

AGENDA

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

June 17, 2019


4:00 PM, City Council Chambers
130 S Galena Street, Aspen



I. COUNCIL ROUNDTABLE 4:00-4:10

II. WORK SESSION

- II.A. Rio Grande Recycle Center Community Feedback
- II.B. StreetSMART Mobility Education Campaign Update - Announcement Only
- II.C. Dockless Bikes/Trikes/Scooters Management



CITY OF ASPEN
MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Liz Chapman, Environmental Health and Sustainability

THROUGH: CJ Oliver, Environmental Health and Sustainability Director
Jessica Garrow, Community Development Director

MEETING DATE: June 17, 2019

RE: Future of the Rio Grande Recycle Center (RGRC)

REQUEST OF COUNCIL: Staff is reporting to Council the results of a concerted community outreach effort conducted in the spring of 2019 about the Rio Grande Recycling Center (RGRC). Direction from Council about the future of the recycling center is requested.

PREVIOUS ACTIONS: The Aspen Area Community Plan addresses waste issues and includes policy statements specifically related to these issues, including Environmental Stewardship Policy IV.1, which states, "Maximize recycling, implement waste reduction and environmentally responsible purchasing programs, and encourage behavior that moves the Aspen Area toward being a zero-waste community and extends the life of the landfill."

Since 2005, Aspen has included recycling their solid waste regulations. As part of the evolution of recycling in Aspen, The RGRC was paved and improved by Council action in 2010. A brief history of the RGRC land use approvals is included as Exhibit A. Pitkin County transported the recycling from RGRC for over 15 years before subcontracting that work to Waste Management in 2014.

In early 2019, in response to the 2015-2017 Waste Study funded by both Pitkin County and the City of Aspen, Pitkin County revised their waste ordinance, requiring haulers to provide curbside recycling. Subsequently, the Board of County Commissioners removed funding of all public recycle centers outside of the Solid Waste Center, including the RGRC. The County has funded for recycling service at the until the end of August 2019.

In response to the County funding changes, Council met on February 2, 2019 to discuss the future of the RGRC. The staff memo from this meeting is attached as Exhibit D. At that meeting, Council directed staff to gather input from the Aspen community on the following questions:

- 1) What services would they like to see offered at the RGRC?
- 2) What is their willingness to spend taxpayer dollars in provision of these services?

Staff initiated a broad community engagement process in March 2019 and continued to take input until the first week of May 2019, utilizing a variety of methods and platforms to give all members of the Aspen community the opportunity to participate in the discussion. Staff were present at 22 community events, 9 of which took place at the Rio Grande Recycle Center and completed a series of walkabouts and discussions directly with businesses. Advertisements were placed in the local print and radio media, as well as online through social media platforms. An Aspen Community Voice webpage was created to facilitate discussion and questions (<https://www.aspencommunityvoice.com/rio-grande-recycle-center>). Direct emails to encourage participation were sent to Environmental Health and Community Development list serves. The feedback came from a wide spectrum of community members: business owners, workers, and residents (both renters and homeowners). As a consequence of these efforts, over 90% of the people who responded favor funding recycling operations at the center.

BACKGROUND:

In the last twenty years, the value of recyclables (paper, aluminum, plastic, etc.) have dropped by 50% while labor, equipment, and fuel costs have steadily risen. However, the prices for selling materials have been dropping. This is especially true as global markets that have traditionally processed recyclables have changed their policies. Directly relevant to this discussion, local waste haulers have responded to this changing environment by charging more for their services.

Although recycling saves energy, conserves resources, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and saves landfill space, it requires technology, labor, and money. Many factors contribute to the increasing costs of collecting and processing recyclables. These factors include the realities of contaminated loads; shifting consumer habits and preferences; and new policies in accepting materials enacted by other nations. Recycling in Aspen is particularly costly due to its remote relationship to national and international markets for recyclable materials. In short, costs are currently outpacing the revenues generated by selling the commodities.

Despite these challenges, the RGRC has continued to provide Aspen and the surrounding community free access to single stream recycling, textile recycling, and household battery recycling — 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In 2017, users of the RGRC deposited a total of 1160.68 tons. This represents 20% of materials Aspen residents and businesses diverted from the Pitkin County Landfill in 2017. To provide additional context, if all the material collected at the RGRC was not diverted, Aspen's recycling diversion rate drops from 27% to 20%. The material collected at the center is attributable to both the residential and commercial sectors. The anecdotal data indicates almost half of the users of the Rio Grande Recycle Center live outside of Aspen city limits.

OPTIONS:

In the outreach materials, the community was presented three (3) options for the future of the RGRC:

- 1) continue operations as they are (single stream collection); or
- 2) change to collecting targeted materials; or
- 3) close the facility.

1. Status Quo - Single Stream collection – This option represents collecting all recyclables into a single container (except glass), and then sorted at a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). This is dependent on what the MRF will accept. This option would necessitate a Request for Proposals (RFP) for vendors to collect, sort, and send to market the recyclable materials —as the expected costs are above

\$250,000 per year. The existing 16 single stream bins (6 yards each) and the 30-yard glass bin would continue to be used as they have in the past. This scenario would also include the separate collection of textiles (clothing and shoes), and household battery collection bins. Yard waste collection would continue to be offered seasonally.

2. Targeted Materials collection – This option represents selecting specific materials to be collected in large bins (4-30 yards) and shipped directly to facilities which can sell or process the source-separated materials. For example, based on observations and the waste composition study conducted in 2016, 33% of the material collected at the center is cardboard. Cardboard continues to have value in the recyclables market. The size of the bins and the costs would depend on what materials were ultimately identified in this option. Changing the center to this type of recyclable collection could reduce the estimated total cost to between \$75,000 to \$200,000 per year. Limited large bins would require less space than the single stream system and yard waste collection could be offered year-round. This option would eliminate the collection of several materials (i.e. plastics, juice cartons) to realize a cost savings over single stream collection. Textiles, batteries, and a separate glass collection would continue in this scenario. If pursuing this option, compostable materials would be considered as a potential targeted material.
3. Close the center – This option potentially represents the lowest financial cost to the City. This scenario would shift Aspen’s recycling efforts to reliance on curbside collection as the sole means of diverting recyclable materials from being buried in the landfill. If this option were pursued, the land on which the RGRC is located could potentially be repurposed, but this option would likely require additional funds and a land use process. In crafting the outreach materials, Staff did not include contemplation of potential alternative uses of the facility.

OUTREACH OUTCOMES:

The primary results of this outreach effort determined that:

- 1) 52% of respondents preferring the option of single stream collection
- 2) 45% of respondents preferring the option of targeted collections
- 3) 3% of respondents prefer closing the RGRC
- 4) 90% of respondents favor funding the recycle center at some level

A selection of the comments received from respondents about the three options:

1. In favor of Single Stream collection (52% of respondents)
 - Public (City) support of recycling represents an Aspen community value
 - The center is the only option some residents and businesses have for recycling
 - Single stream is the most convenient and easy to understand system
 - Single stream captures the largest variety of material
 - Some waste haulers do not provide curbside recycling for all single stream materials
2. In favor of Targeted Materials collection (45% of respondents)
 - Public support of recycling represents an Aspen community value
 - Most environmentally responsible option

- Reduces costs
- Reduces contamination
- Forces individual responsibility
- Allows for year-round food and yard waste drop off

3. In favor of Closing the Rio Grande Recycle Center (3% of respondents)

- I don't use/need it
- Land could be used for something else

A summary of this feedback is attached as Exhibit B, and the raw format of the written comments is attached as Exhibit C

FINANCIAL/BUDGET IMPACTS: Estimating the costs of the various options is difficult because there are multiple unknown factors. Since the City has not formally requested proposals from potential haulers, there is uncertainty regarding about what each of the options would ultimately cost. Eventual expenditures are also dependent on what partnerships or grant opportunities the City could additionally pursue. Additionally, if the RGRC moves from single-stream to targeted collection, it is unclear how this may impact the amount of material that will be collected.

The following financial estimates are based on current numbers and information informally shared by vendors.

1. Single Stream collection (no changes to current operations)

- Estimated annual cost: More than \$250,000 (expected to increase significantly over time)
- Estimated annual cost for seasonal yard waste composting: \$15,000

2. Targeted Materials collection (limited to select materials collected separately)

- Estimated annual cost: \$75,000 – 150,000 (depending on what materials are targeted), broken into the following categories:
 - \$25,000/year to haul yard waste for composting
 - \$8-12,000/year to haul food waste for composting
 - \$20,000 /year to haul cardboard for composting
 - \$6-8,000 /year to haul glass for recycling
 - \$0 /year to haul metals for recycling
 - \$8,000/year to haul textiles & books & batteries for recycling
- Estimated annual additional labor costs for maintenance and enforcement: \$15,000
- Estimated one-time cost in equipment (depending on what materials are targeted): \$25,000 - \$100,000
- One-time educational campaign regarding changes: \$40,000

3. Close the center

- \$0 in ongoing costs to maintain recycle center
- One-time educational campaign regarding changes: \$40,000
- Unknown costs related to conversion to another use, including the planning and entitlement process.

It is likely Pitkin County would partner with the City of Aspen if Aspen were to enter into a contract with a hauler to continue to collect recyclables from the community. Staff from both organizations have also discussed the possibility of changing the materials collected at the center to be in closer alignment with the recommendations of Phase II of the Waste Study the City and County conducted in 2017. This would mean targeted materials collection which would emphasize organics collection and other high value commodities.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

By reducing the amount of material sent to be buried in the landfill, resources are conserved. It also extends the life of the sources of raw materials. The embodied energy and carbon emissions of manufacturing products from virgin resources are reduced when materials are recycled. Recycling results in greenhouse gas reduction, even when transportation emissions are considered. The table below approximates potential tons diverted and greenhouse gas emissions prevented due to the Rio Grande Recycle Center under the various options.

Options	Yard waste	Food & Paper	Cardboard	Glass	Metals	Mixed recyclables	TOTALS
1.Single stream							
Tons diverted*	80	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,200 +	1280
MTCO2e prevented**	12.8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,880	2892.8
2.Targeted Materials							
Tons diverted*	2,500	5,000	400	400	30	N/A	8330
MTCO2e prevented**	400	900	1,200	212	130.2	N/A	2842.2
3.Close center							
Tons diverted	0	0	0	0	0	0	
MTCO2eprevented**	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A

*Actual amount will depend on public participation

**MTCO2e = estimated metric tons of CO2 equivalent based on EPA WARM model

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Continue long-term Single Stream collection – This option would be the least disruptive to the community by continuing the status quo, but is the most expensive approach to City-sponsored recycling and waste diversion efforts.
2. Convert to Targeted Materials collection in September 2019 – This option has the potential to offer new waste diversion programs to the community. It is a less expensive approach than single stream, but would require education and a transition in how the community uses the RGRC.
3. Close the center – This option results in the least amount of material being diverted from the landfill and would likely result in increased GHG emissions. It would however be the least financially expensive approach to City sponsored waste diversion efforts. This option would result in Aspen no longer having a community recycling center. If not used for the RGRC, the site would

require potentially significant one-time costs related to the planning and entitlement processes in pursuit of an alternative use.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Given the environmental benefits realized by the continued operation of the Rio Grande Recycle Center, the goals articulated in the AACCP, the realities in the current markets for recyclable products, as well as the overwhelming community support expressed during the outreach process, staff recommends the following path forward:

1. Continue single stream collection for one additional year from August 2019 until August 2020. During this time City Council can work with staff to create waste diversion goals for the City of Aspen and a strategic plan for achieving those goals. With these goals in place, staff will assess the most economical and effective materials to target for collection at the RGRC. Additionally, staff will evaluate best practices in education and enforcement necessary to manage recycling centers that target specific materials.
2. Beginning in August of 2020, The RGRC will be converted into a targeted materials facility that in combination with Aspen's curbside recycling program will implement City of Aspen efforts to meet bigger picture waste diversion and recycling goals.
3. The estimated costs for this would be between \$300,000 to 350,000 from August 2019 to August 2020.

QUESTIONS FOR COUNCIL:

- A. Is one of the specific options preferred for long-term implementation? Or,
- B. Does Council agree with staff's recommendation for a gradual transition to targeted collection?
- C. Are there specific aspects of the operation or potential operation of the RGRC that Council would like to include in the preferred option?

NEXT STEPS:

With Council direction on the preferred path forward, staff will prepare and issue a Request for Proposals, and will return to Council for funding approval in the fall of 2019 to implement the chosen option. Continuing single stream for an additional year, or transitioning to targeted collections or closing the center, will require a supplemental budget approval to cover the costs of continuing the existing service or closing the center.

EXHIBITS:

- Exhibit A – History of the RGRC land use approvals
- Exhibit B – Summary of community outreach efforts
- Exhibit C – Comments received during outreach
- Exhibit D – Memo to Council from February 2, 2019



Exhibit A

Rio Grande Recycling Center – History of Land Use Approvals

1. Original SPA – 1977 – Ordinance No. 54 – This document does not provide extensive detail beyond creating the boundaries of the property and giving some direction to the general idea of a public use. It does identify that a future master plan will be created to define future use.
2. Creation of a Master Plan that identifies the use of a recycling collection facility
 - a. Master Plan Approved by P&Z – Resolution No. 10, 1993
 - b. Master Plan Endorsed by City Council – Resolution No. 42, 1993
3. Insubstantial PD Amendment- 2010
 - a. Notice of Approval for improvements to recycling center
This approval provided authorization to create a hard surface and drainage improvements, and establishes the general conditions that are found on site today.
 - b. Appealed by a citizen
 - c. Notice of Approval affirmed by City Council – Resolution No. 65, 2010

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Summary Report

The Environmental Health and Sustainability Department, in partnership with the Community Development Department, has engaged the Aspen community to weigh in on the future of the Rio Grande Recycle Center (RGRC). This engagement process was initiated by request of City Council to aid in its ultimate decision on the future of the RGRC. This report summarizes the principle findings from this engagement and what the Aspen community wants for the Recycle Center.



8,773
Total
Reach



8,224
Total Digital
Reach



544
Active Event and
Online Participants

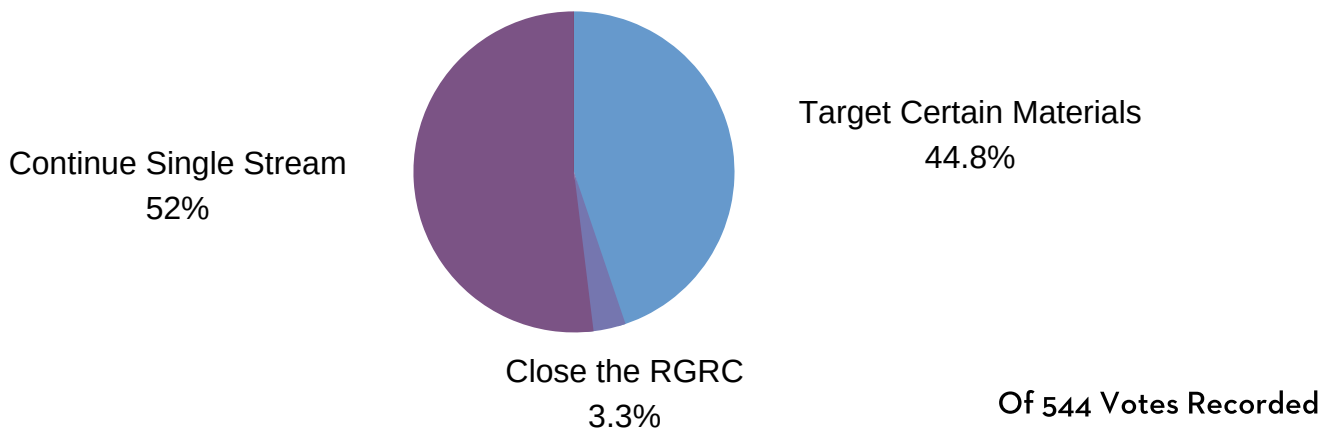


435
Total Survey
Responses

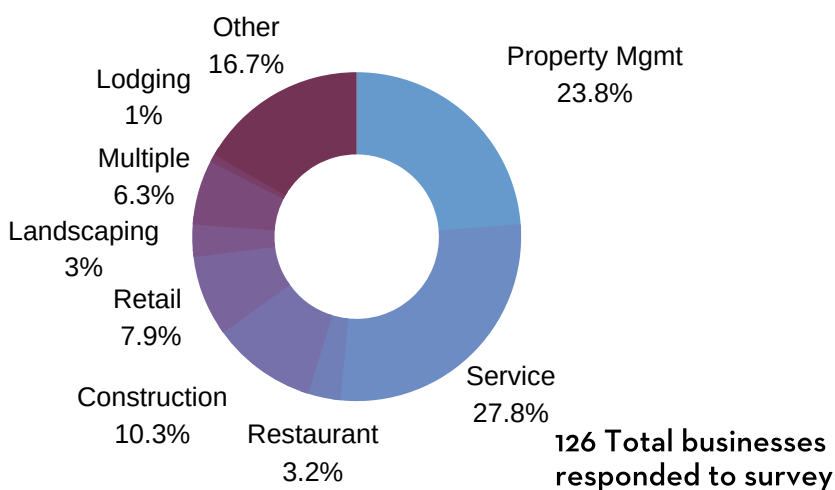


22
Community
Events

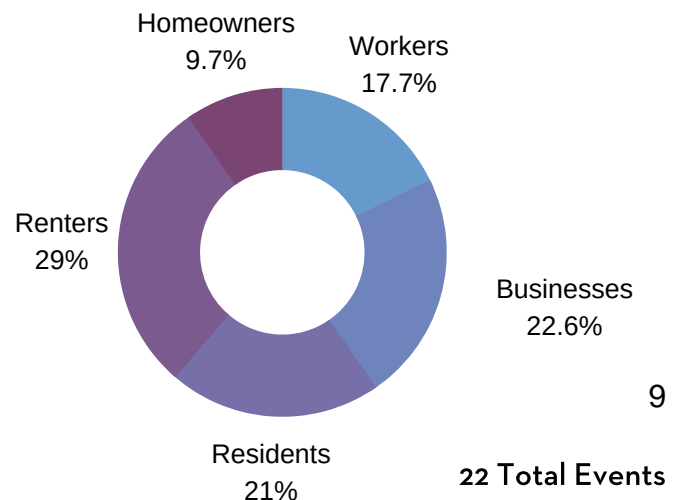
Preference for the Future of the RGRC



Survey Respondents by Business Type



Community Members Engaged at Events

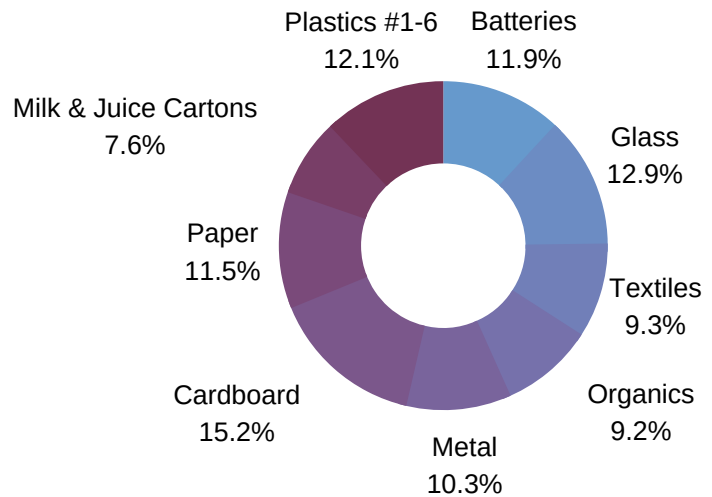


COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Summary Report

Preference for Targeted Materials

This represents respondents who selected "Target Certain Materials" for the future of the RGRC. Diversion data can offer insight into which targeted materials will lead to the most impact over time.



Below are major themes heard in comments made to staff during events, comments submitted to Aspen Community Voice, and the comments made in the survey responses with example quotes for each theme. The number of responses under each theme is in blue, out of a total 282 comments submitted. Some comments are categorized in multiple themes based on their content.

1 The RGRC and recycling serve a community need and that is in line with Aspen's values. 222

"Shutting down the RGRC is a step backwards. Aspen should be a leader. It would be a terrible example for the young people in our community."

2 The City has enough money to fund the Rio Grande Recycle Center (RGRC). 74

"When you consider the amount of money the city collects, the cost of running the RGRC is a drop in the bucket. They spend so much money on studies and more studies, it is out of control. The RGRC provides a great service."

3 The RGRC is/may not be the best use of the land or City money. 39

"I think the RGRC is great - but the service is already available curbside and individuals should utilize that option to recycle and allow the city to spend money in other important areas. This convenience is not worth the additional cost."

4 The RGRC should have special collections available. 66

"Compost would be a nice addition. Did not know you recycled batteries and textiles. I will use it more." 10

<p>The Recycling center is critically important to Keep. I use it once or twice a week. I pay \$160 a month for my dumpster. I also pay \$32,000 a year in real estate taxes!! Aspen, unlike most places, does not pickup my garbage!!! I live near 14 restaurants and absolutely canNot leave out even cleaned food containers for Recycling. Please keep the city recycling center Open for us citizens who deserve this service</p>
<p>My name is XX, and apart from being born and raised here in the valley, I am a nationally known waste and recycling industry expert. I noticed in the newspaper about the current woes with the recycling center and thought I could offer some beneficial advice. Some brief observations:</p> <p>The cost per ton to run the recycling center is incredibly high. \$183/ton dwarfs every cost I've seen charged across the United States. Should be around \$100, as high as \$150 in large cities.</p> <p>It's very likely that Waste Management is disposing of the recycling directly into one of their landfills due to "contamination issues." My company and our partners have seen this consistently happen across the US especially with Waste Management due to the Chinese Sword Recycling Policy. Directly disposing of recyclables is perfectly legal for them to do, but the city would be better off just throwing everything into the Pit Co landfill.</p> <p>How to reduce costs: Increase the quality of recyclables- Increasing the quality of recyclables is difficult, but with a combination of fines, education, and modern tech it is very doable. Improved quality means it's worth more, and the cost to haul should go down significantly. Hire a waste broker/ sustainability consultant- These companies will help the city to meet their goals while avoiding being ripped off. Two companies I recommend and would be happy to give introductions to: RiverRoad Waste Rubicon Global Overall you should most certainly Keep the Recycling Center! What should also be done is to educate the public and renegotiate with WM as they are ripping you off. I'd be happy to consult free of charge if further expertise is needed. I love this community and want to see it have a successful recycling program.</p>
<p>I LOVE the recycle center as it is! Can we get funding from somewhere else? Can we increase the funding from somewhere else? I cannot go online to do the survey. I tried to access Aspen Community Voice to give you feedback. I want to clean up the flowers surrounding the center. They look a mess. I wish there was a way to recycle plastic bags. I love the recycling center.</p>
<p>I am not able to sign in to access the survey. I heard others had the same problem. I live in the downtown core and I am a long time valley resident. I use the recycle center for personal use. I use the center for the things we cannot do at our building. I am sending this response on behalf of many people. We would like to have a public compost drop off. We have heard that City staff get to use taxpayer funded SCRAPS bin and this builds resentment. There is no space for cardboard to be recycled at my home. We want to keep the textile recycling bin. We love the convenient location, since many of us don't drive. Would love to recycle beyond the single stream materials. Thank you for providing this center. We don't think promoting curbside recycling would be more of a benefit than keeping the rio grande recycle center.</p>
<p>I want to give input that curbside recycling doesn't work for me. Keep the recycle center open as a single stream facility.</p>
<p>I'm a millennial that has been living in Aspen for 5 years. I love this community. Environmental preservation and climate change rank among the biggest concerns I have for my future and our future. If something as basic and important as a robust recycling service isn't a priority for</p>

<p>the City of Aspen, how can we ever claim we are leading with integrity on issues surrounding the environment. Our landfill cannot take the volume of waste currently being diverted through our recycling.</p> <p>So many renters in this town do not have access to curb side recycling, and so they rely on the recycling center. My apartment complex does have recycling, but does not offer cardboard recycling. As online shopping etc continues to expand, this service is really important. And the one recycling bin at my apt is always overflowing, so sometimes I bring the rest of my recycling to the center anyways.</p> <p>I would love to see an added service in our recycling center - a drop off for plastic bags. Whole Foods offers this service but I don't know of anywhere else in the valley that does. Plastic bags are actually recyclable, just not through regular recycling streams because they get caught in the sorting machines.</p> <p>I would also love to see a town wide compost program. Can you imagine the amount of space we'd save in our landfill? Consider how much of your garbage bags each week are filled with leftover food. I started composting with Evergreen Waste this year and have reduced by half the amount of times I bring a regular garbage bag to the dumpster. Maybe curbside composting is too much of a lift - but could there be a large compost bin at the recycling center? This compost could be sold and used to cover costs. Alyssa at Evergreen could certainly help with the planning and implementation of this.</p> <p>Please continue to fund the recycling center- and consider improvements.</p>
<p>Good Morning. I grew up in the recycling business, as my Father invented recycling in a midwest community in south west Ohio. Recycling should be done for profit not a loss. I am sure this can be accomplished with a complete overhaul of the system in place. I would be glad to work with anybody to make recycling a positive endeavor. The current system will never make money as it is. Time to get people of knowledge involved and not a city council that has no experience with recycling at all. Again, I would be glad to work with people whom have the proper goals in mind.</p>
<p>I am a long time local and feel that we are best served with a location in which we can go to at will to participate in getting our recyclable material to the place for processing. As well, with our seasonal population and 2nd homeowners who may not look into curb side, are we potentially pushing more recyclable materials into their trash pick up? Will we see a higher percentage of non-trash filling our trash? Please consider this money well spent for our community.</p>
<p>I rent, so I do not have all the details on curbside service. But we do not put bulky items (cardboard) in the bin as it would fill too quickly. We bring these items to the recycling center. Even if you only take certain items (cardboard will keep the most square footage out of the landfill), keep it open.</p>
<p>Please keep it open. I have used it as long as it been there and even though my apartment complex has recycling, some things don't go here. I still take certain things to the recycle center. It's really important for this town. It's a convenient location for everyone who lives here. The recycling center is representative of the important things in Aspen. There are still areas where recycling isn't picked up and it's vital. The seasonal people need to use it too.</p>
<p>I would favor discontinuing single stream recycle and focus on batteries, textiles, compost and possibly fluorescent bulbs. My condo has ample recycle and trash facilities, but the above products won't be recycled without the center. Even at the condo people continually contaminate recycle. I don't favor moving the center to the Marolt open space.</p>
<p>The future use of the recycle center should be part of a holistic vision for the Galena Plaza area and the riverfront district. The New City Offices, Galena Plaza, improvements to the parking garage, transportation and mobility initiatives, future plans for the Rio Grande</p>

<p>building, the county's remodel of the Jail and Courthouse, and changes to the skate park should be consider as part of one vision and not siloed as separate projects by different departments with a different vision. If the Civic Master Plan is no longer relevant update it and initiate an effective public visioning process.</p>
<p>Reply: Very good-</p>
<p>1) The RGRC should be a substation for the Pitkin County Landfill(PCL). 2) The RGRC should take the small and medium volume & lightweight items that the PCL takes, and either: a) sell them or b) take them to the PCL. Large volume & heavy items, like dirt, should go directly to the PCL.. 3) The intent should be to : a) reduce traffic from individual vehicles on Hwy 82 going to the PCL b) reduce individual auto fuel consumption c) show the public the time-saving CONVENIENCE of taking things to the RGRC. Continuous effective multi-market advertising will be necessary, as Aspen is a transient community and the newest transient population needs to be educated each season. 4) Charge the same, or less, than the PCL, and nothing for some things(leaves?). The first \$100 may be free at the PCL, but the convenience and time-savings of the RGRC for anyone inside the roundabout far outweighs that. Raise taxes, if necessary. Recycling is a key factor in sustainability, which is very important to the 6000 Aspen voters 5) Build and staff a gatehouse with gates, and install cameras. 6) Ask landlords of seasonal housing to use deposits to remove seasonal items(furniture). 7) Include medium volume items such as electronics(TVs) and refrigerators. The key message is CONVENIENCE, and 6000(plus seasonal) of the 15,000 voters in Pitkin County live inside Aspen.</p>
<p>It is vital that we do everything in our power to limit trash buried in the landfill by composting and recycling, and the downtown recycling center plays a very important role in facilitating both. Having a conveniently located and centralized recycling center is an irreplaceable element in the system. It will be virtually impossible to replace this valuable resource if it is lost. Recycling and composting needs the subsidy, support and leadership from the City and County to be effective and viable. The recycling center is used by hundreds upon hundreds of people and can not be replaced with mandatory at home pick up. With recycling and composting, every citizen can participate, our community leaders can help lead and support the effort.</p>
<p>I think this is the most compelling argument for why the RGRC needs to continue in its current location and be funded by the City of Aspen. Every city in the United States that offers single stream recycling diverts the largest percentage away from its landfill. Aspen is and will be no different. We pay plenty of property and sales taxes to the City of Aspen; \$150-300k per year is a very small percentage of the overall budget. There are plenty of less impactful City-funded programs that can be reduced or eliminated to pay for the increased cost of operating the RGRC (e.g., free sunscreen for Food & Wine attendees, free light bulbs at Saturday Market, etc.). I do see some people abusing the RGRC. If necessary to limit the operating costs, require all large items like furniture, textiles, etc. to only be accepted at the Pitkin County Landfill for proper disposal. Make RGRC clearly for residents, guests and operating businesses. Require all recyclable construction debris to be deposited at the Landfill. Aspen</p>

<p>is supposed to be a leader in environmental sustainability. Closing or relocating the RGRC is not demonstrating leadership.</p>
<p>It is vital that we do everything in our power to limit trash buried in the landfill by composting and recycling, and the downtown recycling center plays a very important role in facilitating both.</p> <p>Having a conveniently located and centralized recycling center is an irreplaceable element in the system. It will be virtually impossible to replace this valuable resource if it is lost. Although recycling may not be, on the surface, as exciting as other expenditures, it is absolutely of deep and essential value to our city and county, and to our planet.</p> <p>I appreciate the formidable obstacles of expense and space, but hope that the City will do everything it can to continue offering the drop off facility. It's a shame that recycled glass, aluminum, tin, cardboard and especially plastics cannot be more valuable as commodities, but the costs of NOT recycling—regardless of the expense at the moment—surely outweigh the tiny portion of the City budget that will be required to maintain the program. Allowing recyclable materials to clog the landfill or pollute the planet is not a reasonable response to the rising costs of recycling. And there is the SYMBOLIC element as well. Aspen and Pitkin County can be proud of their history of "doing the right thing" when it comes to their environmentally conscious policies. To turn back any of the progressive steps we have taken would send a very negative message—especially in light of the terrible headwinds we are struggling against on a national level at the moment.</p>
<p>Turn it into a drop-off community compost facility!</p>
<p>Aspen needs to participate in TerraCycle or similar to be able to offer recycling of plastic bags and plastic film, fluorescent bulbs, electronics, etc. We are not doing enough.</p>
<p>I'm not sure why it costs so much to operate the RGRC. It always looks crappy and i'll managed when i stop by. Stuff is always sticking out of the bins. Typical COA operation....the cost is astronomical and the service is meh?? for such a "green" town...the RGRC seems like it should be an important amenity and should be better managed.</p>
<p>The whole debacle is a non issue. LIZ CHAPMAN: PLEASE STOP. For our residential trash and recycling service we pay over \$200 for services with Waste Management. The costs are \$150 + for a 32 gallon bear proof tote (which is full of 1 bag) and another \$50+ for fuel/environmental charge. That private cost is astronomical!! Why would the City bear the brunt of more costs to keep the recycling center alive and well for those businesses and homeowners who haven't figured out their methodology. It's not the City's problem to solve. CITY OF ASPEN see the dollar signs and CUT THE COSTS. PITKIN COUNTY DID. Tear up the pavement, return the bins, and turn the space into a BIKE PUMP TRACK.</p>
<p>I reused as many items as possible and recycled what I could before Aspen even had regular recycling. It's extremely important to me that the Aspen community continue to recycle always. More education should also continue as well as reminders that we are a strong recycling community should be put out to the thousands of people who visit Aspen. They also need to be reminded that here, "We just DO it ". Maybe they can even take that message home with them.</p>
<p>As I understand it, curb side recycling has long been a requirement for waste haulers in the City of Aspen. Having said that, the City, and the Waste Haulers, do a poor job of communicating this required service. My hauler, Mountain Waste, has recently moved to single stream. As a consumer, I have low confidence my recycling is actually being recycled, or recycled efficiently with single stream. While I use curb side recycling, I utilize the RGRC regularly for plastic bags, large amounts of cardboard on occasion, yard waste/Christmas trees and for my parents recycling use (glass & newspaper). The curb side compost program, although well intentioned, is prohibitively expensive. Access to compost drop off at RGRC would be most appropriate.</p> <p>Having a recycling center is consistent with Aspen Community values and closing the RGRC would be hypocritical and a disservice to the community. Requiring community members to go to the dump for recycling and compost would be environmentally and time, traffic inefficient as well as reduce recycling success.</p>

I am not sure that many of the homes in the area actually use this site. Curbside may bring about better streaming of recycle materials.
I understand that some things are not cost-effective to recycle, so a cost/benefit analysis should be done that factors in both monetary and environmental factors in order to prioritize what to recycle plus the cost of communicating a new system to the community.
I just think it is so important to keep offering as much recycling as the City can. I own my housing in Basalt but also own my business real estate in the City of Aspen, so that is why I use the City RCRC. I also use the recycling trash opportunity at my condo complex in Willits.
I think that waste re-direction out of the landfill is important and worth the money spent to do so.
It is the only place for plastic bags & batteries & household items (clothing) & lawn waste & things that we can't recycle at our Park.
I actually can't believe that public input is necessary on this one. Fund a recycle center, and make a smart decision about whether it is single stream or combined.
We are open to whatever option gets more people recycling, as well as composting. I don't believe that Aspen should cut services because of costs. We need to be increasing recycling, but also encouraging compost - especially for restaurants and businesses. If curbside service does this - then we would be in support of closing the recycling center. Aspen needs to set the bar high and be a replicable model for other communities.
Use some of the massive excess funds in Wheeler bank for such things. Stop requiring the Wheeler to be only use for these funds.
1 - Would like to see City/County partner on cost-share of facility 2 - RGRC should offer the Community a food-waste deposit center 3 - City should enhance/optimize curbside recycling effort
Taking a step back in the city's recycling program seems to be a move in the wrong direction. However, if you move to curbside then please also implement curbside composting as a city service as well (currently through Evergreen). And if the city takes away options on the output end of the system (recycling), then it must participate in reducing the input end (i.e. helping to eliminate single-use plastic, primarily, from the start.). This would begin with takeaway containers from restaurants, bottled water, etc.
Obtain bids from all trash services. The current contractor , Waste Management, raised rates in our neighborhood about 2 years ago, and VIP bid a significantly lower price.
The city of Aspen needs to follow Seattle's lead and charge businesses high rates for throwing away recyclables or compost.
I dont understand why people dont use curbside recycling when it is required to be offered for everyone in the general area that the recycling center serves. Maybe we can incentivize recycling by significantly raising tipping fees.
It's hard to weigh in on this thoroughly without knowing the costs (financial and carbon) associated with these options. I am a firm supporter of the City's GHG-reduction efforts; we try to do all we can. Our home trash service includes recycling, so personally we have recycling options outside of the center and use it only for special occasions -- Christmas trees, fall leaves, big cardboard. Is that worth it? I say yes, but without this data I can't be certain if it makes sense.
I think this is a great program to support, but does it need to be located where it is? It seems that there could be a much better use for that space and the recycling center could be elsewhere.
The service is great but it really saddens me to see so much disrespect for the service. I do not use curbside service since I go to the good ole Dump but do take recyclables to the town's center but if RGRC closes I will add recyclables to my dump run. If your service is discontinued there is a great possibility that persons will not pay for recycling curbside-if there is a charge-- and more items will be added to the dump that should be recycled. RGRC is so convenient but since plastic, styrofoam, etc are seen in the dumpsters I wander how they are seperated when the recycling does not accept such items.
I hope that we can keep the textiles and add the organics (I can't afford to get organic recycling on my own) and separate the cardboard and have plastics & glass in one container.
Wow. This is a really tough one. As someone who goes way out of their way to recycle, choosing to close the recycle center is a tough call. It comes down to providing single stream for the entire city

<p>limits and then doing something incredible with that space. My thoughts are that the space could be converted into an outdoor public pool with a diving board, a snack bar and green space for people to lay out in the summer that would compliment the Rio Grand Park and surrounding areas. That way it could technically be kept somewhat as open space. Either that, or if you absolutely have to build something there, go high-density employee housing.</p> <p>Thanks and good luck!</p> <p>Sincerely, XX</p> <p>PS - the employee housing neighborhood where we live provides recycling and composting...they should all do that!</p>
<p>Single-stream or separated would depend on data around 1) cost difference, and 2) efficiency in usage. Does single stream yield that much more recyclable output versus having people separate their recycling?</p>
<p>I am curious what this would be if not a recycling center?</p>
<p>We believe the recycle center must continue in some fashion. People need to be encouraged to recycle and eliminating this amenity will make people less likely to do so. We would much prefer the City fund the center than spend money on the mobility lab or other less imperative initiatives.</p>
<p>This town creates an inordinate amount of trash and should bear the responsibility for mitigating whatever is possible.</p>
<p>I think the textiles is the most valuable offering.</p>
<p>I am Co-President of the Aspen Thrift Shop. We receive a tremendous amount of material that should be recycled, at great expense to the shop. Expenses for Waste Management are consistently increasing. Unfortunately, we don't have the ability to recycle in an efficient manner. I fear the disappearance of the RGRC will create even more recyclables that we will be forced to contend with. The RGRC is a valuable community resource and I urge the City to find a way to continue to keep it open.</p>
<p>Recycling is incredibly hard in our location but should still be pursued via targeted recycling as it would be more cost effective, have community members think about what's going into the bins and increase the amount of composting, in which we can deal with locally in lieu of recycling and shipping many miles away.</p>
<p>Is this location best use of the land and would for example this site be better location for housing? If so where then would the recycling center be placed and if moved out o town would it be used as much?</p>
<p>I think curbside is the way to go for traditional items (single stream) and should be heavily promoted and encouraged. The rio grande is a great asset but could be used to collect items that are otherwise not collected at the curb. Compost and electronics would be a welcomed addition to batteries, textiles, glass, yardwaste and christmas trees. Thank you for this community asset...BTW I think you should have a person checking residency and helping recyclers onsite so Aspen taxpayers and businesses reap the benefits and not people outside the area that are not paying the cost of the recycling...unless the county decides to take all the items from us for free and we just pay the hauling....they need to bear some of the cost if non city residents & businesses are going to be allowed to continue using the recycle center.</p>
<p>For a City trying to lead the way in regards to the environment having an easily accessible recycling center, preferably single stream, seems paramount to the city's mission.</p>
<p>I think recycling is very important for our environment and in line with both the City of Aspen and Roaring Fork Valley values. I think single stream is best option to capture more people —bottom line it is easier. Plastic bags and batteries need to be separate. I also think having a separate bin for clothing, sheets etc is a good idea unless it is costly. The Aspen Thrift Shop is always available. Personally I use the recycling center ~ once a week for plastic bags, this wasn't listed in question #5 re what materials do you recycle</p>
<p>If you close this there will be no where else to go. People will throw away what can be recycled and we will all die sooner. The earth is worth the cost to the city.</p>
<p>Keep it open please</p>
<p>The only reason to continue recycling is if you can continue to prove that the products are recycled</p>
<p>I believe it is in the best interests of our community to continue funding the RGRC. It is in the best interest of our environment to have a convenient place for people to recycle. The COA is one of the</p>

<p>richest government in relation to the size of the community. You spend money on ridiculous things like changing logos and mobility labs. The RGRC is already built and running fine. Don't break what is not broken.</p>
<p>I do not have curbside pick up because of bears. My home has no place to store garbage or recycling between pick ups. I share in a dumpster 1.5 blocks away for garbage and yard waste; however to add recyclables to that would be onerous - so I recycle at recycle center</p>
<p>This is an extremely viable asset to the community without such, i believe more of these materials WILL end up in the already strained landfill. Please keep RGRC !! Thanks</p>
<p>Single use plastic bag recycling or a place for disposal would be nice. Also hazardous waste areas would be helpful. I'd rather people bring it in than just dump it down their drains.</p>
<p>Anything that makes recycling harder for people will inevitably increase the "trash" going into the landfill. The landfill situation must be addressed at any cost. Recycling and composting should be promoted and required. Seattle has an extremely effective recycling and composting program. If a city of Seattle's size with a significantly smaller budget per person than Aspen enjoys can have such a comprehensive program, so can Aspen and Pitkin County.</p>
<p>It is vital that we do everything in our power to limit trash buried in the landfill by composting and recycling, and the downtown recycling center plays a very important role in facilitating both. Having a conveniently located and centralized recycling center is an irreplaceable element in the system. It will be virtually impossible to replace this valuable resource if it is lost.</p>
<p>We live in the County and curbside pick up does not work for us. We depend upon being able to take our recyclables to town and the RGRC and don't mind separating some items if that helps. During the growing season we compost so organic matter stays home.</p>
<p>Do the right thing; keep it open with maximum potential for use = single stream. Aspen CAN afford this; it's ridiculous to say otherwise.</p>
<p>PLEASE KEEP THE RECYCLING FACILITY OPEN!! I continue to emphasize the importance of recycling to people in my building so we are not throwing tons of boxes, et al, etc. In land fills. Please add composting & yard waste!</p>
<p>RGRC is very important for me as my building does not provide trash service or recycling service. Without the RGRC, I would have to drive my recyclables to the Pitkin County landfill, increasing congestion on the S-curves and further contributing to greenhouse gas emissions. For the record, I live in a city owned building.</p>
<p>It would be a shame to see this vital community asset go to the curb, pun intended. It would definitely affect how much gets recycled, as there would be many individuals and businesses that most likely wouldn't want to make the effort to pay for curbside recycling. Every time I go to the recycle center, it is flowing with recyclables; it's being used! Now if people could just learn to break their boxes down LOL! Thank you for this invaluable service.</p>
<p>your department does a great job! the City has a large enough budget to fully fund your department. it is very helpful to have this location for residents. it is not always easy or possible for residents to take items to the landfill. very helpful to have seasonal drop offs for leaves and yard waste. the street side pickups are really important for all the branches our mountain weather brings down. thanks very much for all you do!</p>
<p>The city can afford millions for traffic studies and not \$250K for recycling? Absurd. We're supposed to be a "green" city.</p>
<p>Having a community recycling center is so important to have available to full time locals. It supports the community and landfill use. I believe curbside recycling should ALSO be encouraged and expanded. I would be so happy for curbside yard waste pick up and well and a compost program city wide.</p>
<p>I would prefer not to close the RGRC as a member of the community. However, if curbside must be instituted it's imperative to promote recycling through a massive educational campaign. W/the amount of visitors to Aspen, we should be charging for trash. Hit 'em where it hurts; charge more for trash & promote recycling through education. Watch Anthony Bourdaine's movie "Wasted" to learn how Singapore has reduced their trash dramatically. Create Aspen as a LEADER in this field. Institute city wide composting - SAVE our landfill. Charge heavier for construction waste. Educate our citizens AND visitors. Thank you!</p>

I don't know why curbside recycling would decrease recycling. I used to live in Aspen city limits and used the recycling center weekly. Now I live in Aspen Village and the curbside recycling cannot be any easier. Single stream is the best.
Our trash company does not offer recycling. This is my only way to recycle. It is important to me.
Recycling center is Critical to keep. I have many bears and animals because I live near 14 restaurants. I Cannot put out even tinsed ppastic or metal foid containers without bears strewing it everywhere. I share a commercial size dumpster w neighbors and only have pickup once every other week. That still costs \$160 a month!!
We all need to do our part to reduce waste, and promoting recycling in this way is an important first step.
It seems like the RGRC is primarily for businesses and I think that's an important function based on how much I see it being used. The residential recycle program essentially eliminates my need to use the RGRC, other than for batteries once or twice a year. The County should either help pay or require recycling as part of residential trash pick-up. If the RGRC is repurposed I hope its not just more dirt mounds with trees.
The recycling center needs to remain open, otherwise most of these items will be diverted to trash bins. As a property manager, I use the RGRC for rental turnovers, especially during high occupancy times - Food and Wine, 4th July, Christmas/New Years. There is way too much recycling generated to use curbside pickup at the large homes in Aspen. Thanks!
Global warming, dude...
The RGRC sends a strong message that the City cares and is committed to the environment and recycling. The City spends lots of money on various initiatives that aren't visible to the citizens, the recycling center can really be a public program.
If you want to target certain materials for curbside recycling (a good idea), you have to provide a way for us to separate these materials. I would not put shredded paper or office paper in an open container at the curb. The current method for recycling yard waste is ridiculous. People raking their gardens do not separate grass and leaves from small stick and weeds. At 85 I am too old to climb up a ladder and try to stuff wet leaves through a small grid.
This is an integral infrastructure to sustaining the lifespan of the PITCO Landfill. We must continue the operation of the RGRC at it current levels or increase its operations. Increased Organic waste is an important asset to increasing the lifespan of the landfill
The City of Aspen's massive \$130 million slush-fund budget undoubtedly can support this new expense. It wastes so much money on consultants, personnel and equipment. Every Department has the capacity to make pro rata savings from anticipated or budgeted expenses to accommodate this worthwhile community service.
I think the city of Aspen can easily afford this recycle center and that the cost should not be a deterrent.
I believe it's important to have a central convenient collection point for recyclables, and I believe it is in the City's best interest to continue operation of the RGRC. If the finite life of the landfill is a concern, then the consequences of reducing the availability of recycling will only make that problem worse. Asking private citizens to shoulder the cost of recycling will only dis-incentivize recycling and funnel more waste to the landfill. I'm not familiar with the total cost/tax revenue picture of the recycling program, but surely with such a high per capita city budget, our new council can find the funding to continue to support recycling. Perhaps more thoughtful analysis should go into committing to unnecessary projects such as the mobility lab (certain aspects of it), new logo (which I'll add, the City was gifted on - go to aspentihealth.com), consultant studies for new signage, etc. It is my sincere hope that our new council can focus on governing our City and allocating money toward projects with real, measurable impacts on the lives of those that live here, and less toward whimsical pet projects.
I think separating what we recycle does a better job of keeping the contamination down and actually gets the things we recycle-recycled!
I believe if you close the RGRC people will just put these items in the trash. I am co-president of the Aspen Thrift Shop and we have problems already with people leaving non useable items at our back door. I feel this center is an important investment that the city should be pleased to provide for our citizens, visitors and businesses.

<p>Please do not close the RGRC. Of course I prefer single stream but am more than willing to separate my recyclables if that's what it takes to keep it open. This is a highly used City service and very appreciated by City residents. I will be very very disappointed if it closes!</p>
<p>i believe separating recyclables results in less contamination of materials and results in better recycled product for remanufacturing. I also believe that keeping the location at the Rio Grand site promotes greater awareness of recycling for everyone who passes by. We should be encouraging MORE recycling by making it available in as many places as possible. The Earth has only a finite amount of virgin resources. If we don't start using more products made of recycled materials, we will eventually run out!</p>
<p>I think the RGRC is great - but the service is already available curbside and individuals should utilize that option to recycle and allow the city to spend money in other important areas. This convenience is not worth the additional cost.</p>
<p>i am not sure how curbside recycling works. Would that be picked up at homes? i use the RGRC for items that third party recycling companies do not pick up whatever we can do that makes a positive impact on our environment. i would really like to see a comprehensive composting program as that makes up a good portion of refuse.</p>
<p>Use the supermarket bag tax money to fund recycling. The city and county should do everything possible to encourage recycling and make it as convenient as possible.</p>
<p>A valuable resource. Aspen should provide this!</p>
<p>I think that curbside should be the primary method of recycling and the RGRC receive targeted items only that can't be accepted via curbside pickup. With the space needs reduced the current area of the RGRC can be repurposed for another community use such as a covered picnic area, community amphitheater, ECE playground, dog park, etc...</p>
<p>Make the center smaller and more targeted for recycle material, use the space that is gained and create something for the community since it's treated as a "social" activity, possibly as an educational play area for kids... or a gathering space for the community that isn't currently available, amphitheater, movies in the park etc.</p>
<p>Curbside composting is currently an additional cost. Why would there be an additional charge for an action that would reduce the amount of material entering the landfill each year. I feel that our codes are backwards in encouraging folks to put everything in trash instead of the opposite.</p>
<p>Given the effort we've all put into our recycling program thus far, it would be a shame to stop here. I would be willing to pay extra in taxes to be able to have this great service so readily available. I use it weekly to recycle boxes, batteries, sometimes household recyclables (if I don't use our own service). I think we set a precedent for other communities in the valley to follow as well. Thanks Liz!</p>
<p>I work for a resort in town and we have multiple bins full of recycling that we drop off daily. I know there are many businesses in town that do the same thing. It is very important to protect our local environment and ecosystem in any way we can. Closing the recycling center is a step backwards.</p>
<p>Keep the center open as it provides an environmental service that Aspen needs to support</p>
<p>Having been trained as a student at CU Boulder to strictly separate recycling materials, I believe it can be done, though with a great amount of education.</p>
<p>Reducing waste is better than recycling and I think if the city wants to save money on recycling they could focus there first. But the best thing about the center is the stuff we can bring there that is not easily recycled by our regular waste service. We can't put batteries or or clothes in the single stream recycling at centennial so our only option to recycle them in the center. I also know how difficult it can be to get people to sort their trash well, and I've seen the center a disaster at certain times of the year bc people don't care and just drop their crap anywhere for someone else to deal with. I don't have the answer but I do think it's a worthwhile spend for the city.</p>
<p>This is a necessary service in that curbside recycling will encourage people to not recycle, particularly if they have to pay extra for it.</p>
<p>The RGRC helps divert materials that second home owners and construction projects would not recycle. It is important that we reduce our waste footprint as much as possible. The RGRC is a great option to reduce the amount of traffic at the landfill. This should be regarded as a community amenity and a community commitment to making recycling available to all visitors and the community at large. This is potentially a tax raise I would support.</p>

<p>Aspen should be a leader in recycling! I must admit none of us know where the recycling goes or if it really gets recycled as some have seen a recycle truck going to the dump.</p>
<p>Space requirements make mid week recycling necessary. Batteries are not an option for curbside. Would like to see Scraps added to the RGRC.</p>
<p>Given the amount of money the city spends on "studies", I think that money would be better used to keep the recycle in tact. I fear changing to either other option would do one of two things. It would either lower the amount that is currently done, if it is completely closed. If it were not single stream, I fear that people it would also lower the amount currently done, and it would lead to confusion and misuse or abuse of the facilities</p>
<p>City and County should both share expense in need be to continue RGRC service.</p>
<p>\$250,000 is cheap and money very well spent.</p>
<p>If the City does end up targeting specific recyclables one of the main criteria should be whether or not there is a current market for the material and where it exists. It makes no sense to be shipping our waste to China from a life cycle standpoint.</p>
<p>City should not fund the RGRC. If the RGRC elects to stay open, it should be self-sufficient, requiring only those that utilize it to pay -to- use.</p>
<p>We should definitely fund single stream recycling and serve as an example to other cities.</p>
<p>The city of Aspen should always design their urban planning around what is positive for those who work and live here. Continue to be a role model for small cities regardless of the costs. Take the money from banners, and tree lights and wreaths, which aren't recyclable and put it toward recycling in all ways, all of the time.</p>
<p>Aspen has always been at the leading edge on important issues. Proper recycling is a very visible and potentially educational series of events which will help keep our small valley the great place it is to live and visit. As such, it is, in my opinion, a proper role of government to lead "by example". This is certainly a wealthy town. The cost is small compared to the potential benefit. Individual efforts (aka - every alley lined with individual collection containers) will only make the existing trash service pick-ups more noisy and invasive. Those of us without separate containers who wish to re-cycle will be forced to stockpile and make several trips to the landfill adding to out already over-stressed traffic issues.Thanks for listening.</p>
<p>Recycling is the right thing to do and it is great that the City is subsidizing it to facilitate as much as possible. Nothing great was ever easy or cheap, but it's worth it in the end. Continuing the service at the recycling center is valuable and worth the cost</p>
<p>The recycling center is very important. I think the people of the town will take the time to sort the recyclables</p>
<p>Aspen brags about being a Green City. Recycling is part of that. If the city can spend 4 million on an old bridge, it can afford the RGRC</p>
<p>I have 2 re-cycle bins. Waste management is my hauler. I pay extra to have the recycle bins collected 1x per week. There is a fine if they are "contaminated" I don't know the answer</p>
<p>When you consider the amount of money the city collects, the cost of running the RGRC is a drop in the bucket. They spend so much money on studies and more studies, it is out of control. The RGRC provides a great service.</p>
<p>You can not walk back services provided- City of Aspen leads the way- Since you have recycled you have extended the life of the Pitkin County Dump-- That was originally the idea by the County to save the Dump..City and County should get back together and talk and solve the cost situation-- So we spend all that money to make it look beautiful-? So what then Employee housing- Stop making bad decisions that cost money then all of a sudden no money-- close to lying!</p>
<p>Aspen Should Increase Recycling!!! Why don't Bush & Cheney stops have recycling? Why aren't Downtown recycling containers Blue or something to Differentiate from Trash? Aspen should be the Best at this & we' not</p>
<p>Why aren't some Restaurants like Victoria's, Gorsuch, Locals Corner has station REQUIRED to Recycle? RGRC provides a Fantastic Service.</p>
<p>Single stream recycling has been proven in numerous cities to result in the greatest amount of materials diverted from the landfill. Replacing the Pitkin County landfill is going to be astronomically more expensive to the compounded annual cost of operating RGRC. If the City of Aspen is the</p>

<p>environmental leader that it claims to be, we must continue to fund and operate the RGRC at its current convenient location. Moving it to Castle Creek area will have a severe negative impact on the landfill diversion in the City of Aspen. My property taxes are very high and seem to increase every year. \$150-300,000 per year is a rounding error for the City of Aspen budget. Stop wasting money on things like providing sunscreen to people standing in line for Food & Wine Classic and spend the money on recycling.</p>
<p>The RGC is an essential community facility and well managed. The holiday tree collection service is in itself an enormous benefit. Not all citizens have access or ability to engage in private recycling services. This facility is cherished! Please do not take it away!</p>
<p>Re-cycling is not so people can make money. Re-cycling is about saving the planet. Maybe Mother Earth should charge us for being here.</p>
<p>Taking care of our waste is being environmentally conscious. I believe taking care of the environment is a value of the Aspen Community. Please don't close the recycle center. The curbside recycling I have does not take cardboard, paper, milk/juice containers, batteries, textiles so I use the recycle center to recycle those products.</p>
<p>We should make recycling easy for everyone. And it should be set up so that people don't abuse it. I see cardboard that is not broken down, styrofoam and other trash that can't be recycled. People need to follow the rules and it should be set tip so that it is easy to do that and difficult not to, ie, different openings in receptacles so that stuff gets put the right place.</p>
<p>I was involved several years ago when the recycle center was evaluated under Helen Klanderud. Maybe things have changed, but the biggest obstacle was the size of containers required to hold cardboard recycling. There were many alleyways that simply didn't have space. Cardboard waste was a huge contributor to filling the landfill at that time as well. My Question is are the recycle companies assuring us that they can handle the cardboard produced at every business in a curbside pickup situation? It basically doubles the number of dumpsters in the already overcrowded alleys.</p>
<p>I see a fortune of cardboard that the community should recycle. Most seems to be from restaurants and liquor stores.</p>
<p>I pay for trash, recycling, and composting. Not everyone has that option. We need every effort to extend the life of the landfill.</p>
<p>Funding \$250,000? Big deal. You just approved millions to big developers who are going to bring more people, to a town that has no more room, and employ more people who have to commute 45 miles, because the town they work in has no rooms to live in. MASA Make Aspen Small Again</p>
<p>the city spends too much money on outside consultants, wasteful. this is a very small amount in the budget for a huge benefit to the city and county residents</p>
<p>It surprises me that the City has not provided any funding for the recycle center in the past. I feel that the recycle center provides a necessary service to the community. Curbside recycling is very convenient, but I don't think that it can be used for batteries. Also, there are times when I may have large amounts of recyclable material that are too much for curbside pickup. I support keeping the recycle center open for all recyclable materials.</p>
<p>We live in a town that is pro-recycling and to get rid of this service is unconscionable. Keeping the RGRC open saves us space in our landfill for non-recyclables and provides a convenient one-stop location that encourages the recycling of more items. In addition, my curbside recycling service does not allow me to recycle milk and juice cartons or batteries.</p>
<p>The presence of recycling centers is not associated with high waste diversion rates. National studies show that bundling recycling with trash service is the most effective way to increase recycling rates (source: The Recycling Partnership, 2017. The 2016 State of Curbside Recycling Report) Aspen is fortunate to have an ordinance that requires recycling along with trash service. Unfortunately, there is no enforcement of this ordinance: This results in the following: 1) Many residents are unaware that they are already paying for recycling service which they may not know they have. 2) Haulers are not telling residents that they automatically get recycling pick up with trash service, and are not offering them a choice of bins. Residents are unaware that they can have a larger cart, and are not limited to an 18 gallon bin. It makes more sense to promote curbside recycling for residents from a carbon footprint standpoint as well: Recycling collection trucks are already going down streets collecting recyclable items and it is</p>

<p>more efficient for them to pick up from more households as they go down a street versus less households (where someone has to get in a car to take a trip to the Rio and emit more carbon). Hiring someone to enforce the existing ordinance and do public education/outreach on curbside recycling would cost much less than keeping the RGRC as is, and it would create a job position. Recycling doesn't address the deeper issue that we as a society need to address: Reducing and reuse. More public education is needed on reducing and reusing, and money would be better spent on those types of campaigns and ordinance enforcement.</p> <p>People who self-haul their own trash to PCSWC would still be able to recycle their single stream recyclables for free there.</p> <p>Targeted recycling of organics would greatly reduce methane emissions and has a low carbon footprint as it is processed just 5 miles down the highway at PCSWC which results in a product which is high in demand, and used locally. Cardboard is a commodity that has more value than #3-7 plastics that should be targeted as well and would address the business use of the RGRC. Targeting glass would have the following benefits: Reduce the contamination of plastics and paper when it breaks during transport, when it is source separated it has a higher chance of being made into bottles versus alternative daily landfill cover, and haulers and MRF's would prefer to have it out of single stream.</p>
<p>I think it is very important to keep the recycling center open. The community should be able to do certain materials but I'm sure it has been a problem in the past that people do not separate correctly therefore the single stream is probably the best option to move forward. The funding needs to be found for this important service for the town.</p>
<p>Definitely need the recycling center. For those of us in Basalt where the recycling center only operated M- F from 8-3pm it is impossible to get there when you work. The recycling center in aspen provides us an opportunity to recycle materials that otherwise would be going to the landfill. Please keep the recycling center!!</p>
<p>I am sure that I will recycle more, not as you said "less". As it is much more convenient - I didn't know it wouldn't cost me more to put it out with my trash until today! So, I'm going to ask for a recycle bin on Monday!</p> <p>The Thrift shop in Aspen or Carbondale will certainly take clothing. If you decide to keep it going - it will be for businesses, which us citizens shouldn't have to support.</p>
<p>I think it was odd that the city didn't handle the recycling in the first place (the county paid for it) so it seems like the budget should now provide for this service.</p>
<p>Recent articles have shown that the global recycling market is in a downturn and most recyclables end up in the landfill anyway. Why should the city pay more to send things to the dump?</p>
<p>Compost would be a nice addition. Did not now you recycled batteries and textiles. I will use it more.</p>
<p>We have curbside recycling, but also use the city recycle center. It's usually for large cardboard boxes. But frequently take glass & plastic there also.</p>
<p>I think the wording in #10 is misleading. How can going to curbside REDUCE "the overall amount of recycling". I believe just the opposite would happen as it would reduce the people having to take the initiative to hop in their car and drive to the recycling center as they could effectively recycle on their own curb!</p>
<p>people do not use this correctly - they just dump their garbage there and all the bears are there every day</p>
<p>It is very convenient to use the recycle center and curb side is more of a hassel, it also make it more susceptible to wildlife getting itno trash and it's messy looking</p>
<p>We should go to the curbside program that has been discussed. It would be MUCH more convenient for me!</p>
<p>I live at Centennial where they don't offer curb side recycling. If the RGRC is closed I won't be able to recycle. As a town that promotes environmental values I think it is really selfish and hypocritical for them to close the center. They should do everything they can to promote recycling even if it is more expensive. The city spends money on all sorts of things that aren't promoting the environment, while they tout being a forward thinking environmental town.</p>
<p>Please keep the RC open, I pay huge taxes and the city should keep It open. Why do you spend 5 million on a bike path railing that's too narrow, huge money on the downtown, (which killed a long time local business), but something the world desperately needs might be shut down? I could understand if we didn't have any money in our budget come on guys!</p>

<p>Tax the garbage at a rate high enough to encourage recycling and cover the costs of the RGRC. This will be offset by a longer dump life for the Pitkin County dump.</p>
<p>The recycling center is very important for several reasons. Most important is the global costs of single use items which can be recycled but aren't. Secondly, we are running out of landfill space in Pitkin County. Recycling helps there, but it would be better if less dirt was dumped there I use the recycle center or the recycling at the dump. I don't use a trash service and haul my trash and recycling. Many times it is handier for me to drop recycling at the Rio Grande location vs driving to the landfill</p>
<p>Shutting down the RGRC is a step backwards. Aspen should be a leader. It would be terrible example for the young people in our community.</p>
<p>Recycling isn't a perfect solution to our consumption and waste, but at least it is a start and an acknowledgement that we are committed to lowering our impact. How can Aspen be a leader in the Environmental Movement if we don't even provide a recycling center? Curbside is great, but people are lazy and the more options they have available, the more likely they are to actually recycle.</p>
<p>My strong belief is that because of the park, skateboard park, trail, John Denver Memorial, trail to Herron Park, and the beauty of the river the RGRC should not be there(garbage/trash/dirt/.etc.etc) and should never have been located there! When the railroad was there and rivers were used for transportation/commercial etc. then it was the major use Now the entire area including the old museum should be incorporated into what it almost is except for the RGRC. Where are the city planners....even Hunt saw the use in utilizing the area on over to new city office building.This shouldn't be a dump and that is what it is. Too many people do not respect it anyway...even if I use is sometimes because it is 'easy and close, I would much rather have city beautification than a dump!!!!</p>
<p>We pay for curb side recycling. The only use we make of the center is occasionally for batteries and plastic bags. The center should not be funded for other recycling.</p>
<p>It doesn't need to be single stream I am capable of separating and putting in the correct containers but I don't want it limited in any way - the city can pay 4M for lift one but not recycling - this is something i want my tax dollars to go to.</p>
<p>I am an interior designer. When I am receiving goods for a project, there is so much waste - unpacking lamps, furniture etc. We break all this cardboard down and take it to the recycle center because it will not fit in any homeowner's recycling bin. But I would pay to recycle it? I'm not sure others would though.</p>
<p>We do curbside recycling, but the company comes at 7am on Fridays, which aren't always easy to navigate with bear safety issues, travel, and kids. The RGRC offers a good alternative for when we are gone or they come too early. If curbside recycling were offered later in the day, midweek, we might not need the recycling center as much, but it does provide great services such as clothes and other recycling, batteries, and things the curbside services don't pick up.</p>
<p>RGRC is the only place to recycle plastic bags and textiles - important!</p>
<p>Funding is a small percentage of taxes collected. City has mismanaged the red brick and, to date, still has not prosecuted Angie Cullen for embezzlement of \$160k. There's 1/2 of your budget for recycling. Perhaps you should find out what your bean counters are doing!</p>
<p>The City needs to do better at waste stream, recycling and composting. A better partnership with the County could be mutually beneficial. Let's be a leader in reducing use and smarter waste management!</p>
<p>If the City closes the recycle center, how will we recycle cardboard?</p>
<p>The cost of taking items to the dump creates road traffic and pollution.</p>
<p>We have a land fill issue - why on earth would we consider decreasing our recycling efforts!</p>
<p>It would be sad to eliminate the Recycle Center. The most important thing government can do is make protecting the environment a very high priority. Please keep recycling alive in Aspen.</p>
<p>Where I live we do not have curbside recycling. I use the RGRC for everyday recycling - mostly plastic from the groceries, as well as cardboard and aluminum. I wouldn't be able to recycle without the RGRC. Not being able to recycle in Aspen, a town that prides itself on being environmentally friendly, would be ludicrous.</p>
<p>Center allows reuse, specifically cardboard. I see people remove boxes often.</p>

2019 RGRC public comments

I love having a Recycling Center., but wish that it included additional options like plastics, clothing, etc. As a renter, I depend on a landlord to provide trash / recycling options, and if they don't offer the services, or have a giant dumpster for trash, where can I recycle to reduce the amount of waste going to the landfill?
Budget question
I think curbside recycle is the best option.
RGRC is a strong statement about our values. This is a weathy community we can fund this. We may have to forfeit a few miles of hiking/biking trails. RGRC is also a "health" center! The impression is the land fill has extended its life time Through such consciousness. Are we giving up good practices? Is it cost effective in long run to close it? At what costs? I also propose we take a look at all these trash haulers. 2 noisy polluting trucks (1 for trash one for recycle) are on my street everyday. This means trash cans tempting wildlife everyday. Carbondale is exploring effective solutions for this. Can't we be the leaders of Innovative example? Aspen is the major trash producer in the county. Is that the reason for their pushback?
This is an important facility. Would be willing to separate to have compost.
People heavily use it, when it is overflowing, I have to call to have it serviced.
Keeping it single stream is easiest. I think it's great. The City has enough money to for this rather than other things, I enjoy using the center and it gives us a nice feeling to recycle. This is a step in the right direction.
Important to keep the option. I understand the County's position adn the City should find the money in the budget to fund it.
Having a paper shredder would be great. E-waste would also be good to have 2x/ year (as well as a fall streets clean up). The City has so much money, they put it into stupid things. This is such an important thing to spend money on. This is utilized by everyone all the time.
It works well.
There is plenty of money (i.e. new building) that the City can find a way to fund the center
Since there is a recycle drop off at the landfill, there doesn't need to be two
Wehave single stream at our complex, but not cardboard (so far due to a lack of space), so would be supportive of the middle-ground option to continue the RGRC with special material recycling including the above checked materials.
Pitkin County community initiatives are to promote a healthy environment, including recycling. I live in a rural area, which does not offer trash service, nor curbside recycling. So, if there is no facility offered, I will stop recycling. If I go to the landfill, I get nails in my tires, so I will not be visiting the landfill on a regular basis. Have you ever tracked how many people recycle at the Rio Grande Facility? Each time I visit, there usually is some else recycling and I think it is well visited facility. To reduce costs, I would recommend targeting certain materials, otherwise, your landfill will fill up more quickly with items that would've went to recycling...now go to the landfill.
The location and comprehensive recycleing options are convenient and important to encourage more recycling. Many retail stores and restaurants are not recycleing enough and should be the target of future recycleing campaigns.
Keep it up!,,
COUGH UP THE DOUGH! STOP THE IDLING!
I live up the Crystal. I have my own compost, which includes paper/cardboard/cartons/organics. I separate glass/aluminum/tin into single stream, all others I separate into their own bags (batteries, textiles, steel, electronics). The single stream group goes out curbside. Everything else (except compost) I load in the truck every once in a while for a trip to Pitkin solid waste center. This grouping is easy and I think you should look at a hybrid of single stream, separate streams and curbside. If I lived in Aspen I would certainly use RGRC weekly. It should definitely have a compost facility, although I realize that has its own set of management challenges.
To pursue compost should be a priority to make it part of the culture. To close the recycle center may spread the mentality that Aspen does not care about recycling.

2019 RGRC public comments

Would love to have a workable plan to get rid of plastics. Plastics are ruining our world. No plastic in stores-especially grocery stores. Bags must be reusable. Glass should definitely be separated.
Lise adds that she thinks the RGRC is very important and that it should not be taken away.
You tell us. Given the recent setbacks, is recycling still impactful enough to justify the budget and staff time required for the Center to operate for recyclables in addition to required/cheap curbside recycling? Are organics the more impactful diversion to promote, and the more expensive/difficult for residents and businesses to do onsite?
Recycling is not an option that is offered at my apartment complex. It would be a big shame to loose this as an option for the community Thanks
Compost here elimiate plastic
They need to'keep. Figure out a way to do it.
I think we need to do more. We should everything we can to have the public participate by separating. Let's create a consciousness that we need to do more recycling and not less.
The City should spend money on this rather than other things. It has a high priority.
I am for any recycling in any form as long as it works and is financially viable
I LOVE THIS PLACE!!
I come here to collect cardboard when I need a box.
Survey was difficult to get into had to call office to get into site
Clean and we really appreciate it.
If you get rid of this everything will go into the trash. It would be a huge impact. Very important to the future. Need very big, clear signs to allow for separation of materials. Need one container for tin and a different one for aluminum.
I think the recycle center is an important part of our community and a service that COA should continue to provide. I think it is beneficial that it is open at all hours, limiting hours could reduce usage. Having the center and flexible hours encourages ppl to do the right thing vs just throwing it in the trash because it's more convenient for them. Please keep the center!
Cardboard packaging would NOT get recycled curbside
Maybe the City and County could charge a user fee to cover costs. The City and County could split the costs. Add a fluorescent tube option for bulb disposal.
Aspen should be a leader in environmental concerns!
Discourage misuse - dumping trash. Not sure if it's best for companies/construction drop-offs. Benefit to the community overall
- Does not like the bin design - Driving to landfill as an alternative seems counterproductive - People abuse the center dumping.
Location is too convenient. Employee housing could be on this space. I already separate materials for recycling.
If you want people to continue recycling, the site needs to be centrally located like it is now.
Great having this. I recycle everything I can. Add more metal collection options.
Single stream is the best for Aspen. Parking is easiest. Confused about how to park yellow lines. Could buy a bin, but it's convenient. Feels good.
The City and County have more than enough money and "pride themselves" on environmentalism, so they should prioritize the service.
Pay for the RGRC and add motor oil drop off
Please don't take it away, this center is very important to the community.
The City of Aspen, being an environmentally aware community needs to fund the RGRC.

<p>Do your homework, talk to recyclers. Did you know 95% of glass we recycle ends up back in the landfill? We create more carbons in the atmosphere by shipping glass, than we save by actually recycling it. Cardboard and aluminum are the items actually recycled in large percentages. A lot of plastic we recycle ends up at either coast, and then into the ocean. We would be better off throwing our plastic in our landfill.If the City/County is worried about our landfill filling up, you should stop taking construction trash or raise the price of it enough so it will incentivize contractors to recycle.</p>
<p>This is a really convenient recycling center. The City should continue to fund it. I would rather see this center funded than have the City build a new City Hall. The City should not get cheap and do away with funding this recycling center.</p>
<p>We pride ourselves on being recycle advocates. Why stop! Since we seem to have money for grand building projects ... it would seem unconscious for our city to neglect the responsibility of recycling.</p>
<p>Stop worrying about bicycle lanes, less parking and raising parking rates and concentrate on what helps the environment!!!</p>
<p>Try to get as much compostable material as possible. It can get stinky, but at least there is an opportunity to sell the stuff.</p>
<p>Please keep the center open. Would be willing to use curb side if offered at a reasonable price throughout the county.</p>
<p>Huge environmental benefit to the public and the planet and very good for Aspen's reputation.</p>
<p>Recycling is facing hard times because other countries are not taking our recyclables anymore, is that correct? How much of the county's recyclables are actually being recycled? Is there a market for recyclables in the US? Does the future of recycling look promising?</p>
<p>We use the recycling center weekly for our household recycling. It is so convenient and we love it. Please keep some sort of recycling center!!</p>
<p>How much fuel would it take to have a completely separate truck coming all the way up castle creek road for very little recycling every week. I can currently go to Rio grande with a small amount and make it Convenient for everyone.</p>
<p>Curbside is easy and efficient. The RGRC is very helpful from time to time. The textile, batteries, and organics recycling is very beneficial as curbside service does not accommodate these items.</p>
<p>The recycle center is used by many and if not convenient trash/recyclable will end up as trash somewhere else. Most people are conscience about the rules. I have only seen one city/county employee at the site (other than dumpster drivers) in the last ten years and that was for a promotion! A little interest from the city would help!</p>
<p>How can we not recycle? In the life style of this town, the consumer is king and leaves no choice despite the cost of recycling to continue. I chose the lower cost option of single stream as users just do not have the ability to make that any sorts of recycle in their smaller homes.</p>
<p>I believe that maintaining the RGRC is a community priority. I am concerned that if it is left to individual subscribed pick up the amount of recycling will drop dramatically.</p>
<p>We can financially afford this system as a city .Here is no reason to change what is working for all.</p>
<p>Keep pushing hard on full recycling and add to it, like plastic film and bag recycling. I pick up large amounts of recyclables from roadsides and drop them off here.</p>
<p>I have noticed a lot of contamination at the recycle center</p>
<p>Please add compost at Rio grand</p>
<p>Recycling should be mandatory for Pitkin & Eagle county</p>
<p>Please keep the recycle center</p>
<p>I don't have recycling in my apartment complex so I rely on RGCG for all my recycling.</p>
<p>I am pleased with how clean the Center is</p>
<p>Would be nice if there was more of a market for recyclables...stimulate demand somehow, no idea how, but if nobody wants it, it will be doomed</p>
<p>Thank</p>
<p>This makes it easy to recycle.</p>
<p>Thank you we love it to educate our kids</p>

2019 RGRC public comments

Keep it as is.
I hope you continue with the RGRC programmer as it currently exists
Primary use is for plastic bag recycling
Functions very well for everyone who uses it. Occasionally uses Basalt Recycle Center.
We need this place. If people have to pay for curbside, they just won't do it. The city has a lot of money.
It's a great service
It gets on my nerves that people don't sort their recycling.
recycle center sends a message to the people of how important this is to our community. Symbolic importance is almost more the environmental. Landfill should have a sorting facility. It's ok if the county doesn't make a profit out of sorting. Concern about contamination. Should have separate containers for cardboard only. Yellow lids at recycle center are impossible to open! A step lever would be great. Sometimes comes to recycle center to get a box. Tried to take survey, but didn't want to sign in on Aspen Community voice.
This is important for Aspen and the environment. Shame we if we don't do this.
Composting is not going to be viable any time soon, as many people can be bothered to even recycle now...
I think it's really important that Aspen does this. It's one of the reasons I love Aspen because we recognize our impact on the environment. I think closing it down is a step backwards.
I walk to the recycle center and being able to carry a mixed bag of single stream is most convenient.
I am up and down valley and I enjoy coming about 1x every 10 days. It's convenient and I love the single stream.
As a property manager the thought of having to take the recycling to the landfill would be difficult. The RGRC is s big bonus to me.
I live in Mtn. Valley. I do not have recycling service with my trash service. I did not know the County required it to be included.
Food waste diversion should be prioritized. It is locally recycled and creates a valuable commodity.
Pitkin County commissioners are short sided
At the Skiers Chalet, we don't have any recycling. I use the RGRC for ever day plastics and cardboard and would have no option to recycle without the RGRC which would be outrageous. I would be willing to sort my own recycling instead of the current single stream system to save the city money.
I use the center to collect cardboard and recuse it
This center is very important to this community and we need to do whatever is necessary to make sure it is still a viable option.
Fund this through additional taxes
Posting a looking to hire ad and posting the ad everywhere and hope to pull in a employee that is a highly educated in recycling and making recycling simple simpler and fun even rewarding... and less frustrating and appealing less of a hassle and eliminate the waste eye soar that the trash departments and employees have to go through, hire Matt Frazen.
I am with a local property management company. While all of our clients have regular trash and recycling pickup it is hit or miss whether they show up on the scheduled day. Many clients, especially during peak season, want their stuff removed from the house immediately in most cases so we rely on RGRC during these times.
Having lived in multiple communities in this valley, I find Aspen leading the way for waste diversion services with the RGRC. It's convenient and encourages recycling.
Drop free ride services for people who can afford it and keep recycle center
Keep up the good work
Excellent location, heavily used

2019 RGRC public comments

With regard to targeted recycling, I'll accommodate those 'targets' that are most efficient and of budget value.
There is not enough enforcement in town.
Other footprints are available. Evaluate the pros/cons of the current location.
We love it!
When I go to communities like Pagosa Springs, where there is virtually no recycling, I am sad.
I take my recycling to WM at Willits since it is closer to my home, but I support Aspen keeping the RGRC open.
I subscribe to a weekly service for garbage and separate recycling for paper, cardboard items & plastics, metal, glass, etc.
Reduce, reuse, recycle. Aspen should maintain a physical location to provide options for the community.
Leave it in town!
I think this survey is probably already closed, but . . . For what it does for the problem we have with the landfill reaching capacity and with the larger environmental issues, it's a great bang for the buck. Maybe it could be located elsewhere, but it's very effective located near downtown. Compost would be the best addition. I think that could be used even more, as keeping recyclables at home is easy, but compost gets kind of smelly. Knowing you could drop it off at the center frequently would be a great addition.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Liz Chapman, Environmental Health and Sustainability
THROUGH: CJ Oliver, Environmental Health and Sustainability Director
MEETING DATE: February 4, 2019
RE: Rio Grande Drop-Off Recycle Center

REQUEST OF COUNCIL: Staff is requesting City Council direction about the future of the Rio Grande Recycling Center as well as the future of a community drop off facility for waste diversion in the Aspen community.

SUMMARY: Since the early 1990's, collaboration between Pitkin County and City of Aspen has provided a free community drop-off center for recyclables at the Rio Grande Recycle Center. Aspen City Council approved spending \$175,000 in April of 2010 to improve the appearance, function, and security of the facility by paving, landscaping, and installing surveillance cameras. Previous Council actions also include a recycling measure in the Aspen Area Community Plan action plan. Section IV states the Environmental Stewardship Polices should "maximize recycling..." and "encourage behavior that moves the Aspen Area toward being a zero-waste community and extends the life of the landfill."

BACKGROUND: The Rio Grande Recycle Center provides Aspen and the surrounding community free access to single stream recycling, textile recycling, and household battery recycling 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Seasonal yard waste collection is provided in the spring, fall and winter (Christmas trees). This facility is located on City of Aspen property and maintained by City staff. In 2010, Pitkin County contributed \$20,000 to the \$175,000 cost to improve the facility. Pitkin County provided collection services at the Rio Grande Recycle Center for over 15 years at its expense. The County entered into a contract with Waste Management in early 2014 to privatize collection at the Recycling Center. Pitkin County paid over \$225,000 in 2018 (\$217,000 in 2017) to take single stream recycling from the center to Denver for processing. Additionally, the County negotiated a 6-month extension on the contract with Waste Management to continue service at the Rio Grande Recycle Center (until August of 2019) at a cost of approximately \$100,000. The City of Aspen spends ~\$12,000 from the General Fund for recycling collected in the ADA complaint containers and composting seasonal yard waste each year. The City of Aspen also contributes, also through General Fund dollars, labor to maintain the facility by the Parks and Streets departments, as well the time spent by staff in the Environmental Health department. Pitkin County landfill staff also contribute on a regular basis to clean the center and remove illegally dumped materials as needed. The County currently covers the costs to

manage and service the Recycling Center out of the Pitkin County Solid Waste Center's enterprise fund.

The Rio Grande Recycling Center collected 1160.68 tons in 2017. This represents 20% of the recycling diverted in 2017. Excluding the material collected at the center, the residential rate of recycling diversion was 30% and the commercial rate was 21% in 2017. The material collected at the center is attributable to both the residential and commercial sectors, as well as outside of Aspen. Based on observations and the waste composition study conducted in 2016, 33% of the material collected at the center is cardboard and 80% of the cardboard is being brought in by commercial entities. The anecdotal data we have indicates almost half of the users of the Rio Grande Recycle Center live outside of Aspen.

During the period when Pitkin County began hauling recyclables, commodity prices allowed them to largely recoup their costs through the sales of those commodities. Recycling has become a net loss for waste companies in the past few years. The value of recyclables (paper, aluminum, plastic, etc.) have dropped by 50% over the last 15 years, while labor, equipment, and fuel costs have steadily risen. The costs of collecting and processing these commodities have outpaced the revenues collected through sales and there is very little consumer demand for recycled content. On top of these pressures, the changing policies of China suddenly reduced the available markets for recyclables and increased the costs of getting those materials to market. Therefore, companies have either stopped collecting recycling (as Pitkin County did in 2014) or are raising their prices for this service.

DISCUSSION: Although recycling saves energy, conserves resources, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and saves landfill space, it requires technology, labor, and money. There are many disparate factors contributing to why the costs of collecting and processing recyclables are outpacing the revenues generated by selling the commodities. These factors range from the cost of contaminated loads to changing consumer habits and preferences to policies enacted by other nations. Aspen is in a remote area of Colorado and Colorado is located far away from manufacturing facilities and international trade centers, so the costs of collecting, processing, and transporting recyclables is particularly high for our area. This has led Pitkin County to make significant changes in their waste diversion programs.

Pitkin County passed a new Waste and Recycling Ordinance which took effect in January 2019. This ordinance requires haulers operating in Pitkin County to provide recycling services along with trash service and to charge for both services in a single bill. As a result of this ordinance, Pitkin County will cease funding the public drop off centers outside of the Solid Waste Center (landfill), including the Rio Grande Recycle Center in Aspen. The contract between Pitkin County and Waste Management has been extended to August of 2019, and the County has indicated they will not be renewing the contract or soliciting new proposals. However, it is possible Pitkin County might partner with the City of Aspen if Aspen were to enter into a contract with a hauler to continue to collect recyclables from the community. Staff from both organizations have also discussed the

possibility of changing the materials collected at the center to be in closer alignment with the recommendations of Phase II of the Waste Study the City and County conducted in 2017. This would mean emphasizing organics collection and other high value commodities in place of single stream collection.

In addition to the current location at Rio Grande Park, staff is evaluating the potential to relocate a waste diversion center to a new space within city limits, focusing on a location on Castle Creek Road at the entrance to the Marolt seasonal housing complex. The existing location at Rio Grande Park has seen a significant change in use and neighborhood makeup since it was originally selected to house the recycling center. Adding nearly a full acre for park type use at the Rio Grande could provide a more neighborhood appropriate use of the existing space. Creating a waste diversion drop-off center out on Castle Creek Road would keep an in-town location while moving the center away from the neighborhood/park area that exists at the Rio Grande location, directly across from Obermeyer Place.

Staff is requesting Council consider these questions:

1. Should the City of Aspen fund a community recycling drop-off center?
2. Should a public drop-off center be restricted to residential use?
3. What is the appropriate funding source for a waste diversion center in the City?
4. Where is the best location for a waste diversion drop-off facility within the City of Aspen?
5. Does Council want to solicit public feedback before answering the above questions?

FINANCIAL/BUDGET IMPACTS: If Council decides to continue to fund operations at the Rio Grande Park facility or other location the costs could range from \$150,000 to \$300,000 per year. These costs would be a new request to the General Fund budget. Alternatively, the Council may wish to pursue a fee or service charge.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS: By reducing the amount of material sent to be buried in the landfill, resources are conserved. It also extends the life of the raw materials sources. The embodied energy and carbon emissions of manufacturing products from virgin resources would be reduced if materials are recycled. Recycling results in greenhouse gas reduction, even when transportation emissions are considered.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Lynn Rumbaugh, Transportation Programs Manager
John D. Krueger, Director of Transportation

THROUGH: Trish Aragon, PE, City Engineer
Scott Miller, Public Works Director/Interim Assistant City Manager

MEETING DATE: June 17, 2019

RE: Dockless Mobility Management Options

SUMMARY:

The City of Aspen Transportation, Engineering, Attorney, Community Development, Parking and Parks departments have been researching and discussing dockless mobility in an effort to manage these types of programs should they arrive in Aspen. This memo provides options and staff recommendations. Staff is seeking direction from Council on a management approach to dockless mobility in Aspen.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:

In February of 2018, Aspen City Council approved the Short-Range Transit Plan (SRTP), a document guiding Transportation Department activities over the next ten years. The SRTP recommends creating a clear set of expectations for the management of dockless mobility.

In December of 2018, City Council declined entering into a contract with Lyft that, in addition to other items, would have brought dockless bicycles and scooters to Aspen.

A dockless bike and scooter Ordinance is listed in the 2019 Organizational Work Plan as a “should do” item presented to Council in January 2019.

BACKGROUND:

Dockless programs are a relatively new trend in mobility, allowing users to rent, retrieve and return various mobility devices such as e-bikes and scooters without the use of fixed docking stations. Although Aspen is not new to the sharing economy, with WE-cycle and Car To Go being prime examples, dockless mobility has not yet been tested in Aspen.

As dockless programs proliferate, several municipalities have reacted with pilot programs, short-term moratoriums, permit/management plans or outright bans. Some examples include:

Baltimore, Maryland: Partnered with two providers to test dockless bike and scooter services for six months.

Boulder, Colorado: In May of 2019, the City of Boulder established a nine-month moratorium on electric scooter programs for the purpose of conducting public outreach and addressing safety and right of way issues.

Breckenridge, Colorado: Summit Bike Share launched in 2018, offering dockless e-bikes. By early 2019, the Town passed regulations to manage dockless bike sharing, including a cap on the number of bikes, helmet education requirements and per bike fees.

Dallas, Texas: Dallas became host to several dockless providers, generating unpleasant coverage about abandoned and vandalized devices. The city eventually passed an ordinance requiring permits, per bike fees, complaint response responsibilities and data sharing.

DISCUSSION:

While the possibilities related to shared dockless mobility are exciting to many, they bring with them new challenges including right of way management, safety, vandalism, City oversight and impacts to local businesses. As part of the SHIFT effort, meetings were held with local bike share operators and bike rental shops at which representatives expressed several concerns about dockless mobility including pricing, geographic service areas and safety of users.

Dockless operators have reached out to the City of Aspen expressing their interest in providing a dockless operation in the community. Most recently, dockless operator Lime reached out to convey its partnership with the upcoming Fortune Brainstorm (July 15-17, 2019). The event will bring 50 Lime scooters to Aspen for use by event attendees. Because the event takes place on private property, it does not require a special event or other City permit.

However, Lime has agreed to educate event attendees on rules related to appropriate use of scooters. Additionally, Lime will have on-site staff available to address any parking or right of way issues if needed.

Should a dockless mobility operator seek to operate in the public right-of-way, the City could utilize a number of approaches as outlined below. For the purposes of these approaches, staff has worked with the City Attorney's office to develop the following definition of dockless mobility:

The short-term rental of a singular transportation device such as a bicycle, scooter, or tricycle, for the transportation of people or goods that do not require docking stations, pick up or return from a storefront, or other apparatus (including lock-to mechanisms) to rent or return a unit.

None of the proposed approaches would impact the ability of bicycle rental shops to merchandise their rentals on the right of way. This type of use is managed via the Community Development Department's *Merchandise in the Right of Way* license. Neither would the proposed approaches impact the existing docked WE-cycle program.

1. Status Quo

The City could allow the dockless mobility industry to decide if Aspen is a market of interest, responding only if a business operates in such a manner as to create safety or right-of-way problems. In this scenario, a dockless operator would need only to obtain an Aspen business license and a temporary encroachment license to do business in the right-of-way. No additional requirements or fees would be assessed. This option allows the City to respond only to actual problems as they occur. However, the approach puts the City in a reactive stance.

2. Limited Regulation

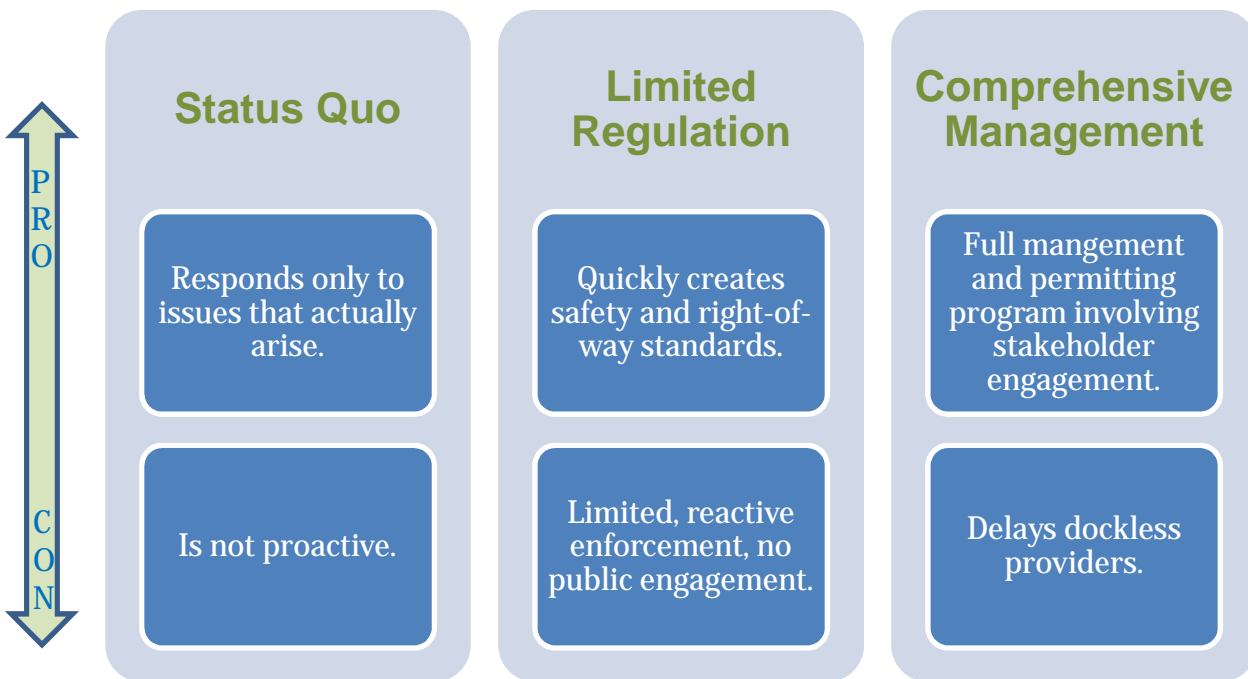
The City could require that any dockless mobility operator agree to additional safety and right of way terms as part of the temporary encroachment licensing process. Additionally, the City could add language to its special event permit applications, requiring dockless providers associated with events to also follow basic protocols such as appropriate device parking locations. This approach would allow the City to quickly set basic parking/right of way and safety expectations without creating new permitting programs or extensive regulations.

However, this option would not be inclusive of stakeholder involvement and would not address concerns aired by the existing bike share/bike rental community. Additionally, the limited regulation approach assumes that collaboration and enforcement would be handled on a complaint basis with existing staff time and processes, which may not provide the appropriate level of service.

3. Comprehensive Management

City Council could direct the City Manager to enforce a six-month delay on all applicable temporary encroachment licenses. Staff would then spend the remainder of 2019 developing a comprehensive management plan addressing topics as wide-ranging as geographic boundaries, customer fees and penalties, device specifications, customer service requirements, per device fees and more. Staff envisions an outreach effort that would include open houses, stakeholder roundtables, Aspen Community Voice, surveys, discussions with existing City boards and commissions and more. As part of this effort, staff could also work with interested operators to demonstrate the technology in the community. This approach would allow staff, stakeholders and City Council time to thoroughly explore dockless mobility opportunities and challenges. However, this effort would pause dockless mobility on the public right-of-way in the meantime. The Short-Range Transit Plan recommends an approach of this nature.

Opportunities & Challenges



FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The status quo and limited regulation approaches require no new funding. The comprehensive management approach is envisioned to require \$25,000.00 in funding, the majority of which would be spent on outreach efforts. A fully developed budget can be provided to City Council following this initial direction.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the comprehensive management approach. This approach allows for thorough public and industry engagement, the development of a specific license/permitting process and the review of appropriate enforcement levels. This approach is also aligned with the Short-Range Transit Plan.

ALTERNATIVES:

Council may choose any of the approaches listed, or direct staff to undertake another alternative.