

## **Title: Optimize the Collection of Recyclable Materials**

### **Description**

- The goal is to optimize the collection of recyclable materials and products, organic materials, and construction and demolition debris to meet a new recycling goal of 80% by 2020.
- The fundamental strategy to achieve this goal is to require source separation of solid wastes by residential and commercial generators into at least three categories: recyclable materials and products, organic materials and residual solid wastes.
- Recyclable materials include at a minimum recoverable paper, container metals, container glass (with some exceptions) and plastics 1 & 2. Organic materials include at a minimum yard and garden wastes and food wastes.
- Residential generators must participate in provided collection services.
- Commercial generators can select their own recycling service provider (no change to existing requirements).
- Local governments will be required to update their local comprehensive solid waste management plans on a phased schedule based on population size and location or contract renewal, describing the services that will be provided. Participation by small rural counties and small population areas is optional.
- As part of the local plan, affected local governments are to develop reuse and recycling policies for construction and demolition wastes.
- Financial and other incentives need to be adequate to provide the private sector capital to invest in the infrastructure needed to support this action.
- New funding is required for state and local governments to implement this action.

### **Impacts on Goals**

- There is at least an additional 4.1 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>E available to be reduced if the remaining available paper, metal and plastic were recycled in Washington State. Based on generation trends and anticipated population growth, this number will be much higher in 2020. (This is equivalent to removing xxx cars off the road, annually or some other descriptive).
- This action will create more green collar jobs in industries that collect, process and use recycled materials.

### **Additional Benefits**

- Optimizing use of collection services will result in less single vehicle use to transport recyclables to various markets.
- The climate change action agenda demands a shift in our economy. The traditional “dig and dump” economy relies heavily on resource extraction and waste disposal. The new “sustainable” economy will rely on resource conservation and materials reutilization. A robust recycling system is key to making this new economic system work.

### **Costs**

- Recycling over time has proven to be more cost effective than disposal. Recycling costs less than disposal given that disposal fees are avoided and that marketing of recyclables generates revenue. The cost of collection remains, in either case.
- System costs will be borne by system users (waste generators), not government. This is a pay as you go proposal.
- Costs of state and local government planning, monitoring and enforcement must include an identified funding source.
- When successful, this strategy could result in reduced revenue collected by the Solid Waste Collection Tax which could impact the Public Works Assistance Account. Efforts are needed to assure revenue neutrality on this account.

### **Relationship to Other Efforts**

- This action relies completely on the ability of local governments and the private sector to work collaboratively to provide services to the public.