



## SMART WASTE MANAGEMENT & REDUCTION

### GOALS

- Reduce generation of solid waste from County buildings and operations.
- Increase the diversion of County-generated solid waste.
- Support policies and programs that reduce residential and commercial waste throughout Clark County.

Home to both the country's largest landfill and the largest residential recycling facility,<sup>5</sup> Clark County is constantly working to divert waste from a growing population while educating on smart consumption practices to reduce the generation of waste. Committed to aligning with the State of Nevada's recycling rate goal of 25%, Clark County has achieved moderate success increasing diversion rates at the community scale – from 8% in 2008 to just under 20% in 2019, but a lack of County operational data has prevented the County from tracking its internal diversion rates. Through the development of a streamlined waste and recycling tracking program for its operations, procurement policies, and employee education programs, Clark County can easily contribute to reaching this recycling goal by reducing its operational waste and serving as a model for its community by illustrating that large-scale waste reduction is achievable.



## CASE STUDY

### Food Waste Prevention at MGM Resorts

One example of how large-scale waste reduction is already being achieved locally is through the efforts at MGM Resorts. Through a partnership with Three Square Food Bank in Las Vegas, MGM Resorts minimizes its food waste while supporting the community. MGM flash freezes leftover food from its events to get it safely to community members in need. Since 2016, MGM Resorts has donated 1.5 million meals.

**Photo source:** Chase Stevens Las Vegas Review Journal



The County is demonstrating the positive results of innovative waste diversion programs. In 2005, the Pulverize and Pave Program through the Department of Public Works completed three million miles of paved road using asphalt recycled from previous projects. The department also recycles brass from the County's shooting complex and auctions off to the public surplus items that would otherwise be sent to landfill. The County composts some yard waste from its parks and landscaping. Cell phones are recycled and laptops, computers, and other electronics are donated for use at the Blind Center of Nevada. These programs go above and beyond the recycling services contracted through Republic Services. At the same time, the County can strengthen these existing activities (for example, by using composted materials in park maintenance or expanding eligible electronics recycling) and enhance overall waste management procedures.

The most significant opportunity the County has to manage operational waste is to centralize its waste management policies and processes into one department. By assigning

management to an individual department, the County can more effectively track and maintain all aspects of County operations waste – from contracting requirements to placement of receptacles. Subsequent to this centralization is the County's ability to set more definitive policies and procedures around procurement and waste minimization. These will need to be enforced across departments and supported through data tracking. The County will need to work more closely with its waste haulers to collect and track data on waste tonnage and diversion rates. Procurement will also need to adopt and implement specific requirements around material and equipment purchasing. All County staff will need to be engaged and trained in order to be held accountable to waste reduction requirements. Once these standards are in place for County operations, the County can utilize its knowledge to inform policies and programs to support residential and commercial waste reduction in the broader community. Clark County's leadership role in this sector will be critical to achieving large-scale results across the county.





**37**

**WATER BOTTLE FILLING STATIONS INSTALLED**

**11**  
**MORE TO COME**

These stations provide cold, crisp filtered water and encourage employees to bring reusable bottles, thereby reducing the County's reliance on single-use plastic bottles.



Clark County proudly partners with Opportunity Village which provides professional cleaning services and paper recycling and shredding services throughout County facilities. Opportunity Village is a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering adults with disabilities through services such as vocational training, advocacy, and arts and social recreation. Clark County has partnered with Opportunity Village since 2009.



An Opportunity Village staffer bundles clothes deemed as unsellable at the Opportunity Village Thrift Shop. The clothes will be sent to a third-party company where the materials will be recycled instead of sent to landfill.



Bales of shredded paper from Opportunity Village shredding services.

# POTENTIAL ACTIONS

Setting policies and programs to guide the County's waste efforts is the next step to achieving its reduction and management goals. The following actions have been identified to help Clark County meet its recycling goal and reduce waste going to landfill.



## ACTION

**Conduct an audit of County waste processes from contracting through to disposal and of the County's operational waste stream.**



## DESCRIPTION

In order to identify gaps and opportunities for waste reduction and diversion, the County needs to assess the current logistical flow of its waste generation, management, and disposal. This includes how waste and recycling services are contracted, what kinds of services are provided, costs associated with them, and what training and procedures departments are implementing. Further, the County will need to understand the composition of its actual waste stream via a recycling audit in order to characterize and benchmark diversion rates and further inform programming needs. The County should consider detailing this information at the department level.

**Centralize County waste management by assigning one department to oversee all services.**

With current processes, County operations waste management is poorly understood due to dispersal of responsibilities across several departments. In order to streamline programming and create accountability for policies and procedures, the County must explicitly assign a central department with managing waste services. This may include creation of a waste management coordinator position.

**Establish a waste management program and communications materials to support recycling within County facilities and operations.**

While the County provides recycling disposal services through Republic Services, it needs to develop a robust on-site waste management program to maximize its waste reduction and diversion opportunities. Communications and signage regarding proper disposal guidelines and County goals, as well as the availability of placement of receptacles, is currently inconsistent. Establishing a comprehensive program that pairs appropriate infrastructure with active staff engagement and unified messaging will enable the County to more effectively manage its waste and to divert recyclable items.

**Create a sustainable purchasing policy and requirements for County purchasing.**

A formal sustainable purchasing policy and requirements can inform employees of County standards on smart purchasing behavior (e.g. bulk buys), product standards (e.g. ENERGY STAR, recycled content), and life cycle considerations.



**ACTION**



**DESCRIPTION**

**Implement a paper reduction program that encourages online/digital application processes and document storage.**

Setting a County-wide policy on the types of documents that should be distributed or stored digitally rather than by print can help standardize printing behavior across operations. This policy would also reduce the volume of paper and ink required, as well as the resources required to maintain office equipment. Implementing online application processes, such as ePermit Hub used in Comprehensive Planning, across all departments can further reduce paper use.

**Incorporate requirements in waste hauler contracts for enhanced reporting/tracking of solid waste and recycling.**

Requiring waste haulers to maintain and provide solid waste and recycling data to the County on a regular basis ensures the County has the ability to accurately assess its waste management and reduction progress and adjust programs as needed.

**Continue to incorporate sustainable materials and waste management requirements into County project RFPs.**

The County can leverage its position to encourage/require vendors and contractors to minimize waste and manage it responsibly. Incorporating waste management requirements into County project RFPs can help the County control the amount of waste generated by those projects which contribute to the County’s overall waste load. Best practices from local and regional jurisdictions can provide additional guidance on effective specific requirements.

**Eliminate single-use plastics from all County facilities and events.**

By eliminating single-use plastics and transitioning to reusable or biodegradable materials, Clark County can significantly decrease both the amount of waste generated, particularly of plastics such as straws, plastic cutlery, and food packaging that cannot be recycled, and contribute to pollution.

# METRICS AND TARGETS

To ensure the County can track its progress towards waste management and reduction, the following metrics and targets have been identified. Note, where possible, **All-In Clark County** has aligned its metrics and targets with existing County, state, or regional plans to ensure efforts for sustainability and climate resilience are coupled.

Metric	Baseline	2030 Target	2050 Target
<b>% employees trained on sustainable waste management</b>	New metric	100%	
<b>Total tons waste generated by County operations annually</b>	New metric	25% reduction	50% reduction
<b>% of County operations waste diverted annually</b>	New metric	30%	90%
<b>Volume of County-generated waste collected through compost annually</b>	New metric	Upward trend	
<b>% of purchasing meeting sustainability guidelines</b>	New metric	75%	100%
<b>% of contracts containing sustainable materials/waste diversion requirements</b>	New metric	75%	100%

