

# THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER

## PLANNING WASTE DIVERSION INITIATIVES



WESTMINSTER

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SUSTAINABLE  
WESTMINSTER

### PURPOSE

The City of Westminster ('City') is northwest of Denver, Colorado and home to 115,000+ people.<sup>1</sup> The City identified a need to explore waste diversion initiatives to increase residential and construction and demolition ('C&D') waste diversion rates. Waste diversion slows the rate at which landfills are filled by keeping materials out of landfill through recycling, compost, and reuse. Westminster has 10 residential waste haulers, no C&D recycling requirements, inconsistent waste data tracking methods, and only diversion goals for City operations and facilities are outlined at 35% by 2030.<sup>2</sup> Westminster's Sustainability Office lacks staff capacity to take on additional waste diversion research. The City partnered with three graduate student consultants from the Masters of the Environment (MENV) program at the University of Colorado Boulder to identify strategies to improve Westminster's waste diversion. The goal was to identify strategies for Westminster to improve waste diversion for residential and C&D sectors. The team analyzed surrounding municipalities as models for waste management, utilized Westminster community input, and conducted expert interviews to inform Westminster's future waste management decision-making.

### METHODS

The MENV consultants conducted background research, interviewed 20 individuals, and simultaneously administered a survey to 200+ Westminster households.

#### Fieldwork and Research

Background research focused on state-level policy, and waste management initiatives and strategies from 12 Front Range municipalities. The team toured multiple material recovery facilities ('MRFs') and attended the Recycle Colorado Summit for Recycling, and Circular Action Alliance Producer Responsibility Program seminars to learn more about waste diversion across the state.

#### Interviews

During June and July 2025, 15 Sustainability Staff members from the 12 selected municipalities were interviewed on their diversion strategies for residential and C&D waste. Three experts on the Colorado Producer Responsibility Program (PRP) highlighted the capabilities and benefits of the program. Lastly, representatives from two data tracking software companies provided insight into their platforms.

#### Resident Survey

Westminster residents responded to a 13 question survey, offered in both English and Spanish, to gauge resident preferences and interest in waste improvements. Through 15 survey events totaling 41 hours of community engagement and two digital outreach campaigns, the team reached over 200 Westminster households.



<sup>1</sup> Westminster, CO. Data USA. (n.d.). <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/westminster-co>

<sup>2</sup> Westminster Sustainability Plan (p. iv). (2021). City of Westminster. <https://www.westminsterco.gov/DocumentCenter/View/819/Westminster-Sustainability-Plan-Final-6-11-21-PDF>

# DELIVERABLES & RECOMMENDATIONS

## DATA TRACKING REPORT

Westminster does not currently capture an accurate weight of residential and C&D waste sent to the landfill, recycling facilities, and other disposal sites. To set appropriate diversion goals, the City needs to have a baseline for current waste generation. Enhanced waste data tracking will be essential for the City to effectively monitor and mitigate municipal waste generation and set accurate goals. The report provides Westminster with methods to onboard comprehensive data tracking strategies.

## CONSTRUCTION & DEMOLITION REPORT

Westminster does not have a C&D diversion requirement. The City is growing and redeveloping through many construction projects. Increased construction and redevelopment leads to an increase in heavy and large C&D material sent to landfills. The C&D report provides Westminster with recommendations for diverting C&D waste, including diversion requirements embedded in licensing, data tracking, and enforcement plans.

## RESIDENTIAL REPORT

The Residential Report details Westminster's current residential waste profile, waste systems in Colorado, lessons and successes in the Front Range, four highlighted municipalities as case studies, and demonstrates the importance of community engagement. Recommendations for improved residential waste diversion include a volume-based waste structure, mandated free recycling, increased residential composting access, stringent hauler license requirements, data tracking software to develop a comprehensive waste profile, an additional full-time staff member specializing in waste, and utilizing state funding opportunities for education and outreach.

## PRP MEMO

The Colorado Producer Responsibility Program (PRP) will go into effect on January 1st, 2026, and provide free recycling to all Colorado residents.<sup>3</sup> The team developed an informational handout to inform City Council and staff of program benefits and how to maximize them.

## IMPACT

The recommendations and resources in these four deliverables will provide Westminster a path to improve upon the current waste diversion initiatives and strategies to develop targets for future diversion. The strategies will prepare Westminster for the Producer Responsibility Program, and aid the City in continued efforts to move toward a more sustainable future. The MENV Team will present to City Council in February 2026 to educate Westminster leadership.

### Key Recommendations:

- Implement data tracking for residential and C&D waste
- Hire additional staff
- Update hauler license requirements
- Update City ordinances to include mandated free recycling and volume-based waste management
- Conduct compost pilot programs
- Implement municipally contracted hauling

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- **Westminster residents**



3. Producer Responsibility program. Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. (2025). <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/hm/prp-program>