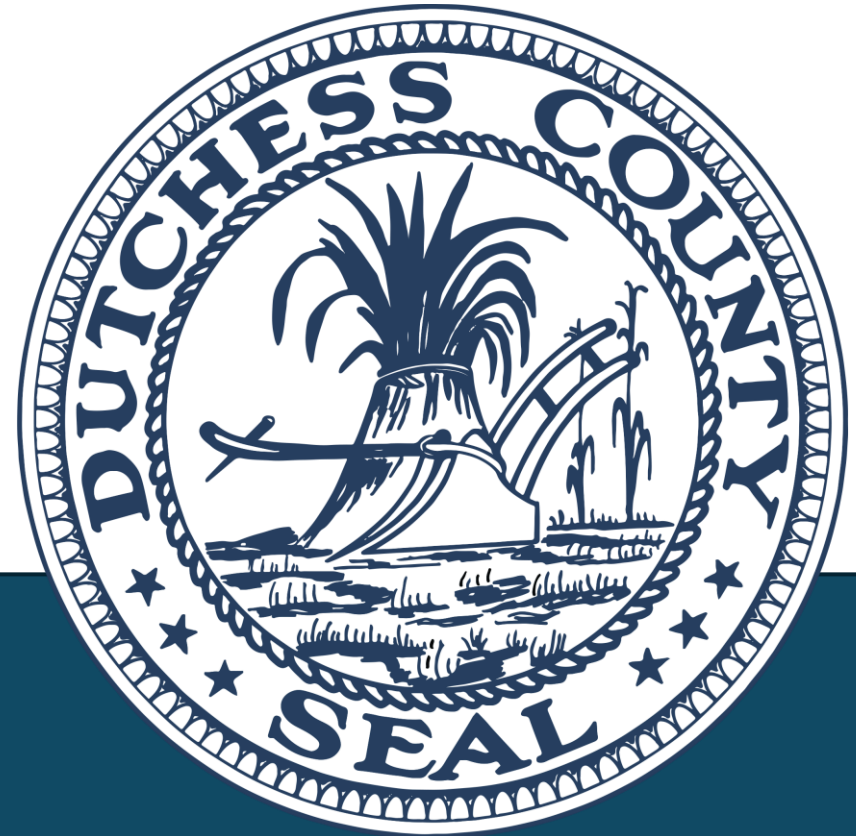


Dutchess County Waste Reduction & Diversion Feasibility Study



Project Tasks

TASK 1:
PROJECT
MANAGEMENT

Task 2:
Waste Composition &
Gap Analysis

Task 3:
Menu of Waste Diversion
Options

Task 4:
Waste Reduction,
Environmental Impact
Cost & Stakeholders by
Initiative

Task 5:
Final Report

Task 3

Menu of Waste Diversion Options

Completed

Current as of 9/15/2026

This Update provides an overview of Task 3, Waste Diversion Opportunities.

- Current waste generation and management practices
- System performance and gaps across key recycling practice areas
- Data-informed strategies—organized into tiers, these strategies cannot all be undertaken simultaneously, therefore they are organized into four tiers based on complexity, resource requirements, and interdependencies with other strategies.

Tier I: Near-term, - Strategies that can generally be pursued within the existing legislative framework.

Tier II: Medium complexity – Requires greater development of partnerships, funding, or coordination.

Tier III: Long-term, high complexity – Involving ordinance changes, major policy shifts, new funding mechanisms, or significant new infrastructure

Tier III+: Transformational, highest complexity, regional in nature

Waste Composition Overview

Waste characterization reveals where the greatest opportunities lie:

Organics: 22% (food scraps + yard waste)

Paper: 13%

Plastics: 11%

Potential focus areas that could yield the highest diversion based on composition data and program gaps:

- Organics – Largest single category and largest opportunity.
- Increased Recycling – To achieve higher rates, stronger commercial and multi-family requirements are needed.
- Drop-Off Recycling – Requires better access countywide for hard to recycle and dispose of items and expanded service offerings, such as mattress collection, plastic film recycling, and electronics recycling.
- Construction & Demolition Debris (CDD) – Strong diversion but lacking mandates to increase recovery.

Focus Area Highlights

Reuse

- Active Hudson Valley Repair Café network supported by the Division of Solid Waste Management
- List of thrift and consignment stores available on website
- Informal reuse tables at four municipal transfer stations
- Community-driven sharing platforms (e.g., Buy Nothing groups)

Recycling

- Countywide access to weekly curbside recycling for most residents
- Strong end markets for curbside recyclables in the Northeast/Canada
- Additional capacity at the Beacon Materials Recovery Facility
- Full-time Compliance Inspector supporting recycling enforcement

Drop-Off Recycling

- Nearly half of the local transfer stations accept yard waste
- County-run HHW & electronics events with high participation
- Textiles accepted through Helpsy curbside and drop-off partnership
- Appliances and specialty items accepted at various transfer stations

Focus Area Highlights cont'd

Organics

- County sells backyard compost bins and provides home composting education
- Multiple municipalities offer food scrap drop-off (City of Beacon, Town of Red Hook, Village of Red Hook, Village of Rhinebeck, Town of Poughkeepsie)
- Many institutions (colleges, prisons) already compost food waste

Construction & Demolition (CDD)

- Dutchess County diverts over 50% of CDD materials
- Six permitted private CDD recycling facilities operating in-county
- Strong markets exist for major CDD materials (concrete, asphalt, brick, soil, wood)
- Recycle Depot processes mixed CDD debris with measurable recovery outputs

Focus Area Highlights cont'd

Education & Outreach

- Multi-channel outreach including web, social media, public presentations and events
- Dedicated youth recycling education programs
- Strong community partnerships (Repair Cafés, Helpsy, farmers markets)
- Consistent engagement through HHW events and complaint-response system
- Ongoing efforts to promote correct recycling and contamination reduction
- Comprehensive and accessible online recycling resources
- Innovative and hands-on community programming

Funding & Partnerships – Highlights

- Successful grant-funded pilots (e.g., composting programs)
- Growing partnerships with municipalities, nonprofits, haulers, processors

Key Gaps Across the System

Reuse

- Reuse operations are inconsistent and mostly informal, limited to a few municipalities.

Recycling

- Commercial sector lacks specified recycling requirements.
- Limited multi-family and commercial participation data due to limited hauler reporting.
- Limited enforcement capacity to ensure consistent compliance.
- Absence of requirements for recycling/organics infrastructure in new development.
- No unit-based pricing (Pay As You Throw).

Drop-Off Recycling

- Limited drop-off opportunities for hard to dispose of items.
- Textile collection is available in only 11 of 30 municipalities.
- No dedicated mattress or coordinated plastic film collection programs.
- Most transfer stations are not open to all county residents.
- End markets for specialty materials are limited.

Key Gaps Across the System cont'd

Organics

- Food scrap collection access is minimal; curbside unavailable for most residents.
- Limited regional composting capacity.
- Lack of compost procurement policy to strengthen end markets.
- Absence of organics or recycling requirements for large permitted events.

Construction & Demolition (CDD)

- Diversion relies entirely on private facilities with limited capacity for certain materials.
- No deconstruction or diversion ordinance.
- Underdeveloped end markets

Key Gaps Across the System cont'd

Education & Outreach programs

- Inconsistent messaging across haulers and local municipal websites causes confusion about accepted materials.
- Limited public awareness of drop-off location for hard-to-recycle material.
- Limited information and communication around recycling contamination.
- Expansion of outreach needed to commercial sector around recycling and waste reduction opportunities.
- Limited visibility of the recycling loan program.
- Limited recycling and diversion education reaching multi-family housing units.

Funding and Partnerships

- Limited funding to expand diversion programs
- Limited formal partnerships with processors, municipalities, schools, and businesses.
- Lack of coordination across the region, despite shared infrastructure needs (organics processing, MRF capacity).

Systemwide Strategy Recommendations (Tiered)

Tier I – Near-Term, Low-Barrier

- Conduct feasibility studies for MRF/mixed-waste processing.
- Expand textile collection, HHW/electronics partnerships, and home composting programs.
- Increase regional collaboration on infrastructure such as regional composting facility, transfer station upgrades, mixed waste processing facility, and materials recovery facility.
- Create compost procurement and use requirements.
- Build community garden composting programs.
- Create uniform recycling guidance, signage, and materials that haulers and municipalities can adopt to reduce confusion.
- Refresh and modernize public-facing educational materials.
- Promote and expand upon the recycling container loan program.

Systemwide Strategy Recommendations (Tiered)

Tier II – Moderate Complexity

- Require more detailed hauler reporting (tonnages by sector & participation rates).
- Expand mandatory enforcement through audits and stronger compliance pathways.
- Increase electronics drop off capacity.
- Develop mattress collection pilots.
- Begin CDD Infrastructure Strategy.
- Expand plastic film collection programs.
- Develop sector-specific outreach campaigns for multi-family housing, commercial businesses, schools, and institutions.
- Diversify grant funding opportunities.

Systemwide Strategy Recommendations (Tiered)

Tier III – Complex, Legislative or Infrastructure-Intensive

- Create commercial/institutional recycling standards.
- Require recycling/composting space in new developments.
- Assess feasibility of Pay As You Throw (PAYT) pricing.
- Expand food scrap drop-off sites.
- Develop opt-in curbside food waste collection.
- Explore countywide access pass program to allow all Dutchess County residents to use any participating municipally operated transfer station for recycling drop-off, regardless of where in the county they live.
- Expand regional composting infrastructure.
- Add recycling/organics requirements to large event permits.
- Develop CDD deconstruction/recycling ordinance.

Systemwide Strategy Recommendations (Tiered)

Tier III+ – High Complexity (Long-Term or Multi-Agency)

- Recycled commodity market development initiative.
- Business food scrap training programs.
- Work with neighboring counties to develop regional organics, composting, and recycling infrastructure.