

Recycle Colorado Plastics Circularity Council – November 19, 2024

Attendees

Adam Farmer - Driven Plastics
Adam Hill - Direct Polymers
Alexa Rosenstein - DEN Airport
Alice Jin - RockyTech
Ally Byzewski - Recycle CO
Brian Loma - Cut the Plastic, Green Latinos
Brian Robinson - Goodwill CO
Evan Kruse - Diverse Video and Design
Hannah Grossberg – Target
Jenifer Freeman – Constellation Strategies
Jonathan Levy - PakTech
Liz Chapman - Recycle CO
Megan Ibach – Eco-Products
Natalie Lana - City & County of Denver
Reenee Casapulla - Foam Cycle
Scott Hutchings - Waste Management (WM)
Susan Renaud - Circular Economy Development Center

Agenda/Topics:

- Introductions
- Ecosystem subgroup progress update & analysis - Alice
- Rail ties and meeting with OmniTRAX - Adam
- Lobby Day & Summit planning - Jenifer/Ally/Liz
- Council goals for 2025 - Jenifer lead discussion

Notes

- Ecosystem Subgroup Update
 - Subgroup formed after the Summit
 - Survey identified 367 companies classified into 41 categories
 - Manufacturing and collection/removal are main subgroups
 - Key categories within collection/removal is recycling centers
 - Key categories within manufacturing is manufacturers, plastic fabrication, plastic injection molding
 - Not many manufacturers in CO, but many distributors/sellers
 - CO needs more manufacturing (end markets); rail ties is an opportunity but can't put all our eggs in one basket

- Alice can send information for companies in table format by category (e.g. commercial or residential collection for collection/removal), mostly collected from public websites
- Next survey will gather more information like volumes and types of plastic; this information is critical to fill gaps and eliminate import/export of plastic outside of CO
 - Very general survey. Ideally we'd apply for a grant to fund more robust research rather than relying on volunteer efforts
 - Almost ready to go out, goal by EOY
 - Second goal to share results by the next Summit in June?
 - Is self reporting the best way to gather? Concern with transparency
 - Adam Hill can find some help within Direct Polymers, lots of new hires
 - Adam Farmer would also like to get involved
- Need to gather contact information to facilitate where to send next survey
 - A good resource to find email addresses from your collection of companies for further surveying: <https://hunter.io/>
- AMI Conference (attended by Alice and Adam Hill)
 - Ravago works with Republic Services. Should we consider consultation services or can someone give a presentation to us?
 - Adam Hill thinks we should hold on engaging with them
 - Blue Polymers created by Republic Services
- Direct Polymers update
 - Brave industry will manufacture in CO (<http://Www.brvind.com>)
 - Identified a number of companies to work with throughout the country to standardize their ability receive and manufacture materials, rather than massive corporate plants (e.g. Blue Polymers)
 - Similar to private equity approach - identify specific companies that they can add value to
 - Negotiating with the companies to partner to provide resources like funding, consulting, processing
 - Looking at black labeling
 - HDPE is the largest produced plastic in CO, then PET then PP
 - Rail ties are consistently needed, not driven by consumer demand
 - Goodwill, Arc, Terracycle struggling to divert rigids
 - OmniTRAX - install rail ties in Texas and Alabama, follow up with them next week, hoping they'll purchase their first bulk order
 - Hoping to go to the city directly (RTD)
 - NY and NJ are purchasing
- Lobby Day
 - Last week of Feb at state capitol
 - Policy committee and board are moving forward with a bill for EPR for batteries, working with NWRA and other stakeholders, e.g. Ecocycle, Fire Chiefs
 - That will be primary focus on lobby day

- Would like a representative from this group to attend
- Same as every year: conversations with legislators, trainings with speakers in the morning
- Different this year from previous years - occupy west lobby to lure legislators to talk to RC members, demonstrate the diversity of members in RC - **if you're interested in having a booth at Lobby Day let Jenifer know**
- Great opportunity to engage with legislators
- Summit 2025 Planning
 - Should we have a panel or workshop for plastics circularity?
 - First week of June in Grand Junction
 - At least one dedicated session per council - **send Liz ideas for what would be intriguing or what we want to share**
- 2025 Goals
 - Councils are supposed to submit a workplan for 2025 (120 days prior to EOY). What do we want to accomplish?
 - Structure that, build benchmarks and deliverables as a committee; individual outcomes that will help the overall work
 - Share with board at their retreat in December
 - Might be helpful to have a template for all councils - Ally working on that
 - Adam Farmer drafted some ideas – see below

1. Expand Recycling Infrastructure

- **Goal:** Launch or support two new scalable recycling facilities or pilot projects in Colorado.
- **Target:** Increase state plastic recycling capacity by 15% by the end of 2025.
- **Action:** Partner with municipalities or private companies to identify viable sites and technologies.

2. Enhance Data Collection and Reporting

- **Goal:** Document and publish a comprehensive analysis of unrecyclable plastics in Colorado.
- **Target:** Release a public report by Q3 2025 with reduction targets for unrecyclable plastic by 2028.
- **Action:** Collaborate with commercial, industrial, and residential sectors to collect accurate data.

3. Promote Re-Use and Repurposing Initiatives

- **Goal:** Identify and implement at least three new reuse or repurposing applications for plastics in Colorado or the region.
- **Target:** Establish partnerships with local businesses or non-profits by mid-2025 to bring these projects to market.
- **Action:** Host workshops or hackathons to engage innovative thinkers and potential partners.

4. Drive Economic Development in Circular Economies

- **Goal:** Foster growth in end markets for recycled plastics.
- **Target:** Attract or support two new businesses focused on producing products from recycled plastics in Colorado.
- **Action:** Partner with state economic development agencies to provide incentives and resources.

Broaden Stakeholder Engagement

- **Goal:** Increase council membership by 20% to strengthen collaboration.
- **Target:** Recruit members from underrepresented sectors such as agriculture or manufacturing by Q2 2025.
- **Action:** Host quarterly networking events focused on specific sectors to build awareness and engagement.