



COOK COUNTY
BUREAU OF
ADMINISTRATION

Cook County Solid Waste Management Plan Update (2024-2029)

Presentation

By the Dept. of Environment &
Sustainability

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Legal Requirements

THE PATH TOWARD ZERO WASTE AND A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

DRAFT



Cook County
Solid Waste Management Plan

2024-2029

- ❑ The **Illinois Solid Waste Planning & Recycling Act (415 ILCS 15/)** requires Illinois counties to:
 - Have a waste management plan;
 - Update the plan every five years;
 - Form an advisory committee; and
 - Submit a copy to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

- ❑ The **Cook County Municipal Code: Chapter 30, Article VI: Solid Waste and Recycling** establishes the creation of the solid waste advisory committee, designation of a solid waste coordinator, and hauler reporting requirements.

Note: Cook County does not inspect, permit, or regulate City of Chicago solid waste facilities and sites. As such, the Cook County solid waste management plan is designed for suburban Cook County.

Plan Development Process

Created in collaboration with the following:

- The Cook County Solid Waste Advisory Committee
- The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
- The Illinois Recycling Foundation
- The Illinois Food Scrap & Composting Association
- Municipal Officials
- Recyclers & Circularity Professionals
- Academic Professionals
- Environmental Justice Advocates

Cook County Solid Waste Advisory Committee Members

Member Name	Organization
Leonard B. Cannata	West Cook County Solid Waste Agency
Eric Connelly	McDonalds U.S.A.
Kristi DeLaurentiis	South Suburban Mayors & Managers Association
Natalie Grimaldi	Lakeshore Recycling Systems
Ian Hughes	Rush University Hospital
Rev. Veronica Johnson	Faith in Place
Stephanie Katsaros	Chicago Sustainability Task Force
Paula McGuire-Rowe	Greater Chicago Food Depository
Jonathan Pereira	Plant Chicago
Chris Sauve	City of Chicago: Dept. of Streets & Sanitation
Christina Seibert	Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County



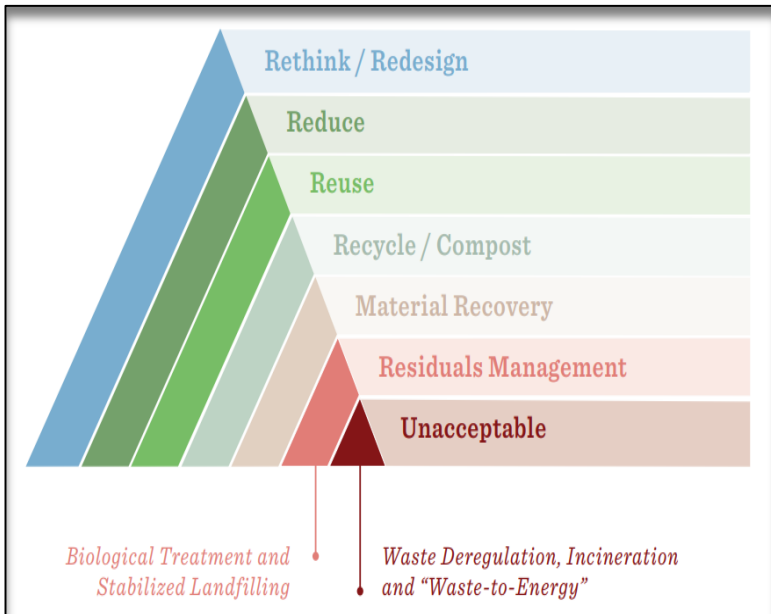
Major Goals of the Updated Plan

Adopt the Illinois Materials Management Advisory Committee (IL MMAC) [Report](#) Recommendation to

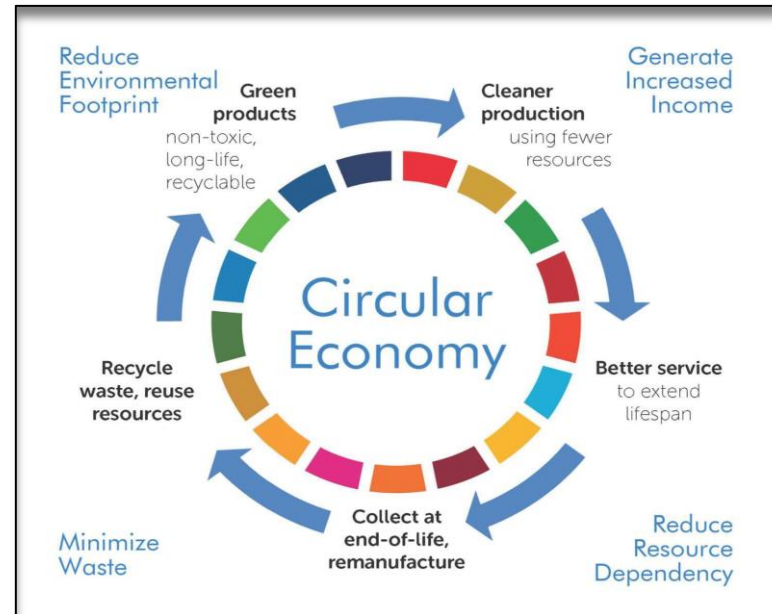
Achieve a 45% Waste Diversion Rate by 2030

(Achieved by Implementing Zero Waste & Circular Economy Best Practices)

Zero Waste



A Circular Economy



Guiding Principles

- Center Vulnerable Communities
- Enhance Data & Transparency
- Educate & Engage
- Advance the Green Economy
- Align with the Policy Roadmap



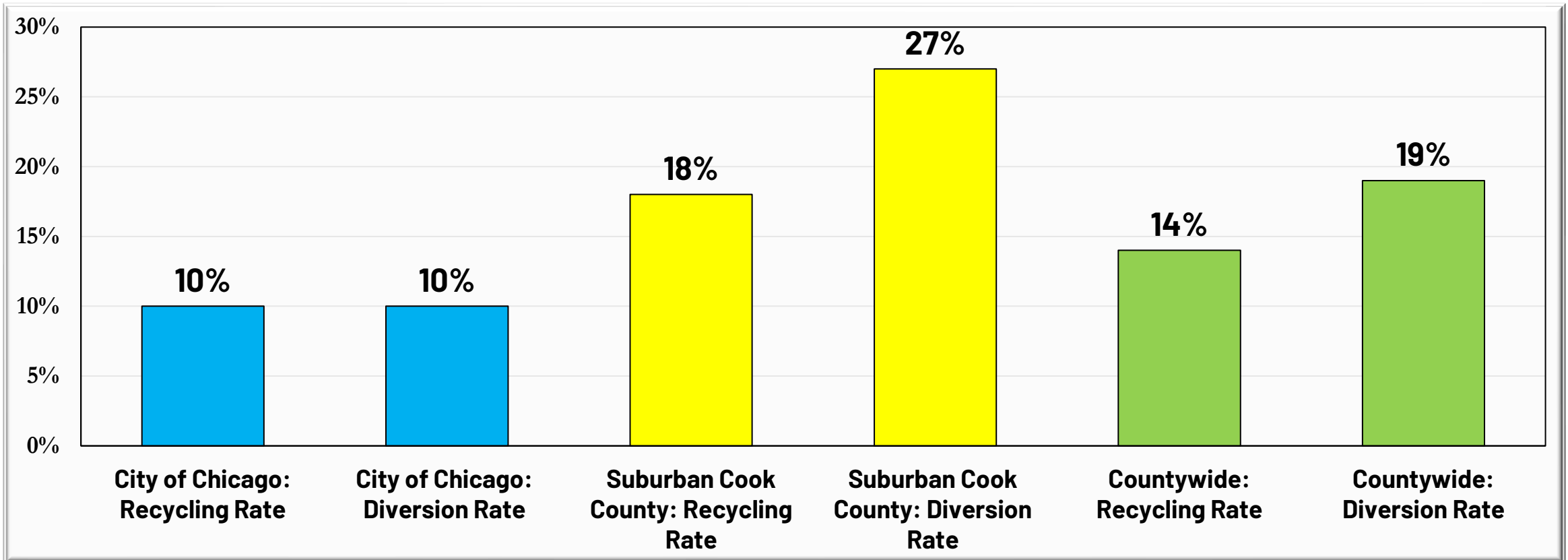
Progress Made Since 2018 Plan Update

- Center for Hard to Recycle Materials
- Household Hazardous Waste Facility
- Businesses Reducing Impact on the Environment
- Good Food Purchasing Initiative
- Green Guide Library
- Drug/Medical Take-Back Program and Recycling Events, (Sherriff)





2022 Countywide Waste Assessment

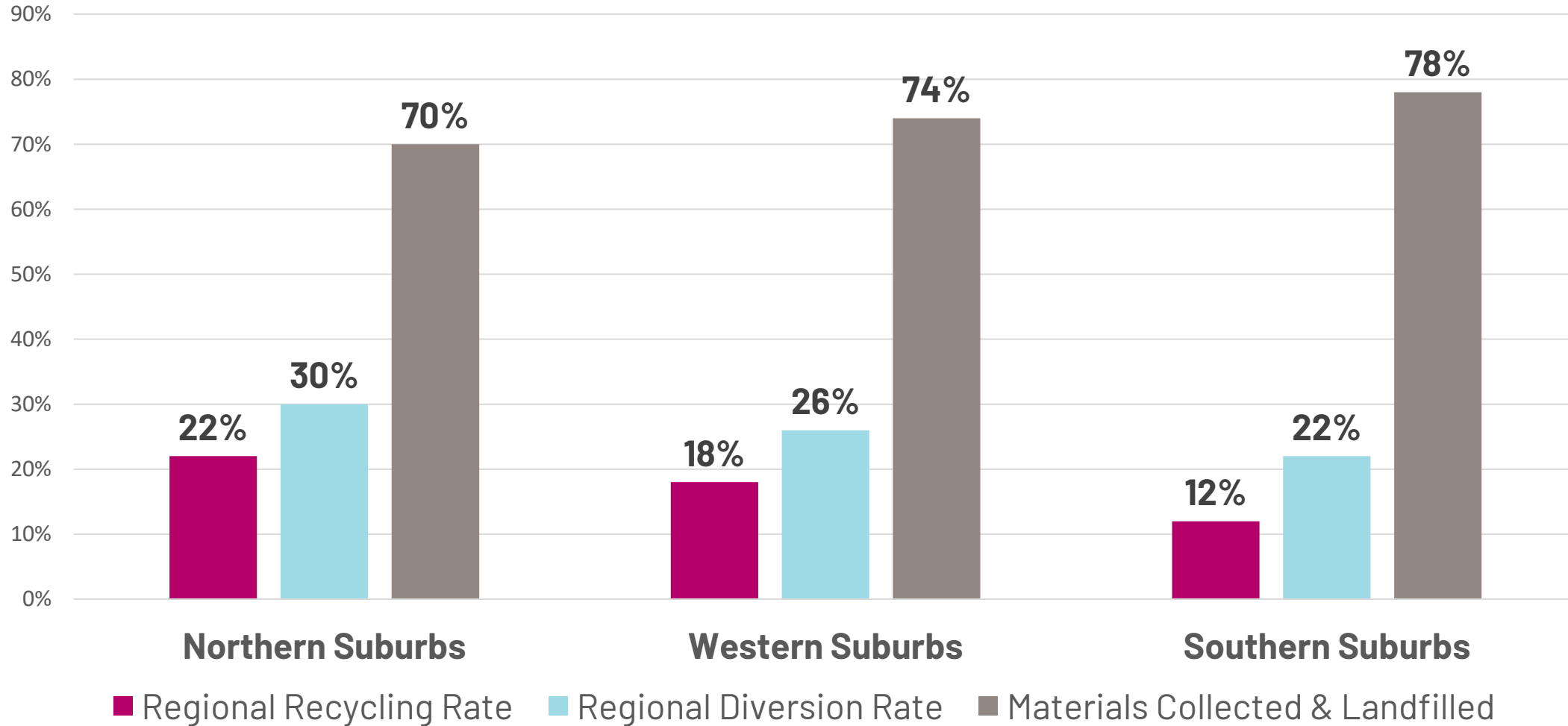


Recycling Rate Formula: Total Recycled divided by Total Disposed + Total Recycled + Total Yard Waste Composted

Diversion Rate Formula: Total Recycled + Total Yard Waste Composted divided by Total Disposed + Total Recycled + Total Yard Waste Composted.



Regional Waste Findings

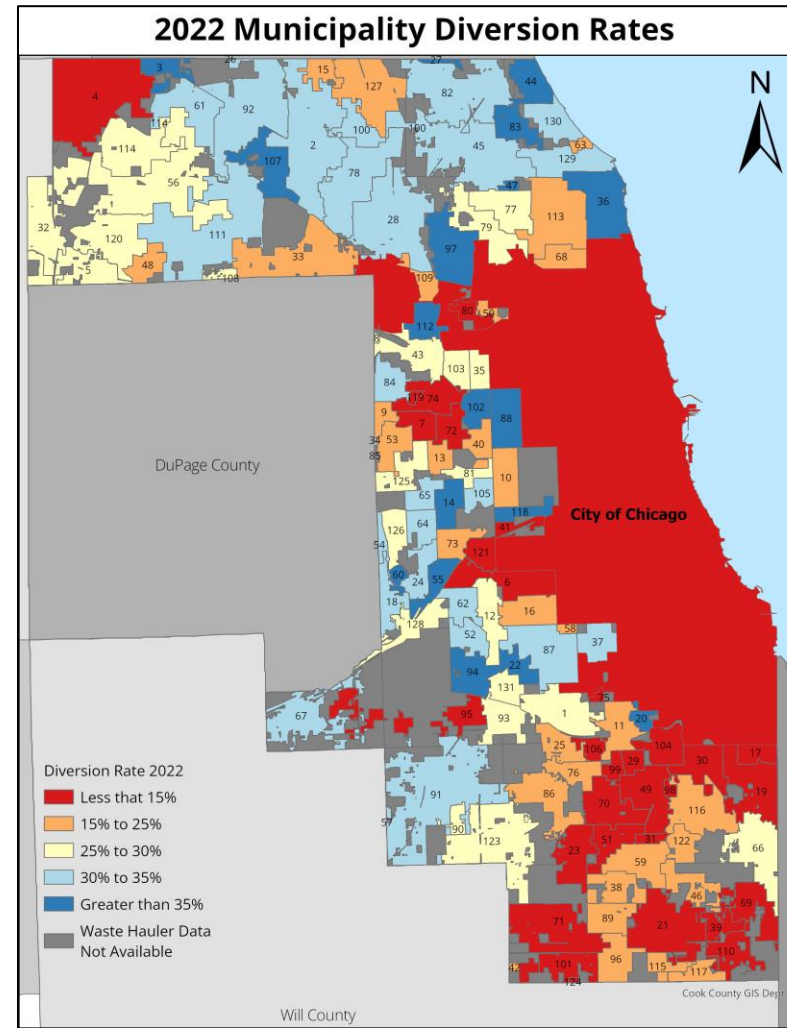
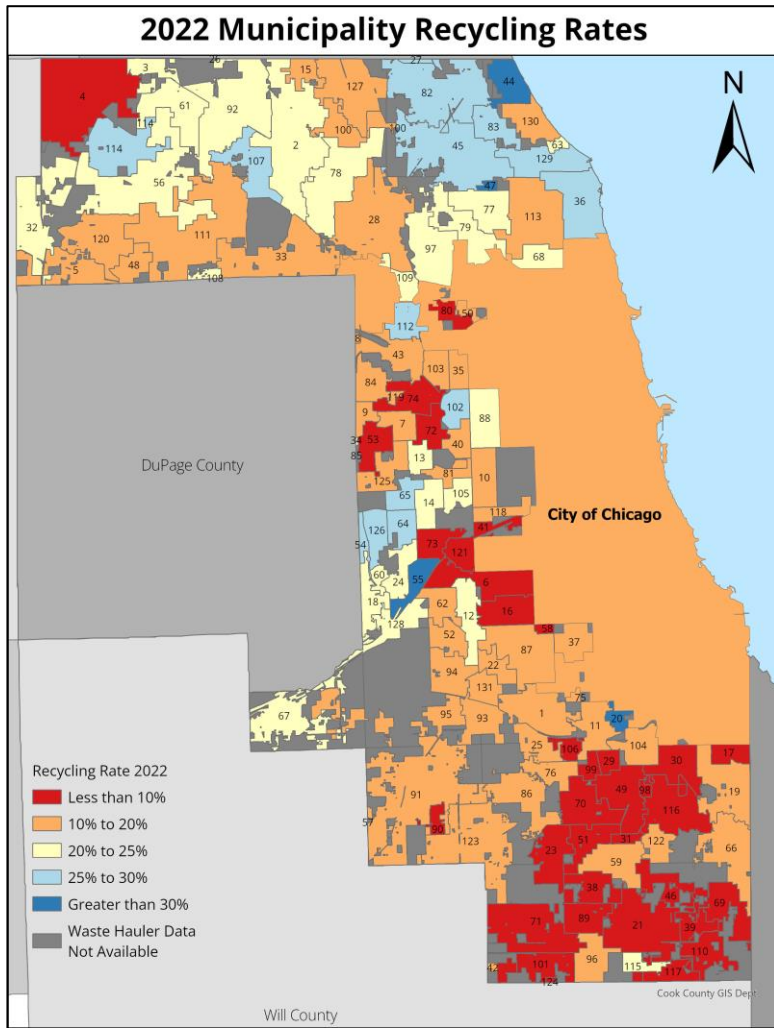




Recycling & Diversion Rate Maps

<https://www.cookcountyil.gov/service/recyclingrates>

DES collects data to help suburban Cook County municipalities assess their waste and recycling and diversion programs.





Summary of Recommendations

This Plan Update proposes **forty-three (43)** ambitious, but achievable, actions Cook County will work to implement over the next five years. The recommendations include actions that will:

- Support municipalities (*17 recommendations*)
- Educate and engage suburban Cook County residents (*7 recommendations*)
- Support industrial, commercial and institutional entities (*5 recommendations*)
- Allow the County to secure new data to inform its plans and programs (*3 recommendations*)
- Explore proposing new or amended ordinances (*4 recommendations*)
- Involve monitoring and proposing legislation (*3 recommendations*)
- Allow the County to develop new partnerships and fundraising strategies to help advance the recommendations in this plan (*4 recommendations*)

Top 10 Recommendations to Implement Over the Next 5 Years

1. Support efforts to create a south suburban Solid Waste Agency or fold municipal waste management functions into an existing municipal joint action agency.
2. Support municipalities in implementing new sustainable material diversion programs (*via grants, technical assistance, collaboration, promotion, etc.*).
3. Support municipalities in providing and/or improving multi-family and high-density residential building recycling and diversion programs.
4. Explore new options to regulate and provide incentives, tax breaks, financial support, and/or other assistance to industrial-commercial and institutional entities that would help these entities implement new or improved sustainable material diversion programs (*i.e., recycling programs, organic composting programs, food donation programs, construction & demolition diversion programs, etc.*).

Top 10 Recommendations to Implement Over the Next 5 Years

5. Expand recycling & diversion infrastructure projects and programs in suburban Cook County.
6. Adopt compost procurement ordinances or policies.
7. Develop a coordinated strategy with municipalities, large land managers and related stakeholders to reduce illegal dumping in Cook County.
8. Monitor and inform Extended Producer Responsibility and Product Stewardship legislation.
9. Consider modifications to current Cook County solid waste related fees and fines to fund the recommendations in this Plan Update.
10. Develop a fundraising and partnership strategy to implement recommendations in this plan.

Questions

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43 RECOMMENDATIONS

Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG):

1) Secure new data from waste haulers, solid waste related facilities, municipalities, Industrial-Commercial & Institutional entities, and other related stakeholders, to assist in the evaluation of Cook County's solid waste related programs and practices, and to include a calculation of solid waste related greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) for future plan updates.

Zero-Waste & The Circular Economy:

2) Further assess, re-align, or modify necessary solid waste, recycling and diversion systems and practices using the zero-waste and circular economy framework in suburban Cook County.

Municipal Recycling & Organics Initiatives:

3) Support municipalities in implementing new sustainable material diversion programs (*i.e., (a) residential curbside recycling services; (b) yard waste composting programs; (c) food scrap composting programs; (d) food donations programs; (e) recycling collection events; and (f) creating new permanent recycling drop-off stations*). Prioritization of this support will be targeted to municipalities that are not members of a Solid Waste Agency (SWA), have diversion rates below the national average, and/or have been designated environmental justice/cumulative impacted communities.



43 RECOMMENDATIONS

Municipal Recycling & Organics Initiatives: (Continued)

4) Support municipalities to provide and/or improve multi-family and high-density residential building recycling and diversion programs (*ex., (a) enacting and/or enforcing local municipal ordinances that require property owners of multi-unit or high-density residential buildings to provide source-separated carts/bins/dumpsters, single-stream recycling, food scrap composting programs, an ongoing educational program that includes posting signage about recycling and/or composting, etc.; and (b) including recycling and/or food scrap composting in their residential hauling contracts for multi-unit or high-density residential buildings, etc.*).

5) Provide municipalities with a toolkit that includes information on local recyclers, locations of recycling drop-off stations, location of re-use facilities, on-line circularity platforms, relevant solid waste data, model ordinances, Construction & Demolition Debris related rules and resources, funding and partnership opportunities, and model contracts.

6) Encourage and support efforts for south suburban municipalities to develop their own regional Solid Waste Agency to jointly manage their solid waste and recycling services. In addition, this new agency will assist these municipalities and provide needed technical assistance and staffing capabilities.



43 RECOMMENDATIONS

Municipal Recycling & Organics Initiatives: (Continued)

- 7)** Encourage and support efforts for all northern and western municipalities to become a member of an existing Solid Waste Agency if they are not already one.
- 8)** Encourage and support current local Solid Waste Agencies to collaborate/provide support to nonmember municipalities within their regions on waste reduction practices, strategies, and events.
- 9)** Encourage, and explore options to incentivize, all municipalities in Cook County to have robust recycling and organic composting programs for their residents.
- 10)** Encourage municipalities to inform and promote relevant opportunities and locations for residents and Industrial-Commercial & Institutional entities to recycle, compost, donate food, reuse materials, etc. (ex. including information on their websites, social media accounts, newsletters, etc.).
- 11)** Expand residential recycling & diversion infrastructure projects and programs around the County.



43 RECOMMENDATIONS

Industrial-Commercial & Institutional Recycling & Organics Initiatives:

12) Explore new options to regulate and provide incentives, tax breaks, financial support, and/or other assistance to Industrial-Commercial & Institutional entities that would help these entities implement new or improved sustainable material diversion programs (i.e., recycling programs, organic composting programs, food donation programs, Construction & Demolition recycling & re-use programs, etc.).

13) Provide recognition to Industrial-Commercial & Institutional entities that can document substantial material diversion (i.e., recycling and composting) successes.

14) Connect and engage national and state environmental related corporate affiliates, local recyclers, composting entities, and re-use facilities, to local Industrial-Commercial & Institutional entities.

15) Expand Industrial-Commercial & Institutional recycling & diversion infrastructure projects and programs around the County through the Cook County BRITE Program, RCCES Program & CHARM Center, the Neighborhood Revitalization & Brownfield Remediation Program, the Good Food Purchasing Initiative, etc.).



43 RECOMMENDATIONS

General Organic Diversion Initiatives:

16) Support efforts for Cook County government and suburban municipalities to adopt compost procurement ordinances or policies, which should include considerations for certain landscape, construction and postconstruction, erosion prevention, stormwater runoff filtration, plant growth, and transportation related projects.

17) Expand organics related infrastructure projects and programs around the County.

Household Hazardous Waste Initiatives:

18) Open a Household Hazardous Waste Facility no later than the end of 2025.

19) Support the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and local municipalities in hosting Household Hazardous Waste collection events in suburban Cook County.

Electronic Waste Initiatives:

20) Support the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and local municipalities in hosting or providing electronic recycling collection events and programs in suburban Cook County.



43 RECOMMENDATIONS

Medical Waste & Pharmaceutical Initiatives:

21) Support the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Cook County, and local municipalities in hosting Medication Take Back collection sites, events, and programs in suburban Cook County.

Constructions & Demolition Debris Recycling & Re-Use Initiatives:

22) Better integrate data from demolition contractors to report planned and actual amounts of material recycled, reused, and disposed of into Cook County's online Demolition Permitting portal.

23) Collaborate with municipal governments to ensure Construction & Demolition Debris activities occurring in their jurisdictions comply with Cook County Construction & Demolition Debris permit requirements and the Cook County Demolition Debris Diversion Plan (3D) Ordinance.

24) Expand recycling and non-traditional infrastructure related projects and programs around the County (e.g., repair cafes, tool libraries, material exchange, new reuse centers/sites, etc.)



43 RECOMMENDATIONS

Illegal Dumping Initiatives:

25) Develop a coordinated strategy with municipalities, large land managers and related stakeholders to reduce illegal dumping in Cook County.

26) Develop a public campaign and awards program to help identify and prosecute individuals/entities that illegally dump material.

General Legislative Initiatives:

27) Support statewide and local legislative efforts that would require recycling and food composting opportunities for certain public/large events.

28) Monitor and inform legislative actions in the IL General Assembly that would advance zero waste and circular economy related practices in IL and Cook County.



43 RECOMMENDATIONS

Extended Producer Responsibility & Product Stewardship Initiatives:

29) Monitor and inform Extended Producer Responsibility and Product Stewardship legislation in the Illinois General Assembly that would help reduce materials being landfilled in the region.

30) Support and/or collaborate with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and other national and state entities working to implement newly adopted Extended Producer Responsibility and Product Stewardship related legislation.

Alternative & New Technology Initiatives:

31) Monitor the status of emerging and alternative technologies that could help advance the County's diversion goals.

32) Support the expansion of appropriate infrastructure projects and programs around the County.



43 RECOMMENDATIONS

Environmental Justice Strategies:

33) Help develop and implement an environmental justice policy.

34) Ensure that the implementation of this Plan Update and other solid waste management related projects consider environmental justice implications and considerations.

Public Education & Outreach Strategies:

35) Identify and promote entities (preferably non-profit mission driven) that reduce the waste stream by recycling, repurposing, and donating waste materials (i.e., electronics, clothing & textiles, etc.) to vulnerable and/or environmental justice communities.

36) Develop a communication plan and outreach campaign focused on building circularity and zero waste behaviors.

37) Communicate waste reduction messages in a culturally sensitive manner to County residents, businesses, environmental organizations, and other stakeholder groups.

38) Develop and implement a targeted multifamily outreach and engagement strategy.



43 RECOMMENDATIONS

Public Education & Outreach Strategies: (Continued)

39) Incorporate incentives, awards, contests, etc. to encourage all stakeholders to participate in sustainability programs.

Partnerships & Funding Strategies:

40) Partner with economic development entities, and other related stakeholders, to support the growing movement that is working to attract “green” businesses and jobs in Cook County by growing the local circular economy.

41) Partner with local Solid Waste Agencies, maintain existing partnerships, and identify new partners, to advance and promote zero waste and circularity programs and projects in Cook County.

42) Develop and implement a fundraising and partnership strategy to help fund the recommendations in this Plan Update.

43) Consider modifications to current Cook County solid waste related fees and fines to fund the recommendations in this Plan Update.