22 and working to re-establish recycling goals and strategies with City Council.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald M. Tripp
City Manager

Attachment 1 – June 4, 2012, Staff Report on Recycling in the Community
Attachment 2 – March 4, 2013 Staff Report on Recycling in the Community
Attachment 3 – Location of Proposed Community Recycling Center
Attachment 4 – Conceptual Community Recycling Center Designs
Attachment 5 – FAQ by the Colorado Association for Recycling



Staff Report

ATTACHMENT 1

City Council Study Session Meeting
June 4, 2012



SUBJECT: Recommendations from the Environmental Advisory Board to Improve Recycling in the Community

PREPARED BY: Lisa Bressler, Environmental Advisory Board Chairperson
Nick Pizzuti, Environmental Advisory Board Vice Chairperson
Rachel Harlow-Schalk, Senior Projects Officer

Recommended City Council Action:

Receive the report and recommendations of the Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) to improve recycling in the community and direct Staff to implement the EAB's recommendations as outlined in this Report.

Summary Statement

Since 2009, the Environmental Advisory Board and the Green Team have worked on recommendations to improve recycling in the Westminster community. Work has included economic research and a robust public education and engagement process. City Council is requested to review the recommendations from the EAB and direct Staff to implement recommendations accordingly.

Expenditure Required: One-Time Improvements: Between \$37,000 and \$213,000
Annual Investment: Between \$57,300 and \$60,200

Source of Funds: General Fund
Stormwater Fund
Study of Nominal Fee Needed to Cover Remaining Non-curbside Recycling Program Elements Not Currently Funded

Policy Issue

Should Council make changes to the community recycling program?

Alternatives

Reject the recommendations of the Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) and direct the EAB to further study alternatives to improving community recycling. This alternative is not recommended as the investment of the EAB, businesses, trash collectors, volunteer residents and Staff has been significant so that these recommendations are well informed.

Direct the Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) to seek additional input from the community on their recommendations. Initially, the EAB had anticipated returning their recommendations to the residents through large community meetings and then bringing the recommendation to City Council for finalizing. The EAB no longer believes this step is necessary based on the myriad of public education and engagement tools utilized to help inform their recommendations.

Background Information

In 2008, City Council established in their Strategic Plan the objective of a convenient recycling program for residents and businesses with a high level of participation. In January of 2009, the Green Team presented recommendations to Council including the need to improve recycling in the community and the Green Team's desire to work in partnership with the Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) to make improvement recommendations.

Through 2010, the Green Team and the EAB conducted a thorough review of recycling and trash collection in the community and identified potential improvements. As a result of this research, a robust community education and engagement process was utilized to identify improvements that Staff believes reflect the needs of the community and key stakeholders. The following meetings and public engagement tools were essential to making informed improvement recommendations:

- March 1, 2010 – Licensed trash collectors reviewed potential opportunities to improve recycling in the community and worked with the EAB to identify nine potential improvements that collectors could complete.
- October 2010 – Licensed trash collectors were individually interviewed by the Green Team and asked to participate in a subcommittee of the EAB to review four of the nine improvements selected to improve community recycling.
- November 2010 – Two public meetings were held to discuss community recycling research results, including nine potential opportunities for recycling improvement and the four specific opportunities being studied by a proposed subcommittee of the EAB. Residents in attendance were asked to participate in the proposed subcommittee; on a focus group if they could not come to monthly subcommittee meetings; or submit their comments via email, telephone or through Facebook.
- November 2010 to today – Residents submitted comments, questions or concerns through a dedicated email or telephone account and all comments are kept on the Green Team's Facebook account. Residents also submitted comments directly through the Facebook account. Residents did not need to be members of Facebook to review information submitted by fellow residents. Additionally, the Green Team has maintained a City webpage of all documentation and audio recordings from meetings on this project for residents to remain informed even when they could not make meetings.
- December 6, 2010 through June 16, 2011 – The Community Recycling Subcommittee of the EAB reviewed options to improve recycling and identified draft recommendations. The Subcommittee spent the first half of every meeting learning about recycling in Westminster and the second half identifying what additional information they would need to make a recommendation on improvements to community recycling. Subcommittee membership

included all licensed trash collectors (12), two EAB members, a homeowners association President, a homeowners association management company representative, a resident not interested in changes to the current program, three residents not within a homeowners association neighborhood, a resident within a multi-family unit, a business owner, a strip mall/business owner, and technical support including a Staff Liaison, a Green Team project manager, a staff member from the City Attorney's Office, two moderators and an expert in the economics of trash collection and recycling—nearly 30 members overall.

- January 12, 2012 – A focus group was held with 11 residents to react to the draft recommended improvements from the Subcommittee. Since the beginning of November 2010, residents had been asked to participate in this focus group. Many of the participants had requested to be part of the group in November 2010 and had waited until January 2012 to give their opinion.
- March 8, 2012 – The last meeting of the Study Subcommittee was held to finalize recommendations to the EAB based on the reaction of the focus group and draft costs of the Subcommittee's recommendations supplied by the Green Team.
- April 26, 2012 – The final recommendations from the Subcommittee were presented to the EAB and all Subcommittee members were invited to the meeting to share any additional comments they had from their involvement on the Subcommittee.
- May 17, 2012 – The final recommendations from the EAB to City Council on improvements to recycling were completed based on the recommendation of the Subcommittee and new developments in recycling identified between the April and May 2012 meetings of the EAB.

Current Community Recycling Program

The recommendations crafted by the Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) on recycling in the community are well informed. A synopsis of information used by the Study Subcommittee and EAB to formulate their recommendations includes:

- In general, residents are satisfied with their trash service, but not with recycling services.
- There are currently 14 trash collectors of which 11 collect curbside residential trash. All collectors charge different rates for trash and recycling services to customers. All recyclables collected at the curb are standardized and mirror those collected at the four community drop-off locations. At the time this project began, not all trash collectors were offering recycling and were collecting different materials from customers.
- Westminster has no recycling/trash diversion rate goal and provides no incentive for diverting materials from reaching the landfill especially in the multi-family, commercial and construction/demolition sectors.
- In Westminster, approximately 11% of waste is diverted from reaching the landfill—approximately 7% at the curb and 3-4% at City drop-off locations. In comparison, the State of Colorado estimates the general population is diverting 19.5% and nationally, 33.4% of trash is diverted from reaching the landfill. Based on information from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, trash in the United States is composed of 28.5% paper; 13.9% food scraps; 13.4% yard trimmings; 12.4% plastics; 9% metals; 8.4% rubber, leather & textiles; 6.4% wood; and 4.6% glass. All of the remaining trash (3.4%) is a mix of appliances and oddities like animal waste and diapers. Based on this information, conceivably 96.6% of trash could be recycled, reused or composted.
- Residences signed-up to recycle with their trash collection company are recycling on a level similar to those in other Colorado communities. However, most recycling containers utilized by Westminster residents are too small to accommodate significant recycling (15 gallons, compared to 96 gallons for single stream in surrounding communities).
- All solid waste collection companies in Westminster charge extra to provide recycling. Citizens are offered a base service trash pickup rate and then an additional rate to recycle. From the residential survey portion of the Board's research, residents noted they are willing to

Staff Report – Recommendations from the Environmental Advisory Board to Improve Recycling in the Community

June 4, 2012

Page 4

pay on average \$7.87 more in their trash rate for recycling service. Also on average, the survey found households currently subscribing to recycling pay \$3.00 extra on top of an average \$16.50 monthly trash bill. Trash collectors reported trash fees for residential customers ranged from \$12 to \$21 per month, and recycling charges ranged from \$2.25 to \$5 per month. Some homeowner associations (HOAs) provide recycling at no additional fee, that is, the cost to recycle is combined in the service price. It is not known how many neighborhoods are in this situation.

- For administration of the trash collector licenses, each collector is required to pay \$250 to operate in the City plus \$250 per trash truck and \$10 per recycling vehicle running within City limits. In 2010, the City collected \$29,520, in 2011 \$29,890 and in 2012 \$34,270. Trash collectors are paying \$34,270 to operate in Westminster and collecting trash every week and recyclables every other week from approximately 40,000 households. No portion of monthly fees charged to residents by collectors is returned to the City.
- Roughly 2/3 to 3/4 of residents said they had high volumes of compostables in their trash (organics like grass and food scraps).
- Residents want to recycle when visiting public areas like parks, want more recycling education done by the City and support curbside recycling costs combined with trash fees.
- City drop-off locations are not convenient and cost the City thousands of dollars every year to maintain--\$35,400 spent in 2011 including cleaning up sites and handling citizen calls--\$24,600 in collections and \$10,800 in staff time. Staff cleaning up locations includes firefighters, recreation aides, municipal court clerks, and maintenance workers—all staff paid at higher rates than if the City were to utilize temporary staff during high volume months. In 2011, only \$11,500 was budgeted for the program offset by a rebate the City received for \$7,665 from the State of Colorado for offering the program. Together, these funds did not fully cover recycling and trash collection at the locations or the unfunded staff time. It is also known that six months out of the year, volume increases at drop-off locations: immediately following the Christmas holiday, through January and during Spring and Fall cleaning times.
- Residents receive the greatest convenience to recycle by doing so at the curb.

Evaluation of services provided by other cities compared to Westminster:

- Research included surveying 18 communities in the Front Range to compare trash and recycling services. Of these communities, over half had recycling services that collected the conventional materials (glass, aluminum, plastics 1-7, paperboard, office paper, magazines, tin/steel, and junk mail). The remaining cities reported that materials collected were dependent upon the trash collection company.
- Recycling services provided in cities vary based upon the community need. For more detailed results from the community comparison survey, please see Section 2 and Appendix 3 from the Skumatz Economic Research Associates Report presented to Council on September 13, 2010.

Homeowner Associations (HOAs):

- Administratively, homeowners' associations that contract for trash collection on behalf of HOA homes are considered commercial customers. In the City Code, trash collectors are not required to offer recycling to commercial customers. Therefore, solid waste collections companies are not required to offer recycling to these neighborhoods. Staff completed additional research and estimates that only 18% of the residential population of the City lives outside of a homeowner association. That is, trash collection companies are not required to provide recycling to nearly 85% of the population (see attached maps). Thankfully, survey work found that most HOAs offer recycling; however, only 50% of the population within them actually recycles—many citizens in association areas pay for the service, but are not using it.

Businesses and Multi-family Developments:

- Businesses are generally satisfied with their trash service, but not with recycling.
- Many business and multifamily living locations do not have room for recycling collection.
- The City's Solid Waste Collection Code does not require trash collectors to offer recycling to these customers.
- Only an estimated 25% of businesses said they contracted for recycling service, another 20% said they had an "informal" program (usually employees collecting and bringing materials to a drop-off locations or home programs), and half are not recycling. "Upscale" or office-type buildings were the most likely to recycle.
- Food waste and organics are generally not recycled/composted: less than 10% of businesses reported generating a significant amount of food waste (half generate none) and 80% generate no yard waste. Most communities that address food waste do so through programs targeted at specific sectors, not across all businesses.
- Materials most commonly recycled by businesses in Westminster are paper and cardboard.

Trash and Recycling Collection

There is an economic incentive for trash collectors to recycle materials—all companies are paying to take their materials to recycling facilities at a lower rate per ton compared to taking the same materials to the landfill. Depending upon the commodities market, if there is any material within the recyclables that yields a profit, a rebate is then deducted from the per ton fee the company would have to pay to the recycler.

Additionally:

- Materials that go to recycling facilities are recycled. When asked if materials are landfilled when pricing markets down turn on certain products, recycling facilities stated they would hold (stockpile) material until markets yielded profits. None would place materials in the landfill.
- One of the largest issues discovered is the need for consistent, on-going education from the City, not just the trash collectors, on curbside recycling services. Currently, the City only educates on programs that it runs like the recycling drop-off locations. Any changes to the trash collection system will require that the City educate in partnership with trash collectors on what services they provide.

Environmental Advisory Board Recommendations:

The engagement of residents, businesses and trash collectors has resulted in the following recommendations from the Board to City Council:

Community Recycling Drop-off Locations

Only 3-4% of Westminster's trash is diverted from reaching the landfill through the four community recycling drop-off locations. In 2011, 1,764 tons was collected from these locations. The current program being run by the City is not a quality program and does not meet Council's Strategic Plan recycling objective. The EAB requests Council identify which of the following viable options to improving the drop-off location recycling program best fits Council objective for community recycling and then Council is requested to direct Staff to identify funds for implementation.

Option 1: Maintain a quality community recycling drop-off program that includes staffing support six months of the year during high volume months to clean the four drop-off locations.

Additionally, improve the collection frequency at locations from one time per day to twice per day, improve signage including pictures and Spanish, and investigate cost sharing with neighboring cities known to have residents utilizing Westminster drop-off locations. The City also needs to be a good neighbor and fence, on three sides, the locations to keep material from blowing through the community. As with the current program, it is not anticipated that the sites will yield a profit for the

Staff Report – Recommendations from the Environmental Advisory Board to Improve Recycling in the Community

June 4, 2012

Page 6

City because materials are not sorted and often trash is left at the sites. Staff estimates this option to cost **\$71,900**; only \$11,500 is available within the current operating budget for community recycling. An additional \$60,400 is needed that could be generated through a fee added to trash collection licenses or utility bills to pay for non-curbide recycling services including the drop-off locations. Without a fee to cover these costs, the funding would need to be taken out of the General Fund, which would require tradeoffs with other funding priorities. Through the community recycling study, it was learned that Westminster’s trash collection license is one of the highest in the Front Range and the focus group who heard the draft recommendations from the Subcommittee were not interested in new fees. However, the Subcommittee and the EAB believes a fee should be collected to cover non-curbide services so long as the fee does not result in a profit to the City. An additional option is to pursue corporate sponsorship from the largest businesses in Westminster.

Recommendation Impact Summary	
Estimated One Time Costs:	\$34,000 capital (fence)
Funding Needed:	One Time \$34,000
Estimated Annual Costs:	\$37,900 operating
Additional Funding Needed	Annually \$26,400
Potential Tons of Material Collected:	1,750
Potential Funds from Recovered Materials:	\$0
Potential New Waste Diverted from Landfill:	0.5%

Option 2: Maintain the current drop-off program. Improvements must be made to ensure at least temporary staff time is made available to cleanup locations instead of the higher wage paid staff. The difference between this option and Option 1 above is a lack of capital improvements to the drop off sites. The current program does not yield a profit for the City because materials are not sorted and often non recyclable trash is left at sites. The City also needs to be a good neighbor and this option does not put the City in that position. Complaints from businesses and residents will continue from this program because materials will blow through neighborhoods and locations will continue to stockpile material until temporary staff can travel to the location for cleanup. Staff estimates this option to cost **\$27,300**; only \$11,500 is available from within the current operating budget for community recycling, an additional \$15,800 is needed that could be generated through a fee added to the trash collection license or to utility bills to pay for non-curbide recycling services including the drop-off locations. Through the community recycling study, Staff has learned that Westminster’s trash collection license is one of the highest in the Front Range and the focus group who heard the draft recommendations from the Subcommittee was not interested in new fees. However, the Subcommittee and the EAB believes a fee should be collected to cover non-curbide services as long as the fee does not result in a profit to the City. An additional option is to pursue corporate sponsorship from the largest businesses in Westminster.

Recommendation Impact Summary	
Estimated One Time Costs:	\$0 capital
Additional Funding Needed:	One Time \$0
Estimated Annual Costs:	\$37,900 operating
Funding Needed	Annually \$26,400
Potential Tons of Material Collected:	1,750
Potential Funds from Recovered Materials:	\$0
Potential New Waste Diverted from Landfill:	0.5%

Option 3: Create one Drop-off Location with Improvements. The Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) recently learned of the City of Lakewood’s community drop-off location that opened in December 2011. The information on this program was not available to the Study Subcommittee, but the model this site creates is significant enough for the EAB to recommend Council consider a one recycling site option. The City of Lakewood is currently providing a staffed location, with daily operating hours, that is fenced and covering the costs of the operation. The location offers collection of not only commingled, but also segregated materials. The segregated materials are yielding a monetary return. Based on the current estimations, Lakewood anticipates breaking even with their operating costs after having made a \$150,000 in capital improvement investment. Staff estimates this option would require an upfront investment by Westminster of **\$245,000**; \$11,500 is available from the current operating budget. An additional \$233,500 would be needed; \$150,000 to fence and make improvements to a site, yet to be determined, plus \$60,000 for a large compactor and a bailer for materials collected as well as \$35,000 annually in staff time. The opportunity may exist for the compactor and bailer to be purchased through a grant from the State of Colorado and the remaining staff time would be afforded through temporary staff offset by recycling funds yielded through clean segregated recyclables collection. Lakewood anticipates collecting 1,500 tons of materials from their roughly 150,000 population this year at this one location. Lakewood’s model shows a diversion amount nearly the same as the four locations Westminster operates. Additionally, the Lakewood site has seen no dumping and the site is clean because there is staff on site actively supporting the program.

Recommendation Impact Summary	
Estimated One Time Costs:	\$150,000 capital
Grant:	\$60,000 (equipment)
Funding Needed:	One Time \$210,000
Estimated Annual Costs:	\$35,000 operating
Funding Needed	Annually \$23,500
Potential Tons of Material Collected:	1,750
Potential Funds from Recovered Materials:	\$35,000
Potential New Waste Diverted from Landfill:	0.5%

Option 4: Create one Drop-off Location with Improvements at Current City Operating Facility. This option would be the same as option 3 above, except it would utilize an existing City facility. Option 4 would eliminate a significant amount of the upfront capital improvement funding needed. Staff estimates this option to cost **\$110,000**; \$11,500 is available from the current operating budget for community recycling. An additional \$15,000 would be needed to make improvements to a site, yet to be determined, plus \$60,000 for a large compactor and a bailer for materials collected as well as \$35,000 annually in staff time. As with option 3 the opportunity may exist for the compactor and bailer to be purchased through a grant from the State of Colorado and the remaining staff time would be afforded through temporary staff offset through recycling funds yielded through clean segregated recyclables collection.

Recommendation Impact Summary	
Estimated One Time Costs:	\$15,000 capital (site)
Grant:	\$60,000 (equipment)
Additional Funding Needed:	One Time \$75,000
Estimated Annual Costs:	\$35,000 operating
Funding Needed	Annually \$23,500
Potential Tons of Material Collected:	1,750
Potential Funds from Recovered Materials:	\$35,000
Potential New Waste Diverted from Landfill:	0.5%

Staff would recommend doing additional feasibility work on option 4, but believes this is probably the best approach to continue drop off recycling service in the City.

Education

The EAB requests Council direct Staff to implement a comprehensive outreach and education program on recycling. The EAB believes this is one of the most important components of an effective recycling program. Improvements in this area include:

- o Developing partnerships with schools. Initially, the targeted schools might be located in areas of Westminster that may not have as much awareness or access to curbside recycling.
- o Targeting HOAs to implement recycling programs.
- o Ongoing efforts to inform residents of what materials are currently recyclable, how to recycle, and other recycling services, like tree limbs and household hazardous waste that are currently offered by the City.
- o Partnering with trash collectors to inform customers about recycling. Trash collectors are committed to including information in their communications with customers at least on an annual basis.
- o Targeting educational efforts about drop-off location recycling opportunities in neighborhoods known not to have available curbside recycling.
- o Establishing a “GREEN” designation for businesses who partner with the City to recycle or who currently recycle.

Staff has identified that a quality education campaign needs to be established which can be done for a one-time start-up cost of \$15,000 and an additional \$5,000 annually. Funds are already available within operating budgets to not only address these one-time costs, but also the annual education funding.

Recommendation Impact Summary	
Estimated One Time Costs:	\$15,000 initial
Additional Funding Needed:	\$0
Estimated Annual Costs:	\$5,000 operating
Additional Funding Needed	\$0
Potential Tons of Material Collected:	Potentially significant
Potential Funds from Recovered Materials:	\$0
Potential New Waste Diverted from Landfill:	Potentially significant

Modifications to the City Code, Annual Recycling Report or Trash Collector License

There are several changes to the City Code that need to be made to accommodate an improved recycling program in Westminster. The EAB requests Council direct staff to:

Set a diversion goal. The EAB believes a generic recommendation is not sufficient and was conscious of the fact that the City can set a goal if the City does not also commit to measuring progress towards that goal over time. Measuring progress involves analysis and therefore expense; however, this could be done only every few years to minimize the expense. A measurement goal will likely involve collecting data from trash collectors. In order to alleviate trash collector concerns that this data remain proprietary, when needed, protective language should be added to the City Code allowing proprietary information to be held in confidence. Currently, there is no way to measure diversion from the landfill without hiring a contractor to measure diversion rates. Staff estimates an annual cost of **\$5,000** to have a contractor measure diversion from the landfill by not only residents, but also businesses. There is currently no funding for this evaluation.

Modify the trash collector annual recycling report. The annual trash collector report that is already required will be modified to ask collectors to provide total tons taken to the landfill, total tons recycled, and total tons diverted (tons recycling, tons composted, etc.). Reporting of collector data to the community would be aggregated and data noted as proprietary will be held in confidence. Because these modifications are administrative and the annual reports are already being reviewed, Staff does not estimate an additional cost to the City to administer this change.

Define Single-Family Home Owners Associations (HOAs) neighborhoods as residential units in the City Code. Because HOAs are currently considered business units, trash collectors are not required to offer recycling to them. HOAs would need to be notified of the clarification in Code and given an opportunity to respond to the change. Because these modifications are administrative and the annual reports are already being reviewed, Staff does not estimate an additional cost to the City to administer this change.

Require trash collectors to offer recycling opportunities to all residential units and businesses. This will ensure that multi-family units and businesses will be offered recycling. Because these modifications are administrative and the annual reports are already being reviewed, Staff does not estimate an additional cost to the City to administer this change.

Remove the Days of the Week Collection Requirement from the Solid Waste Collection License. Once HOAs are no longer considered businesses, trash collectors noted the impact the three day of the week restriction will have on their routing and ultimately, increased cost and inconvenience to residents. Because this is an administrative requirement within the Collection License, Staff recommends trying the removal of day designations for one year under a pilot program to review the impact on the community. Staff does not believe this change will have a significant impact on current operations and studying can be funded within current Staff projects.

Recommendation Impact Summary	
Estimated One Time Costs:	\$0
Funding Needed:	One Time \$0
Estimated Annual Costs:	\$5,000
Additional Funding Needed	Annually \$5,000
Potential Tons of Material Collected:	Unknown
Potential Funds from Recovered Materials:	\$0
Potential New Waste Diverted from Landfill:	Unknown

Organics

The EAB has learned that the tree limb program could potentially be scaled back to only four collection events per year instead of the eight currently offered. Funds for these programs would be reallocated to maintenance activities within the Open Space Program. Additionally, Staff has noted there are other options for residents, for a fee, to address their organic recycling needs. The Study Subcommittee did not make suggestions on yard waste collection program improvements because the limb program was in existence. The EAB has learned that there are several recycling companies that are working on compost programs that will collect yard waste, but there are none located near Westminster and collectors will not pick-up materials at the curb unless it is to take the material to the landfill. Until there are viable options for residents to recycle yard waste locally or at the curb, the EAB recommends the City maintain the current tree limb program.

Staff Report – Recommendations from the Environmental Advisory Board to Improve Recycling in the Community

June 4, 2012

Page 10

Recommendation Impact Summary	
Estimated One Time Costs:	\$0
Funding Needed:	One Time \$0
Estimated Annual Costs:	\$12,300 operating
Additional Funding Needed	\$12,300 is currently budgeted
Potential Tons of Material Collected:	60
Potential Funds from Recovered Materials:	\$0
Potential New Waste Diverted from Landfill:	0.1%

Funding

The Subcommittee and the EAB believe every business and household in Westminster should be assessed a nominal fee to pay a portion of the cost of non-curb-side recycling programs. The amount must be identified through financial analysis. The EAB and Subcommittee members are cognizant that during these hard economic times, the fee must be minimal in order to be palatable to the community. The recycling program should not generate a profit, but simply be self-sustained. The most fair and efficient way to collect the fee must be studied. Voluntary donations were discussed as an opportunity within utility bills but the EAB and Subcommittee felt it would be very difficult to recuperate donations because they would have to be collected either by trash collectors or by another non-profit entity. Collecting and taking care of IRS tax reporting requirements for the fee would place additional administrative burden on Staff. The EAB requests Council direct Staff to fund and study ways to implement a fee that will cover non-curb-side recycling opportunities.

Recommendation Impact Summary	
Estimated One Time Costs:	\$0
Funding Needed:	\$0
Estimated Annual Costs:	Unknown
Funding Needed	Annual Administration Costs Not Identified
Potential Tons of Material Collected:	0
Potential Funds from Recovered Materials:	\$0
Potential New Waste Diverted from Landfill:	0%

Most of the recommendations contained in this Staff Report have a fiscal impact and while the total amount of the reduction in waste gain to the landfill is unknown, Staff believes it will be significant enough to warrant additional investment by the City. Also, two of the recommendations within the community drop-off program will yield a return of funds to the City on clean, sorted recyclables collected that could potentially offset the cost of the drop-off program and maintain the volume of materials collected.

Both the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Environmental Advisory Board and Staff will be in attendance at the Study Session to answer any questions that Council may have on these recommendations.

The EAB's recommendations support the City's Strategic Plan goal of a Beautiful and Environmentally Sensitive City by pursuing the objective of a convenient recycling program for businesses and residents with a high level of participation.

Staff Report – Recommendations from the Environmental Advisory Board to Improve Recycling in
the Community

June 4, 2012

Page 11

Respectfully submitted,

J. Brent McFall
City Manager

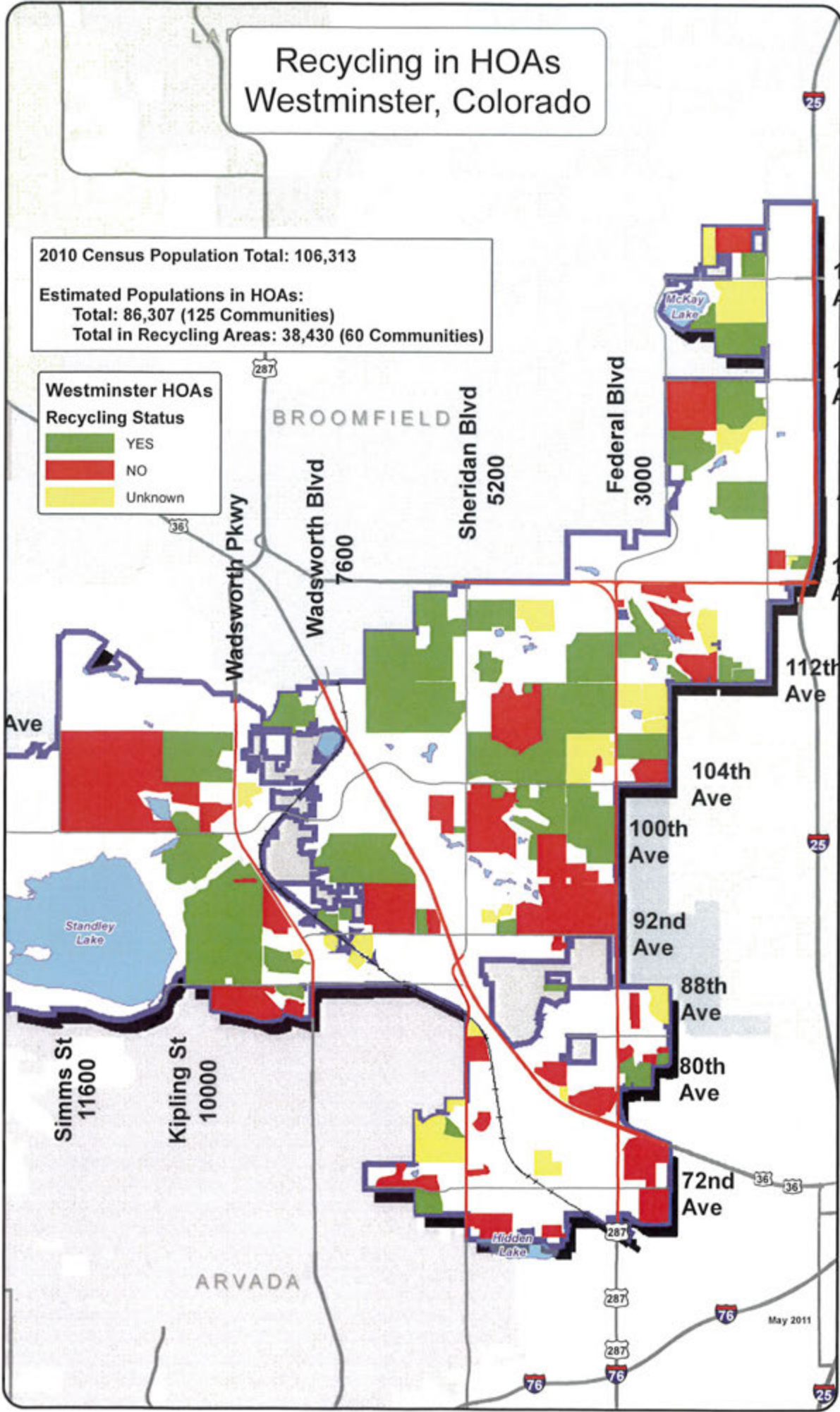
Attachment

Recycling in HOAs Westminster, Colorado

2010 Census Population Total: 106,313
 Estimated Populations in HOAs:
 Total: 86,307 (125 Communities)
 Total in Recycling Areas: 38,430 (60 Communities)

**Westminster HOAs
 Recycling Status**

- YES
- NO
- Unknown





Staff Report

ATTACHMENT 2

City Council Study Session Meeting
March 4, 2013



SUBJECT: Community Recycling Project Update

PREPARED BY: Rachel Harlow-Schalk, Senior Projects Officer
Lisa Bressler, Chairperson, Environmental Advisory Board
Nick Pizzuti, Vice Chairperson, Environmental Advisory Board

Recommended City Council Action

Direct staff to implement the community recycling program at the former England Water Treatment Plant site.

Summary Statement

Since 2009, the Environmental Advisory Board and Green Team have worked together to improve recycling in the Westminster community. On June 4, 2012, City Council was provided recommended improvements for recycling including changes to the Solid Waste Collection section of the Municipal Code, implementation of a community education campaign, and constructing a single, staffed community recycling location with specific hours of operation.

In November of 2012, the Municipal Code changes recommended were implemented. Staff, in consultation with the Board, also prepared a robust community recycling education campaign plan to begin in 2013 (see attachment 1). The dates set forth in this education plan will be adjusted based on the final recycling center project schedule.

As part of the 2013 General Fund Operating and Capital Improvement budgets, Council approved construction funding for a single community recycling location and funds for staffing the location during operating hours. After evaluating several city owned locations for the placement of the recycling center, staff identified land available at the recently demolished England Water Treatment Plant site. The England location has the best access and provides recycling support to the area of most need of a recycling center.

Expenditure Required: \$269,400

Source of Funds: General Fund and General Capital Improvements Fund (\$244,400)
Stormwater Fund (\$25,000)

Policy Issue

Should Council continue implementation of one staffed community recycling facility and close the current four recycling drop-off locations?

Alternative

Council could decide the current four unstaffed locations are sufficient and direct staff not to implement the single recycling center. Pursuit of this alternative is not recommended. In addition to having agreed with the Environmental Advisory Board's recommendation of one location based on three years of studying recycling, the City continues to spend more funds annually to provide the locations than is budgeted. In 2012, the Building Operations and Maintenance Division covered a \$40,000 funding gap for the drop-off program by using funds meant for facilities maintenance. This is up from 2011 when the Division spent \$20,000. By running the current drop-off locations without segregation of materials, without staff on-site to ensure materials collected are clean, and spending money to dispose of trash left at all four locations, the City continues to spend ever increasing funds out of facilities maintenance without returning funds for clean segregated recycled materials.

Background Information

In 2008, City Council established in their Strategic Plan the objective of a convenient recycling program for residents and businesses with a high level of participation. In January of 2009, the Green Team presented recommendations to Council including the need to improve recycling in the community and the Green Team's desire to work in partnership with the Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) to make improvement recommendations.

Through 2010, the Green Team and the EAB conducted a thorough review of recycling and trash collection in the community and identified potential improvements. As a result of this research, a robust community education and engagement process with impacted stakeholders was implemented. After this engagement process on June 4, 2012, Council received recommendations from the Board to improve recycling in the community. The recommendations included a three prong approach: revise the Solid Waste Collection Section of the Municipal Code, conduct an on-going education campaign and construct one central recycling location, staffed, with scheduled hours of operation. Since June 2012, the Municipal Code changes recommended were completed and staff, in consultation with the EAB, has prepared robust community recycling education campaign plan (see attachment 1).

In the 2013 operating and capital improvement budgets, Council approved funding for the construction and operation of one community recycling location staffed with scheduled hours of operation. After evaluating several City owned locations for the placement of the recycling center, staff identified land available at the recently demolished England Water Treatment Plant site (see aerial photograph attachment 2). As was learned in the community recycling study, most of the community lives in homeowner association neighborhoods that may coordinate neighborhood trash and curbside recycling services. The majority of these association neighborhoods are north of 88th Avenue. The England location has the best access of all City owned properties and provides recycling support to the area of Westminster most in need of a recycling center. Staff contracted with the architecture firm, Hangar 41, who prepared the 60% concept design drawings for the site (see Phase I in attachment 3).

Over the course of the three year recycling study, it was discovered that drop-off locations are more than where residents recycle their materials; residents also use the drop-off locations as gathering places

where they meet each other, learn about recycling and learn about Westminster. As a result of this knowledge, staff requested Hangar 41 prepare design concepts to not only construct the drop-off location that had been recommended to City Council by the EAB, but also provide additional phases for a construction project that would create a multi-functional education center that would allow for these additional site uses.

Because the England location is next to Little Dry Creek Trail (just west on the Trail from the commuter rail station) and is located south of the City's community gardens and east of the City's greenhouse operations, the site creates an environmental synergy that can be capitalized on.

Also, the overarching goal of the community recycling education campaign is to encourage residents to recycle at the curb. If, in the future, residents and businesses were all recycling at their curb, the City would be able to close the recycling center and may consider maintaining the multi-functional education center.

A multi-functional education center would offer an amenity to the community not currently available and would establish a model multi-functional education center not available in the Front Range (see attachment 3, phase III). The project would provide the City with an additional gathering location where residents could:

- learn about recycling,
- learn about the City's trail system,
- learn about community gardens and gardeners,
- learn about xeriscaping,
- learn about alternative materials or recycled materials used in building materials,
- learn about alternative energy use,
- learn about local artists using recycled materials and offer another location for art viewing,
- meet local businesses and give businesses an opportunity to partner with the City, and
- learn about any number of environmental stewardship measures the City has implemented or is implementing.

The real potential exists for this education center to be a partner in the community.

If Council concurs with the plan outlined in the Staff Report, Staff will construct Phase I of the project as planned in attachment 3 in 2013. Once the recycling education campaign is implemented and the recycling site is operating, staff will evaluate the need for the multi-functional education center and funding options.

For additional consideration, Council will find in attachment 4 the projected costs associated with implementation of the recycling center and costs associated with the potential future multi-functional education center. When the Board's recommendation of one recycling center was brought to Council, Lakewood's recycling center was used as a model of how to return funds through recycling materials to cover site operations. Since the EAB's initial recommendation, Lakewood completed another year of operation. In 2012, Lakewood saw much of the cost to run the site covered by the resale of segregated recycled materials. However, a turn in commodities markets resulted in lowered funds from collection of recycled materials and contractors also increased their pricing for resources they offered to the center. As a result, Lakewood spent an additional \$47,700 to operate the one location. For comparisons sake, in 2012, Westminster's four drop-off locations spent \$57,000 over what was

budgeted for operation; and because all of the materials had to be segregated by the recycling contractor, none of the recycled materials offset site operation costs.

Continuing forward with EAB's recommendation of moving the drop-off program to one location that is staffed with hours of operation will remain an improvement over the current collection program and continue to offer the community an option to recycle if they do not at their curb. But, fluctuations in commodity markets will continue and operations at the center may not be completely covered by the resale of recycled materials. For planning purposes, it is anticipated that bridging the funding gap for the recycling center will occur through reprioritization in other City operations.

Both staff and representatives from the Environmental Advisory Board will be in attendance to provide a brief presentation and answer questions.

Continued efforts to implement the EAB's community recycling recommendations support the City's Strategic Plan goal of a Beautiful and Environmentally Sensitive City by pursuing the objective of a convenient recycling program for businesses and residents with a high level of participation.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Brent McFall
City Manager

Attachments



Potential Recycling Location Old England Water Treatment Facility





"According to the statistical survey completed for this project, 61% of the survey respondents report that they use the drop-offs. Over two-fifths (43%) of the respondents reported that they visit the drop-offs once a month or more..."

Overall, the drop-off program is a cost-effective program that is responsible for about 40% of the diversion in the residential sector. The drop-offs divert about 4% of the residential waste stream. Without the drop-off program the overall residential diversion rate would be only around 7% (the curbside diversion rate). The average cost per ton is around \$12.50, making the recycling drop-off a very cost-effective program...

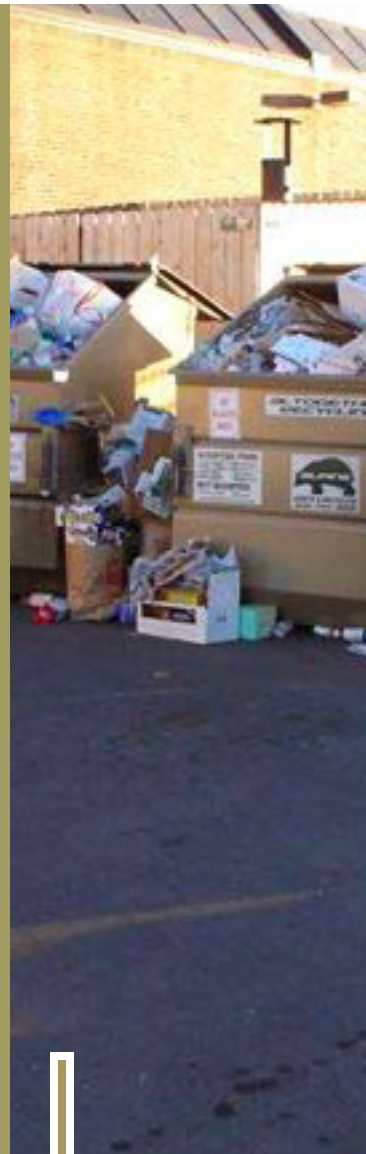
This is not to say that Westminster's drop-off program is generating revenue or is free, it is a cost to the City and a drain on both budgets and staff time. However, if the city is striving to reach certain environmental and recycling goals, the recycling drop-offs are an important mechanism to reach those goals."

- "Westminster Trash and Recycling Report" Section 11. Pg. 86-87





West View Recreation Center



recycling overflow



proposed site

After conducting an analysis of the existing drop-off recycling stations, the City of Westminster has proposed closing the current stations and opening one central station similar to neighboring communities.

"A fourth option for the city, is the development of one central drop-off site similar to the drop-site programs in Longmont, Loveland, Fort Collins, Greeley, Windsor, Boulder and other cities in the area. Under this option, the city closes all of the sites accepts for one, and focuses all of its efforts in developing and maintaining the one site. The central site would require a number of large scale improvements that would come at a significant cost. The site would require around 75x75yds of space to accommodate several 20-30 cubic yard containers for recyclables, enough room for a truck to easily collect the containers, an OCC compactor, fencing, electricity, stairs for access to the drop-offs, and new signage. Based on interviews with other communities, the site does not need to be staffed full time. Staff would be needed to check the sites in the morning and the evening for basic maintenance and to lock and unlock the access gate."

- "Westminster Trash and Recycling Report", Section 11. Pg 90

A site south of adjacent England Park, located at Raleigh Street and Elk Drive has been selected for the proposed recycling and education center.



community
involvement



recycling fairy



community building

A central recycling drop off station enables the city and community a place to host gatherings to promote recycling. It can serve as another civic space. Events can range from recycling education geared towards children or adults, communal gatherings such as markets, or new sustainable product presentations.



for life



sculpted

xeros - greek for "dry"

Xeriscaping refers to landscaping and gardening in ways that reduce or eliminate the need for supplemental water from irrigation. Plants whose natural requirements are appropriate to the local climate are emphasized, and care is taken to avoid losing water to evaporation and run-off.

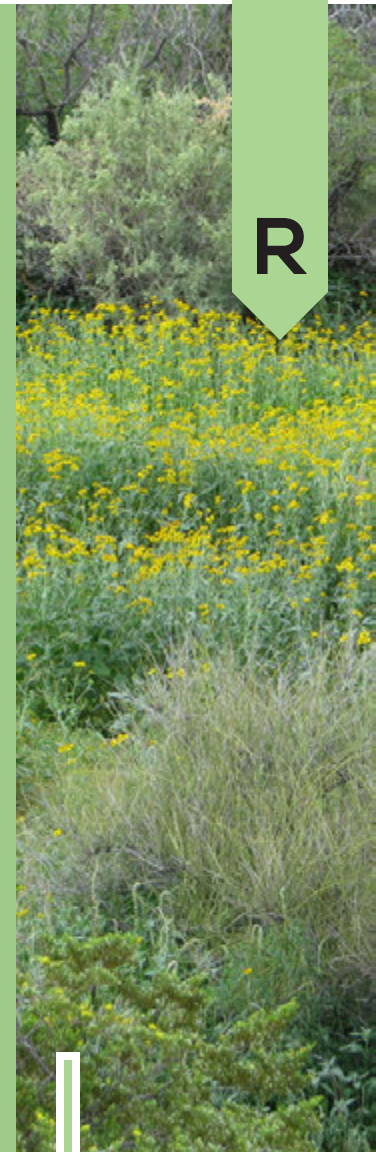
Xeriscaping is not the same as "zero-scaping" in which the designed landscape consists mostly of hard surfaces, with a few plants as accent features.



lush



climate specific plantings



natural



recycling at the building scale



green building



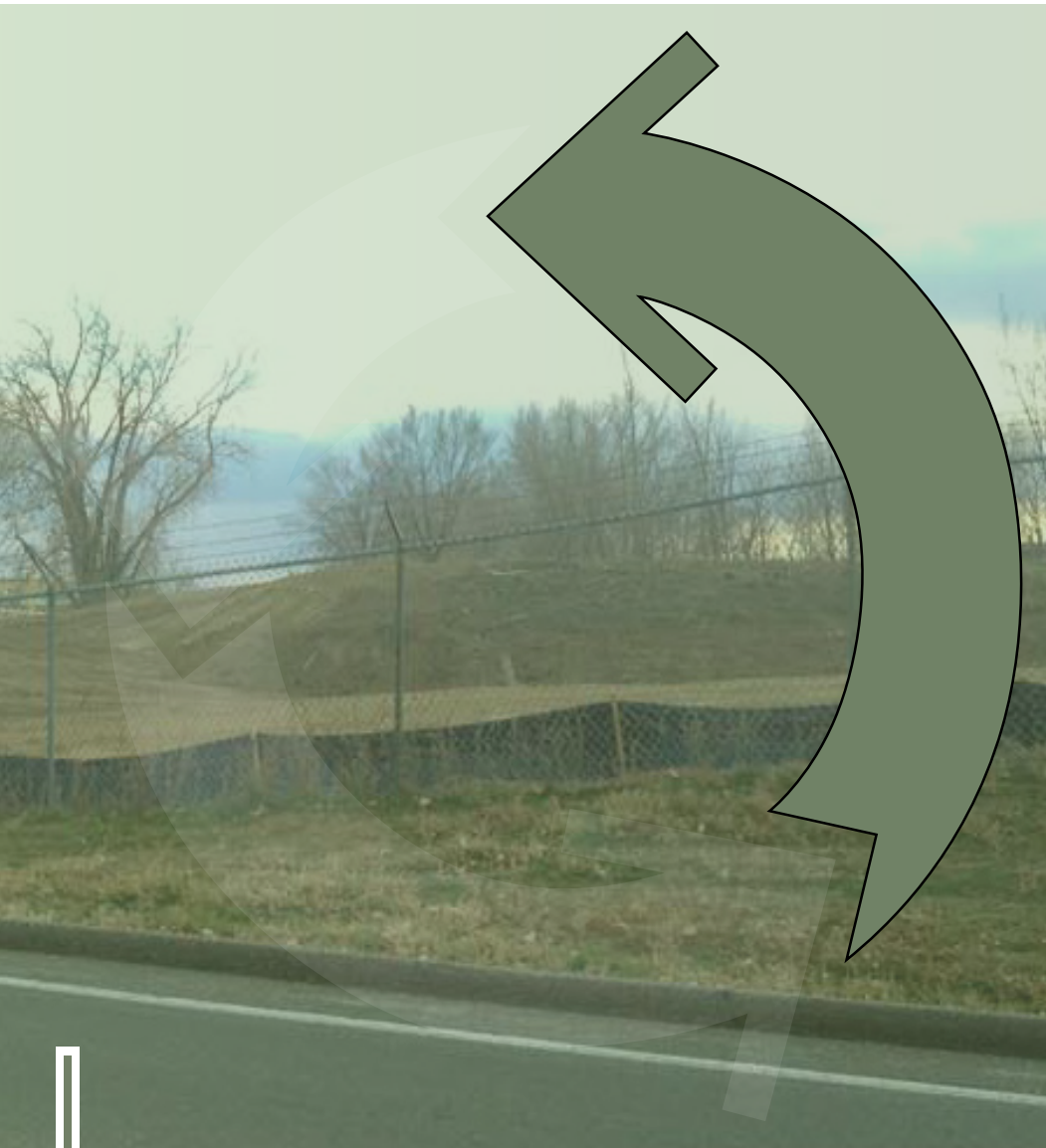
strength

There are countless numbers of empty, unused shipping containers around the world just sitting on shipping docks taking up space. The reason for this is that it's too expensive for a country to ship empty containers back to their origin. In most cases, it's just cheaper to buy new containers from Asia. The result is an extremely high surplus of empty shipping containers located here in the US that are just waiting to become a home, office, apartment, school, dorm, studio, emergency shelter, and everything else.

Benefits of shipping container construction include strength, durability, availability, cost and the ability for a building to speak literally of active recycling.



focal point

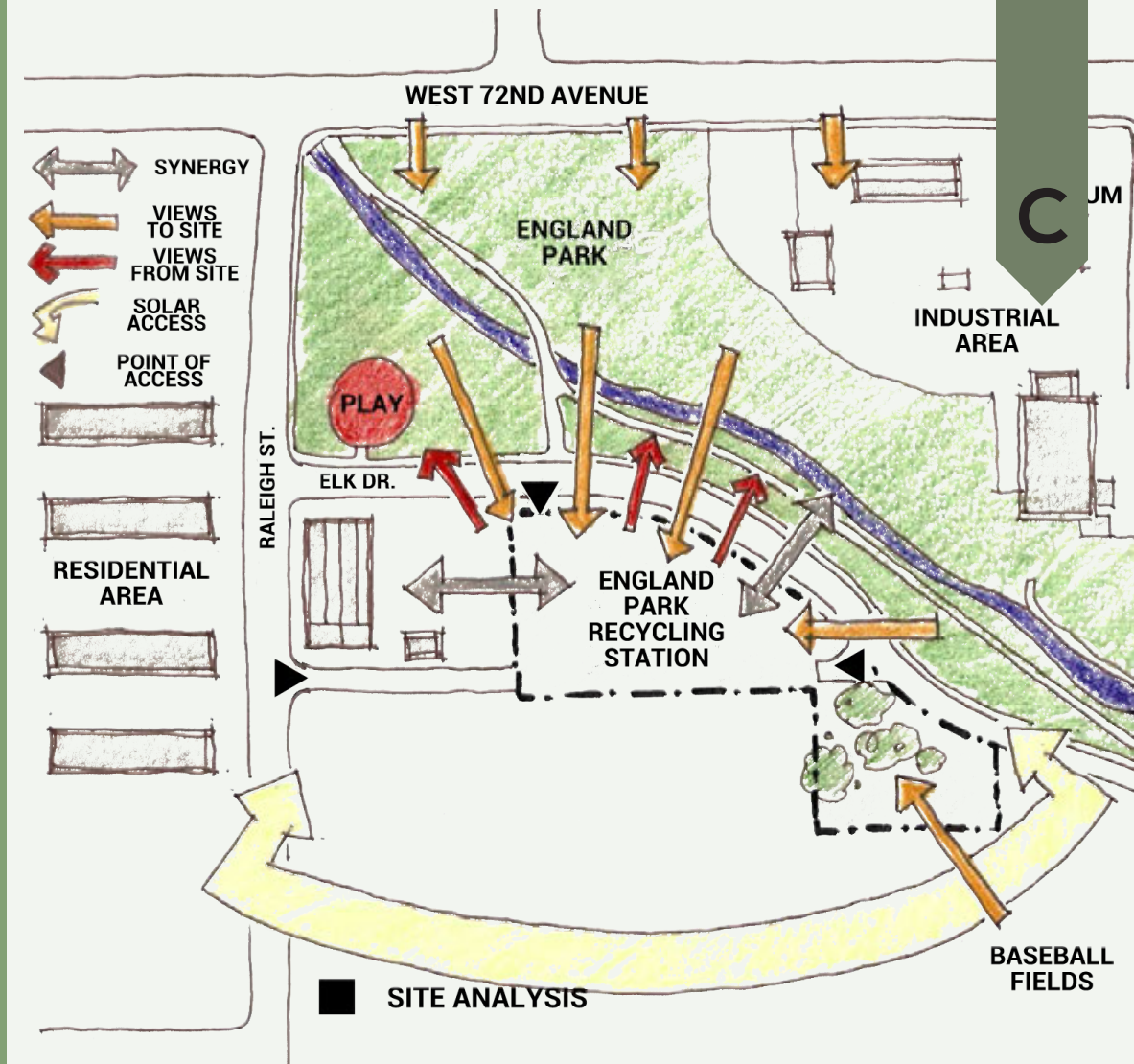


existing site

The England Park Recycling Station should represent the City of Westminster's commitment to the environment. It should address the fears of the neighborhood by providing an amenity to the community and not a dumping site that could become an eye sore and a burden. As such, the facility should become a backdrop to the adjacent park. This is an opportunity for the City to produce a forward thinking and functional facility that would be a very marketable feature within the community if programmed properly to engage the community as a whole.

Education should be a monumental part of this site with programs to not only enlighten the community toward the importance of recycling, but also on-site power generation, xeriscaping and low water gardening, sustainable design, global warming, etc.

By providing a more fulfilling experience, more people will be encouraged to visit the facility. This could be done through education and through design, by providing amenities such as toilets, vending machines, public art made from recycled materials, a place to rest in the shade after unloading, and pleasant environments / landscapes. Leading to a higher number of visits per person and an increased percentage of materials recycled.

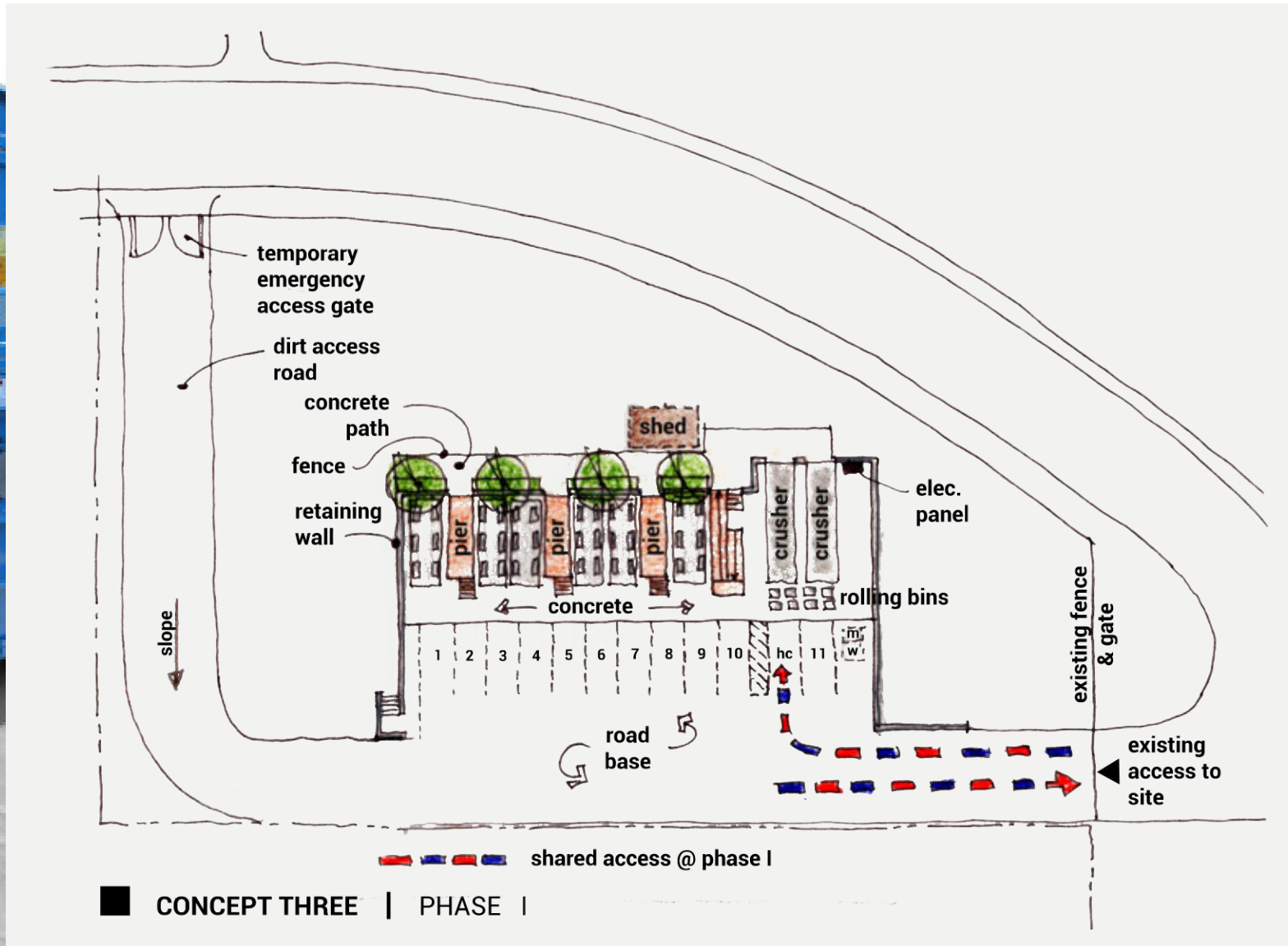


Phase I includes all of the amenities of a basic recycling center.

All public and service access to the site would be from the existing access road, emergency access would be from Elk Drive via a locked gate and temporary road providing a straight run access and egress for fire department response vehicles.

As part of Phase I the access piers would be constructed but would support removable stairs for direct access from the parking area. At the expense of one bailer or bin, a ramp and stair unit would be provided for access to the upper level in a similar fashion as most sites do with a raised platform.

60% conceptual estimated cost:
\$220,063



RECYCLING STATION

60% DESIGN CONCEPT



HANGAR

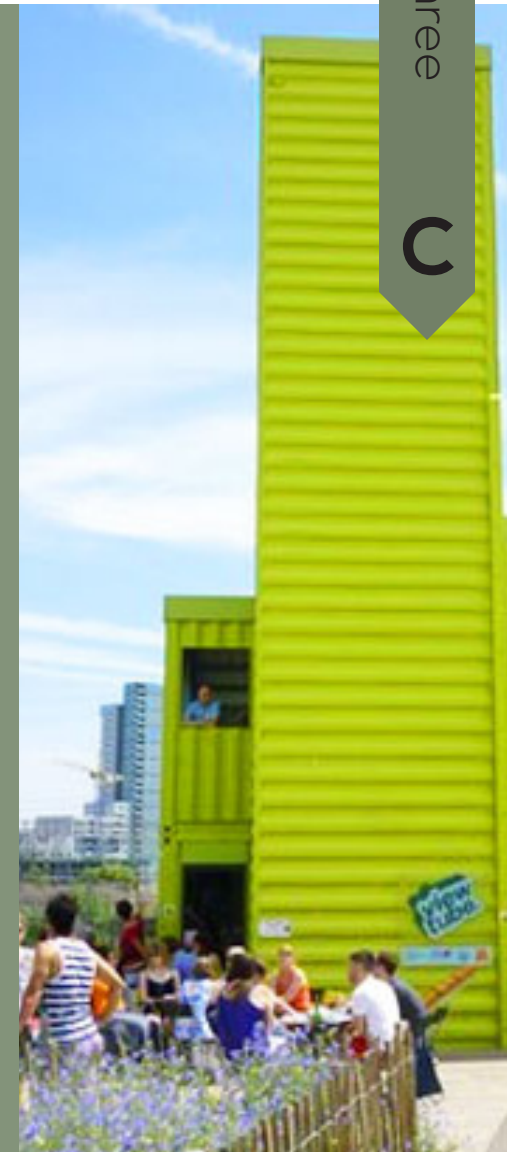
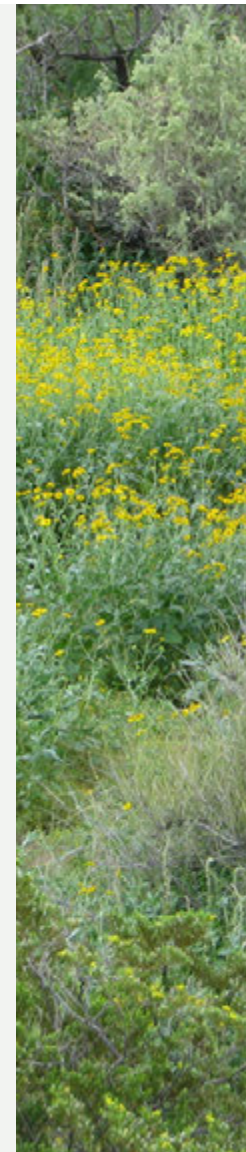
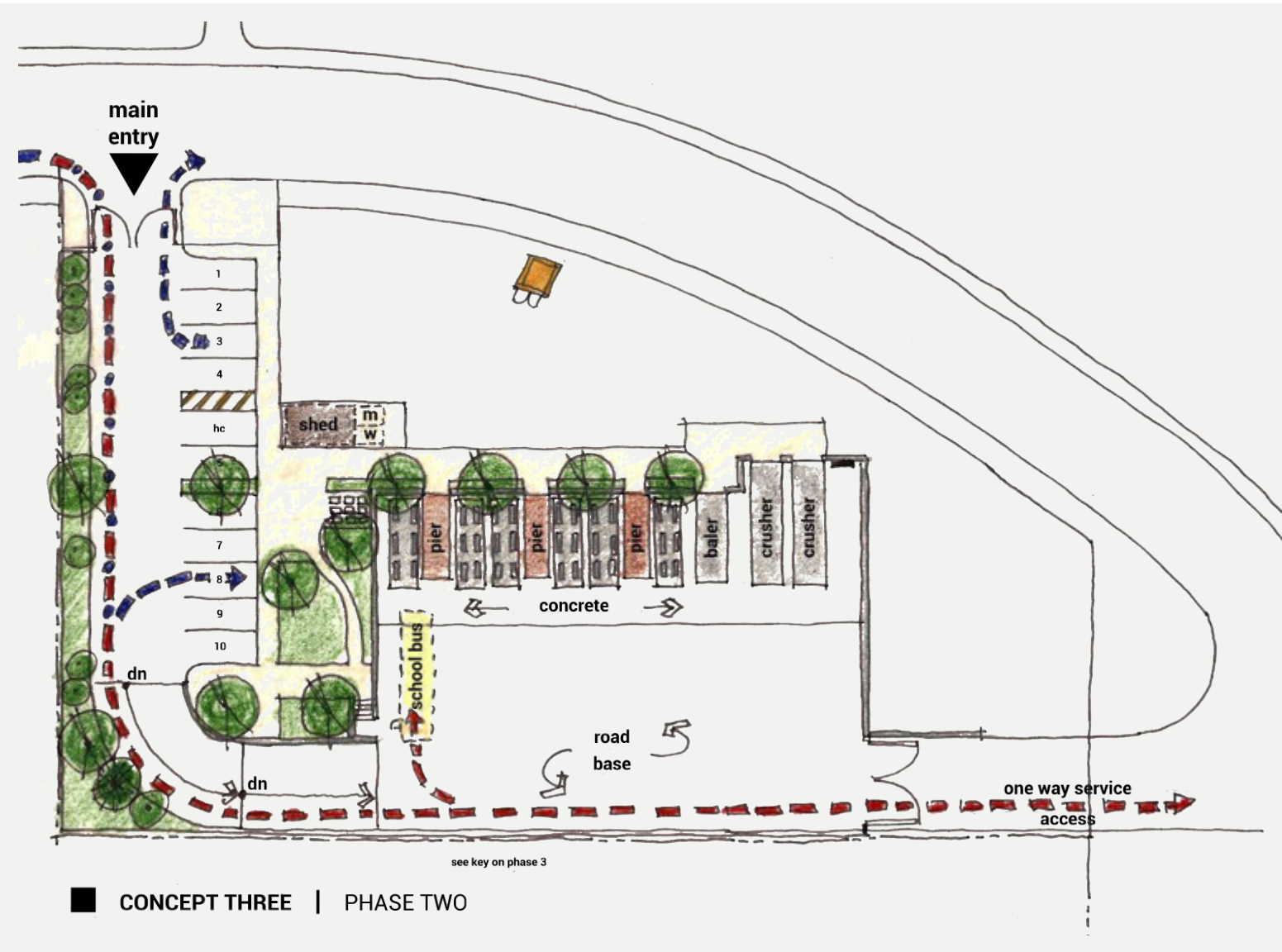
Phase II creates the separation of the public areas from the service spaces. The graded lot created in Phase I would be used exclusively by service vehicles and school bus loading while a new public parking lot is then provided with all public and emergency vehicle access to the site now from Elk Drive.

The newly created public realm is 3 feet above the service area enabling on-grade universal access to the recycling dumpsters creating complete separation between public and service functions. During this phase the previous stair access to the pedestrian piers would be replaced with railings and signage, and the ramp unit would be replaced with a baler bringing the facility up to the expected capacity.

Preliminary partial landscaping is provided in Phase II and the introduction of a shipping container oriented vertically serves as a marker / signage and storage shed.

60% conceptual estimated cost:

\$133,606



RECYCLING STATION

60% DESIGN CONCEPT

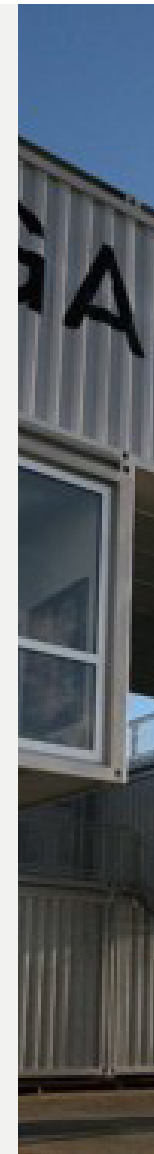
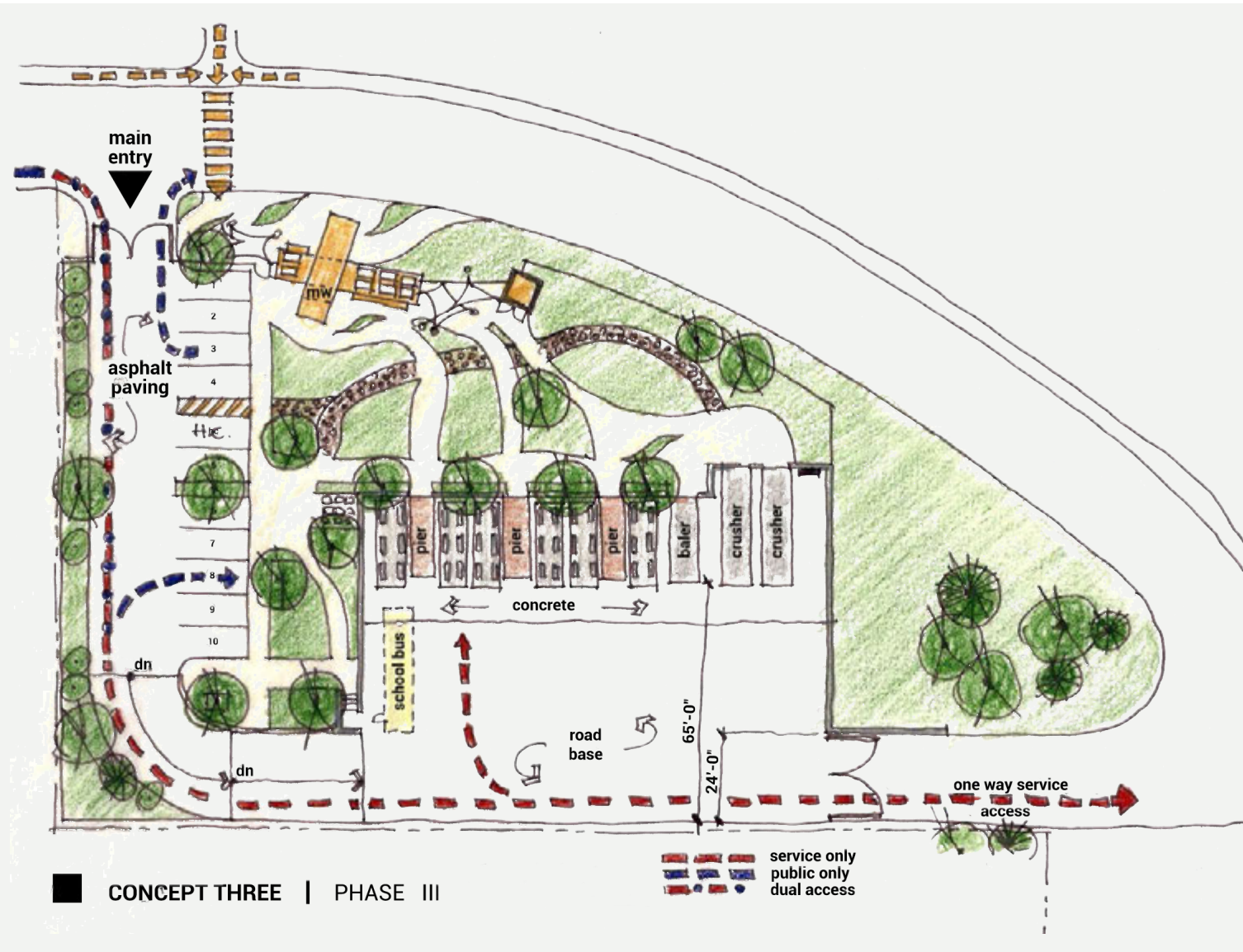


HANGAR

Phase III brings the full scope of additional amenities to the site including the visitors education center, coffee shop (maybe), natural low water use gardens, on site power generation and other elements to help support the teaching of sustainable living concepts.

The seeded natural grass and wildflower areas and xeriscape landscape gardens become more refined and begin to mature and a pedestrian connection is made across Elk Drive to England Park promoting public interaction for curious passersby and easy access for families visiting the park.

60% conceptual estimated cost:
\$135,255

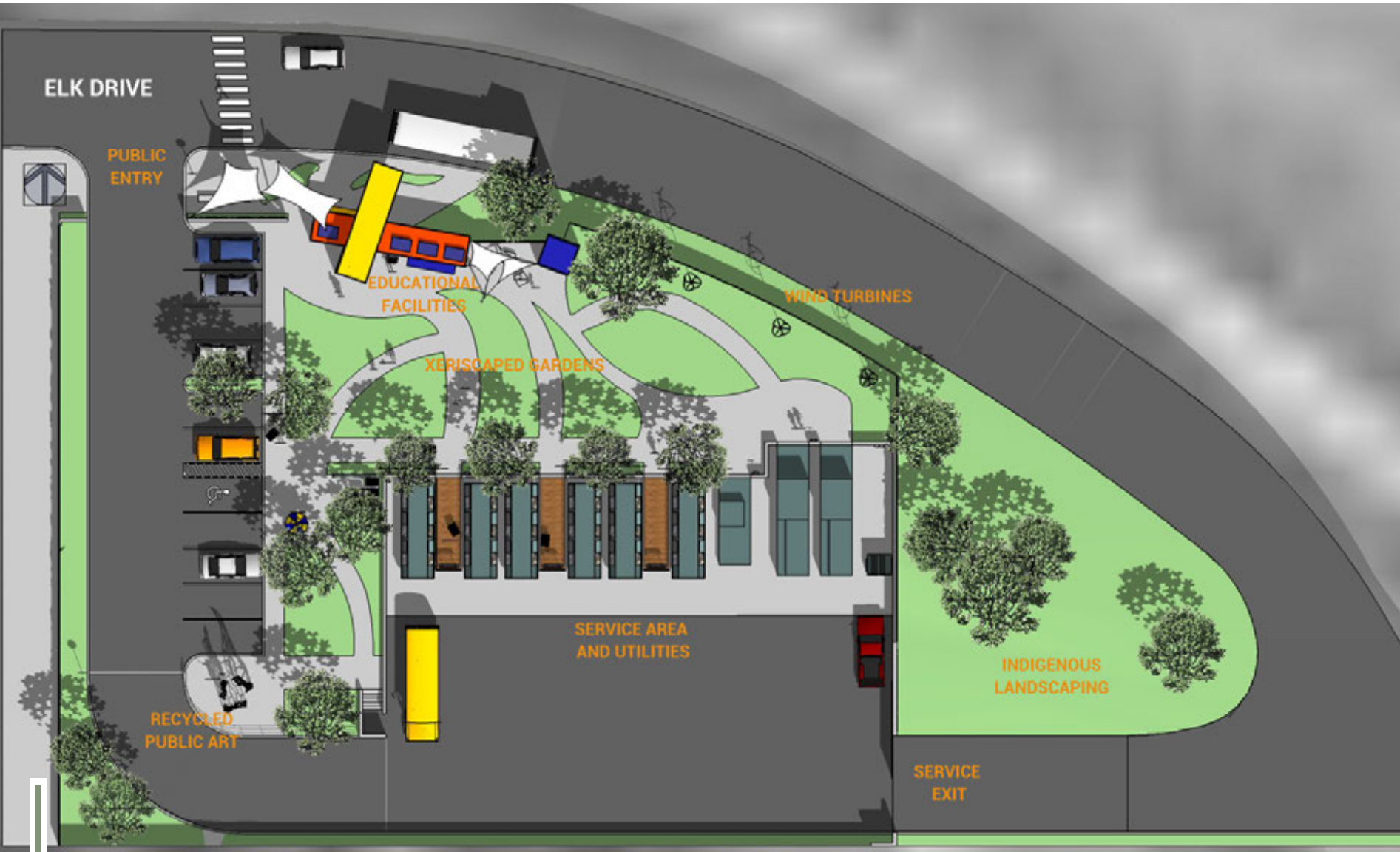


RECYCLING STATION

60% DESIGN CONCEPT



HANGAR



site plan



entry sequence

RECYCLING STATION

60% DESIGN CONCEPT



HANGAR



recycling bins and piers



xeriscape landscape design

RECYCLING STATION

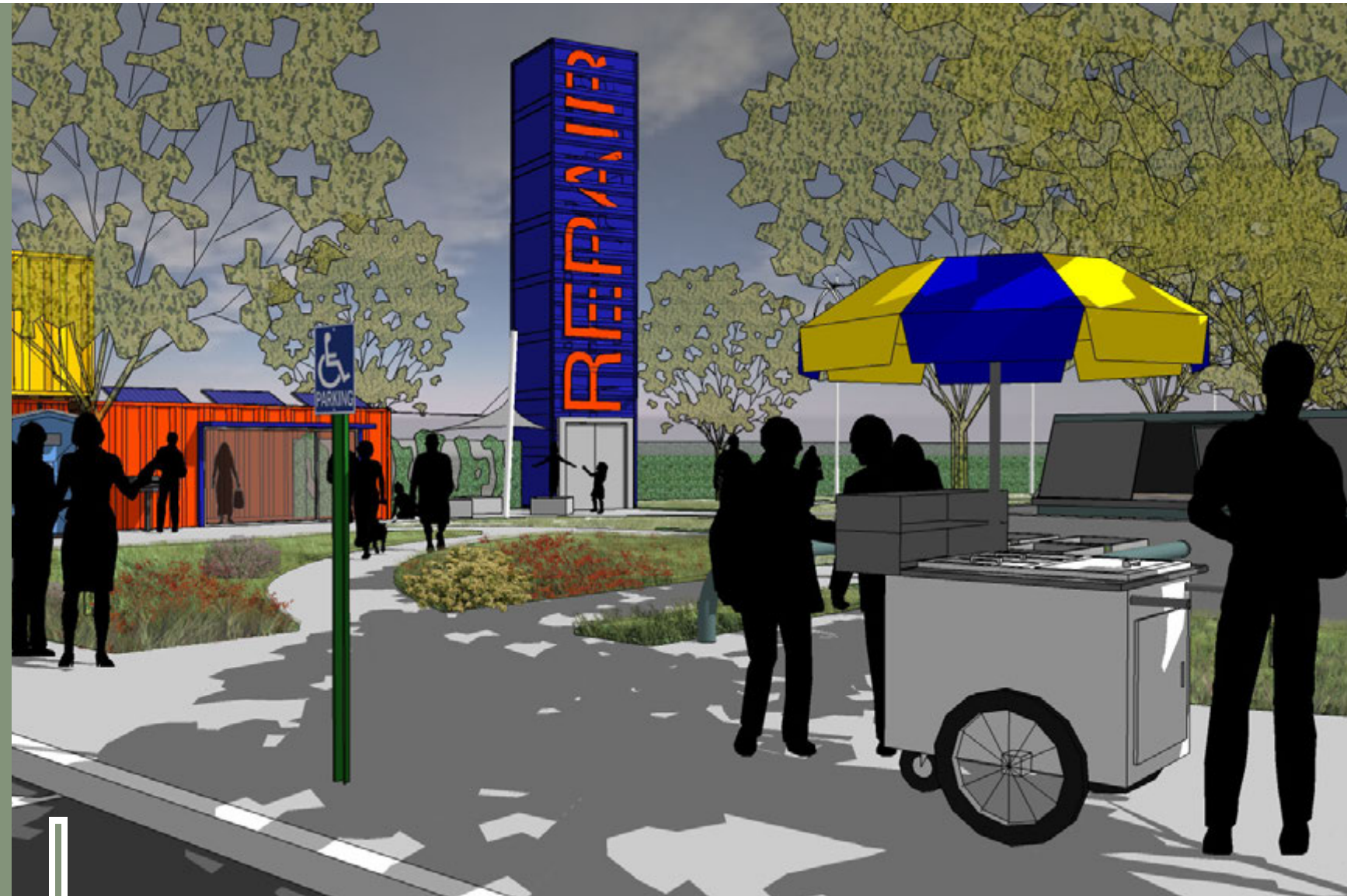
60% DESIGN CONCEPT



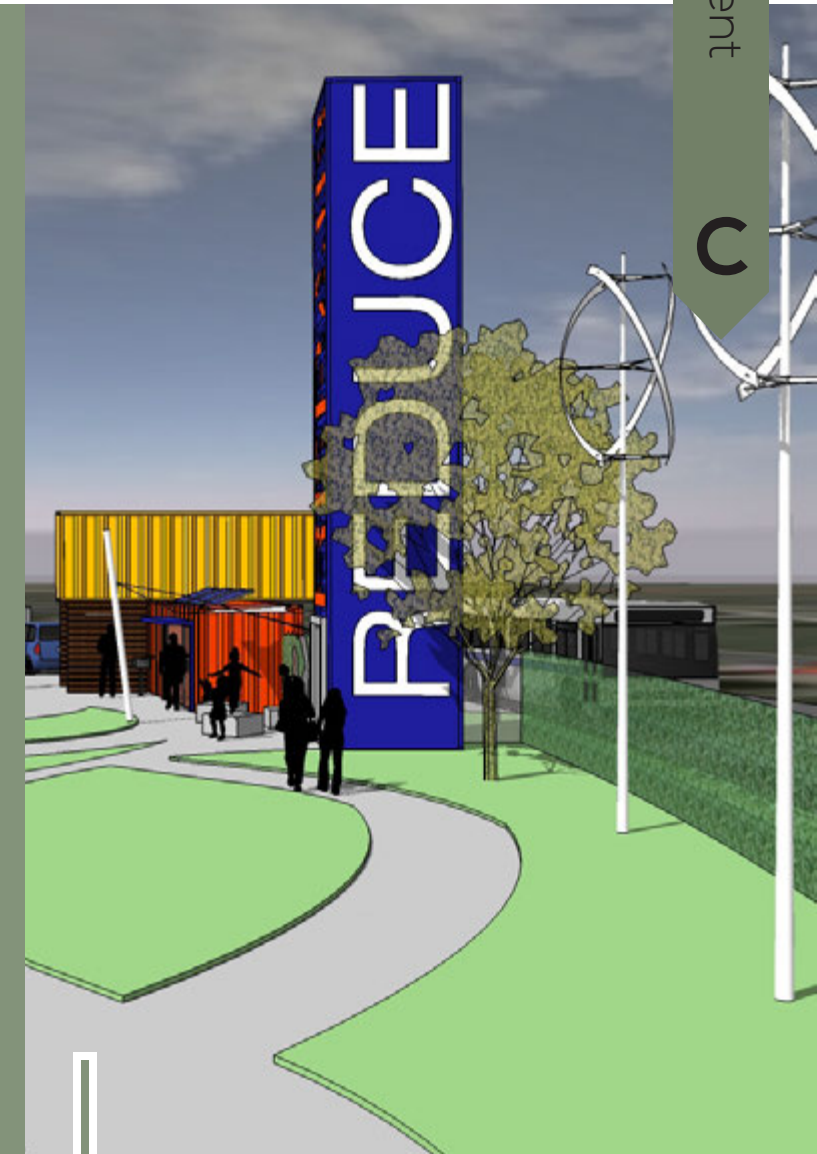
HANGAR



landscaped garden



social hub



net zero energy use



bird's eye view



bins and access piers

RECYCLING STATION

60% DESIGN CONCEPT



HANGAR



RECYCLING STATION

60% DESIGN CONCEPT



HANGAR

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC ISSUES AND CONCERNS SURROUNDING RECYCLING, WASTE COLLECTION, PAYT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S ROLE

Common Facts and Misconceptions about Recycling

How does our state compare in terms of being a "green" recycling state? ⇒ Colorado is not doing a great job in recycling¹ (less than 20% of the municipal waste stream was recycled or composted in 2009²) relative to the rest of the nation (34% nationwide). Less than half of the counties in the state have recycling available for residents at the curb³. Some areas of the state have been very active and successful in recycling however, these areas and industries have not been able to compensate for the rest of Colorado.

Does recycling make sense in Colorado? I have heard rumors that plastics and/or other materials either sit in warehouses or are thrown in landfills. Recyclables have value and once separated from trash and collected as recyclables, are rarely thrown into landfills⁴. Recyclables are sold to markets for a profit (revenues can vary depending on local and international economies). For example, in early 2011 the regional value for sorted and baled cardboard sold as a commodity had a value of \$160-\$170/ton, mixed plastic was \$160-\$180/ton, and aluminum was over \$1,500/ton⁵. It does not make business sense to separately collect recyclables and then pay to put something in a landfill that has value in the markets.⁶ It is worth noting that economics for recycling are more challenging in Colorado compared to coastal states with Front Range landfill rates around \$11-15/ton and our distance to some markets.

How is recycling is a job creator? Does it help or hurt small businesses and small waste haulers? ⇒ On a per ton basis, recycling can sustain 10 times more jobs than landfilling or incineration⁷. The State of North Carolina reports that job gains in recycling have outgrown other sectors during the recent recession and for every 100 recycling jobs created in the state just 10 jobs were lost in the waste hauling and disposal industry⁸. Colorado is losing its fair share of recycling jobs by landfilling so much.

¹ Colorado ranks in the bottom quartile in state recycling rates. Arsova, Van Harren, Goldstein, Kaufman, Themelis, 16th National Survey of MSW Management in the US. The State of Garbage in America. BioCycle, December 2008 Vol 49, No. 12

² Colorado Department of Health and Environment, *Colorado Solid Waste and Materials Management Program 2010 Annual Report to the Colorado General Assembly* reports the MSW recycling rate in 2009 was 19.8% (includes composting) and it was only 9.3% if scrap metal is excluded.

³ Colorado Department of Health and Environment, *Colorado Solid Waste and Materials Management Program 2010 Annual Report to the Colorado General Assembly* reports only 28 out of Colorado's 64 counties have curbside recycling available.

⁴ The exception to this rule may be glass. Although Colorado is lucky enough to have a local glass recycler in Rocky Mountain Bottling Company (Coors), glass is an expensive commodity to transport due to its weight. Rocky Mountain Bottling Company does pay for incoming glass and several successful businesses (Ex. Dahl Recycling, Colorado Springs) rely on glass recycling to make a profit, but it is not profitable for all parts of the state. However, some landfills in the state use glass as Alternative Daily Cover (ADC) on the their landfill, a material that is required to be placed in the open face of an active landfill at the end of each working day to keep vectors and blowing materials away from the trash due to the economics underlying the commodity.

⁵ Commodity values as reported by Waste and Recycling News Secondary Materials Pricing, Commodity Pricing Averages Midwest and Central United States March 2011.

⁶ The net value of course depends on whether there are recycling centers near the community to bring the materials, and the cost of transporting the collected materials to that center.

⁷ Institute for Local Self Reliance, Washington, DC, 1997

⁸ *2008 Trends in North Carolina's Recycling Industry*. North Carolina Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance

Attachment 5

- Is it true that recyclables from Colorado are mainly shipped to China or other non-domestic manufacturers?* ⇒ Recycle America (Denver) and the Boulder County recycling facility both report that they sold over 90% of their recyclables to U.S. manufacturers. In 2009, more than 960,000 tons of recyclable materials were used to manufacture new materials in Colorado⁹.
- Can recycling reduce overall green house gas emissions even taking into account the recycling trucks on the road and transportation impacts?* ⇒ The embedded energy recovered in recyclables dramatically outweighs the emissions from transportation¹⁰. For example, the “break even” point for trucking aluminum (the point where the GHG emissions from transportation outweigh the potential GHG emissions avoided through recycling) is 116,000 miles, or the same as driving from New York City to Los Angeles 47 times¹¹. In 2009 Colorado alone conserved 640,000 tons of coal by using recycled steel and glass in the State¹².
- If recycling makes so much sense, shouldn't recycling service be free for all households?* ⇒ Someday it may be free, but right now recycling is only cheaper than trash service. On average, a collection hauler will charge a household around \$3-\$5/month to collect recycling and around \$8 to \$12/month (or more) to collect trash. The actual recyclables revenues are only a portion of a hauler's total budget and expenses. To collect recyclables haulers must still purchase trucks and carts/bins, staff the trucks to collect the materials, purchase fuel, provide maintenance, etc.. These costs are nearly the same for recycling as for trash. However recycling, unlike trash, once collected can be sold as a commodity, and haulers must pay to dispose of trash in a landfill.
- I have heard people talking about ICLEI and other “sustainability” organizations? What does this mean?* ⇒ ICLEI¹³ is an international association of local governments (county, city, and governmental organizations) who have made a commitment to sustainability. ICLEI provides free technical assistance, information, reports, and guidance to cities/counties to help them achieve their own local sustainability goals, and some Colorado municipalities are members of ICLEI. Some local governments in Colorado have prioritized sustainability as a means of retaining and enhancing Colorado's local green environment (for outdoor enjoyment, tourism, and business reasons).

Concerns about Hauler Arrangements, Regulations, and Options

- What role do local governments play in trash regulations and control?* ⇒ Enacting regulations for hauler operations/licensing or contracting for services does not equate to a city taking over trash/recycling collection. Trash/recycling service, whether provided by multiple haulers or a single hauler requires some oversight in the interests of protecting the public health and environment. For this reason, Colorado statutes provide counties and cities with the powers to enact regulations. The Colorado Municipal League supports local governments' legal authority to be a stakeholder in local solid waste management for residences up to 7 units. CML feels that local government actions are appropriately balanced by the rights of citizens and businesses to register complaints, submit a

⁹ Colorado Department of Health and Environment, *Colorado Solid Waste and Materials Management Program 2010 Annual Report to the Colorado General Assembly*

¹⁰ Skumatz, Lisa. *Recycling and Climate Change*. Resource Recycling, October 2008. Platt, Ciolet, Bailey, Lombardi. *Stop Trashing the Climate*. Institute for Local Self-Reliance, June 2008

¹¹ David Allaway, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality

¹² Colorado Department of Health and Environment, *Colorado Solid Waste and Materials Management Program 2010 Annual Report to the Colorado General Assembly*

¹³ Governments in Colorado are members of ICLEI USA which is an affiliate of the international organization, but just focuses on the US

Attachment 5

referendum petition and vote for elected officials.

- Does contracting for trash and/or recycling collection take away personal choice in selecting a hauler?* ⇒ In neighborhoods or cities that move from an "open" system (where citizens select their own hauler) to a system where the government or HOA selects the hauler, residential choice of a hauler is typically lost. It is important to note that a contract still promotes competition and capitalism. Under a contract, haulers bid competitively to provide service for a community/neighborhood and the most responsive bid wins.
- Do single hauler contracts cause rates to increase for households or reduce the services they get because there is less competition?* ⇒ Single-hauler contracts typically result in lower prices for households (because of economies of scale, and hauler desire to be awarded all homes in a town)¹⁴. Attaching CPI or other inflators keeps the rates lower. In most cases the loss of household choice of hauler is balanced by an increase in services for households, greater safety in neighborhoods, a reduction in traffic and noise caused by collection vehicles, and a reduction in road damage and less pollution. Under a bid competition, haulers often add services to "sweeten the pot" for the contract, resulting in value added services for all households.
- Is hauler reporting of tons collected possible because trucks cross city borders and can't say what trash/recycling comes from what city?* ⇒ Haulers currently report in many communities and address this issue by using the ratio of number of accounts along the route in each community or other method for apportioning collected tons.
- Do single-hauler contracts put trash haulers out of business?* ⇒ Unsuccessful bidders may elect to expand into nearby markets. However, they will lose customers in the market in which they bid if they lose the bid. Single hauler contracts are typically used only for residential customers in Colorado and do not affect the commercial sector (in some cases, unsuccessful bidders may choose to re-focus their services to the commercial sector). As an alternative to a single hauler contract, a city may choose to district and offer multiple contracts to multiple haulers, similar to how HOA's currently contract for trash collection in different neighborhoods in a single city.
- Are small haulers at a disadvantage in the bidding process for single hauler contracts?* ⇒ Some small haulers may be at a competitive disadvantage however, small haulers have been awarded contracts in the state, and have used them to "grow" their business successfully¹⁵. It is up to each City to establish the bid requirements and specifications for choosing the winning bid.
- Damage to roads is increased by multiple haulers serving the same neighborhoods.* ⇒ More large commercial trucks driving down residential streets causes increased road damage as shown by a number of studies. The literature shows that one trash truck causes the equivalent damage of 350 to 10,000 cars driving down the same road¹⁶.
- Is it true that any changes to the status quo of an existing solid waste collection system will increase costs for all* ⇒ There are some changes to the trash system that can lead to lower costs. Examples include: 1) If there are many haulers serving the same streets, costs can generally be reduced if fewer trucks are serving the same area,

¹⁴ *Residential Refuse Collection in Selected Glen Falls Area Local Governments*. Office of the New York State Comptroller, Division of Local Government Services and Economic Development. 2005-MR-6

¹⁵ Recent examples of local haulers winning contracts against national or regional haulers include Western Disposal (Lafayette, Louisville) and EDS Waste Solutions Inc. (Golden, CO)

¹⁶ There is a wide range of estimates from the literature including multiple national agencies (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) state agencies (WA, MN, others), and other county and local studies. For example, the City of Chanhassen Organized Collection Study reports that a single hauler serving a residential cul-de-sac represents 1,650 equivalent automobile trips and five haulers serving the same cul-de-sac is the equivalent of 8,250 automobile trips.

Attachment 5

households, haulers, and businesses?

and/or if haulers serve all the homes in particular districts or neighborhoods, allowing routes to be efficient, and providing sufficient customers to reach “economies of scale” and efficient utilization of equipment. Districting, city contracts, or home owners associations are examples of these efficiencies. 2) Moving to provide recycling for all customers will reduce the cost of recycling compared to the fees when only a few customers select recycling (again, economies of scale). Thus, universal recycling also reduces the cost of recycling to those wishing for curbside service.

Can local governments provide collection services as effectively as the private sector?

⇒ Both local governments and the private sector have the ability to provide cost-effective and responsive trash, recycling and organics collection. One of the communities with the highest diversion rate in the state, Loveland, has municipal collection with rates ranging from \$13.75 to \$23.75 including the collection of recycling and yard waste and extensive drop-off sites and materials all while operating as a self-sufficient enterprise fund.

Pay-As-You-Throw and Variable Rates

Does Pay As You Throw (PAYT) cost more for the city, haulers, and households?

⇒ *City costs:* Two large statewide surveys (WI, IA) showed that PAYT led to no increase in costs (or town workloads) in 2/3 of communities implementing PAYT.

Hauler costs: PAYT itself can be implemented in ways that lead to virtually no cost increase (bag programs without special cans or billing, keeping the same collection system, etc).¹⁷ If the hauler does not currently provide recycling service there will be some costs associated with new carts and setting up collection routes. These are typically passed through to the households in the rates. Recycling is cheaper than trash, but not free, as trucks must still stop by the house, collect materials, and deliver them to a recycling center.

Household costs: PAYT works by charging residents for the volume of trash they dispose and encouraging recycling. Under a PAYT program some households will pay more (those throwing away a lot of trash and not recycling), others will not see significant changes in their rates, and other households (avid recyclers, small households, elderly households, etc.) will pay less.

Is making people pay for more trash unfair to large families or large generators?

⇒ PAYT works under the basic environmental law principal of *polluter pays*. The premise is that the person or entity responsible for the pollution, in this case trash and its related impacts on landfills, water, air, etc., is the one responsible for paying the costs. Unlike programs where everyone pays to benefit all regardless of personal use or responsibility, polluter pays requires each person to be responsible for their own pollution. Under unlimited trash disposal, a small generator (i.e. one bag disposer) subsidizes services for a large generator (a household with 5 or 6 bags). Under PAYT, each household only pays for what they throw away. This is a more equitable system than unlimited trash disposal. PAYT has been adopted by over 7,100 communities nationwide¹⁸.

What impacts does PAYT have on small

⇒ PAYT does not put small haulers out of business. PAYT can be enacted

¹⁷ Potential cost increases occur if towns or haulers need to purchase new containers (this is no extra cost if they are already buying new cans to go “automated” – they just buy different sizes); however, if they already purchased big cans, a cost can result from purchasing new, smaller cans. This can be mitigated by offering an every-other-week service at the lower cost, and keeping the large cans (buying smaller ones through attrition, perhaps) or switching the big cans to recycling or yard waste containers.

¹⁸ Skumatz, Freeman. *Pay-As-You-Throw in the US: 2006 Update and Analysis*. Published by US EPA Office of Solid Waste, 2007.

Attachment 5

haulers?

under an ordinance in an "open" system (citizens can choose from multiple haulers) to provide a level playing field for all haulers without prohibiting any hauler from competing in the marketplace¹⁹. PAYT with embedded recycling service (as PAYT is often implemented) is a business opportunity for haulers. Under a PAYT system haulers may be required to offer recycling to all households for an appropriate fee – leading to more corporate revenues. They may also use the PAYT experience to expand their capabilities and are therefore ready and experienced when other communities select PAYT. Several haulers have used PAYT as a competitive business advantage to distinguish themselves from haulers that provide basic trash-only service.

Does Pay-as-you-throw (PAYT) lead to more illegal dumping?

⇒ Overall, PAYT does not lead to increased illegal dumping. Hundreds of communities with PAYT have been asked about the impact on illegal dumping. About 20% say there is an issue that lasts about 3 months, and that enforcement helps²⁰. Research on illegally dumped waste in PAYT communities shows the majority is not household in origin (and thus, not due to PAYT) and the most common household items dumped are bulky items (appliances, sofas, etc.). PAYT programs should have convenient methods for citizens to get rid of bulky items (tags, fees, appointments, coupons for one free dump, etc.) to avoid illegal dumping issues.

¹⁹ Skumatz, Freeman. *Pay-As-You-Throw in the US: 2006 Update and Analysis*. Published by US EPA Office of Solid Waste, 2007.

²⁰ *Pay-As-You-Throw and Illegal Dumping*. Econservation Institute Fact Sheet 2009. http://www.paytnow.org/PAYT_FactSheet_IllegalDumping.pdf