



# State of Colorado

## Colorado Circular Communities (C3) Enterprise

### CY2025 - CY2029 Strategic Plan

Approved November 6, 2024





# C3 Enterprise Strategic Plan

## Moving Circularity Forward in the Next Five Years



### Mission

To empower and support Colorado's communities, businesses, and organizations by providing technical assistance, grants, and funding opportunities for projects that advance circularity throughout the state.



### Vision

We envision a Colorado where every community thrives within a fully integrated circular economy - where waste is minimized, resources are continuously reused locally, and economic opportunities are enhanced through sustainable and equitable practices.

### Values

- ❖ *Sustainability* - We are committed to activities that, for both current and future generations, protect the environment, support local and state economics, and promote public health.
- ❖ *Innovation* - We embrace forward-thinking, humanity-centered solutions that challenge traditional economic models and foster a circular approach to resource management.
- ❖ *Collaboration* - We believe in the power of partnerships to realize regional efficiencies across Colorado and amplify impact.
- ❖ *Equity* - We strive to ensure that the benefits of a circular economy are accessible and equitable across all communities in Colorado.
- ❖ *Protecting Public Health and the Environment* - We support waste haulers and landfill operators to achieve greater material capture, extending the useful life of landfills, and promoting access to services throughout Colorado.
- ❖ *Operational Excellence* - We are committed to transparently delivering value to the people of Colorado through open communication and continuous, measureable improvement.



# C3 CY2025-2029 Goals & Strategies

## Goal 1.0

### Increase Participation in the State's Circular Economy

- 1.1 Conduct statewide outreach and technical assistance to support the state's circular economy.
- 1.2 Develop confidence in the state's circular economy.
- 1.3 Increase access to the state's circular economy.

## Goal 2.0

### Reduce Material Consumption

- 2.1 Encourage less consumption and promote the reuse of materials.
- 2.2 Support sustainable product design to reduce material inputs, protect natural resources, protect human health and the environment, and extend the lifetime of products.

## Goal 3.0

### Increase Material Capture for In-State Marketability

- 3.1 Develop regional partnerships.
- 3.2 Decrease material contamination.
- 3.3 Increase the state's circular economy infrastructure.

## **Definitions**

For the purpose of this Strategic Plan:

1. Circular economy means an economy that uses a systems-focused approach and involves industrial processes and economic activities that:
  - (a) Are restorative or regenerative by design;
  - (b) Enable resources used in industrial processes and economic activities to maintain their highest values for as long as possible; and
  - (c) Aim to eliminate waste through the superior design of materials, products, and systems, including business models;

See Sections 25-16.5-103 and 25-17-601(2), of the Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.)

and,

- (d) includes waste diversion and aversion, which is the sustainable design , production, distribution, consumption, recoverability, reuse, waste prevention, repair, collection and recycling of a variety of materials, including construction and demolition materials, single-stream materials, technology and electronic materials, food recovery, and the composting of raw and reused materials, including organic materials.

See Sections 25-16.5-103(11) and 25-16.5-109, C.R.S.

4. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) means the producer responsibility program and nonprofit organization designated by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Executive Director pursuant to Sections 25-16.5-109(5)(b)(II) and 25-17-705(1)(b)(II), C.R.S.
6. Organic materials means any solid waste that is a biological substance of plant or animal origin, including food scraps and yard trimmings, that can be broken down through biological processes.

See Sections 25-16.5-103 and 25-17-901(5), C.R.S.

7. Rural County or Area means county or geographical area outside the Front Range as defined in Section 25-16-104.5 (3.9)(c.5), C.R.S.
8. Small business means a business with fewer than 50 employees.
9. Underrepresented Community means a composition of the population that faces barriers in accessing and using public services, to include rural county or area.

## **C3 CY2025-2029 Goals, Strategies, and Activities**

### **Goal 1.0 – Increase Participation in the State’s Circular Economy**

#### **1.1 Strategic Goal - Conduct statewide outreach and technical assistance to support the state’s circular economy**

Activities to achieve this goal:

- 1.1.1 Develop and launch a Statewide Outreach and Technical Assistance Program for all eligible entities, resulting in at least 50 prospective projects each calendar year, with at least five projects that will be in or benefit underrepresented communities, including rural counties or areas.
- 1.1.2 Develop a data-driven outreach plan by July 2026, prioritizing eligible entities that are least engaged, aiming for at least 10% increase in participation from these groups by January 2027.
- 1.1.3 Perform outreach to at least 150 eligible entities per year with at least 45 eligible entities being in or benefitting underrepresented communities including rural counties or areas.

#### **1.2 Strategic Goal - Develop confidence in the state’s circular economy**

Activities to achieve this goal:

- 1.2.1 Develop and publish enterprise toolkits, such as webinars and case studies, to expand circularity participation by publishing resources in multiple languages by July 2027.
- 1.2.2 Host at least two regional workshops each calendar year for eligible entities, with one targeted to a rural county or area.
- 1.2.3 Design and pilot targeted consumer choice campaigns by collaborating with at least two underrepresented communities each calendar year.

#### **1.3 Strategic Goal - Increase access to the state’s circular economy**

Activities to achieve this goal:

- 1.3.1 Ensure all public facing materials, resources, and applications continue to meet State of Colorado accessibility requirements throughout the duration of this strategic plan.
- 1.3.2 Develop a multi-year communications plan that includes multilingual translation services by June 2025.
- 1.3.3 Create a eligible entity or technical assistance recipient feedback process by July 2026, to improve transparency, grant and funding recipient experience, technical assistance recipient experience, and circularity outreach, education services, and overall C3 program participation, resulting in at least a 10% increase of eligible entities from underrepresented communities within three years.

## **Goal 2.0 – Reduce Material Consumption**

### **2.1 Strategic Goal -Encourage less consumption and promote the reuse of materials**

Activities to achieve this goal:

- 2.1.1 Conduct statewide education and marketing campaigns to encourage the reduction and reuse of materials with at least two campaigns completed by January 2027.
- 2.1.2 Host at least two webinars each calendar year for local governments regarding local public policies that promote waste reduction and reuse models and best practices.
- 2.1.3 Develop a webinar each calendar year on reducing single use waste and promoting reuse systems for businesses that generate organic materials.
- 2.1.4 Develop a rebate or incentive pilot program to increase consumer demand for upstream material consumption (i.e., reuse, remanufacture) by June 2025, and implement before June 2026.
- 2.1.5 Provide rebates to rural counties or areas, or haulers providing services in rural counties or areas, to offset the cost of providing curbside recycling by September 2025.
  - 2.1.5.1 Review the efficacy of the rebate program to determine any modifications needed or possible elimination due to the new Extended Producer Responsibility Program (EPR) by January 2026.

### **2.2 Strategic Goal -Support sustainable product design to reduce material inputs, protect natural resources, and extend the lifetime of products**

Activities to achieve this goal:

- 2.2.1 Provide financial support for sustainable design of products to at least ten entities by July 2028, in accordance with Section 25-16.5-103(11), C.R.S.
- 2.2.2 Collaborate with the Circular Economy Development Center (CEDC) to host at least one webinar each calendar year for producers regarding reducing material inputs and protecting natural resources when designing products.

## **Goal 3.0 – Increase Material Capture for In-State Marketability**

### **3.1 Strategic Goal -Develop regional partnerships**

Activities to achieve this goal:

- 3.1.1 Hold at least three regional planning meetings in underrepresented communities including rural counties or areas of the state by July 2026.
- 3.1.2 Develop at least three regional funding projects for C3 Board consideration that establish a circular framework in underrepresented communities including rural counties or areas of the state by July 2027.

- 3.1.3 Develop and fund at least two projects utilizing a hub and spoke model for collecting and transporting materials in underrepresented communities including rural counties or areas of the state by January 2028.

### **3.2 Strategic Goal - Decrease material contamination**

Activities to achieve this goal:

- 3.2.1 Collaborate with the EPR program to develop educational materials concerning the Minimum Recyclable List by December 2025.
- 3.2.2 Develop an educational materials and outreach plan for Colorado residents on the importance of recycling correctly by July 2026.
- 3.2.3 Develop at least one webinar per year for businesses that use or generate organic materials on best practices to reduce contamination in the commercial organics stream.
- 3.2.4 Fund at least one organics pre-sortation system in a facility accepting compostable packaging by July 2027.

### **3.3 Strategic Goal - Increase the state's circular economy infrastructure**

Activities to achieve this goal:

- 3.3.1 Fund at least six collection and hauling infrastructure projects that expand or provide new waste diversion access to underrepresented communities including rural counties or areas in the state by December 2029.
- 3.3.2 Fund the establishment of at least two new transfer stations in rural counties or areas of the state by December 2029.
- 3.3.3 Collaborate with the EPR program to identify projects that will maximize funds for key processing facility infrastructure upgrades by December 2025.
- 3.3.4 Fund at least three small business material recycling facilities in need of additional sortation equipment to maximize material capture in underrepresented communities including rural counties or areas of the state by December 2029.
- 3.3.5 Fund the establishment of at least two new composting facilities that provide access to composting in or for one or more rural counties or areas of the state that currently lack composting access by December 2029.
- 3.3.6 Fund the establishment of at least two construction and deconstruction sorting facilities in Colorado by December 2029.
- 3.3.7 Fund at least three manufacturing projects identified by CEDC to establish new or expand current end markets in the state by December 2029.
- 3.3.8 Make \$1,000,000 available to fund grants up to \$50,000 for eligible entities to support equipment needs.

## **Annual Priorities to Implement the Strategic Plan, including an Equitable Distribution for Rural Counties**

An “X” notes the year in which the activity is to be achieved. An “X” appears multiple times when the activity is recurring. Efforts to implement the activity will begin months or years in advance.

Many rows reflect statewide efforts. Rows highlighted in gray identify activities that include targeted efforts to rural counties or areas to ensure an equitable distribution of funding from the board’s grants and funding program. It is anticipated the activities identified in this strategic plan will result in an equitable distribution of funding for rural counties. This may occur in the form of projects located within rural counties, projects benefitting rural counties, or projects, such as regional projects, that benefit some Front Range counties and some rural counties. When enterprise staff recommend funding projects, staff will identify whether the proposed project benefits rural counties or areas of the state. As part of its review of staffs’ recommendation, the board will assess whether the specific recommendation or the overall distribution of funding is equitable. The activities in this strategic plan can be adjusted as needed to achieve an equitable distribution.

Strategic Goal	Activity	Funding Opportunity	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Goal 1: Increase Participation in the State's Circular Economy	1.1.1	X	X	X	X	X	X
	1.1.2		X	X			
	1.1.3		X	X	X	X	X
	1.2.1				X		
	1.2.2		X	X	X	X	X
	1.2.3		X	X	X	X	X
	1.3.1		X	X	X	X	X
	1.3.2		X				
	1.3.3			X			
Goal 2: Reduce Material Consumption	2.1.1				X		
	2.1.2		X	X	X	X	X
	2.1.3		X	X	X	X	X
	2.1.4	X	X	X		X	
	2.1.5	X	X	X			
	2.2.1	X				X	
	2.2.2		X	X	X	X	X
Goal 3: Increase Material Capture for In-State Marketability	3.1.1			X			
	3.1.2	X			X		
	3.1.3	X				X	
	3.2.1		X				



	3.2.2			X			
	3.2.3		X	X	X	X	X
	3.2.4	X			X		
	3.3.1	X					X
	3.3.2	X					X
	3.3.3	X	X				
	3.3.4	X					X
	3.3.5	X					X
	3.3.6	X					X
	3.3.7	X					X
	3.3.8	X	X	X	X	X	X