

Beyond 34

A multi-stakeholder, place-based initiative aimed at increasing the current 34% recycling rate in the United States



Summary Notes

Orlando Region Recycling Leaders Meeting

February 26, 2019

2PM-5PM

Rosen Centre Hotel
9840 International Dr.
Orlando, FL 32819

Welcome Remarks

Scott Breen, Associate Manager, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation (USCCF)
Heather Armstrong, Executive Director, Recycle Florida Today (RFT)

Scott thanked Beyond 34 attendees and noted that more registered for this local stakeholder meeting than any other previous Beyond 34 local meeting.

Scott introduced Heather and thanked her for her help in organizing the Feb 26th meeting. Heather Armstrong introduced herself and invited Beyond 34 Attendees to the RFT Winter Summit also taking place that week at the Rosen Centre.

Beyond 34 Overview and Feedback

Scott Breen, Associate Manager, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation

Scott reviewed Beyond 34 effort for those new to the meeting:

- In 2017, a hotspot analysis was conducted to identify the Beyond 34 pilot region.
- The Orlando region was named the Beyond 34 pilot region in a September 2017 announcement, and a kickoff meeting was held in Orlando in October 2017.
- The Beyond 34 technical partner produced in early 2018 a gap analysis of the Orlando region and also the business case for four projects to increase the Orlando region's recycling rate. The study noted an economic opportunity of \$84 million for the region.
- USCCF published in June 2018 a case study report on the goals of the B34 project, steps taken so far in the Orlando region to increase recycling, and on how other communities can strengthen their economic competitiveness through recycling initiatives.

- Orlando region local stakeholder meeting in June 2018 to obtain feedback from community members on which of the 14 projects for which USCCF had developed business cases for should be prioritized
- USCCF announced more than \$100,000 in funding during a November 2018 local stakeholder meeting and each prioritized and/or funded project was discussed in detail
- Karam Singh and Sara Miller form the local, part-time project management team based in the Orlando region.

Scott reviewed lessons learned from Orlando Pilot thus far:

- Local champions should be established early with clear roles as well as a long-term plan
- Mapping of key local stakeholders should have been done more extensively and earlier
- Engage more recycling collaborator partners earlier on in the process
- More robust examination of existing data and clear decision on what is the baseline
- Long-term plan needs to be part of the budget for future Beyond 34 efforts in other cities so that those involved see how it rolls up into a larger effort
- Establish a system of communication between the in-person meetings, be it committees or working groups or open check-in calls, so that momentum continues and communication is more robust
- Engage more intimately those who are not in the least populated part of the scope region
- Obtain seed funding for implementation projects up front so there is less of a lag between when projects are developed and when they are executed
- Clearly state the need for Beyond 34 seed funding of implementation projects to be combined with local sources of funding

Scott noted how a lot of the recommendations in the gap analysis have been followed

- Organize recycling champions network
 - Local champions group was formed
 - Local project managers were identified
 - This February 26, 2019 meeting had more registrants than any previous local stakeholder meeting
- Collaborative communications campaign
 - No regional effort yet but Orange County has piloted communications efforts with The Recycling Partnership and is exploring expansion of that pilot
- Build a new MRF
 - David Gregory is actively engaged in efforts to bring an operating, high-tech MRF to the region
- Collect and process more organics
 - Paul Duncan is exploring ways to collaborate with players in the region to take commercial organics and process it with Anuvia's technology to convert it into plant nutrients

- Enact multi-family and commercial ordinances
 - The City of Orlando is leading in the region and nationally as it works on an ordinance requiring multi-family and commercial recycling
- Obtain financing for large scale projects
 - USCCF has connected David Gregory to Closed Loop Fund to help finance the MRF upgrade
- In addition to making progress on these recommendations, USCCF has also funded a project to conduct waste audits in convenience stores and to institute recycling in the downtown core of the City of Winter Park

Scott asked attendees to provide feedback on the Beyond 34 effort with a focus on two questions.

Q1: Given the present state, how can we best develop a long-term plan and what form should it take?

- One local stakeholder remarked that we need to have a clear team in place for the long-term. He appreciates the work of Scott, Karam Singh (Beyond 34 Local Project Manager), Sara Miller (Beyond 34 Recycling Fellow), and Isabella Wilhelm (Valencia College Service Learning Student) but recognizes that they are not a multi-year solution.
- Another local stakeholder asked how the team leaders for each project were identified
 - Scott explained that they consist of volunteers or those that USCCF hired to lead/conduct certain projects.
- A local stakeholder asked how we can identify additional projects to take on in the Orlando region to increase/improve recycling.
 - Scott replied that Beyond 34 is meant to be a big tent. USCCF may have funded only certain projects given the realities of what it fundraised, but the hope is that this Beyond 34 effort in the Orlando region is a way for local stakeholders to collaborate on, discuss, and implement a variety of efforts. So additional projects are more than encouraged. USCCF's efforts are meant to set up the Orlando region for long-term work towards a more circular system and zero waste.
- Another local stakeholder asked how are we going to identify leadership to take the baton from USCCF and lead the projects going forward into the future? We need to identify local leadership so that USCCF can prepare for the "hand-over" of this work once USCCF's involvement needs to sunset.
 - Scott said that USCCF is committed to keeping the momentum going and to see its projects through to success this year, but USCCF doesn't have the funding or bandwidth to be organizing these meetings for years to come.
 - The City of Orlando and Orange County were seen as the best places to continue this effort once USCCF sunsets its involvement.

Q2: How should we best communicate between these on-the-ground meetings so that momentum is maintained?

- Attendees discussed calls for certain projects and also a general update email in between meetings.

Implementation Projects Update

Short updates on projects discussed during last meeting:

Waste & Recycling Audits at Selected Business Type

Cynthia Mormile, Senior Project Manager, MSW Consultants

- Challenge of finding convenience store and fuel retailing partners
- Plan B is to work with the City of Orlando since they have drop offs throughout the city
- Speaking at the Recycling Workshop on Thursday February 28th that the Florida Recycling Partnership is hosting at Goodwill Industries of Central Florida with the support of Beyond 34.

City of Winter Park Downtown Core Recycling

***Vanessa Balta Cook, Sustainability and Permitting Planner,
City of Winter Park***

Kris Stenger, Assistant Director, Building & Permit Services & Sustainability, City of Winter Park

- First kick of call couple weeks ago
- Strategy meeting today between Kessler Consulting and key representatives from City Administration, Finance, Economic Development, and Public Works
- Kicking off a green business recognition program in April (Earth Day/ Spring) and are thinking about combining this effort with that program
- The Community Redevelopment Agency has dedicated funding for improvements in the park which means updates with receptacles and signage.
- Implementation by 2019 is the project goal

Commercial Organics Infrastructure

Paul Duncan, Sustainability Director, Anuvia Nutrients

- Challenge to take waste and convert to fertilizer
- Pulpmaster to convert waste into a medium that can then be used by Anuvia to make fertilizer and sell back to the city and residents

- Will be testing the waste from the convention center and it will be going to Pulpmaster to be processed and then used at Anuvia facilities. Will update how that works in the next few months.

Standardized Labels

Alex Bunker, National Program Director, Recycle Across America

- Andrea Ruiz-Hays, Director of Strategic Alliances, Recycle Across America (RAA) is the main POC for this project, but she is sick today
- Main goal to hit about 1000 business and provide labels to business
 - Each business will receive 3 labels per waste and recycling. Businesses can order online and use code to get them for free. Businesses must supply bins.
- Volunteers are needed and will be used for distribution of labels and auditing their success and distribution
 - Best practices will be explained during distribution
- Exploring a pilot in Audubon Park Garden District
 - On March 6, RAA and volunteers will walk around to business owners in the district to explain the solution of standardized labels and sign them up to participate [note: this walk around has since been completed. Less businesses in the Audubon Park Garden District are recycling than expected. RAA is working with USCCF and others to identify businesses that already recycle and could recycle more/better with implementing free standardized labels on their bins].
 - To measure success, nine businesses will be audited as a baseline metric and will be audited again in 3 months and 6 months to see results of program.

The Recycling Partnership (TRP) Intervention Focused on Contamination Rates

Jennifer Baugher, Sustainability Manager, Coca-Cola Beverages Florida

- Reviewed sustainability goals of Coca-Cola's World Without Waste initiative including collecting and recycling the equivalent of every bottle or can it sells globally by 2030
- The Recycling Partnership worked with Orange County on a pilot of its tagging program
 - TRP is ready to work with Orange County on an expansion of this pilot when it is ready.

New MRF as Part of Hub and Spoke Model

David Gregory, Section Manager, Orange County Utilities Department

- The goal is to renovate the closed Orange County MRF to recycle single stream in a more efficient fashion to improve quality and output and ultimately get end markets to come to the Orlando region.

- Orange County MRF operated since 1990 and reached the end of its useful life. It requires upgrades, new equipment, and/ or reconstruction. It was upgraded in 2004 before recently shutting down
- He has a plan of how to get a new MRF and that will start with a request for information.

City of Orlando's New Recycling Ordinance

Joseph England, Sustainability Project Manager, City of Orlando

Joe detailed the City of Orlando's New Recycling Ordinance

- Ordinance details
 - Mike Carroll, Division Manager, Solid Waste, City of Orlando, was tasked with developing an ordinance for commercial and multi-family recycling that would work for those entities and the city
 - The ordinance has commercial and multi-family entities do three things:
 - Provide container for recycling
 - Develop a way to service the container
 - Submit a verification form to the city for approval so the City knows there is a recycling program in place
 - The ordinance will be instituted in phases. Exemptions are allowed and all phases are a guideline.
 - First phase is new construction. There is a six month grace period for those that are applying for new permits.
 - Second phase is for large properties. This is multi-family units with more than 250 units and commercial buildings with more than 200,000 square feet. They have to submit and implement a recycling plan within 12 months of the ordinance effective date.
 - Third phase is for multi-family buildings with 75-249 units and commercial buildings between 100,000 and 200,000 square feet. They have to submit and implement a recycling plan within 24 months of the ordinance effective date.
 - The fourth phase is for all other properties. They have to submit and implement a recycling plan within 48 months of the ordinance effective date.
- Stakeholder outreach
 - Over 12 months, the City has hosted and attended 25 meetings.
 - Reviewed with Waste Haulers and stakeholders – wanted it to be transparent.
- Hired some assistance for part-time and administrative duties around this ordinance, but he is the project manager and will be helping businesses, doing site visits, and looking at verification forms.

Waste Haulers & Processors Panel

The panelists provided a short update on the key initiatives/challenges they are seeing as the haulers and processors of much of the waste in the region.

Carrie Miller, Total Recycling Program Manager, Waste Management Inc. of Florida

- While China now has 0.5% specifications on prohibitives, WM has seen an increase in the residue of the material it is receiving.
 - The residue in 2016 was 15% and in 2018 it was 22%.
- Market diversification has resulted in lower commodity prices.
 - 40% drop in 2018
- MRF operating expenses have increased 12% since the China news.
 - WM spends an estimated \$15-\$25 million per year at 44 of its MRFs removing film from sorting screens, and it loses \$30 million in lost processing revenue during these daily shut downs.
- WM has secured new outlets for commodities; SE Asia, India, Mexico and the US
- Continual partnership with packaging councils to influence package design that is readily recyclable
- Robots created to help sort so MRF operating costs are reduced
- WM has taken action in Central Florida
 - WM Inc. Florida created a contamination task force
 - Hang tags on front-load and residential carts that are contaminated
 - All in-bound roll-off loads are graded at a MRF or transfer station

Don Collins, Manager of Municipal Sales, Republic Services

- Real Talk About Recycling - History of recycling
 - The 1970s were about pollution and bad water
 - The country embraced the war against pollution
 - The 1980s involved the proper operations of landfills, and in 1988, started to see more curbside offerings
 - In 1988, there were 1,000 curbside programs and today there are almost 10,000.
 - The 1990s involved building lots of waste management infrastructure.
 - Towards the end of the decade, grant money went away and lots of infrastructure went away
 - In the 2000s, there were more hub and wheel MRFs created and redesigned.
 - 2010s, transportation was an issue so the innovation was the automated side loader truck with 95 gallon carts. Participation increased but so did contamination.
 - Next decade – today! We are going to do it better
- Durable Recycling

- Can't assume anymore that the value of the recyclables will pay for the service. Have to consider the cost of recycling (collection fee + processing fee + disposal of residual - commodity sales)
- MRF was going to be handled the same as a landfill
- Pickup recycling and included in the price will be the cost of taking the material to processing
- Education has been a challenge. People need to be better educated on what items vs. materials are recyclable (e.g., aluminum bat is not recyclable but an aluminum can is).
- Measurements of U.S Recycling Success
 - Paper is worth zero or negative (tough stretch and re-negotiating)
 - Aluminum has a much higher CO2 savings per ton of material recycled than any other material.

Q&A with Don and Carrie

Q: So the China ban is increasing the cost of recycling?

- Yes. All recyclers are going through the same issue.

Q: Will the federal government intervene?

- This is more of a state issue. The question of "why recycle" is coming up more than ever before. One city cancelled its recycling program to save its residents \$2/month. Still others, recycle to save landfill space and making products out of the recyclable materials uses less energy and material than using raw materials.

Q: Should we move to volume-based recycling rather than weight?

- Recycling is very localized. Taking heavy weighted materials could mean less reduction in CO2. The state could restructure so the focus is less on tons and more on CO2.

Future of Beyond 34 Nationally

Scott Breen, Associate Manager, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation

Scott explained the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Beyond 34 expansion plan and how the pilot in the Orlando region informed this expansion plan.

- The Beyond 34 expansion plan has two parts: (1) apply refined model in a new expansion region; (2) develop online tools so any community can learn about the model and apply it
 - Funding for the expansion plan is coming from Walmart Foundation, Walgreens Boots Alliance, and the Plastics Industry Association
- There is a short list of seven cities

- Scott is talking to local stakeholders in each city
- Arizona State University is applying a decision-matrix to help inform the decision on the expansion region
- The expansion plan will run through early 2021. It would not be possible without the Orlando region pilot so thanks!

Discussion of Two Implementation Projects in Small Groups

Two long-form discussions focused on two implementation projects:

New MRF as Part of Hub and Spoke Model

Scott DeFife, Vice President, Government Affairs, Plastics Industry Association
David Gregory, Section Manager, Orange County Utilities Department

Background

- County's existing materials recycling facility (MRF) has operated since 1990. Current facility has reached the end of its useful life and requires upgrades, new equipment, or reconstruction
- Contract with MRF operator is currently under an extension that expires June 30, 2020
- County recycling program faces a number of challenges including lack of available funds to rebuild MRF and lack of committed tonnage to County MRF
- Due to condition of MRF equipment, materials are being transferred to out-of-county facilities to be processed
- One of first projects identified as a regional need by Beyond 34
- Orange County working to develop Request for Proposal for Public Private Partnership for a new recycling processing facility at our landfill
- Using Beyond 34 to leverage ideas and awareness of this opportunity

Recent Activities

- Continuing to work with Cities and other local government entities in region
 - Identifying tonnage to combine with County's 65,000 annual tons of recycling
- Completed recycling composition study to identify what's in the County's recyclables – finalize in next couple of days
 - Five collection zones
 - Percent contamination 25% to almost 50%
 - Most of contamination related to plastic bags and "fines"
 - Fines are broken glass and undifferentiated trash
 - Some contamination could be recyclable (e.g., film rigid plastics)

- Targeting contamination – continuing roll-out of Recycling Quality Improvement Program
 - Increased funding from increased MSBU rate
 - Conducted pilot last year, and saw positive results, working to increase
 - Discussing grant from The Recycling Partnership and Coca-Cola to have TRP help us expand and further develop plan
 - Hiring a consultant to support program, and augment staff with boots on the ground
 - Intention for other local governments to be able to piggy-back and leverage services throughout region
- Just completed evaluation of existing materials recycling facility (MRF) engineering review.
 - Address transfer station and MRF at landfill
 - Address status of building floors, walls, roof
 - RRT perform assessment of processing equipment

Opportunities

- Changes in recycling marketplace
- High percentage of contamination
- Working on public-private partnership (P3) procurement to contract with a firm to develop a new/enhanced MRF - design, build, own, operate, transfer (alternative service contract)
- Awareness of County’s MRF plans has been enhanced by participation in US Chamber of Commerce Foundation’s Beyond 34 program
- Plastics Industry Association (PLASTICS) volunteering to provide outside expertise to support
 - PLASTICS goal is to encourage processing of plastics, assist with developing end-markets to support circular economy, and highlight its involvement at its next National Plastics Expo at Orange County Convention Center in 2021
- County’s MRF planning
- Coordinating with cities concerning opportunities and partnerships for recycling program development

Next Steps

- Continue to develop P3 procurement documents for new MRF
 - Considering design, build, own operate, finance, (transfer) – driven by state statutes
 - Know need long-term deal to allow cost recovery of MRF operator
 - The more partners County brings to the table the better
 - New MRF – evaluation may include
 - Experience/team

- Service offered, scope
 - Cost to County and partners – payments/cost – financial component
 - Innovation and price stability
 - Transition plan
 - Other non-financial considerations
- Leverage available outside resources as appropriate, assuring transparency and fairness to all proposers
 - Question – how do we best solicit and engage ideas to support?
- As part of pre-procurement, provide opportunities for “marketplace of ideas” to bring together different potential processors, funders, equipment providers
- Use County Request for Information (RFI) process
 - Release RFI to gain as much information as possible on marketplace and opportunities
- Prepare draft Inter-local Agreement (and Letter of Intent) for working with cities on long-term MRF partnership

Tentative Project Timeline

- Finalize recycling comp study and facility evaluation in next week or two
- Finalize and release RFP for consulting services to support within 30 days
- Finalize and release RFI – next month or so
- Coordinate and develop “marketplace of ideas” meeting through Beyond 34 – June
- Release RFP – Late Summer/early fall
- Award contract first of year, 2020
- Commence service July 2020

Questions:

- What issues most important to proposers?
- How do we assure openness?
- How assure best connections between processors and end-users to promote circular economy?
- Is there a way to expedite the plan?
- Is there a company that help brings companies together to develop ideas to recycle materials?
 - There are companies that are reusing plastic bags to create walkways and sidewalks. Also, conferences bring people together all the time and there is hope that there will be further innovations to recycle plastic into different forms which will in turn increase demand and the continued use of the circular economy.

Coca-Cola’s World Without Waste Campaign and The Recycling Partnership’s Anti-Contamination Work

Jennifer Baugher, Sustainability Manager, Coca-Cola Beverages Florida
Jessica Kitt, Senior Utilities Maintenance Coordinator, Orange County Utilities Department
Jill Martin, Vice President, Technical Assistance, The Recycling Partnership

Coca-Cola World Without Waste

- Coca-Cola Beverages Florida (Coke Florida) is partnering with a number of organizations to create a more circular economy for bottles.
 - One example is Coke Florida's reverse vending machines where for each empty plastic bottle (it rejects those still full of liquid), the person inputting the bottle can choose to donate five cents to one of several charities.
 - There is currently one at UCF and FAU. One also travels, and Joe England expressed interest in one coming to City Hall at some point.
 - Coke Florida partnered with ZooTampa to do a beach cleanup in Tampa and to use the bottles collected from the beach cleanup to make new Coca-Cola bottles.
- Coca-Cola Beverages Florida is using the map in Beyond 34's recycling research that details the level of waste generation vs. the recycling rate for every county in Florida to drive where Coke Florida targets its efforts.
- Coke Florida is trying to make its production facilities zero waste to landfill with third party verification. It's working with GreenCircle Certified. Coke Florida has bottling facilities in Tampa, Hollywood, Orlando, and Jacksonville.

The Recycling Partnership's (TRP) Anti-Contamination Work

- There are several steps to TRP's anti-contamination work
 - Step 1. Sort things out with your MRF to see what their biggest pain points are and exactly what they accept.
 - Step 2. Communications. This can be in the form of an annual info card, curbside feedback (e.g., "oops" tags), top issue mailers, and top issue signage.
 - Important to have consistent messaging and direct feedback
 - Step 3. Results. In Atlanta, TRP saw the overall capture rate increase 27%, the overall contamination rate decrease 57%, and overall bagged recyclables decrease 62%.
- TRP's website has tools to address contamination
 - Anti-contamination kit
 - Free info cards, oops tags, icons, magnets, etc.
- Question and answer
 - What tech does TRP use when tagging?
 - TRP is partnering with Rubicon Global to build the tech for the tagging program. It's an app for the tablet or smart phone. In it one can document contaminants and take photos. Reports are generated in real time.

Orange County Pilot with TRP Materials

- Background
 - Focus was on 643 homes in the Park Manor subdivision
 - Carts were observed and tagged for eight weeks
 - The goals were to gather information, improve recycling, and assess cart tagging effectiveness
- Method
 - Three levels of tags: “oops;” “good try;” and “great job”
 - Upon a fifth oops tag, the cart is not collected
 - The field work involved solid waste staff going out ahead of the hauler and lifting the lid for a quick visual inspection.
- Primary findings
 - There were 2,965 set-out carts tagged
 - 433 oops tags; 1,342 good try tags; and 1,190 great job tags
 - Out of the houses observed, 61% set out recycling each week and 96% of homes set out recycling at least once during the eight week pilot.
 - Over the eight weeks, the “oops” tags went down a little bit, “good try” tags went down more than 10%, and “great job” tags increased more than 10%.
 - Of the non-recyclables in the recycling, plastic bags, film, and wrap were the most common
- Media and customer feedback
 - Most local outlets covered the media preview of the program
 - Positive feedback received in the field and through the Solid Waste hotline
 - They observed people actually waiting for the checkers to arrive and asking how’d they do
- Next steps
 - Eliminate the “good try” tag but keep “great job” and “oops”
 - Stop collecting contaminated carts after one “oops” tag
 - Always tag “oops” for any plastic bags, film, or wrap
 - Always tag “oops” tag for household hazardous waste and evaluate non-collection for any household hazardous waste
 - Continue to implement program Countywide in steps, with the goals of continuing educating residents, gathering data, and improving countywide recycling program
 - Release RFP to hire a consultant to assist with tagging
- Question and answer
 - Who paid for the labor to do the tagging?
 - In the pilot, Orange County paid for it. When this program is done on a larger scale, the hope is that a third party will contribute or pay for it.

Next Steps and Concluding Remarks

Scott Breen, Associate Manager, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation

Scott discussed with attendees next steps for the Beyond 34 effort in the Orlando region

- The four projects that the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation funded are happening and you heard from efforts others are leading such the City of Orlando's new recycling ordinance, commercial organics, the MFR, etc.
- Local stakeholders should use these local stakeholder meetings and the new local capacity to do more. Beyond 34 is meant to be a big tent and a launching pad for projects.
- Scott asked the group when it would like to meet next.
 - One suggestion was June so the County could shares results of the Request for Information regarding the MRF.

Scott thanked project leaders and teams for all their hard work thus far. Scott suggested that the Beyond 34 team will work to do the following between now and the next meeting:

- Identify who will organize these local stakeholder meetings and keep the effort going in the long-term
- Send out a local stakeholder roster so people can connect with each other on their own, and ask people to opt out if they do not want to be on this roster
- Send out notes from this meeting and include the google doc where people note their interest in specific projects
- Send an email in between meetings that provides an update on regional recycling efforts (both those projects that are funded through Beyond 34 and otherwise)

Scott emphasized a push for new projects. Just because there is currently no more funding from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation doesn't mean we stop at the projects already started.

Scott encouraged local stakeholders to send suggestions on when to have the next meeting in June.

One person asked when USCCF will identify and make the announcement of the next region for Beyond 34.

- Scott said the goal is to identify the next region by the end of March and make a public announcement soon thereafter.