

"Discovering Collingswood"

A Master Plan for the Borough of Collingswood

Recycling Plan Element

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Recycling Plan Element

Prepared for:

Borough of Collingswood Planning Board as part of the Community's Master Plan Analysis

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(The original of this report has been signed and sealed in accordance with the law)

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COLLINGSWOOD MASTER PLAN RECYCLING PLAN ELEMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This element of the master plan provides a comprehensive inventory of the current state of solid waste management and recycling in the Borough (section II) and a series of recommended actions and programs that the borough can implement to increase the percentage of solid waste that is recycled in the community.

- Waste is picked up by a contract hauler once per week from each residence as well as those businesses with less than 300 pounds or six (6) containers.
- Collingswood's Ordinance #829 established a recycling program which mandated the separation of newspaper, glass, aluminum, motor oil, and metal. Leaves, vegetative waste, plastics and cardboard were added between 1988 and 1993. Currently, the Borough's trash hauler collects glass, cans, plastics, and mixed paper from all residences as well as most businesses. All recyclable materials with the exception of paper, are delivered to the Camden County Recycling Facility. Paper is marketed by the Borough.
- The Borough's Public Works Department collects large brush (over 4"), leaves and Christmas Trees. Grass and small brush is collected by the contract hauler from April through September. Yard waste is accepted at the Borough's State-approved compost facility and are processed into a landscape material made available to the public. Other vegetative material is stored at the site for final disposal at other facilities.
- The Borough's contracted hauler is responsible to collect up to two items per week of bulk waste such as furniture and appliances.
- The Camden County Division of Solid Waste offers a Household Hazardous Waste Collection four times per year with paint and paint-related materials collected five additional days per year. Used motor oil is accepted daily at the Borough Garage.
- In 1996 the total waste generated in Collingswood was 4.7 pounds per capita per day, compared to the national average of 4.3 pounds per person per day. The daily per capita disposal rate (after recycling) in Collingswood was 2.3 pounds, compared to national average of 3.2 pounds per person per day.
- The 1996 cost for recycling compared to trash was \$35.35/stop vs. \$34.51 for waste disposal.

Recommendations to increase recycling in Collingswood include:

- Revising residential waste disposal to a pay-as-you throw program where residents are charged for the amount of waste that is disposed of. Over 25 communities throughout New Jersey have found success through the program, evidenced by a 25%-50% reduction in waste, and increased recycling rate of up to 60%.
- Collingswood should evaluate the potential for generating revenues by leaving the county run recycling program and directly marketing recycled material with neighboring communities.
- Collingswood should also consider adopting an ordinance to require the recycling of construction debris such as clean wood, metal and concrete.
- Once Collingswood's collection contract has expired, the opportunity to bid for those services with another municipality may provide a 10-20% savings from the resulting economies of scale.
- Amend site plan standards to require site plans to include details and information on the storage and disposal of recyclable materials specified in Ordinance #829-85.

**COLLINGSWOOD MASTER PLAN
RECYCLING PLAN ELEMENT**

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COLLINGSWOOD MASTER PLAN RECYCLING PLAN ELEMENT

I. INTRODUCTION

In the early 1990s, the Municipal Land Use Law was amended to direct that master plans to include a recycling plan element. This element was created to provide a mechanism for municipalities to implement the Mandatory Statewide Source Separation and Recycling Act of 1987, which requires the establishment of a municipal recycling program and the adoption of a recycling ordinance.

This element of the master plan provides a comprehensive inventory of the current state of solid waste management and recycling in the Borough (section II) and a series of recommended actions and programs that the municipality can implement to increase the percentage of solid waste that is recycled in the community.

II. CURRENT STATUS OF WASTE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

A. WASTE AND RECYCLING COLLECTION PROGRAM

1. Waste collection

Waste is picked up once per week from each residence as well as those businesses with less than 300 pounds or six (6) containers. A private hauler provides the service under a contract with the Borough.

2. Recycling

The Mandatory Statewide Source Separation and Recycling Act of 1987 (the Act) sets goals for recycling and requires each municipality to implement a recycling program. In addition, the Act required municipalities to adopt a recycling ordinance, designate a Recycling Coordinator, and report annual recycling tonnages to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Collingswood's Ordinance #829, adopted February 19, 1985, established a recycling program which mandated the separation of newspaper, glass, aluminum, motor oil, and metal. Leaves, vegetative waste, plastics and cardboard were added between 1988 and 1993.

Currently, the Borough's trash hauler collects glass, cans, plastics, and mixed paper (office paper, newspaper, magazines, unwanted mail, chipboard and cardboard) from all residences as well as most businesses in the Borough. These materials are picked up curbside by the hauling contractor once per week on the same day as trash collection. All recyclable materials with the exception of paper, are delivered to the Camden County Recycling Facility. Paper is marketed by the Borough.

3. Yard waste

The Borough's Public Works Department collects large brush (over 4"), leaves, and Christmas Trees. The leaves are picked up weekly using a vacuum machine. Grass and small brush are collected by the contract hauler from April through September.

Yard waste is accepted at the Borough's State-approved compost facility, where leaves are processed into a landscape material made available to the public at no charge. Other vegetative material is stored at the site for final disposal at other facilities.

4. Bulky Waste

The Borough's contracted hauler is responsible for collecting bulk waste such as furniture and appliances. A limit of two items per week for each household has been established by the municipality. Material generated by a building contractor is not collected under the Borough's contract, unless the material consists of a small quantity.

5. Household Hazardous Waste Collection

The Camden County Division of Solid Waste offers a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day four times per year at no direct charge to the municipalities or residents of the County. In addition, paint and paint-related materials are collected five additional days per year.

Used motor oil is accepted daily at the Borough Garage.

B WASTE GENERATION AND RECYCLING RATES

Figure R-1, entitled "Solid Waste and Recycling Tonnage, 1987 - 1996," presents the amount of solid waste and recycling tons generated in the Borough over a ten-year period beginning in 1987.

FIGURE R-1

SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING TONNAGE 1987 - 1996 BOROUGH OF COLLINGSWOOD, NJ

YEAR	WASTE	RECYCLING*	TOTAL	RECYCLING RATE
1987	7,330	--	--	--
1988	7,215	--	--	--
1989	7,032	--	--	--
1990	6,460	--	--	--
1991	6,242	--	--	--
1992	6,502	6,223	12,725	48.9%
1993	6,146	7,469	13,615	54.9%
1994	6,412	9,174	15,586	58.9%
1995	5,959	10,560	16,519	63.9%
1996	6,341	6,544	12,855	50.8%

*Includes commercial recyclables, whereas solid waste totals may not include all commercial waste generated in Borough.

In 1996, the total waste generated per capita daily in Collingswood was 4.7 pounds, compared to the national average of 4.3 pounds.¹ The daily per capita disposal rate (after recycling) in Collingswood was 2.3 pounds, compared to the national average of 3.2 pounds in 1995 (EPA). Collingswood's recycling rate, ranging from 48 to nearly 64 percent, is approximately twice the national rate of 27%.

The curbside recycling collection program is similar to most in New Jersey regarding collection frequency and types of materials collected. However, the inclusion of yard waste, bulk, and the ability for residents to drop off used motor oil daily goes beyond many programs. The cost of the program, \$35.35 per stop (residential plus small commercial) per year, is average compared to research finding cost per household to range from \$12 to \$52 statewide.²

¹1995 figure, EPA *Characterization of Municipal Solid Waste in the United States: 1996 Update*.

²*Recycling and Garbage Collection Manual*. New Jersey State League of Municipalities, June 1992.

C. COSTS

The 1996 cost for recycling compared to trash was:

	<u>Collection</u>	<u>Disposal</u>	<u>Total</u>
Recycling	\$155,692 (\$35.35 per stop)	\$ 13,425*	\$169,117
Trash	\$152,000 (\$34.51 per stop)	\$596,117	\$748,117

Notes

Collection costs per stop based on 4,000 residential stops plus 404 commercial stops.

Does not include cost of yard waste collection and processing.

Future lower costs in trash disposal costs may not be realized due to debt fee or tax.

**cost to bring 895 tons of paper to private recycling center at \$15 per ton.*

D. WASTE FLOW DEREGULATION

From July 1991 to November 1997, waste generated in the Borough of Collingswood had been legally directed to the waste to energy plant operated by Foster Wheeler in Camden, as well as to the Pennsauken Landfill. However, through a series of court decisions regarding New Jersey's waste system, the control of waste has been found to be an unconstitutional restriction on interstate commerce. The Borough is now able to direct waste generated within its borders to any disposal facility it chooses. Regardless, there is over \$212,000 of outstanding debt on the resource recovery facility (as of January 1998), the responsibility for which may fall on the taxpayers and/or waste generators of Camden County, in the form of a State or County tax, or as a specialized *Environmental Investment Charge* (EIC).

The Camden County Pollution Control Financing Authority has solicited bids for waste disposal, which will allow each of the municipalities in the County to participate in obtaining a lower disposal rate than if each contracts individually. Currently, the tip fee at the Foster Wheeler waste to energy plant is \$50 per ton, down from \$94 just prior to waste deregulation.

The waste flow issue is very unstable, and this uncertainty is likely to continue until it is decided who will be responsible for the debt of the waste to energy plant. In particular, it is not clear whether the Borough can expect significantly lower trash costs, especially with the possibility of an EIC.

Although the Borough has limited control over the waste flow issue, there are several actions that can be taken that will lower overall trash costs. These are outlined in the Section III, Recommendations.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following programs and actions are recommended steps that Collingswood should pursue to increase the amount of material recycled in the Borough and to lower the community's disposal cost.

A. PAY-AS-YOU-THROW PROGRAM

A pay-as-you-throw program for trash collection is a way to charge residents based on the amount of trash they generate, just as they are charged for other utilities such as electric and phone service. This system motivates residents to reduce the amount of waste they generate, and increase the amount of material separated for recycling, lowering the overall cost of providing waste services. Over 25 communities throughout New Jersey have found success through this program, evidenced by a 25%-50% reduction in waste, and an increased recycling rate of up to 60%.

There are several different ways to structure a pay-as-you-throw program. The most basic structure consists of limiting the number of cans that residents can put out for disposal. Any waste above the limit must be tagged, with a cost assigned to that tag (or sticker). A more common structure is to sell specialized bags, tags, or stickers at a cost equal to the cost for disposal of 25 to 30 pounds of trash. Collection costs may be charged through taxes or as an added cost in the sale of the bags, tags or stickers.

A 25% reduction in trash would result in a savings of between \$80,000 and \$150,000 (based on a tip fee range of \$50 to \$94). The costs to implement the program include staff time and informational materials. Grant money, up to \$75,000, is available from the EPA. A public education effort for this program should start one year before implementation, and should include recruiting advocates from groups such as a taxpayers association or senior citizens group. In addition, it is critical for public officials to commit to the program and sell it to the residents. Other communities have found that once residents understand the issue, they will support it because it is more fair than charging everyone the same amount through property taxes, regardless of how much service they require. This is particularly true for older citizens who generate less trash and are "tax sensitive" due to fixed incomes.

The challenges of a pay-as-you-throw system include designing the best system for a community, and the process of educating the residents about how the program works. In addition, setting up the distribution network for the bags or stickers also requires a retail effort in which the municipal government may not have experience.

B. MARKETING OF RECYCLED MATERIAL

Currently, the County keeps any profits generated by the sale of recycled materials from its recycling facility. Collingswood should evaluate the potential for generating revenues by leaving the County-run recycling program and directly marketing recycled material with neighboring communities.

There are several publications which can keep the Borough informed about the current market value of recyclable materials. The more popular and useful titles for paper markets include *The Paper Stock Report* and *Fibre Market News*. Also, combining efforts with a neighboring municipality to market materials together will save transportation costs and the higher volume will command better prices.

C. CONSTRUCTION/DEMOLITION RECYCLING ORDINANCE

To ensure the materials generated at construction sites are being recycled, many communities have adopted an ordinance which requires separation at the site. Materials targeted include clean wood, metals, and concrete. A copy of the ordinance and area recycling centers which accept construction and demolition materials can be provided when a construction permit is issued. Also, the ordinance can require the reporting of tonnages and materials for the Borough's annual tonnage report to the State DEP.

D. BID WASTE SERVICES WITH ANOTHER MUNICIPALITY

Once Collingswood's collection contract has expired, the opportunity to bid for those services with another municipality may provide a 10% to 20% savings. The bid specifications may remain unchanged. However, if one hauler provided the service to two (or more) municipalities, economies of scale may result in a savings. An EPA document, *Joining Forces on Solid Waste Management*, may be helpful. In addition, the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs has been offering grants of \$25,000 to study consolidating services among municipalities.

E. AMEND THE BOROUGH'S DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS TO INCLUDE RECYCLING

The Municipal Land Use Law requires the Recycling Plan Element to include provisions for:

"the collection, disposition and recycling of recyclable materials within any development proposal for the construction of 50 or more units of single-family residential housing or 25 or more units of multi-family residential housing and any commercial or industrial development"

proposal for the utilization of 1,000 square feet or more of land.”
(Emphasis added)(NJSA 40:55D-28.b.(12))

To implement this requirement, it is recommended that the site plan requirements of Development Regulations of the Borough be revised to require site plans to include details and information on the storage and disposal of recyclable materials specified in Ordinance #829-85. The inclusion of this language would primarily be oriented at promoting recycling in commercial development since a residential development of 50 or more units is highly unlikely given the Borough's built-up status unless it is part of a larger redevelopment effort.

F. ADDRESS THE MUNICIPAL SERVICES ACT (AKA THE KELLY BILL)

With the passing of the Municipal Services Act, municipalities are now responsible for providing trash collection service to condominium complexes, or for provide reimbursement for costs. Many municipalities have decided to take control of such service, for reasons of accountability. The Borough should issue bid specifications for the combined collection of all condominiums, or include specifications for collection of all condominiums in the bid for Borough-wide collection, and include the same level of service provided to other residents (once per week). If the complex desires more frequent collection, they may procure that service independently.