

# The Recycling Partnership

## Houston-Galveston Recycling Lunch and Learn

February 2024



**The Recycling  
Partnership**  
Solving for Circularity

We mobilize people, data, and solutions across the value chain to reduce waste and our impact on the environment while also unlocking economic benefits.

## Introductions

- Charlotte Pitt – The Recycling Partnership
- Matt James – The Recycling Partnership
- Vincent Leray- The Recycling Partnership
- Kyra Levau- The Recycling Partnership
- Scott Pasternak – Burns and McDonnell
- Erin Livingston – H-GAC
- Zoe Killian – Keep Texas Recycling

# Keep Texas Recycling

Expanding recycling access to rural communities in Texas



Keep Texas  
Beautiful



**Since 1994,**

**KTB's Keep Texas Recycling Program, formerly CTRA, has helped rural and underserved communities in Texas recycle.**



**321.8 M**

Pounds of material recycled



**745,000**

Texans provided with access to recycling



**\$11.9 M**

Generated in revenue for member communities



**\$1.1+ M**

Raised by KTR grant writing services to support member communities



**\$5.5+ M**

Saved in landfill fees



**2.7 M**

Trees saved



**500,000**

Cubic yards of landfill space saved

# Keep Texas Recycling Program



## Rural Recycling Network

Implementation  
Efficiency  
Marketing



**PALACIOS  
WANTS YOUR  
BOTTLES  
BACK.**

PLASTIC WATER BOTTLES ARE 100% RECYCLABLE.

LAS BOTELLAS DE AGUA DE PLÁSTICO SON 100% RECICLABLES.



For more recycling resources and tips, visit [www.ktb.org/recycle](http://www.ktb.org/recycle).

## Strategic Projects

Consulting  
Expansion  
Challenging Materials



## Technical Assistance

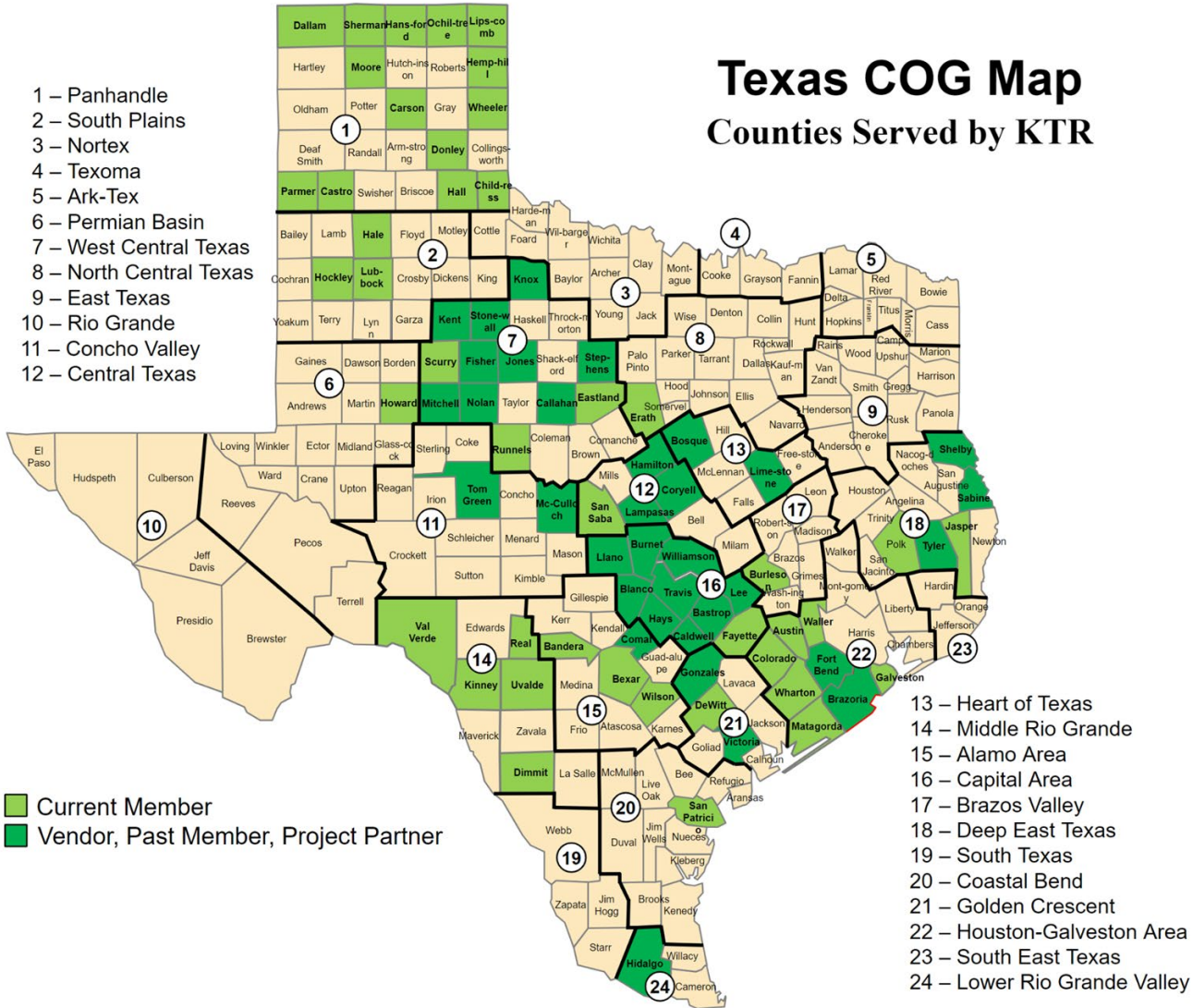
Education  
Training  
Capacity Building



**NO Fee to Join**  
**NO Annual Fees**

# Regions Served

**Texas COG Map**  
Counties Served by KTR



**Est. 745,000 Texans**

**50+ Entities**

*Civic groups, private industry, military bases, government entities, and school districts*

# Common Partner Profiles

## Who is the typical KTR Partner?

- **1,000-10,000** in population
- Distance to market **over 60 Miles**
- Lack of **funding, staff, time**
- Community is **not engaged**
- Difficulty with curbside program or costs of recycling
- Drop-off center with **separated materials**



# Corporate Partnerships



Ingleside Recycling Center

*You're Invited!*



City of Ingleside's Recycling Center  
**GRAND OPENING**  
 Thursday, July 7th  
 10am-1pm  
 1580 4th Street  
 Ingleside, Texas 78362  
 (Between Danforth Ln. & FM 2725)

Join us, July 7th for the grand opening of the City of Ingleside's new recycling center! Bring your empty, rinsed plastic bottles & jugs and broken-down cardboard boxes to be recycled.

**Recycle these items:**  
 Recicla estas cosas:

- #1 Plastic bottles Botellas de plástico
- #2 Plastic bottles & jugs Botellas y jarras de plástico
- Flattened cardboard Cartón aplanado



**Our Texas  
Our Future**




**ARCA CONTINENTAL**



**SOUTHWEST BEVERAGES**

## Target Communities

COG regions with low funding

## Projects

Infrastructure, equipment, education & outreach, sponsorships etc.

**Tell us where you need help!**



Snyder ISD Bottle Challenge



**NOVEMBER RECYCLING CHALLENGE**

- Collect as many #1 and 2 plastics as possible.
- Remove caps, rinse out any residue, and put your plastics in a bag.
- Trade in your bags for raffle tickets on Nov. 9th, 10th, & 11th.

2 Small Bags = 1 ticket  
 1 Medium Bag = 2 tickets  
 X Large Bag = 5 tickets

**WIN!** The grade with the most tickets will win a prize! ALL Tickets will be entered into a drawing for prizes!






# How Can Keep Texas Beautiful Help You Recycle?

- **Education & Outreach**
  - Best Practices
  - Resources
- **Regional Trainings**
- **Become a KTR partner**
  - Technical Assistance
  - Material Marketing
  - Strategic Projects
- **Grant Opportunities**

# Thank you!



*Find out more at*

[www.ktb.org/KeepTexasRecycling](http://www.ktb.org/KeepTexasRecycling)

**Zoë Killian**

Program Manager, Keep Texas Recycling

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512-872-6630



Keep Texas  
Beautiful



# The Recycling Partnership

We mobilize people, data, and solutions across the value chain to unlock the environmental and economic benefits of recycling and a circular economy.



**Less than half of  
recyclables in U.S.  
homes get recycled.**

Let's change that together.





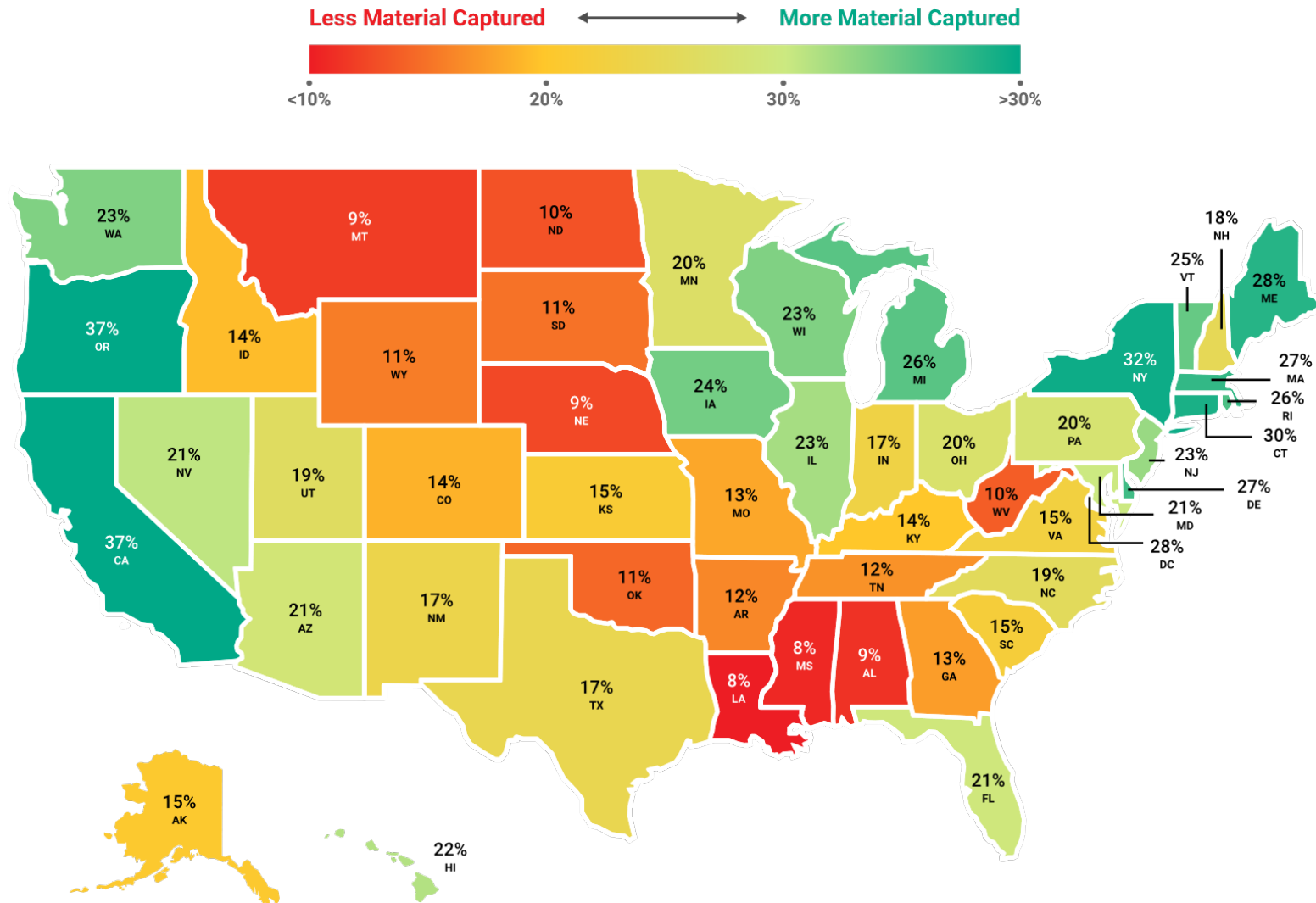
# The Present and Future of Residential Recycling in the U.S.

# Five Requirements of an Effective Recycling System

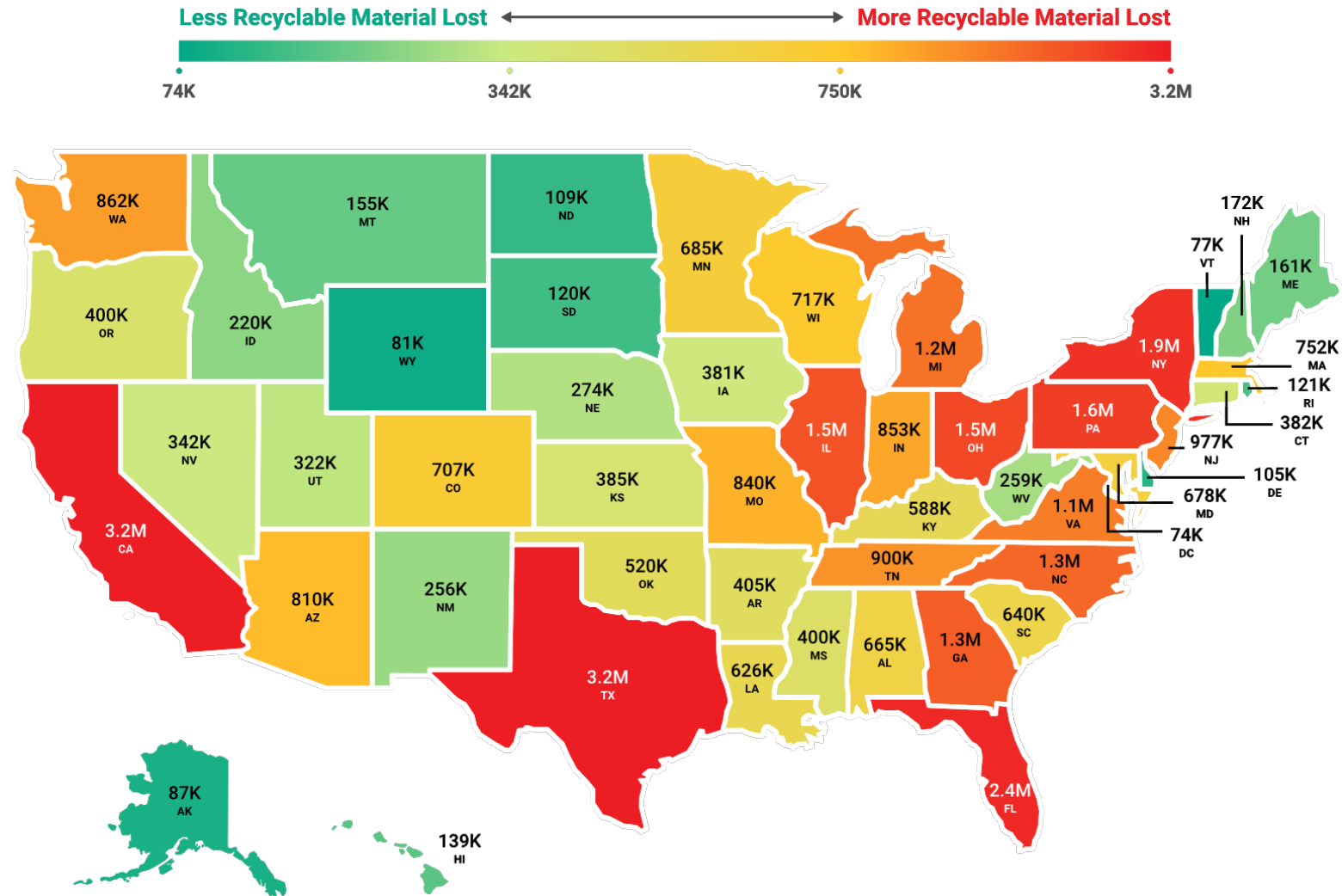
For the U.S. Residential Recycling System to Function Effectively, Five Requirements Must Be Met:



# State-by-State Residential Recycling Rates



# State-by-State Residential Recyclable Material Lost (in Tons Per Year)





# Targeted Investments for Maximum Impact

Data-driven, local solutions are key to overhauling the U.S. system



## Impact on Two EPR States

**Oregon & Colorado:** In addition to Maine & California, Oregon & Colorado's recent passage of EPR could bring more than 645,000 tons of recyclables to these two states. Needs assessments, single and multi family access, engagement, and expanded MRF processing activities are areas of need.



## Increase in Participation

**California** loses 3.2 million tons per year largely due to lack of engagement. 95% of Californians have recycling access, but state recycling rate is 37%. As part of its EPR implementation engagement will be key.



## Linchpin Cities

Because there are strong end markets and yet limited recycling in **Cleveland, Detroit, Indianapolis, Lubbock, Phoenix, & New Orleans**, these cities are critical for unlocking the regions that surround them. By focusing on access, engagement, and processing in these cities, the greater regions could likely see increased recovery of recyclables.



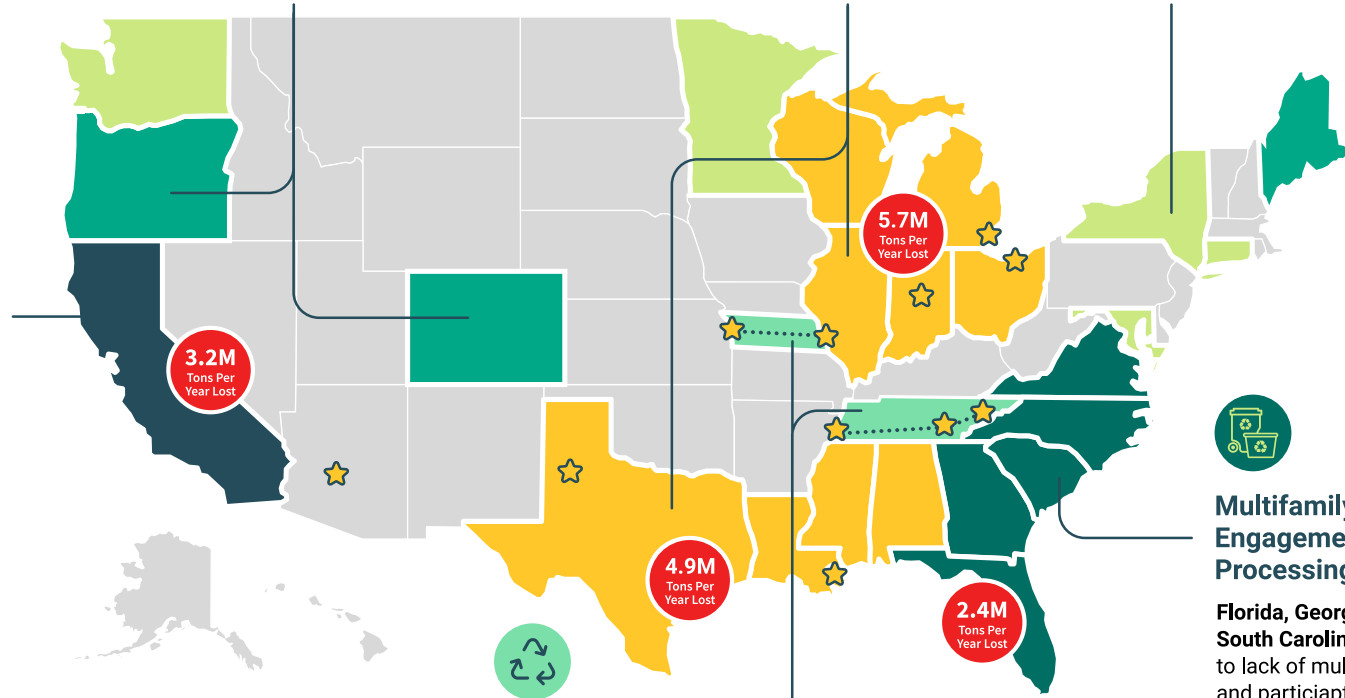
## Regional System Change

**Gulf Coast & Great Lakes:** These two regions collectively lose nearly 10.6M tons of recyclables annually. Comprehensive regional investment in single and multi family access, engagement, and MRF processing to expand recyclables accepted could bring big change for the country as a whole.



## Future EPR Opportunities

**Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland, Minnesota, New York & Washington:** These states, like many, could benefit from future EPR legislation, boosting recovery by more than 3.3 million tons annually.



## Multifamily Access, Engagement, and Processing

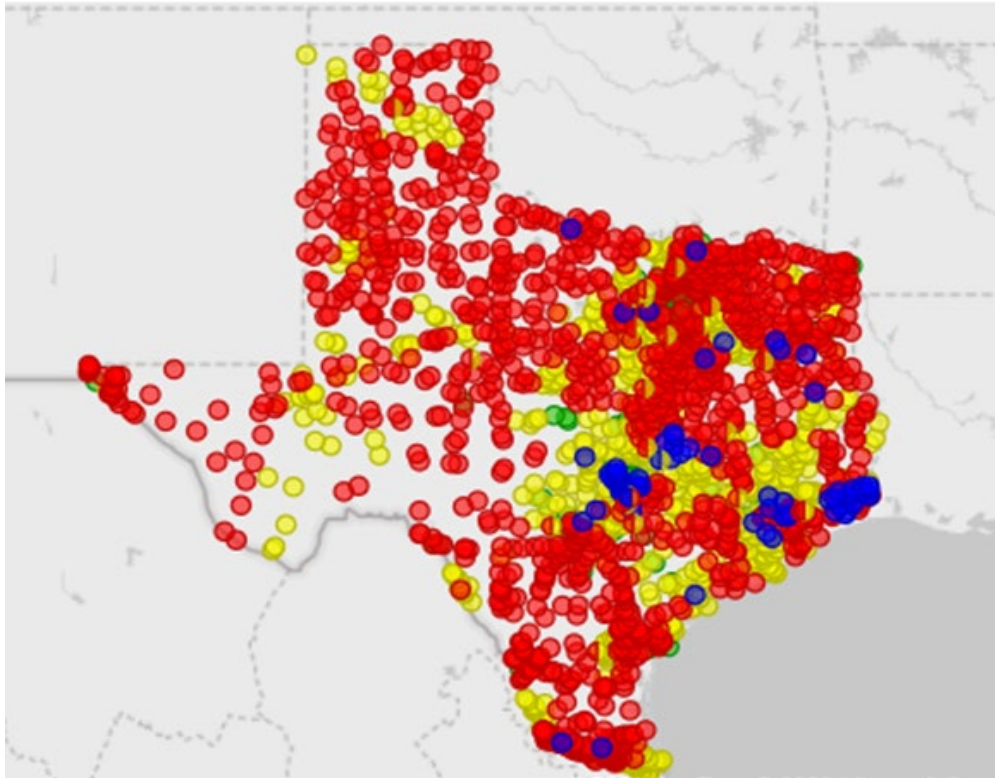
**Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, & Virginia:** Due to lack of multi-family access and participation, these states have big opportunities to increase recycling rates. For example, Florida has 90% access for single-family homes, but only 16% for multifamily homes, and loses 2.4 million tons per year.



## Micro-Regional System Change

**St. Louis - Kansas City Corridor and the Memphis, Chattanooga, & Knoxville Region:** Although processing and end markets exist, these metropolitan corridors generate large quantities of unrecovered recyclables. Focusing on access and participation in these regions could produce significant tonnage.

# Texas Community Recycling Access Landscape



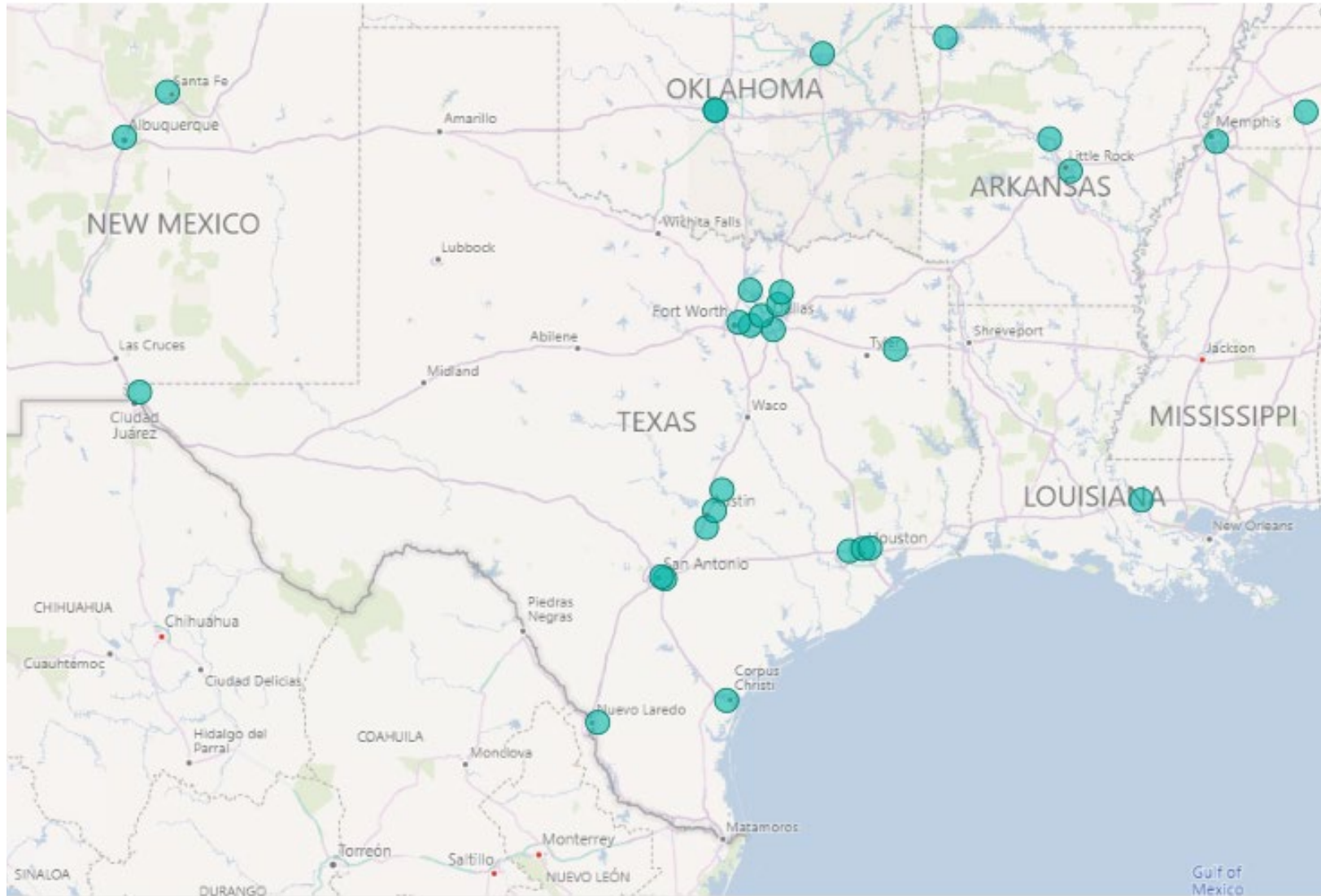
Community Access Category

Access ● Curbside ● Dropoff ● None ● Subscription

## Access Facts

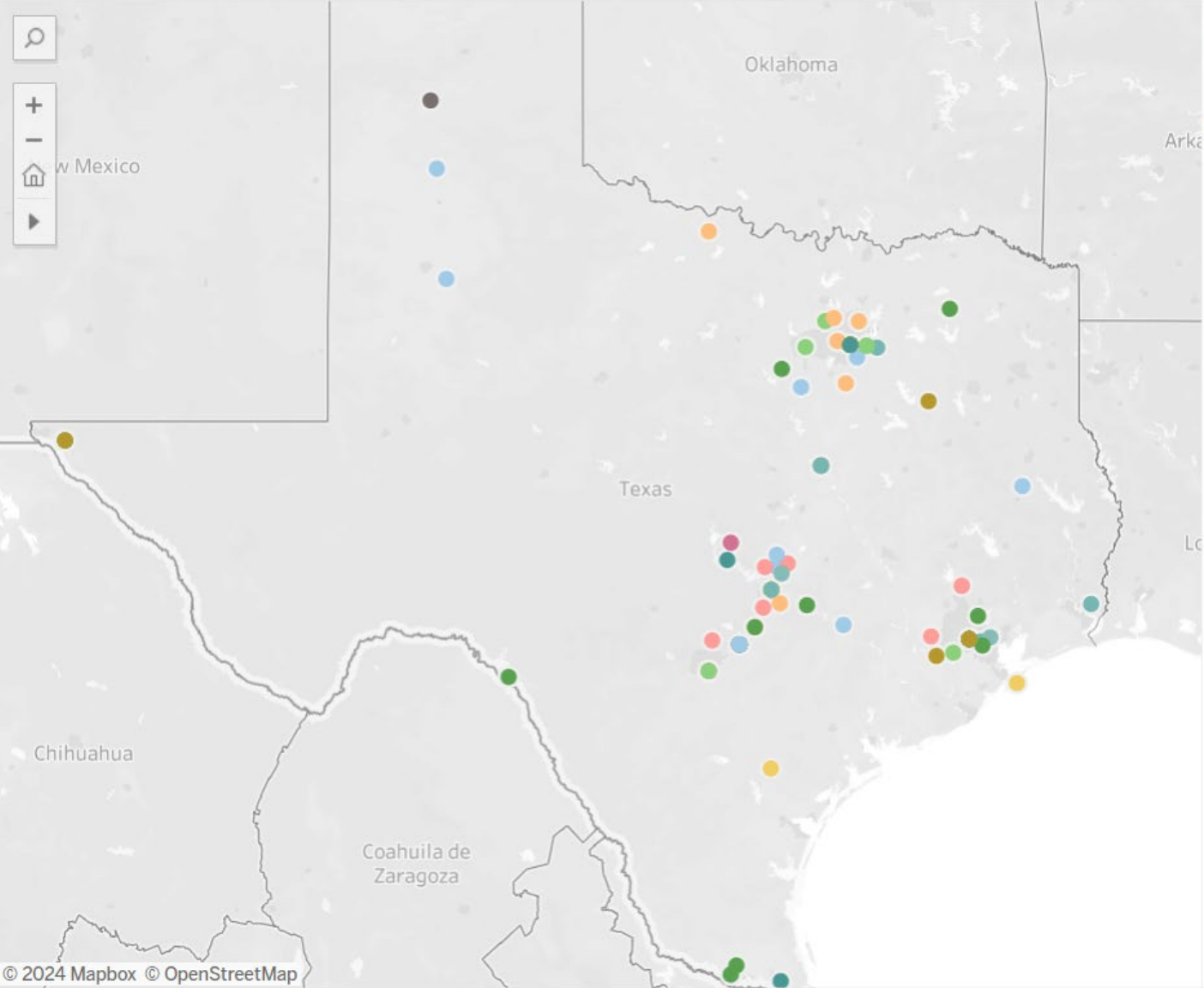
Single-Family Equitable Curbside Access - TX	50% of 7.2m HH
Multi-Family Equitable Curbside Access - TX	40% of 2.7m HH

# Texas MRF Landscape



# Markets

Texas

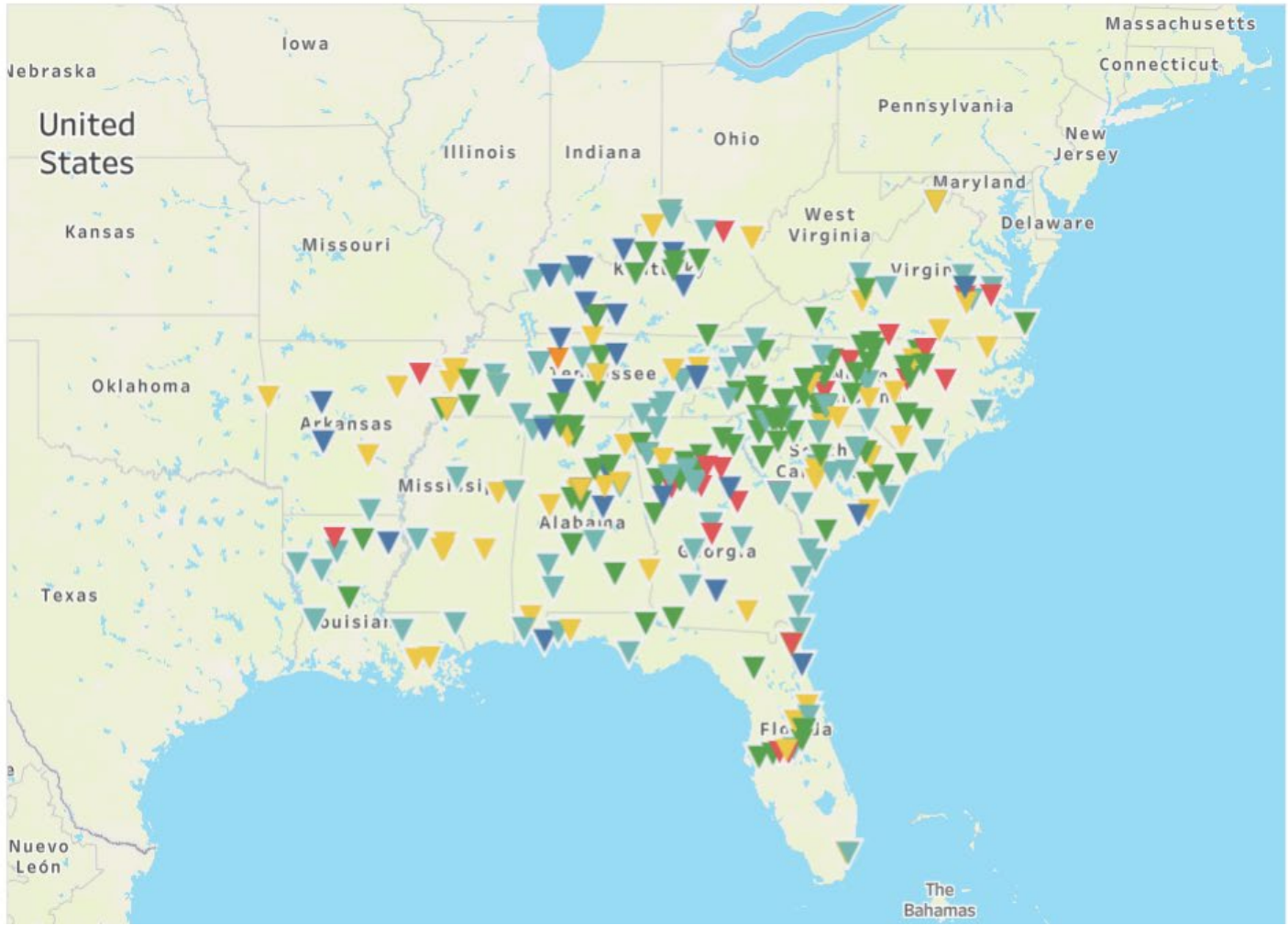


Commodity  
(All)

End Product  
(All)

- Commodity
- Null
  - Construction & Demol...
  - Electronics
  - Glass
  - Household goods
  - Metal
  - Multiple
  - Oils
  - Organics
  - Paper
  - Paper, Plastic
  - Plastics
  - Textiles
  - Tires

# South East Recycling Manufacturing Map



### Commodity

- Aluminum
- Aluminum & Steel
- Glass
- Paper
- Plastics
- Steel

### SERDC State

### Commodity

[Download a Copy](#)





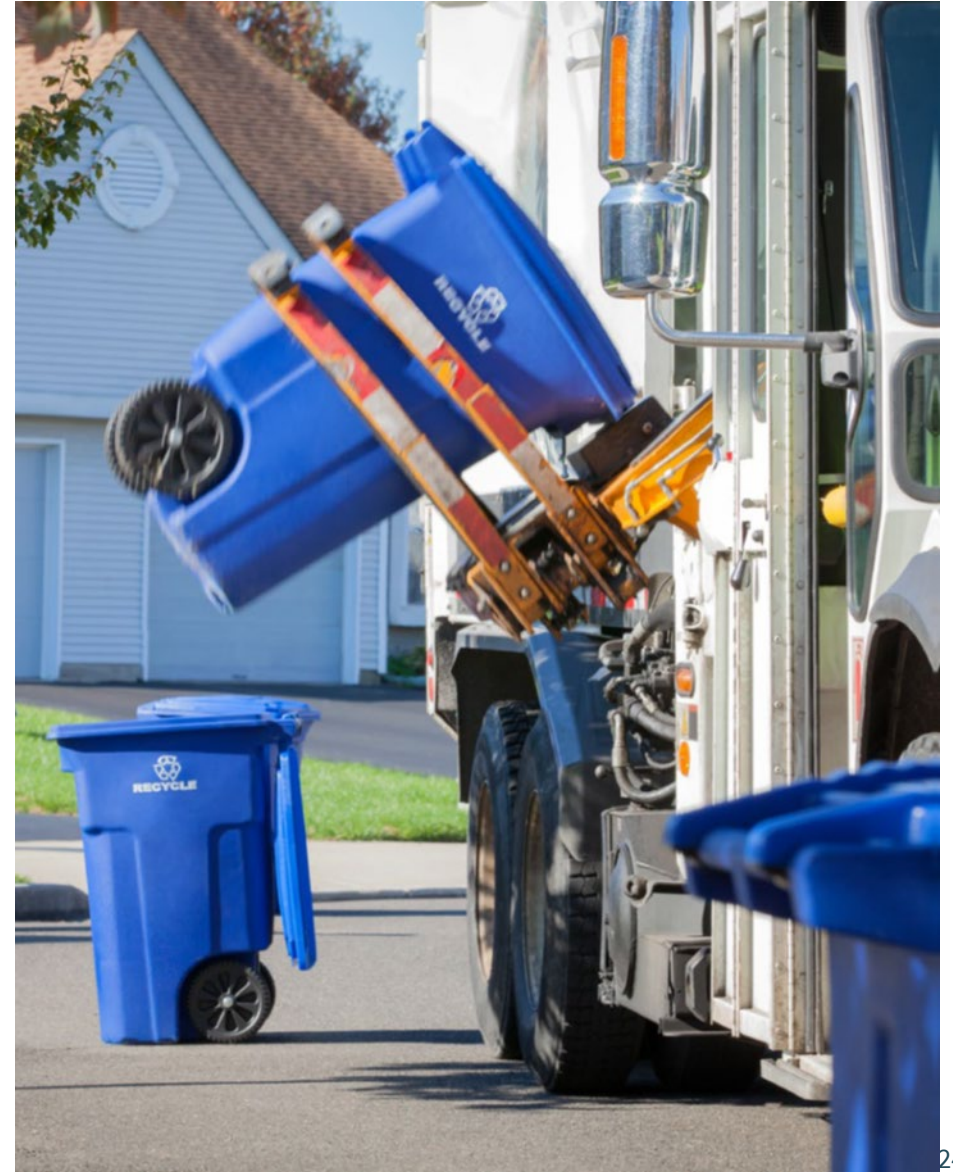
# System Opportunities

# Challenges in Texas



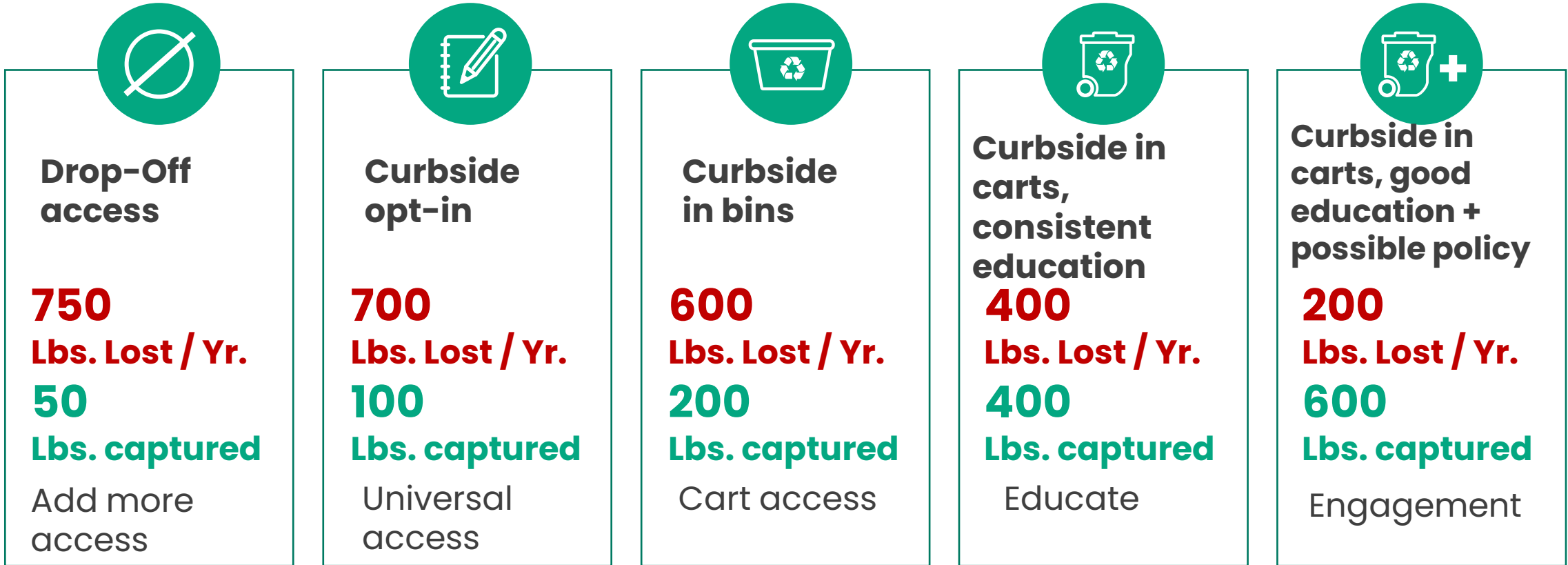
## Urban and Rural

- No access to service
- Opt-In/Subscription systems underperforming/charging extra fees
- Lack of staff in local governments to lead change
- Contamination challenges
- No community education
- Infrastructure challenges
- Limited multifamily access
- Drop-off system lacking in rural and urban areas





# Where to make the right investments...



On average, single-family households generate ~750-800lbs of recyclables each year.

*How do we ensure this valuable material is accepted and processed?*



## Behavior Change Strategy

Education, Anti-Contamination,  
Participation, and Capture

## Processing Grants/Processing Contracts

Material Coalition Strategy

## Equitable Access

Curbside, Multifamily, Drop-off



# The Recycling Partnership Grants

# Helping Deliver Equal Access



## Strategic Grantmaking

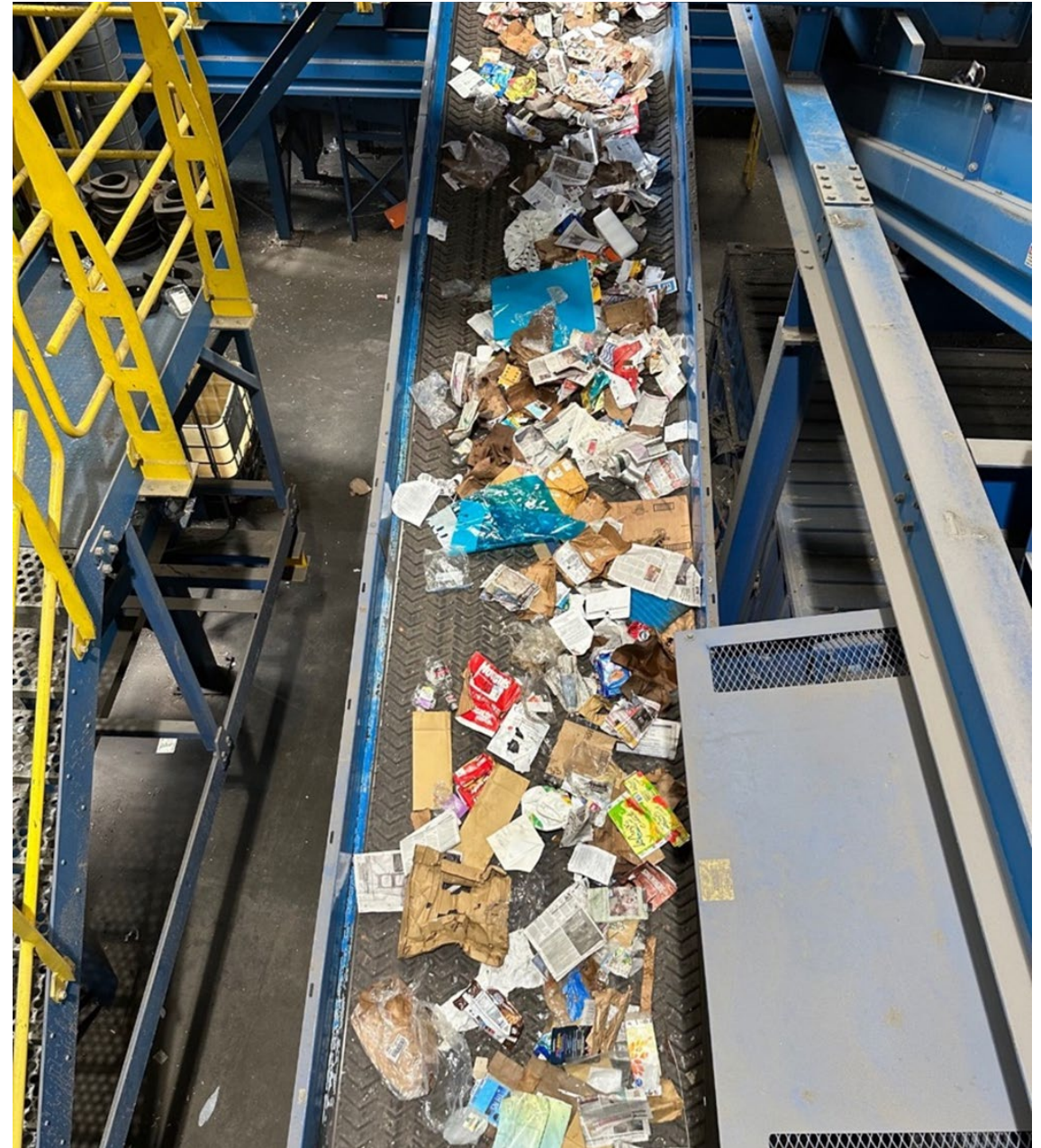
- ✓ Recycle Carts plus Education (Access)
- ✓ Drop-off Centers (Access)
- ✓ Multi-Family (Access)
- ✓ MRF Improvements (Access & Capture)
- ✓ Engagement (Capture)
- ✓ Data



# Grant Priorities



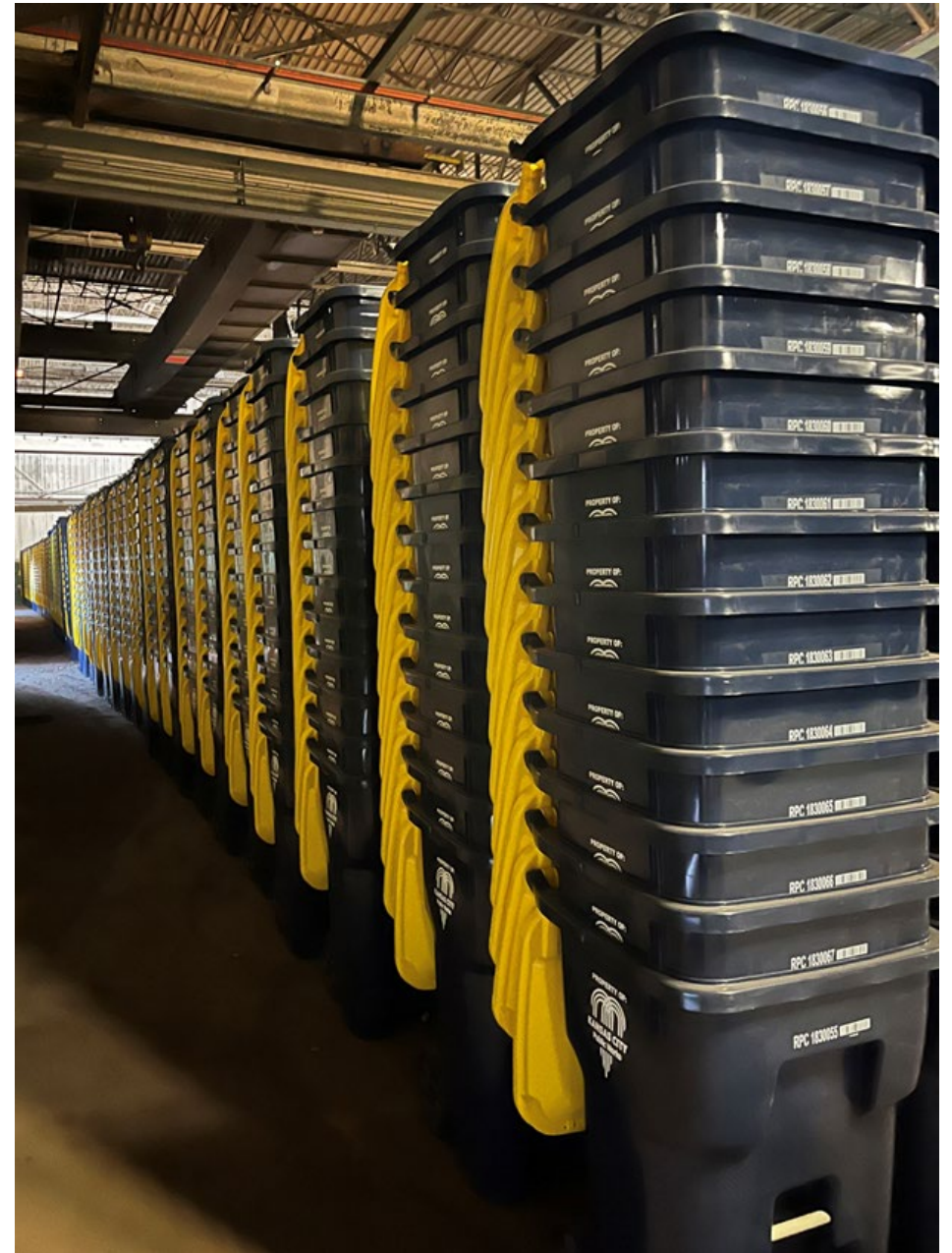
- **New access**
- **New tons/better tons**
- Hub-and-spoke
- Drop-off as precursor to curbside
- Efficient, scalable strategies
- Learnings
- Partnership/Regional Opportunities
- MRF-Shed Opportunities



# Cart Grants



- Grants for cart-based curbside recycling systems
- Funding up to \$15/cart, depending on service type, \$1/HH education
- Technical assistance and design of education/outreach materials
- RFP available on an on-going basis
- Project data



# Drop-Off Grants

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## Considerations for funding

### Site Development

- Construction and planning
- Concrete Pads
- Grading work / electrical

### Infrastructure

- Compactors preferred
- Roll-offs
- Bunkers

### Hub and Spoke

- Soft shell Transfer Station
- Hard shell Transfer Station
- Transfer Station retrofit

### Education

- Signage
- Mailers to promote recycling



# Multi-Family Grants



## Collection

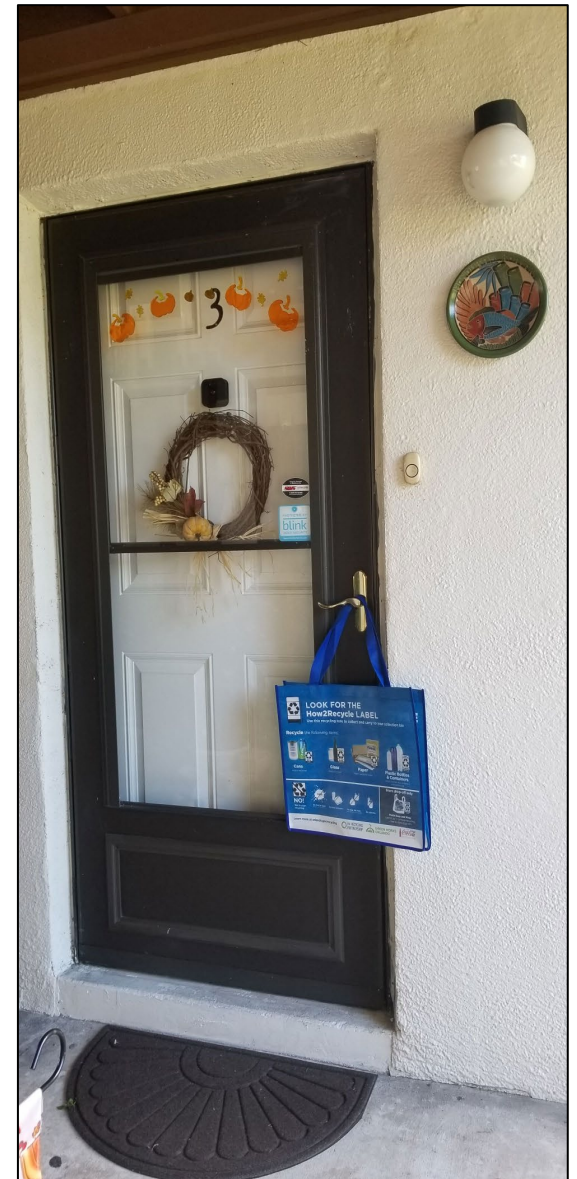
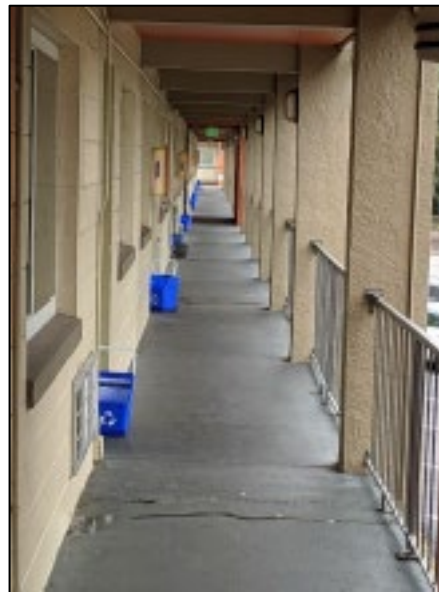
- Enclosure development
- Trucks
- Carts
- Dumpsters
- In-unit totes

## Service Provision

- Valet service recycling
- Staffing

## Education

- Signage
- Mailers to promote recycling





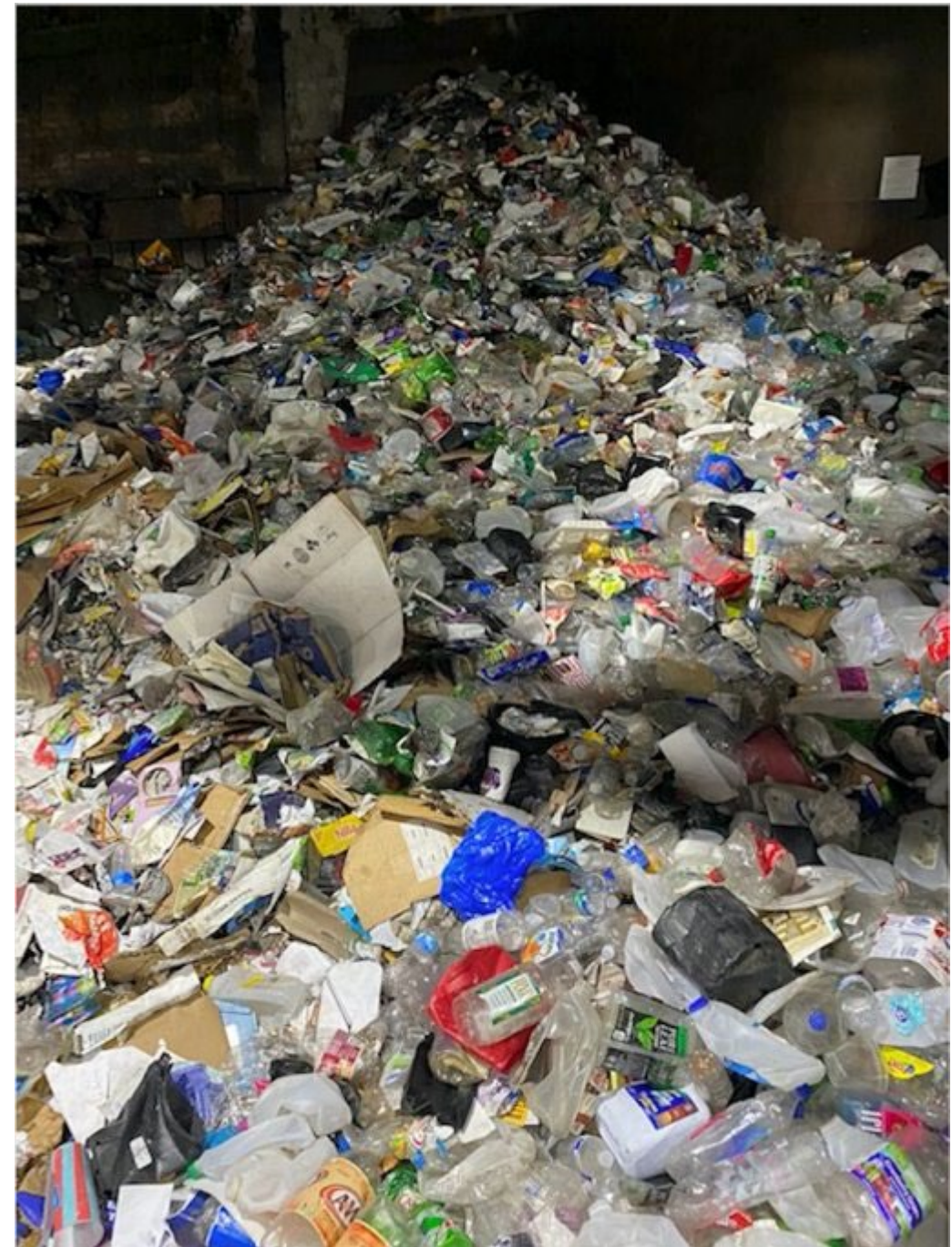
# MRF & Material Specific Grants



- General Technical Assistance
- Controlling Contamination
- Partnering in Measurement

## Potential Grant Opportunities

- Polypropylene Recycling Coalition
- PET Recycling Coalition
- UBC Grant Program
- Film and Flexibles Recycling Coalition



# Grant Application Process



- Simple Applications and Contracts
- Education and Outreach Support with Every Project
- Project Manager Support
- Year-Round Applications
- Reimbursement grants – 90/10%
- Project data





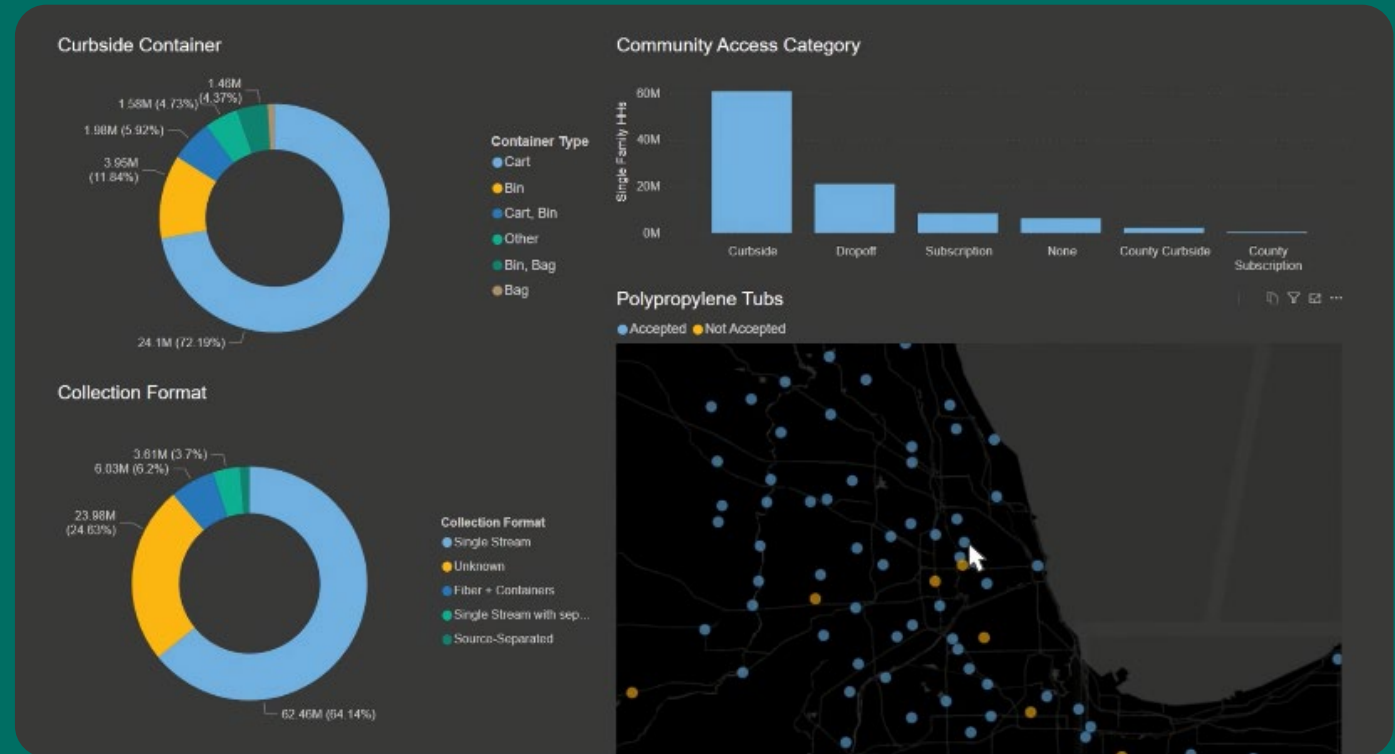
# The Recycling Program Solutions Hub



Communications & packaging design tools are powered by the National Recycling Database

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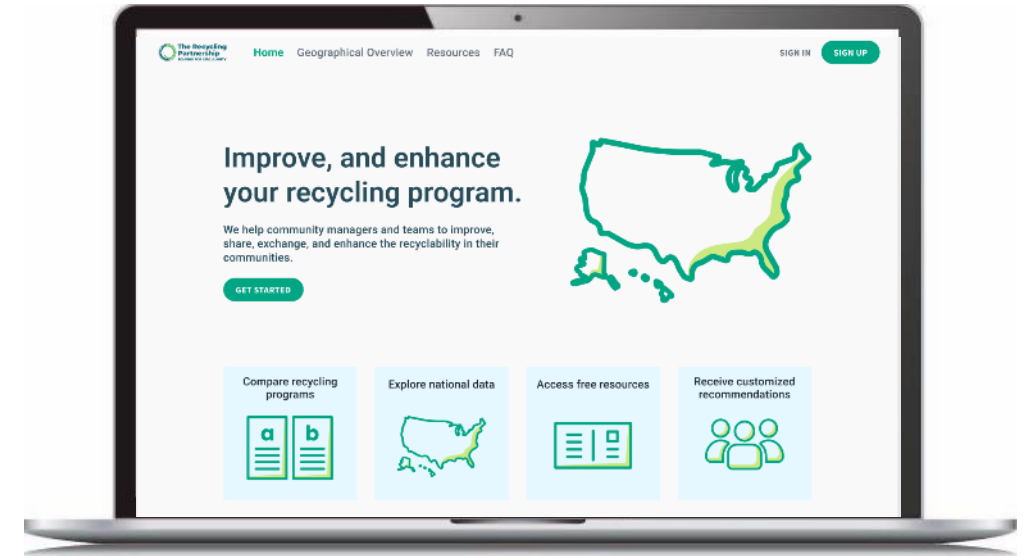
Accurate, local, dynamic, recycling data connects the entire recycling system



National Recycling Database

The **Recycling Program Solutions Hub** is an open-access, free tool for recycling program managers to **access and verify** critical recycling program data.

The Hub is centered around **connectivity** and **actionable suggestions** whereby community leaders have a first-hand opportunity to co-create a **stronger system**.



## Key Features

- Interactive Map
- Custom Recommendations
- Learning Hub & Resources
- Peer-to-Peer Networking

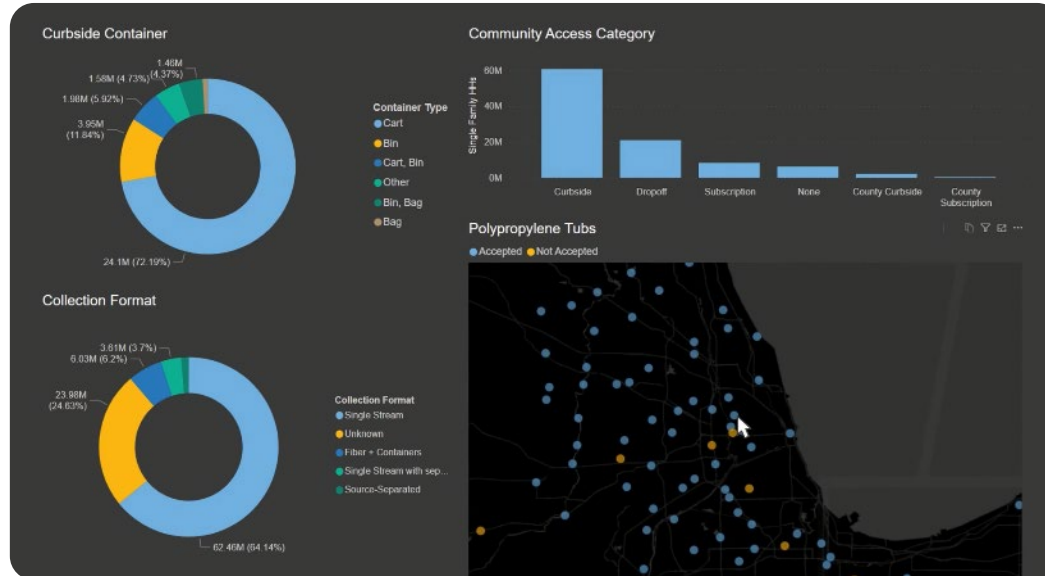
**Giving local program managers control over the accuracy of program data**

[community.recyclingpartnership.org](https://community.recyclingpartnership.org)

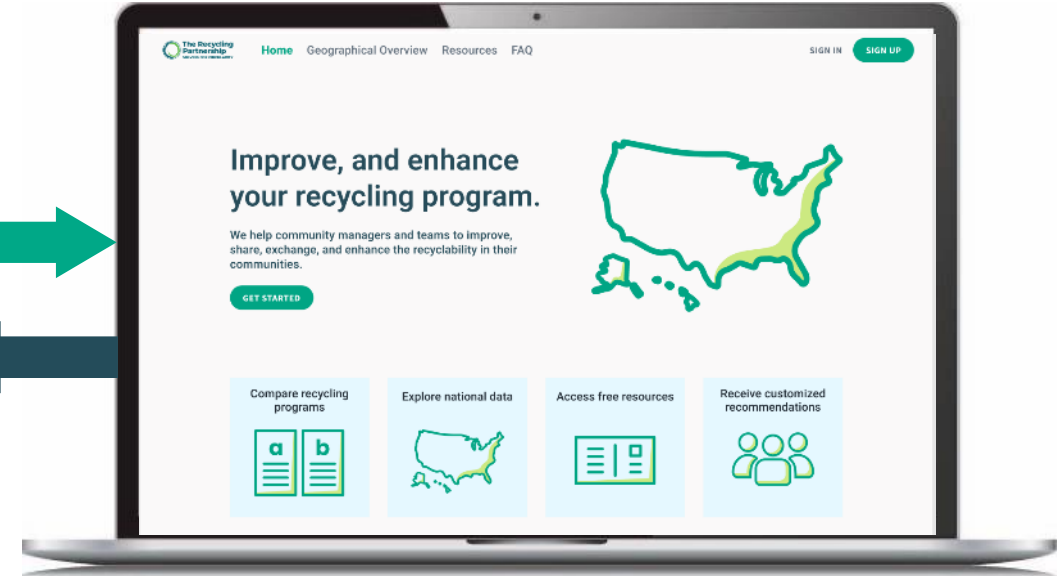
# The National Database and Recycling Program Solutions Hub



## National Recycling Database



## Solutions Hub



The **National Recycling Database** is the underlying structure for the **Hub**. It becomes **more accurate and thorough** as recycling staff use the Hub.

# Recycling Program Solutions Hub: Interactive Map



**View MRFs**

**View access to recycling**  
on the national and local  
levels

**Explore** recycling  
programs across the  
country

**Explore U.S. Recycling Data**

There are more than 9,000 recycling programs in the United States. Click on the map below to learn more about recycling access and infrastructure across the country.

Search for a specific program, municipality, county, or state

Show Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs)  Only show communities with a recycling program

Curbside Percentage  
0% 100%

# Recycling Program Solutions Hub: Community Profile

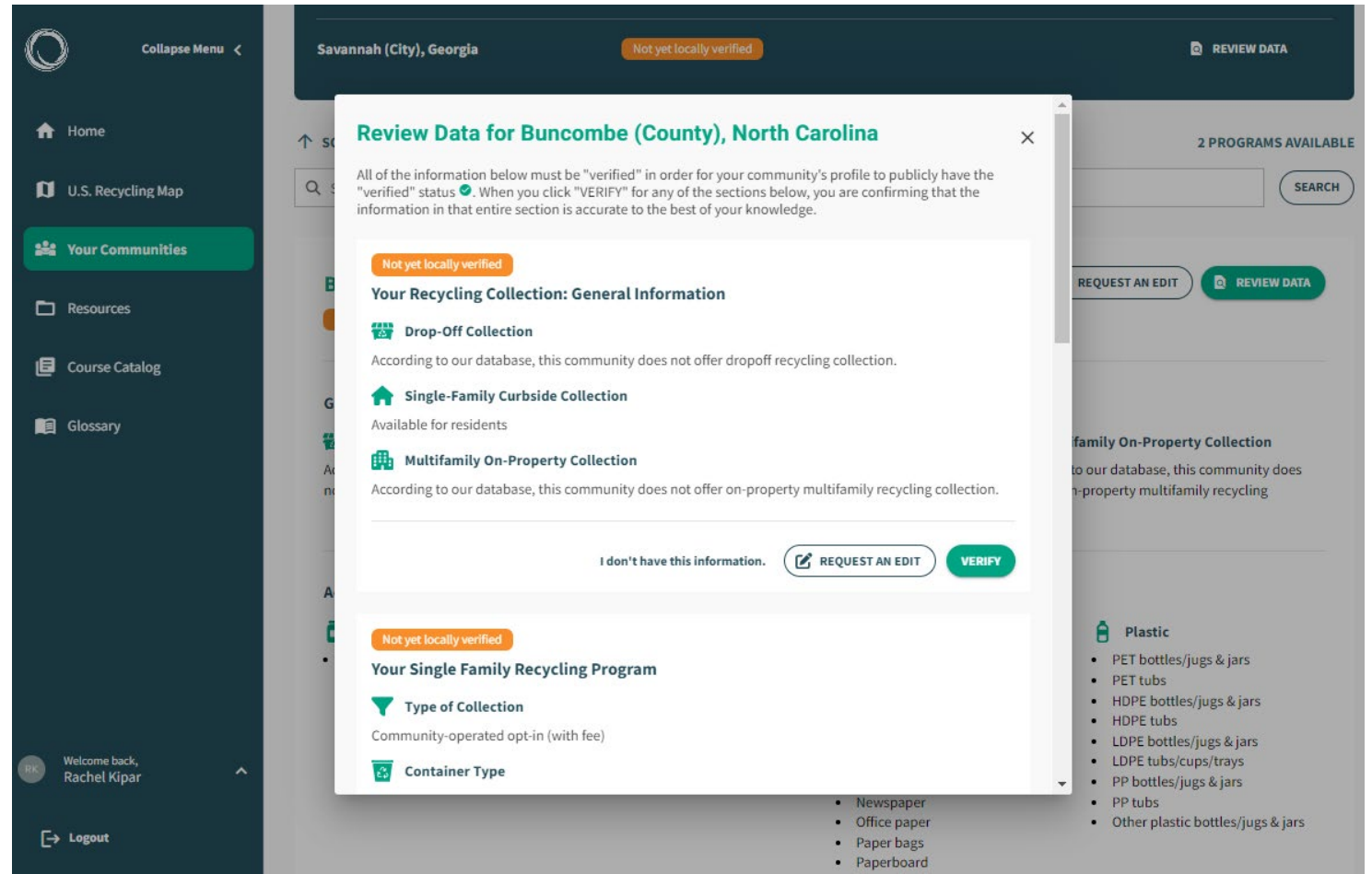


**Anyone in the public** can view basic information about any community program in the U.S.

Type of recycling program(s) offered

Accepted materials

**Only recycling program staff** can verify and edit community profile data





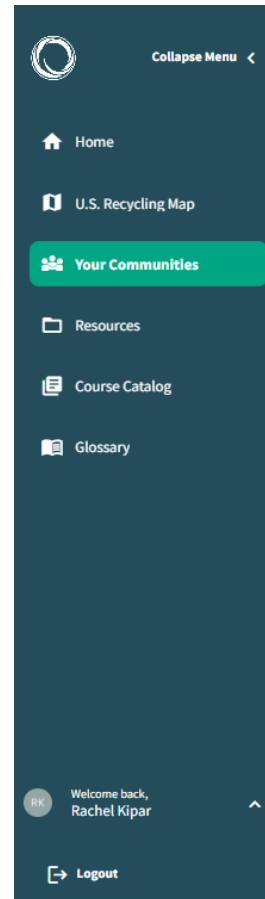
# Recycling Program Solutions Hub: Your Communities Page



**Program staff** will review information about their community that informs the offerings of their recycling program.

The more information provided, the more **customized** the Recommendations section becomes.

**“Similar Communities”** will also be available, allowing program staff to find peers with similar programs anywhere in the U.S.



## Based on the data above, consider these next steps:

Something look off? Click "[Request an Edit](#)" to let us know.

### 1. Consider a Multifamily Recycling Collection

- [Take our Multifamily Recycling Kit Course to learn about how to get started and see what other communities are doing.](#)
- [Download our Multifamily Recycling Guide to get started.](#)

### 2. Convert Your Collection to Carts

- [Click here to learn the benefits of single-stream carts.](#)
- [Apply for our Residential Cart Grant to receive funding to expand your program.](#)

### 3. Expand Capture of Recyclables

- [Take our Recycling by the Numbers Course to learn how to better measure your recycling performance.](#)

[SEE MORE](#)

## More Resources



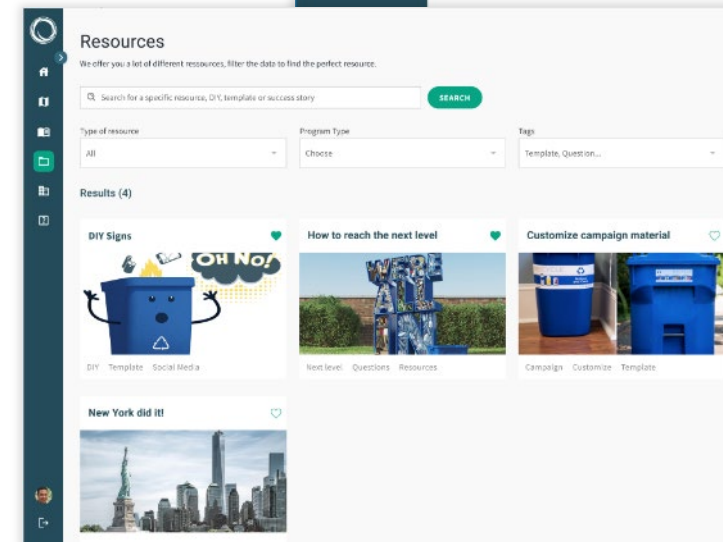
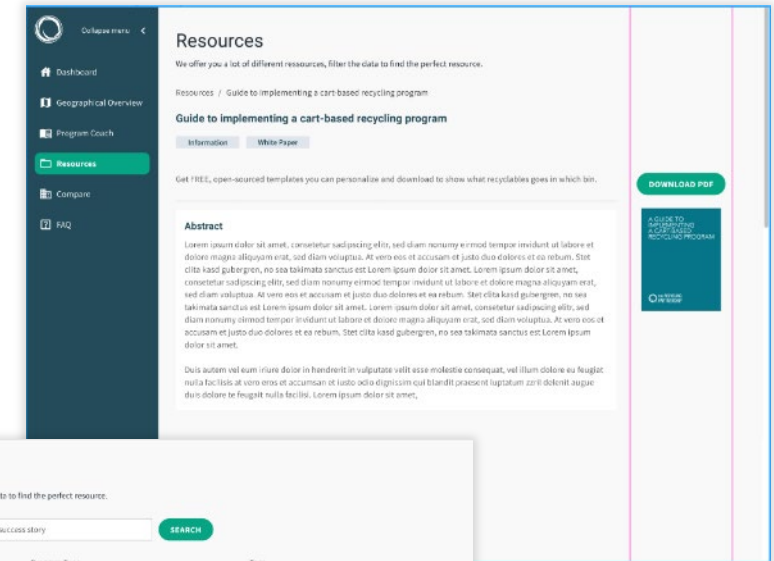
[Check out the Resources page for more.](#)



**Each Recommendation is linked to a Resource** that has been crafted by the Recycling Partnership. These include our most popular toolkits and guides:

- | DIY Signs
- | Start at the Cart
- | MRF Contract Guide
- | and more!

Resources are publicly available and searchable without a login





## Imagine a world where programs decide what labels tell residents in real time

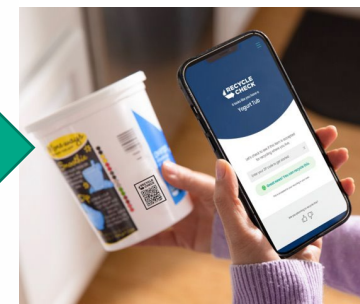
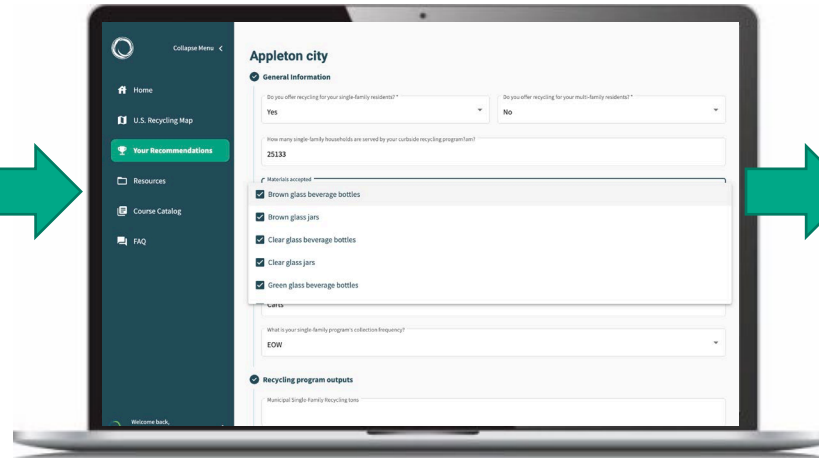
Through our National Database, this is a reality



**1**  
What is accepted locally comes from local programs

**2**  
National Recycling Database updates in real-time via Recycling Program Solutions Hub

**3**  
Residents scan a package for up-to-date local information





## Consumer-tested research shows overwhelming support for interactive packaging information

78%

think a QR code would make recycling **less confusing**

74%

Would scan a QR code to **find out if** a package can be recycled

73%

Said the QR code would **help them trust** it will be recycled into something else

73%

Would **feel better about a brand's commitment** to recycling with a QR code





**Is this accepted  
for recycling  
where you live?**





# Engagement and Behavior

# What do we know about residential recycling engagement today?



- **People intend to recycle, but do not always act on their intent.**
- **Confidence in recycling is in decline.**
- **Confusion around how to recycle is high.**
- **People do not have the information they need to recycle right.**
- **Need for messaging and tools that go beyond “one size fits all”.**



# Segmentation Identified 5 Groups, Each With Key Traits



49% Dedicated

51% Frustrated, Confused, & Less Dedicated



25%

Eco Activators



24%

Committed Followers



18%

Discouraged Self-Doubters



16%

Detached Abiders



16%

Conflicted & Overwhelmed



# Demonstrated Success: Motivational Messaging Informed by Audience Segmentation



## Top Messages



**Empathy** "We get it. It can be confusing."



**Logic** "Recycling makes sense."



**Emotion** "We have to do better!"

# Understanding In-home Recycling Tools & Systems





## Study Overview

- In-home ethnographic research
- 23 households in San Diego, CA and Columbus, OH
- 2-hour sessions
- Conversation and observation

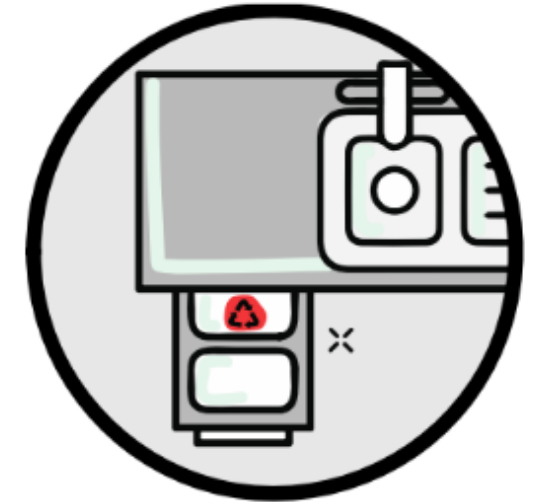
## Findings

- **Home Grown Systems:** Households develop their own home-grown systems for recycling
- **Good Flow:** Households who recycle well practice good flow – the consistent and fluid movement of recyclables out of the home.

Centralized – Bin Free



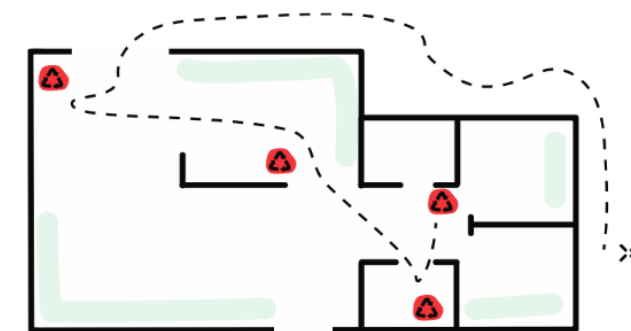
Centralized - Contained



Out of Sight - Isolated



Distributed Gathering



# How can we improve recycling behaviors?

- **Providing frequent visuals of what can and cannot be recycled at home.**
- **Tailoring messaging and levels of information for different types of recyclers.**
- **Activating positive feelings to increase trust and enthusiasm for recycling.**
- **Guiding people on how to correctly interpret packaging and product labels.**

## Invest in Recycling Behaviors



Provide Visuals



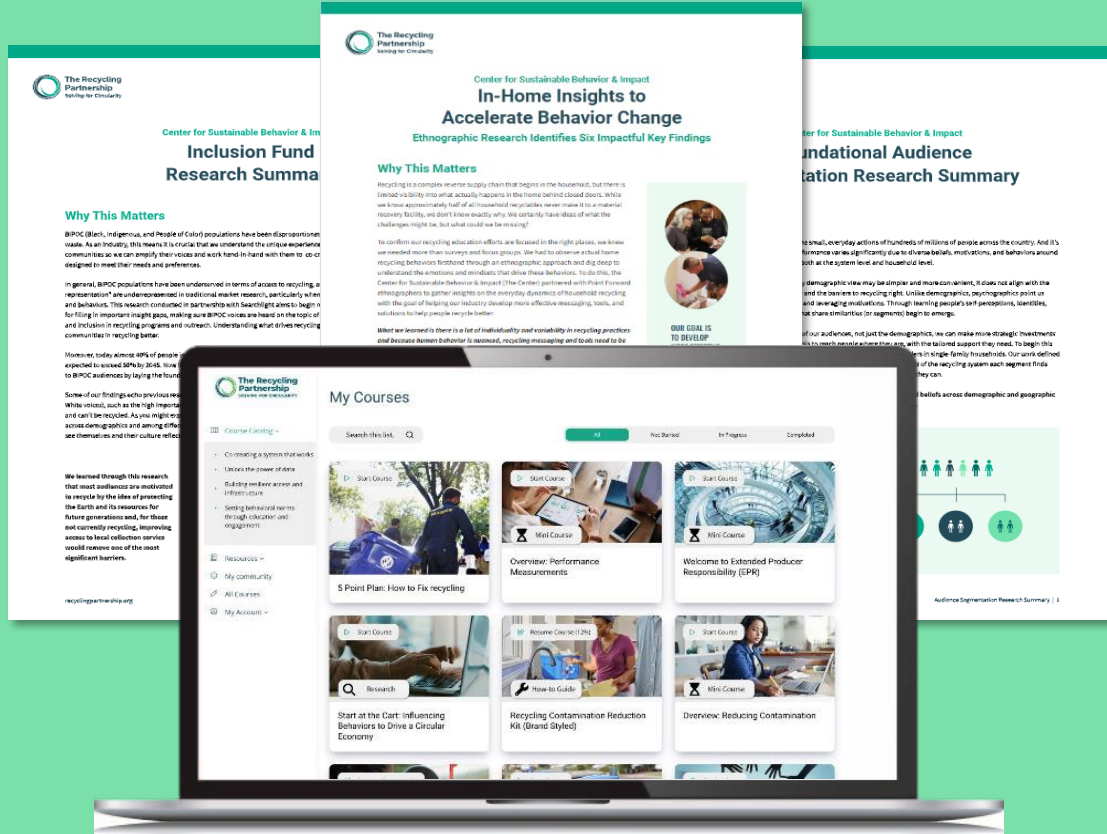
Tailor Messaging



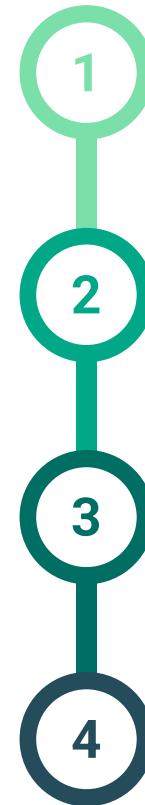
Activate Trust



Clear Labeling



## People Intend to Recycle. We Must Clear the Way for Them to Act.



1 We Must Have Systematic Communications

2 People Must Have Confidence in Recycling Outcomes

3 Engagement and Outreach Must Be Tailored to Different Audiences

4 Recycling Systems Must Be Designed with Behavior In Mind

# The Recycling Partnership Collaboration and Work in Texas



## Past and Present Grants in Texas

- **Garland, TX** – Carts
- **Fort Worth** - Optimization
- **NCTCOG** – Optimization/Education
- **San Marcos** – Multi-Family
- **Houston** – Measurement
- **MRF Grants**

THE 90s CALLED.  
THEY WANT THEIR  
BIN BACK.

[GarlandEnvironmentalWaste.com](http://GarlandEnvironmentalWaste.com)



Since 2016, The Recycling Partnership has delivered more than \$4M in grants to Texas communities and MRF's.

## What we'd like to do in Texas

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- Understand the Local Recycling Systems
- Understand the Challenges and Opportunities
- Understand other Barriers to Change
- Understand System Funding, Challenges and Opportunities
- Understand Infrastructure Availability and Needs
- Have a clear picture of opportunities for the next 5 to 10 years and how can we support that –Technical Assistance, Grants, Implementation, etc.
- Learn about your Communities
- Develop Regional Recycling Partnership Grant Funds



# Thank You to Our Partners!





# Questions & Discussion

For more information:

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**Matt James** [mjames@recyclingpartnership.org](mailto:mjames@recyclingpartnership.org)

**Vincent Leray** [vleray@recyclingpartnership.org](mailto:vleray@recyclingpartnership.org)

[www.RecyclingPartnership.org](http://www.RecyclingPartnership.org)



We mobilize people, data, and solutions across the value chain to unlock the environmental and economic benefits of recycling and a circular economy.

