

# Addressing Inequalities in Recycling Access and Participation

The Recycling Partnership

May 20, 2021

# Today we are going to cover these three things:



- 1. Introduction to The Recycling Partnership and Why Our Model is Effective for Improving Recycling**
- 2. The Needs to Address Inequalities in Recycling and Opportunities to do so**
- 3. Driving Positive Environmental Change**

## Who We Are



**Jessica Levine**

*Manager, Strategic Engagement*

The Recycling Partnership



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# THE RECYCLING PARTNERSHIP

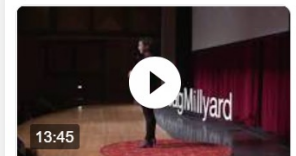
# We transform underperforming recycling programs, for good.



- We are the **action agent** transforming residential recycling and tackling circular economy challenges.
- Since 2014 we have worked in **thousands of communities**.
- We engage the **entire supply chain** to deliver data-driven **solutions**.

Click link below to view  
Keefe's TedX Talk:  
**Our CEO tells it best**

#### Videos



The voice we need to  
speak up for the  
environment | Keefe ...

TEDx Talks  
YouTube - Jun 1, 2020

# Our Funding Partners



The recycling system is loosely connected, highly dependent



# Partnership to Deliver Results

# Our Focus Areas

**Fund & Deliver Systemic Improvements** in the US Residential Recycling System



**Assemble & Leverage Data** to Drive Informed Systems-Based Decisions

Lead the Transition to **Circularity for Packaging**





**Pass Policies** Furthering Residential Recycling and a Circular Economy



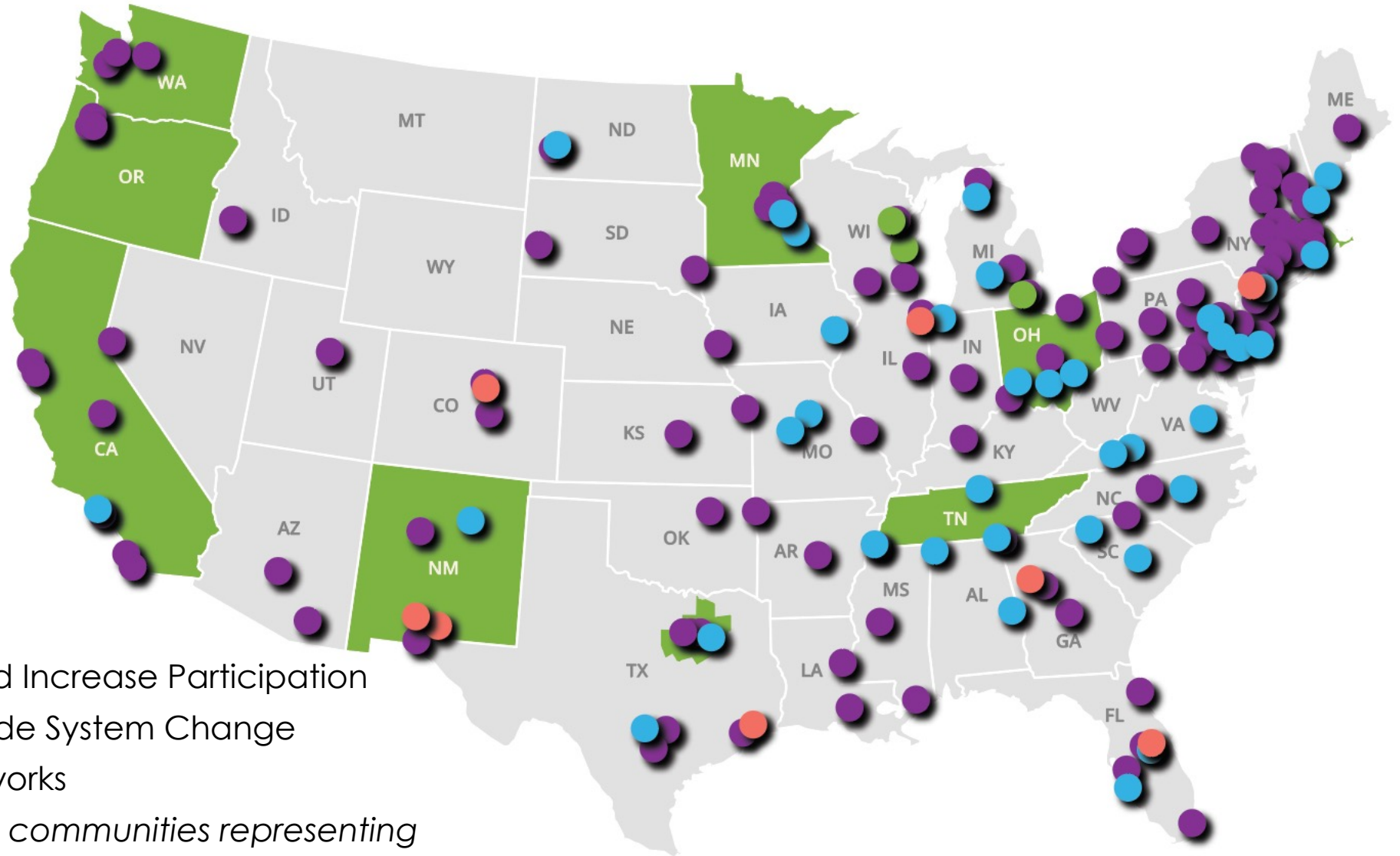
# *Fund & Deliver Systemic Improvements in the US Residential Recycling System*



## Driving National Recycling System Change Coast to Coast

-  Infrastructure Grants
-  Reduce Contamination and Increase Participation
-  Drive Regional and Statewide System Change
-  Connect Peer-to-Peer Networks

*Additionally, more than 500 communities representing 30 million households have downloaded our free videos, campaigns, social media kits and tech tools.*

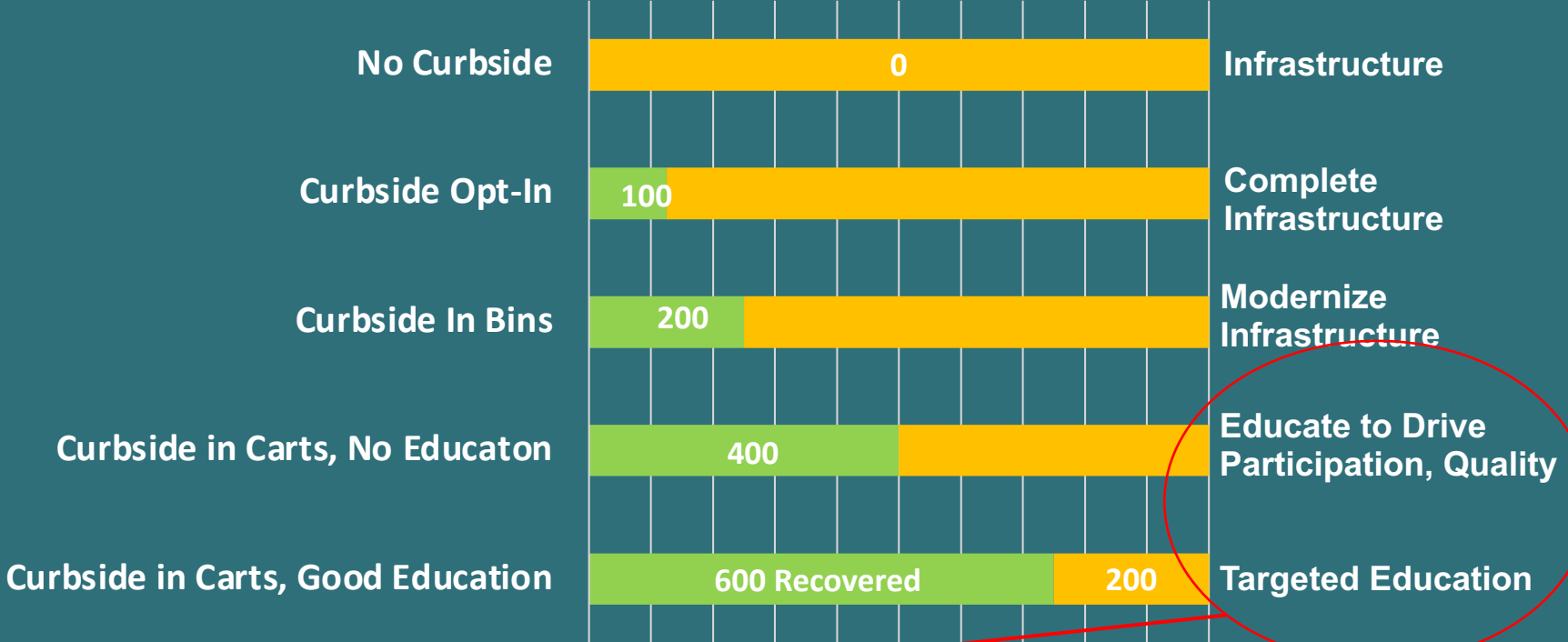


# Understanding The Recycling Partnership's Model



**800 lbs**  
of recyclables in HH

Continuum of Curbside	Materials Captured	Approach
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Education is **critical** to drive increased capture  
**200lbs per HH average improvement (50% increase)**

■ Lbs Captured    ■ Lbs Lost



# Recycling Education Is Core to Our Work

1<sup>st</sup>

We can't implore the public to recycle without giving them the **ability to do so**, that's step one.

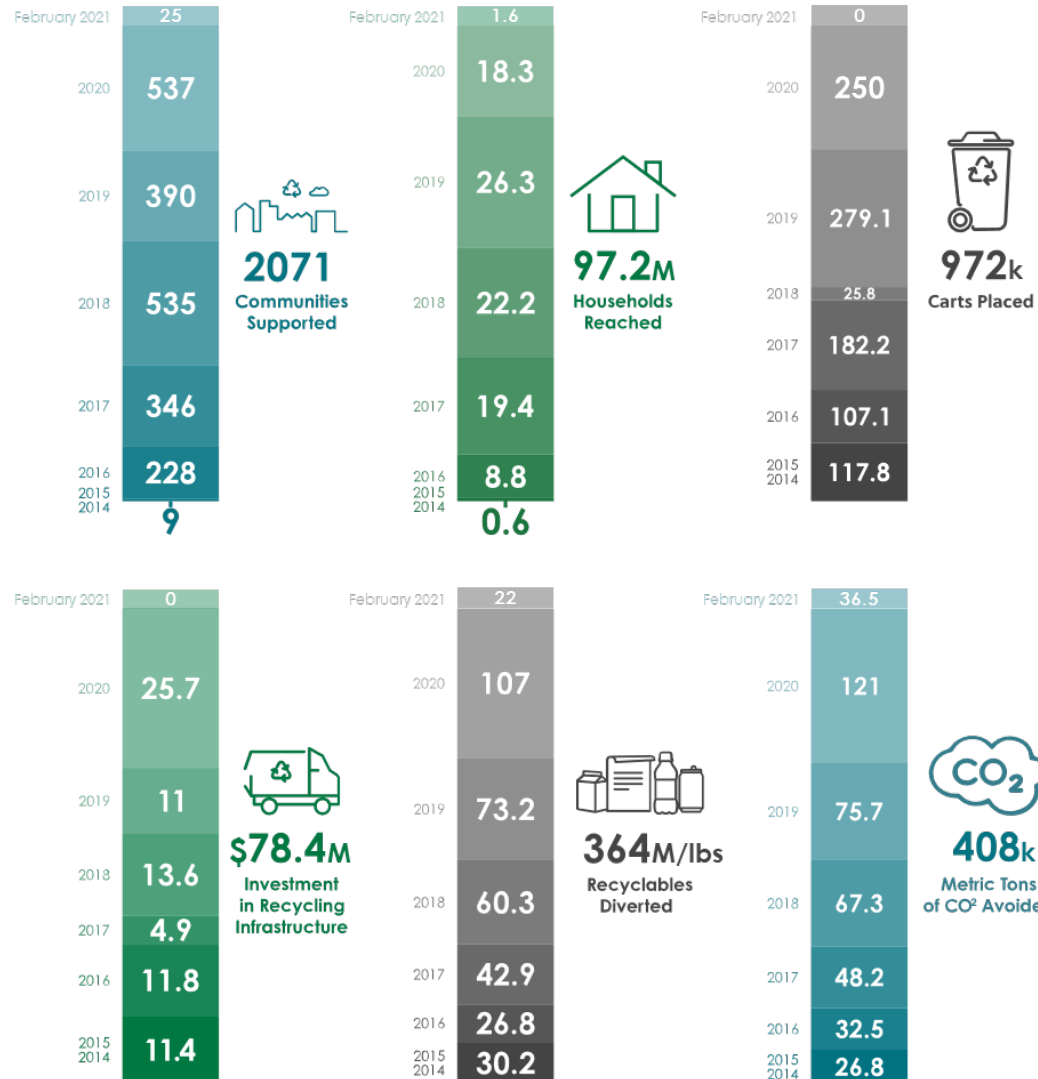
2<sup>nd</sup>

We can't expect people to recycle well without **educating** them on the basics.

3<sup>rd</sup>

**Influencing recycling behavior** delivers quantity and quality of tons available in the home and is the critical third step in building an **equitable and informed recycling system**.

# Year Over Year Results: A Focus on Systems Change



[Learn More](#)

As of February 2021



# Building Tools to Transform Recycling for All Materials



**Proven Model** to  
Complete Equitable  
Access

**Best Practices** to  
Educate and Restore  
Trust

National, Local, and  
Household **Data**

# Recycling Inclusion Fund

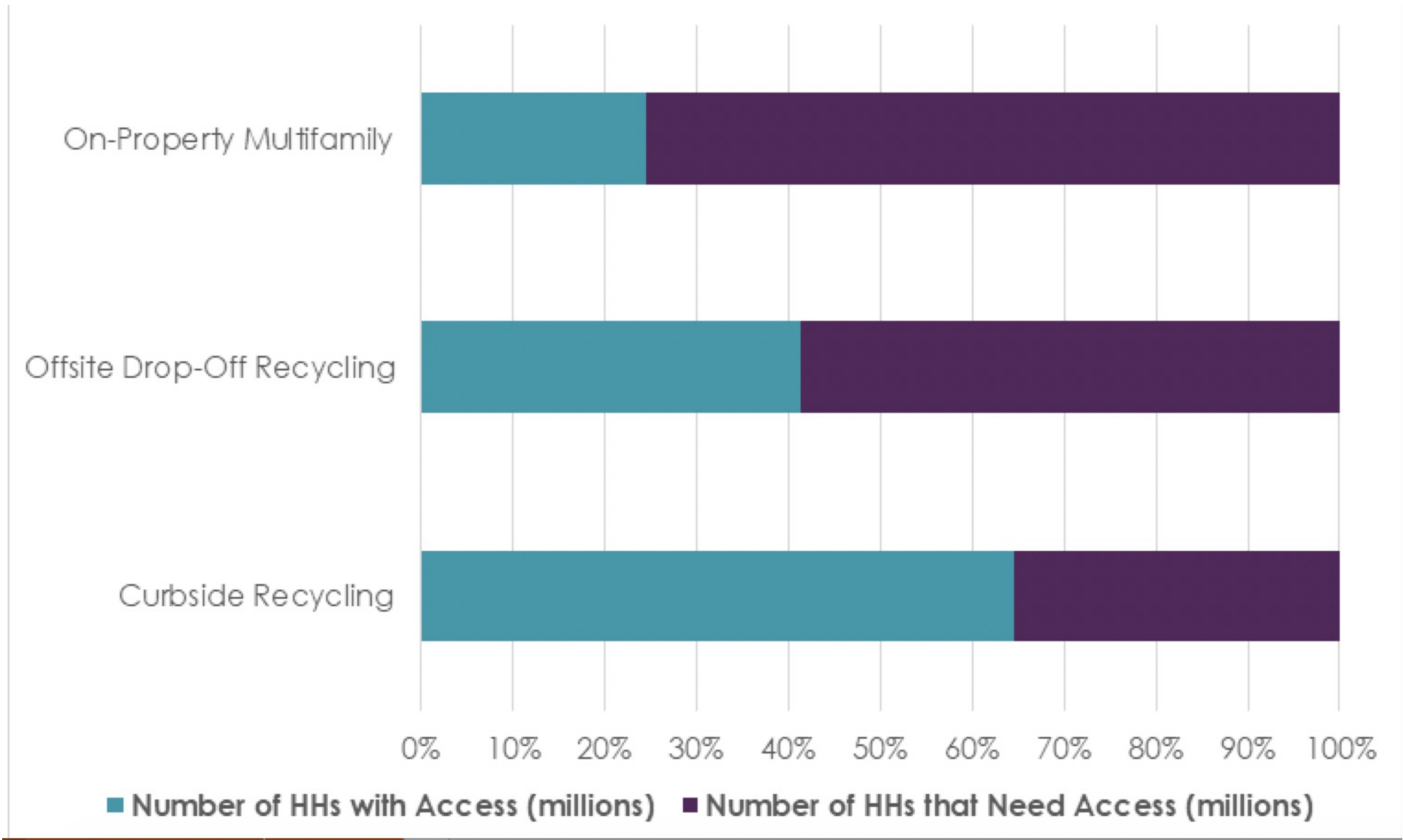
# Top 4 Perspectives on Equal Recycling Access in the U.S.

1

While recycling feels universal, only 2/3rds of the U.S. population has the same level of access to recycling as they do garbage service, and the access gap is much larger in multifamily housing.



# Closing The Access Gap



# Top 4 Perspectives on Equal Recycling Access in the U.S.

2

**Socioeconomically disadvantaged, Black, and brown populations often have unequal access to recycling infrastructure and educational materials compared to more affluent neighborhoods.**

# Top 4 Perspectives on Equal Recycling Access in the U.S.

3

Only half of recyclables in homes with service are recycled. For minority populations, these numbers may be lower due to the lack of inclusive education resources that speak to their needs and in their language.

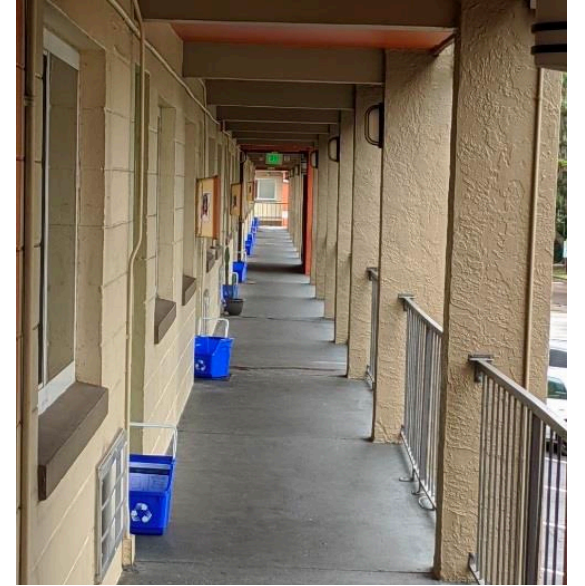
# Orlando Single Family Recycling Research to Inform Multifamily Work

*Does income level, education attainment, and racial/ethnic origin influence curbside recycling participation? (SWANA FL)*



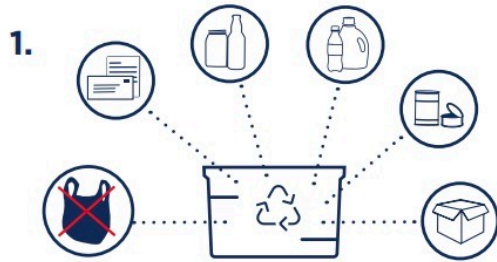
# Driving Positive Environmental Change in Orlando, FL

- There is an ordinance in Orlando that requires all multifamily properties to recycle.
- The Partnership will offer technical assistance and physical resources including in-unit containers and various educational collateral assets to community partners.
- The three main minority groups that make up Orlando are African-American, Hispanic and Creole.
- We will be exploring best outreach methodologies to reach historically underserved and under supported populations.

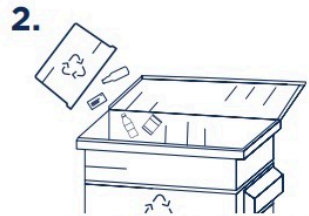


# Orlando Spotlight

## HOW TO RECYCLE AT THE MARK AT SODO:



1. Collect your bottles, cans, boxes and paper in this bin



2. Take your bin to the recycling container, and empty recyclables loose into the dumpster.



3. Refill and repeat

Congratulations! This new bin is here to help you recycle successfully. Reference your card to KNOW WHAT TO THROW. You are equipped! Now you can waste less and recycle more.

Find out more about what you can recycle at [orlando.gov/recycling](http://orlando.gov/recycling)  
YOUR RECYCLING ADDS UP! Thank you for doing your part.

CONFIDENTIAL

## RECYCLE KNOW BEFORE YOU THROW! THANK YOU FOR RECYCLING THESE:

<b>Cans</b>	<b>Cardboard</b>	<b>Glass</b>	<b>Paper</b>	<b>Plastic</b>
Aluminum, Steel & Tin Cans empty & clean	Cardboard flatten boxes	Glass Bottles and Jars remove lids empty & clean	Newspaper, Magazines, Junk Mail, and Drink Cartons	Plastic Bottles and Containers empty & clean caps stay on

### DO NOT place these items in your recycling container:

No Bag Recyclables	No Plastic Bags or Plastic Wrap	No Styrofoam™	No Household Garbage
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TO LEARN MORE, visit [orlando.gov/recycling](http://orlando.gov/recycling) or call 407.246.2314



## RECICLE KNOW BEFORE YOU THROW! GRACIAS POR RECICLAR LO SIGUIENTE:

<b>Latas</b>	<b>Cartón</b>	<b>Vidrio</b>	<b>Papel</b>	<b>Plástico</b>
Latas de aluminio, acero y hojalata vacías y limpias	Cartón desarme las cajas	Botellas y pomos de vidrio sin tapa vacíos y limpios	Diarios, revistas, publicidad postal y envases de cartón para bebidas	Botellas y Envases de plástico vacíos y limpios, con tapa

### NO coloque lo siguiente en su recipiente para reciclar:

No embolse sus artículos para reciclar	No coloque bolsas ni plástico para envolver	No coloque poliestireno	No coloque basura ni desperdicios
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PARA MÁS INFORMACIÓN, visite [orlando.gov/recycling](http://orlando.gov/recycling) o llame al 407.246.2314



# Top 4 Perspectives on Equal Recycling Access in the U.S.

4

We often see people of color in labor positions, but not in leadership roles within solid waste and recycling programs, illustrating a clear need to create leadership opportunities for people that reflects the communities they serve.

***We at The Recycling Partnership stand with Black people and people of color. We stand against racism. Today, and in all the days to come, our mission to advance recycling will carry with it a flag of social justice including the right to pursue a healthier and more sustainable life. We call on our community, company, and industry partners to listen, learn, and do more to uphold equality. We pledge to do the same.***

***- Keefe Harrison, CEO***



*What can we do to help build an equitable recycling system in the U.S.?*

# We're Taking Action to Drive System Change

We've launched the **Recycling Inclusion Fund** and call on corporate changemakers to join us in our strategic efforts to make lasting change toward an equitable recycling system.



- Identify **where** people are being underserved and **what** is needed to improve recycling **equity**.
- Develop **communication** best practices, tools and resources and target **infrastructure** investments to close service gaps.
- Build a pipeline of leadership talent within the recycling industry.

# How is The Partnership Taking Action to Drive Equitable System Change?

## RESEARCH:

Identify **where** people are being underserved and **what** is needed to improve recycling **equity**.

- Evaluate existing infrastructure and optimization work from a demographic perspective.
- Identify the state of access and level of participation of recycling in predominantly BIPOC communities in the U.S.

# How is The Partnership Taking Action to Drive Equitable System Change?

## INFRASTRUCTURE & EDUCATION

Develop **communication** best practices, tools and resources and target **infrastructure** investments to close service gaps.

- Update online open-source recycling education materials and guides
- Increase recycling access and participation

# How is The Partnership Taking Action to Drive Equitable System Change?

## FELLOWSHIP & TRAINING

Build a **pipeline** of leadership talent within the recycling **industry**.

- Develop and kick-off a fellowship program to “tool up” individuals with resources and training and create a pipeline for developing change agents with leadership potential within industry

# Inaugural Contributors to the Recycling Inclusion Fund

**Committed  
Contributors**



*Together, we will drive equitable system change.*

# Houston Project Spotlight

- A Feet on the Street project recently launched in Houston
- The program is bringing recycling education into the neighborhoods of Houston to meet residents where they recycle – at the curb.
- Tailored feedback is provided to residents on unaccepted materials they may have in their cart.
- Project area was carefully selected to ensure community representation
- All materials are in English and Spanish



**OOPS!**  
THIS IS A WARNING.

**LEAVE THESE ITEMS OUT.**  
NO INCLUYA ESTOS ARTICULOS.

**RECYCLING WARNING:**  
Next time we cannot collect your cart if wrong items are found.  
*La próxima vez no se recogerá su contenedor si estos artículos son encontrados*

 <p><b>No Bags, No Trash</b> <i>No reciclar bolsas, No reciclar basura</i></p>	 <p><b>No Food or Liquid</b> <i>No reciclar alimentos ni líquidos</i></p>
 <p><b>No Hoses, Cords or Wires</b> <i>No reciclar mangueras, cables o cadenas</i></p>	 <p><b>No Batteries or Electronics</b> <i>No reciclar baterías ni electrónicos</i></p>
 <p><b>No Household Items</b> <i>No reciclar artículos para el hogar</i></p>	 <p><b>No Shredded Paper</b> <i>No reciclar papel triturado</i></p>
 <p><b>No Yard Waste</b> <i>No reciclar residuos de jardinería</i></p>	 <p><b>No Scrap Metal or Wood</b> <i>No reciclar madera o chatarra</i></p>

[houstonrecycles.org](http://houstonrecycles.org)



**RECYCLE MORE OF THESE:**  
RECICLE MÁS DE LO SIGUIENTE:

	<b>Paper</b> <i>Papel</i> Paper and Cardboard <i>Papel y cajas de cartón</i>
	<b>Cartons</b> <i>Cartones</i> Cartons (empty and dry) <i>Cartones (vacío y seco)</i>
	<b>Cans</b> <i>Latas</i> Aluminum and Steel Cans (empty and dry) <i>Latas de aluminio y acero (vacío y seco)</i>
	<b>Plastic</b> <i>Plástico</i> Plastic Bottles, Jars and Jugs (empty and dry) <i>Envases y frascos de plástico (vacío y seco)</i>
	<b>Glass</b> <i>Vidrio</i> Glass Bottles and Jars (empty and dry) <i>Botellas y frascos de vidrio (vacío y seco)</i>

**Questions?**  
¿PREGUNTAS?  
TO LEARN MORE, call 3-1-1 or visit  
[houstonrecycles.org](http://houstonrecycles.org)



# Houston Project Spotlight

## RECYCLE/RECICLE

THANK YOU FOR RECYCLING THESE:  
GRACIAS POR RECICLAR ESTOS MATERIALES:

**Paper**  
Papel



**Paper and Cardboard**  
Papel y cajas de cartón

**Cartons**  
Cartones



**Cartons**  
(empty and dry)  
Cartones  
(vacío y seco)

**Cans**  
Latas



**Aluminum and Steel Cans**  
(empty and dry)  
Latas de aluminio y acero  
(vacío y seco)

**Plastic**  
Plástico



**Plastic Bottles, Jars and Jugs**  
(empty and dry)  
Envases y frascos de plástico  
(vacío y seco)

**Glass**  
Vidrio



**Glass Bottles and Jars**  
(empty and dry)  
Botellas y frascos de vidrio  
(vacío y seco)

**NO!**



**No Hoses, Cords or Wires**  
No reciclar mangueras, cables o cadenas



**No Batteries or Electronics**  
No reciclar baterías ni electrónicos



**No Household Items**  
No reciclar artículos para el hogar



**No Shredded Paper**  
No reciclar papel triturado



**No Yard Waste**  
No reciclar residuos de jardinería



**No Scrap Metal or Wood**  
No reciclar madera o chatarra

Funded in part by



TO LEARN MORE, call 3-1-1 or visit [houstonrecycles.org](http://houstonrecycles.org)



Houston-Galveston Area Council



RECYCLE RIGHT, HOUSTON!

**DON'T BAG RECYCLABLES**

NO PLASTIC BAGS IN YOUR RECYCLING CART



[houstonrecycles.org](http://houstonrecycles.org)



City of Houston Solid Waste Management Department  
P.O. Box 1562  
Houston, TX 77251



The background features a colorful illustration of a town. On the left is a multi-story brick building with several windows. In the center is a white house with a dark door and windows. To the right is a red barn. In the foreground, there are green trees and blue recycling bins. A person is standing near the brick building, and another person is walking towards the white house. The sky is blue with white clouds.

## GOAL: Every Person Recycles Well

### Key Takeaways:

1. First, people need the **ability to recycle**.
2. Then they need to **be knowledgeable on how to do it well**
3. Finally, they need **engagement from a trusted messenger** in a way that is relevant to them to build trust in the system.

All three things are required for quality recyclables to move through the system and allows you to **meet your sustainability goals**.

# Call to Action: What You Can Do

# Three Ways for You to Make a Difference Today



1. Stand up and speak out for equity and inclusion.



2. Know your accepted materials list in your community and recycle everything you can.



3. Share the presentation and online tools.

# The Recycling Partnership's Online Tools

Check out and share the following Digital resources with your employees, neighborhoods, and families:

Visit and promote our dedicated [Earth Month/Day landing page](#) at [Communitiesforrecycling.org](#).

Commit your [pledge to recycle](#) and encourage peers to do the same!

Honor recycling collectors who have continued a valuable and essential public service throughout the pandemic by using our #ThankYouRecyclingHeroes [social posts and coloring sheets](#).

Get your families involved with this [at-home scavenger hunt](#). Challenge your workplace to test their recycling I.Q. with this [online quiz](#).

Encourage your employees and community to use our [DIYSigns](#) tool to help them recycle better where they work and live.





**Questions or Feedback?**