



Metro



**Waste Prevention & Environmental Services**

# **Regional Waste Plan Progress Report**

**July 2024**

**Public service**

We are here to serve the public with the highest level of integrity

**Excellence**

We aspire to achieve exceptional results

**Teamwork**

We engage others in ways that foster respect and trust

**Respect**

We encourage and appreciate diversity in people and ideas

**Innovation**

We take pride in coming up with innovative solutions

**Sustainability**

We are leaders in demonstrating resource use and protection

**Metro's values and purpose**

We inspire, engage, teach and invite people to preserve and enhance the quality of life and the environment for current and future generations.

If you picnic at Blue Lake or take your kids to the Oregon Zoo, enjoy symphonies at the Schnitz or auto shows at the convention center, put out your trash or drive your car – we’ve already crossed paths.

**So, hello. We’re Metro – nice to meet you.**

In a metropolitan area as big as Portland, we can do a lot of things better together. Join us to help the region prepare for a happy, healthy future.

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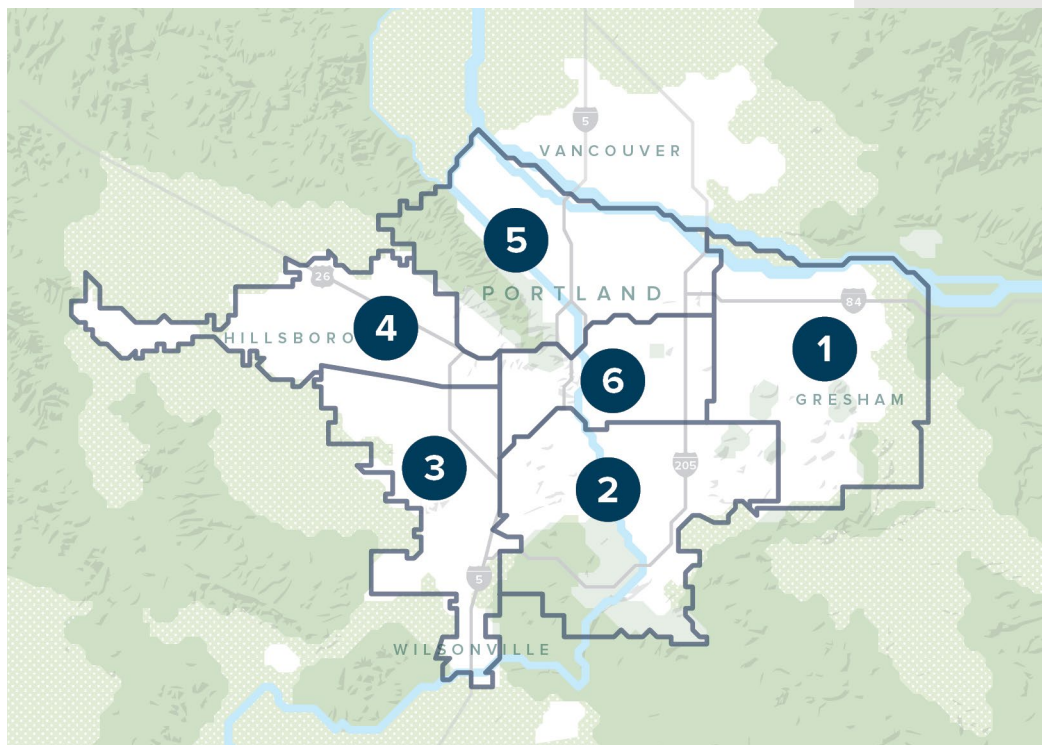
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# Executive Summary

The 2030 Regional Waste Plan is a far-reaching blueprint for how our region manages the impacts of the products we buy, use and throw away. The plan is guided by three overarching strategic priorities:

- preventing waste and reducing negative impacts of waste
- improving the garbage and recycling system
- sharing the benefits of the system.

This report highlights our collective progress toward these priorities and covers the year 2023. The successes are a result of extensive collaboration and partnerships between Metro and local governments, private industry, nonprofit organizations and community leaders.



## Regional Waste Plan progress so far

As of 2023, two thirds of actions are on track to reaching their goals. Metro and partners are carrying out many of the system improvements called for in the Regional Waste Plan through ongoing work and regional planning efforts. Significant efforts are focused on education to support better purchasing and consumption choices.

Looking ahead, we see opportunities to address remaining actions and to improve reuse efforts, increase waste prevention, advance disaster resilience and strengthen workforce equity.

### Waste prevention and healthy environment

Supporting better design, manufacturing, purchasing and consumption choices through public policy and education efforts

### Excellent, accessible and resilient garbage and recycling system

Improving service quality and access, while keeping services affordable, and building a more resilient system, ready for disasters and changing conditions

### Shared prosperity

Increasing equitable access to the benefits of the garbage, recycling and reuse economies by making careers available to all, raising wages, and sharing decision-making and funding

#### Design & manufacturing



#### Consumption & use



#### End-of-life management



#### Disaster resilience



#### Shared prosperity



■ Not started   ■ Facing obstacles   ■ On track or Completed



## Definitions and a new online tool

**NEW**

- Page 2 has new detailed definitions for the status of actions
- Check out a new [online tool](#) to read more details about the work to implement each action in 2023

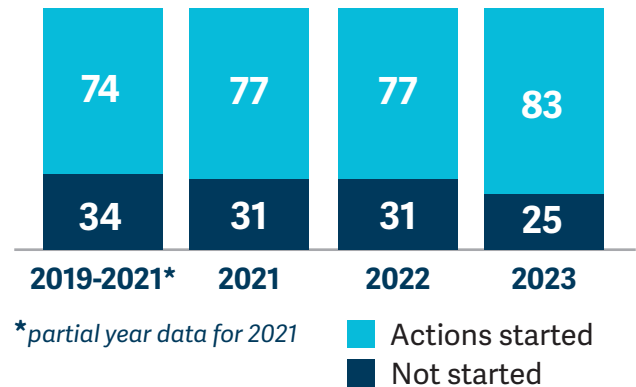
## Implementation successes and opportunities

As of 2023, work has begun on 83 of the 108 actions in the plan. Many actions are advanced through **ongoing** work by Metro and regional partners, which means the work has begun and is expected to continue, instead of being finished. This work includes waste prevention education, grants to increase reuse and recycling capacity, implementation of service standards, and cleanup of dumped trash.

For some actions, work in 2023 was in active **planning and development** phases. Examples include bulky waste policy, system facility planning and siting, and emergency preparedness and continuity of operations planning.

In 2023, work began on the largest number of actions compared to all previous years implementing the plan. Still, some of the plan's most aspirational actions remain "not started." These long-range actions serve as a north star to guide where we want to go in the future. These include actions advancing workforce diversity and policy that encourages design and manufacturing changes and reducing consumption.

Number of actions started and not yet started



### Spotlight on progress

#### Decal project finished



**6,000** multifamily properties have new signage about what can and cannot be recycled

#### Bulky waste collection study completed



**16 weeks** of bulky waste collection service tested at **39 multifamily properties** in Gresham

#### Community weighs in on future facility investments



**80** business, nonprofit and local government participants provided input on investment scenarios for the System Facilities Plan

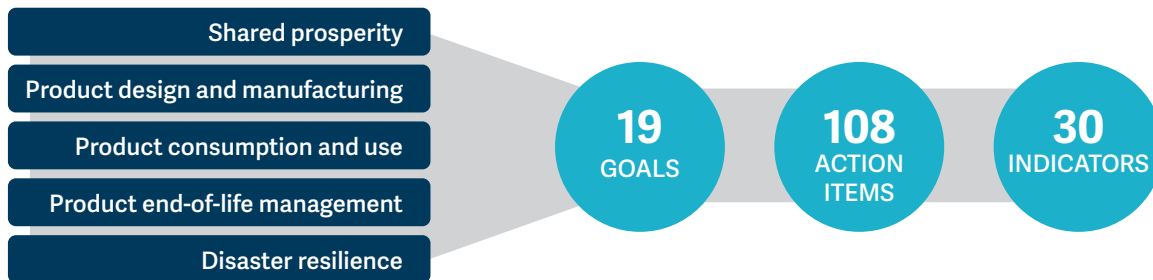
# Introduction

The [2030 Regional Waste Plan](#) is both a vision for greater Portland’s garbage and recycling system and a blueprint for achieving that vision. It was created in partnership with cities, counties, local businesses and community leaders to set direction for how we manage and improve the system between 2019 and 2030. Metro also collaborated with members of culturally specific community-based organizations who historically have had the least influence in the decision-making process to shape the garbage and recycling system. This helps ensure that as we implement the plan, we move toward a system that delivers benefits shared by all. The work to implement the plan continues to rely on partnerships and collaboration among local governments, businesses and communities.

## Navigating the plan and progress report

The Regional Waste Plan sets out goals in five areas of work addressing the impacts of materials – from production to disposal – and community needs within the garbage and recycling system. Action items within each goal represent concrete steps being taken to help reach the goal.

### Regional Waste Plan goal areas




This report is the fourth in a series of annual progress reports and covers the year 2023. This report evaluates progress toward each goal in the plan by monitoring the status of action items and by measuring indicators over time. The Regional Waste Plan calls for numeric indicators to be reported at least every three years. Indicators are not included in the 2023 report.


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## Definitions for action statuses

The status for each action in the Regional Waste Plan is determined using the following definitions.


 **Not started**  
Work on this action has not yet begun or little progress has been made on project planning or program development (and no active planning or development is taking place).

 **Facing obstacles**  
Work on this action has begun but may be facing one of these challenges:

- Time delays and/or completion dates significantly extended
- Changes to the scope of work
- Staff, budget, or other resource constraints
- Legal or statutory constraints
- Progress has been made, but the scope of progress is limited. Examples include system-wide actions where progress has only been made by one or a few partners, but the full scope of the action has not been reached.

 **On track**  
Work on this action is characterized by one of the following:

- **Work is ongoing:** Programs, services and work continue on an ongoing basis (e.g. have no defined end point or are required by statute) and are not facing obstacles to operation.
- **Work in planning or development phase:** Work is in active project planning and program development phases and is not facing significant obstacles.
- **Work is in execution phase, on track for completion:** Program or project-based work with a defined end point for which work is progressing on time and has adequate staffing and other resources to continue advancing the project or program to completion.

 **Completed**  
Program or project-based work with a defined end point that has finished.



Check out a new [online tool](#) to read more details about the work to implement each action in 2023.

*Note: The action statuses have been used to describe progress on the actions since the first progress report; 2023 is the first year that these detailed definitions were developed and applied to determine the status of actions.*

# Shared Prosperity

## Goal Area Progress

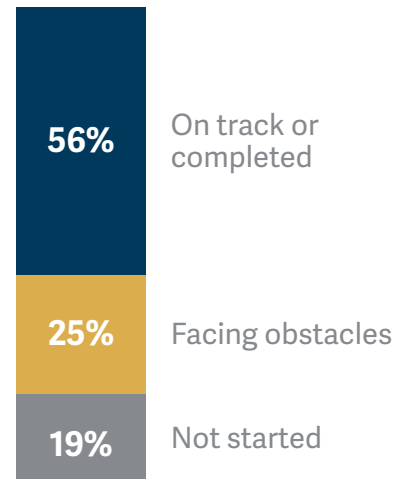
### Summary

This area of work is addressing barriers faced by communities of color and those who have been disproportionately impacted by inequities in the garbage and recycling system. Through the goals and actions in this section, Metro and local governments are making progress toward a future where all people have equitable access to the benefits of the garbage, recycling, reuse and repair economies.

### 2023 highlights include:

- Metro, in partnership with Centro Cultural, Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center, ELSO, Inc., Trash for Peace, Oregon Outdoor School, Friends of Outdoor School, Oregon Green Schools, National Wildlife Federation, and the Institute for Learning Innovation, developed the framework for a high school leadership program that responds to the legacies of systemic racism in outdoor science and supports community-based waste prevention projects.
- In 2023 the Regional Refresh Fund grant program awarded \$387,420 to 85 clean-up projects focused on litter/dumped trash, bulky waste collection, or graffiti abatement. To date, 44% of the program's funding has been awarded to organizations led by people of color and women, and 89% of projects have served an equity focus area or another underserved community.
- MetroPaint provided professional development opportunities for frontline staff, including English as a second language classes for English language learners, Commercial Driver's License certification, project management and supervisor trainings and participation in Association of Oregon Recyclers conferences.

### 4 Goals | 16 Actions





## Goal 1

Increase engagement of youth and adults historically marginalized from garbage and recycling decision-making by enhancing civic engagement and leadership opportunities.

Action		2023 Status
1.1	Increase representation of historically marginalized community members, including youth, on advisory committees, such as Metro and local government solid waste advisory committees	On track
1.2	Evaluate and refine a public sector paid internship program to increase engagement of youth and adults in garbage and recycling careers and decision-making, with an emphasis on communities of color and other marginalized communities.	Completed
1.3	Partner with organizations to engage youth in leadership opportunities for social, economic and environmental issues related to garbage and recycling.	On track

## Goal 2

Increase the percentage of garbage and recycling system revenue that benefits local communities and companies owned by people of color and other historically marginalized groups.

Action		2023 Status
2.1	Develop Metro and local government procurement policies to increase the amount of spending on solid waste-related services that goes to locally owned companies, with an emphasis on minority-owned and woman-owned businesses.	On track
2.2	Implement strategies in consultation with community organizations that can be adopted by local governments to ensure greater racial equity in the ownership and management of collection service providers.	Facing obstacles
2.3	Utilize grant programs to invest in businesses and non-profit organizations to strengthen regional efforts around reducing waste, making better use of the waste that is produced and helping foster economic opportunities for communities of color and others who have historically been left out of the garbage and recycling system.	On track

Not started
  Facing obstacles
  On track
  Completed

## City of Roses community enhancement grant elevates youth voices

In East Portland, a new youth-led grant committee invested in community resilience, family-friendly activities, support for kids aging out of the foster system and more. The funding came from a \$1 fee paid for every ton of solid waste disposed at the City of Roses transfer station.

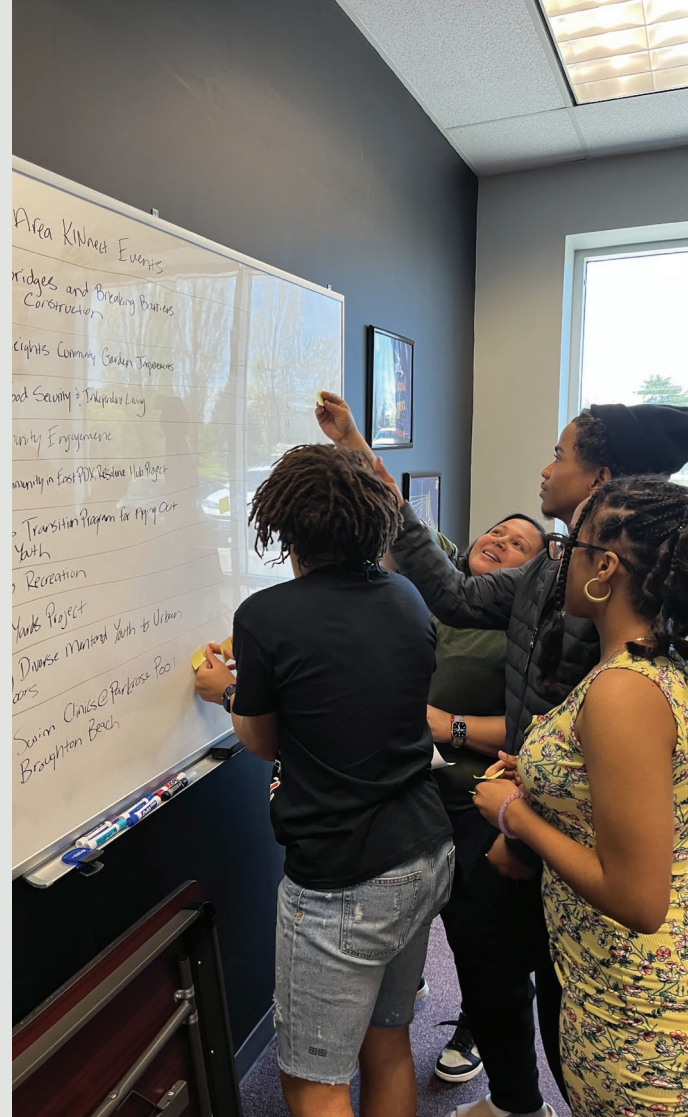
The group was made up of eight youth leaders from Parkrose High School and two adult advisors supported by the nonprofit Elevate Oregon. They worked throughout the school year to create guidelines, vet grant proposals, and decide which grantees would get funding.

Leo Marshall, 16-year-old member of the committee, said the group had a responsibility to make thoughtful choices. In 2023, they distributed a total of \$92,592.50 to six organizations serving East Portland.

“It’s something that we all took very seriously because we know that whatever we choose, it’s going to impact someone like us.”

”

Leo Marshall  
youth member of the Elevate Oregon grant committee



### Goal 3

Ensure that all jobs in the garbage and recycling industry pay living wages and include good benefits.

Action	2023 Status
3.1 Establish a living wage and benefits standard for the lowest-paid positions in the solid waste industry and update the standard on a regular basis.	On track
3.2 Incorporate “good jobs” provisions regarding wages, benefits, workforce diversity and career pathways into public sector solid waste investments, operations contracts, franchises, licenses and other procurement and regulatory instruments.	On track
3.3 Conduct baseline and regular follow-up studies of wages and benefits in the greater Portland area’s solid waste sector to inform “good jobs” provisions.	Facing obstacles
3.4 Reduce the use of temporary and contract workers in the region’s solid waste industry	Facing obstacles
3.5 Evaluate the use of Metro employees to fully operate Metro-owned transfer stations	On track

Not started      Facing obstacles      On track      Completed



## New recycling rules aim to improve the lives of frontline recycling sorters

Throughout the creation of the Recycling Modernization Act, advocates have asked how we can make our recycling system better. The act aims to make recycling more consistent and convenient while sharing responsibility with producers to ensure that recyclable materials are sent to environmentally and socially responsible recycling facilities and end markets.

On January 1, 2027, local governments will be prohibited from sending their recycling to commingled recycling processing facilities that do not provide living wages and supportive benefits to their workers. These potential benefits are being defined through a rulemaking process led by DEQ, which includes draft rules that set standards for wages, health insurance, life insurance and a retirement plan.

Gabriela Buamscha, president of the sustainability consultancy Lanin Iman, says the draft rules “walk the talk” of equity, elevating the needs of frontline workers who are often people of color and/or immigrants. These workers regularly risk injury from repetitive labor and sorting machinery accidents.

“ *The work is rough. It's so hard to work in those facilities. Equity is decent pay, a living wage, and benefits to the worker. It will make their lives easier and it will also attract more skill. It will retain people to do that job that is so important, recycling.* ”

Gabriela Buamscha  
president of Lanin Iman LLC, who advocated for workers during the second rulemaking of  
the Recycling Modernization Act



## Goal 4

Increase the diversity of the workforce in all occupations where people of color, women and other historically marginalized communities are underrepresented.

Action	2023 Status
4.1 Implement a workforce development and readiness program for garbage and recycling industry jobs.	On track
4.2 Develop a career pathways strategy that aims to increase the diversity of workers in all solid waste occupations.	Not started
4.3 Conduct baseline and regular follow-up studies of workforce diversity in the regional garbage and recycling industry, including an assessment of barriers to hiring and retaining people of color, women and other historically marginalized groups.	Facing obstacles
4.4 Work with private garbage and recycling service providers and community-based organizations to design and implement programs that address safety, bullying and harassment in the workplace throughout the solid waste industry.	Not started
4.5 In partnership with community-based organizations, create workforce development programs within the reuse sector that focus on people with barriers to employment.	Not started

■ Not started    ■ Facing obstacles    ■ On track    ■ Completed

# Product Design and Manufacturing

## Goal Area Progress

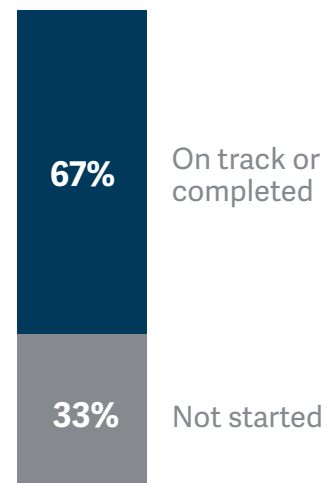
### Summary

Through this goal area, we are working to influence the design and manufacturing of products and packaging by advocating for changes in public policy. The goal is for manufacturers to become more responsible for the impacts of their products. The actions focus not only on reducing the amount of waste, but also shifting what's in it.

### 2023 highlights include:

- Washington County and Metro testified in favor of and advocated for the passage of HB 3220 to modernize Oregon's electronics recycling Extended Producer Responsibility program, which passed in 2023. City of Portland and Metro advocated for Right to Repair legislation (SB 1596), which passed in 2024.
- Metro supported the following bills The Beyond Toxics coalition put forward in 2023: SB 546 for cosmetics (notice of high priority chemicals of concern), HB 3043 for children's toys (regulation of harmful substances) and SB 426 for school chemicals (brand and product information reporting). SB 546 and HB 3043 both passed.

1 Goal | 6 Actions





## Goal 5

Reduce the environmental and human health impacts of products and packaging that are made, sold, used or disposed in Oregon.

Action	2023 Status
5.1 Advocate for legislation that minimizes chemicals of concern in products and packaging and requires the disclosure of product chemical data to consumers.	On track
5.2 Assist the Oregon Health Authority in implementing the 2015 Oregon Toxic-Free Kids Act, which requires manufacturers of children's products sold in Oregon to report products containing high-priority chemicals of concern.	On track
5.3 Partner with the State of Oregon to provide incentives to manufacturers for developing sustainable manufacturing techniques, including green chemistry, for products and packaging sold in Oregon.	Not started
5.4 Advocate for product stewardship legislation and other policy approaches that can achieve the greatest reduction in environmental and human health impacts from products and packaging made, used or disposed in the region.	On track
5.5 Advocate for legislation that would require building products sold and used in Oregon to be free of highly toxic materials.	Not started
5.6 Advocate for standards for high-impact products, including phase-outs or bans.	On track

■ Not started    ■ Facing obstacles    ■ On track    ■ Completed





## New and improved Extended Producer Responsibility programs to begin throughout Oregon

Metro and partners have been working to encourage legislation and help rulemaking for new statewide extended producer responsibility programs. These programs make companies responsible for managing the recycling or proper disposal of their products.

Over the next two years Oregonians will benefit from three new extended producer responsibility programs. A mattress stewardship program is set to start in 2024. A landmark plastic packaging stewardship program, called the Recycling Modernization Act, will begin operation in 2025. Expanded electronics recycling, known as the “new” Oregon E-cycles program will launch January 2026.

When producers share financial responsibility for the end-of-life management of their products, it can spur innovation to design things that are easier to reuse or recycle. These programs also fund collection and processing infrastructure, making it easier for consumers to drop off materials.

“ I’m looking forward to an increased opportunity to recycle more items – hopefully reducing landfill waste and illegal dumping.

”

Elizabeth Cole  
Recycling & Waste Reduction Program Coordinator, City of Beaverton



# Product Consumption and Use

## Goal Area Progress

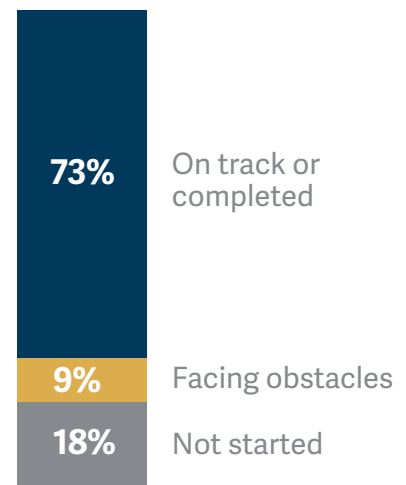
### Summary

Goals in this area focus on reducing environmental and health impacts of what we buy. Actions emphasize education and policy efforts to reduce impacts and support better purchasing choices. Education prioritizes culturally responsive efforts, with programs and services implemented in partnership with community organizations to reach historically marginalized groups. Policy actions in this area provide safer, lower-risk products and reduce the use of single-use items.

### 2023 highlights include:

- City of Gresham partnered with Multnomah County, City of Portland and Community Services Network to organize the first annual East County “Learn. Share. Do Climate Resilience Fair” at Centennial High School. The event included education on waste prevention, creative reuse, recycling and a DIY green cleaners station.
- Through the Food Waste Stops with Me campaign, Metro, cities, counties and industry partners provided technical assistance to food service businesses, including food waste prevention techniques, how to donate, and how to compost food scraps.
- The Eat Smart Waste Less program helps households shop, prepare and store food in a way that helps reduce food waste. The program, led by a team of cities and counties, provided a wide range of tips and resources in both English and Spanish.

### 2 Goals | 11 Actions



## Goal 6

Reduce product environmental impacts and waste through educational and behavioral practices related to the prevention and better purchasing choices.

Action		2023 Status
6.1	Provide culturally responsive and developmentally appropriate school-based education programs about the connections between consumer products, people and nature.	On track
6.2	Provide culturally responsive community education and assistance about the connections between consumer products, people and nature.	On track
6.3	Provide and increase accessibility to education and tools to help residents and businesses reduce their use of the single-use products with the greatest negative environmental impacts.	On track
6.4	Partner with communities of color and others to increase awareness about high-risk chemical products, reduce their use and decrease people's exposure to them.	Facing obstacles
6.5	Assist households and businesses in the adoption of practices that prevent the wasting of food and other high-impact materials.	On track
6.6	Support implementation of Oregon State University's (OSU) SolvePestProblems.org as a primary tool for education and resources on integrated pest management.	On track
6.7	Implement recognition programs for business efforts to prevent waste and minimize environmental impacts of the products they purchase.	On track

## Goal 7

Reduce product environmental impacts and waste through policies that support prevention practices and better purchasing choices.

Action		2023 Status
7.1	Implement procurement policies for Metro and local governments that prioritize the purchase of products and services with low environmental and human health impacts.	On track
7.2	Implement policies that will reduce the use of single-use products such as single-use plastic bags.	On track
7.3	Advocate for the reclassification of high-risk nonagricultural pesticides to restricted use status in Oregon.	Not started
7.4	Implement policies and programs that lead to construction of buildings that use fewer resources, including improvements to Oregon Reach Code and baseline building codes to address material selection preferences and restrictions, incentives for space-efficient homes and removal of barriers to adopting lower impact materials.	Not started

Not started
  Facing obstacles
  On track
  Completed

# Product End-of-Life Management

## Goal Area Progress

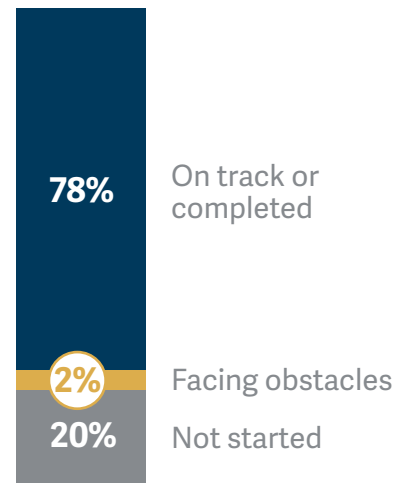
### Summary

While the ultimate goal is to prevent waste to begin with, the Portland region still needs a system that safely and conveniently manages products at the end of their useful life. The goal is to ensure that the programs and services not only protect human health and the environment, but that they do so in a way that meets the needs of all residents and all communities today and into the future.

### 2023 highlights include:

- Cities and counties continued to support neighborhood-scale reuse and repair by coordinating repair fairs, promoting lists of repair shops, supporting Libraries of Things, awarding grants to local schools to purchase durable silverware and a water bottle refill station, hosting clothing swaps and partnering with community organizations to educate community members about reuse and repair opportunities.
- Metro, cities and counties worked to develop a translated language glossary, which is a comprehensive document that lists commonly used waste and recycling terms and their translations in multiple languages. The glossary will also describe alternate translations, use cases, cultural context and dialect preferences.
- Metro coordinated 14 large scale and 37 small scale Household Hazardous Waste community collection and outreach events serving 4,000 customers.
- The City of Beaverton introduced a reduced rate program for garbage and recycling service. The City of Gresham and City of Portland are each working to develop reduced rate programs, with some in planning and exploratory phases, and at least one program likely to be adopted in 2024. Washington County adopted a reduced rate program in unincorporated Washington County in 2022.

9 Goals | 60 Actions





## Goal 8

Increase the reuse, repair and donation of materials and consumer products.

Action		2023 Status
8.1	Support efforts to ensure that surplus edible food desired by agencies serving communities experiencing hunger in the region is made available to them.	On track
8.2	Implement strategies to increase the salvage of building materials for reuse, without increasing exposure to toxics.	On track
8.3	Advocate for research-informed changes to building codes and other regulations to increase use of reused and deconstructed materials.	Not started
8.4	Expand the collection of reusable items at public and private transfer stations, in partnership with reuse and repair organizations.	On track
8.5	Invest in neighborhood-scale reuse and repair services and infrastructure.	On track
8.6	Support implementation of Oregon DEQ's Reuse, Repair and Extended Product Lifespan Strategic Plan.	Completed

## Goal 9

Increase knowledge among community members about garbage, recycling and reuse services.

Action		2023 Status
9.1	Provide culturally responsive education and assistance for garbage, recycling and reuse services to residents and businesses.	On track
9.2	Utilize Metro's Recycling Information Center to serve all residents and businesses in the region as a clearinghouse for prevention, reuse, recycling and disposal information.	On track
9.3	Ensure that community education and volunteer development courses, such as Master Recycler, are relevant, accessible and culturally responsive to all communities.	On track

Not started
  Facing obstacles
  On track
  Completed

## Goal 10

Provide regionally consistent services for garbage, recyclables and other priority materials that meet the needs for all users.

Action		2023 Status
10.1	Provide comprehensive collection services and supporting education and assistance for source-separated recyclables, source-separated food scraps and garbage, in compliance with state, regional and local requirements, including the Regional Service Standard, Business Recycling Requirement and Business Food Waste Requirement in Metro Code.	On track
10.2	Implement minimum service levels or performance standards for all collected materials for multifamily and commercial tenants.	On track
10.3	Implement regional standards for collection container colors, signage and other related informational materials for single-family, multifamily and commercial services.	Facing obstacles
10.4	Provide convenient, accessible and equitable collection of hazardous waste from households and Conditionally Exempt Generators, prioritizing communities with greatest need.	On track
10.5	Provide regularly occurring bulky waste collection service, with particular emphasis on multifamily communities and lower-income households.	On track
10.6	Establish standards for collection areas for existing and newly constructed multifamily properties to ensure residents have adequate access to garbage, recyclables and food scraps collection containers.	Not started
10.7	Partner with community health organizations to expand options for collection of hypodermic needles and other types of medical waste, prioritizing individuals with the greatest barriers to service.	On track
10.8	Advocate for statewide legislation or implement regional policies to increase the types of products and packaging for which manufacturers and retailers provide environmentally sound, convenient and accessible take-back programs.	On track

Not started
  Facing obstacles
  On track
  Completed

## New bin decals make recycling easier, addressing inequities

Over the years, residents of apartments and condos have told Metro that their garbage and recycling services weren't meeting their needs. One issue is signage – often signage is missing, in poor condition or hard to understand.

In 2023, Metro's community partners affixed new, consistent signage decals on all multifamily properties in greater Portland, ensuring that if people moved from one neighborhood to another, the information would be the same.

The decals were developed by Metro, local governments and community-based organizations, and rely mostly on photos with minimal words. The signage has also been translated into four languages – Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese and Simplified Chinese.

The environmental promoter crew at Trash for Peace helped make the switch to new decals. The team was made up of Spanish-speaking and bilingual people whose families all live in apartments. The job offered a flexible schedule, decent wages and the opportunity to advance Trash for Peace's mission of reducing waste and encouraging resilient communities.

“ *If we invest in reuse and repair, we are actually investing more in programs, policies, and actions that will make the most headway in reaching our climate change goals and in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as the majority of those emissions come from creating new products. The work is really important. Not just for us but for the community.* ”

Anallely Rodriguez  
field and outreach manager for Trash for Peace



## Goal 11

Address and resolve community concerns and service issues.

Action		2023 Status
11.1	Provide cultural competence training to customer service representatives at Metro, local governments and collection service providers.	On track
11.2	Improve feedback loops between haulers, local governments and Metro to address collection service issues for households and businesses.	Not started
11.3	Provide inclement weather notifications to customers in multiple languages and through a variety of media.	On track
11.4	Provide services to clean up illegal dumps on public property, prioritizing communities with greatest need.	On track
11.5	Research the root causes that contribute to illegal dumping and how they can be addressed.	Not started
11.6	Implement garbage and recycling collection services for people experiencing homelessness.	On track
11.7	Evaluate the need to expand and improve access to public collection containers to reduce litter and illegal dumping	On track

## Goal 12

Manage all garbage and recycling operations to reduce their nuisance, safety and environmental impacts on workers and the public.

Action		2023 Status
12.1	Minimize the health and safety impacts of solid waste operations on employees, customers and neighboring communities, with particular focus on low-income communities and communities of color, and identify methods for repairing past harm.	On track
12.2	Implement consistent and enforceable nuisance and safety standards for all solid waste facilities within the system.	On track
12.3	Implement environmental and safety standards for all on-road and off-road solid waste fleet vehicles.	Facing obstacles
12.4	Implement sustainability practices in the operation of public and private solid waste facilities to reduce energy use, utilize renewable energy, reduce equipment emissions, maximize the use of safe alternatives to toxic materials and achieve other environmental objectives.	On track
12.5	Regulate collection of solid waste materials by collectors not otherwise regulated by local governments and illegal dumping.	Not started
12.6	Regulate facilities accepting garbage, recycling, food scraps, yard debris and other solid waste generated from the region to advance progress toward achieving this plan's goals.	On track
12.7	Require post-collection material recovery for marketable materials that will advance progress toward achieving this plan's goals and targets.	On track
12.8	Evaluate on a continuing basis, the need to regulate different types of solid waste facilities not covered under current Metro regulation based on their actual and potential impacts on human health, the environment and neighboring communities. These facilities include, but are not limited to, dismantlers, wood waste grinding operations, landscapers, sludge processors, and specific or single material recyclers.	On track

Not started
  Facing obstacles
  On track
  Completed



## Metro completes multifamily bulky waste service study

From October 2023 to January 2024, Metro, in partnership with the City of Gresham, completed a study to track collection of large household items at multifamily properties. The study is part of a slate of efforts guided by the 2030 Regional Waste Plan values to improve garbage and recycling services for people living in apartments and other multifamily communities.

Bulky waste is waste that is too large to fit inside garbage bins, like couches, appliances and mattresses. Getting rid of these large items is especially difficult for people living in apartments, who may not have a large vehicle or know who to contact for a pickup.

The study tested weekly collection at 39 multifamily properties, serving about 2,800 apartment homes. The information gathered will be used to inform future policy and program planning.

“ For both me and the residents it was nice that instead of having to call out that they left their items out, it would just get picked up. ”

Property manager for an apartment complex that participated in the study





### Goal 13

Invest in communities that receive garbage and recyclables from Metro region so that those communities regard solid waste facilities as an asset.

Action		2023 Status
13.1	Expand the host community enhancement program to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>include all solid-waste-handling facilities that impact neighboring communities;</li> <li>increase funding;</li> <li>prioritize diversity, equity and inclusion elements in grant funding criteria.</li> </ul>	
13.2	Implement annual volunteer projects and collection/recycling events in neighborhoods affected by solid waste facilities.	
13.3	Require each solid waste facility to work toward a good neighbor agreement with its host	
13.4	Evaluate Community Benefit Agreements as a potential tool for garbage and recycling facilities to invest in host communities.	

### Goal 14

Adopt fees for all services that are reasonable, responsive to user economic needs, regionally consistent and well understood.

Action		2023 Status
14.1	Implement transparent and consistent annual rate-setting processes for all collection service providers.	
14.2	Implement transparent and consistent annual rate-setting processes for all facilities.	
14.3	Establish fees across the region that are consistent for like services.	
14.4	Implement a low-income rate assistance program for residential collection services.	
14.5	Evaluate alternative models for collection, processing and transfer services to identify which would deliver the best environmental, financial, efficiency and equity outcomes	
14.6	Implement strong financial performance reporting standards to provide greater certainty on the financial viability of facilities serving the Metro region.	
14.7	Require that local governments annually provide information to residents about the components of their garbage and recycling collection rate.	

Not started
  Facing obstacles
  On track
  Completed

## Goal 15

Improve the systems for recovering recyclables, food scraps and yard debris to make them resilient to changing markets and evolving community needs.

Action		2023 Status
15.1	Implement regionally consistent contamination reduction efforts to improve material quality, including education, sorting instructions, collection equipment changes, and customer feedback methods.	
15.2	Regularly assess the list of recyclable materials collected in the residential and business programs in the region relative to end-markets, life cycle environmental benefits, community needs and forecasting of future materials in the waste stream.	
15.3	Develop public-private partnerships to expand local markets for priority recyclable materials, with an emphasis on minority-owned and other business owners from historically marginalized groups.	
15.4	Fund investments to improve the performance of material recovery facilities through collection fees and/or other mechanisms.	
15.5	Facilitate the permitting of composting facilities to process mixed residential yard debris and food scraps, while ensuring minimal impacts on neighboring communities.	
15.6	Implement stronger linkages between recycling collection programs and material recovery facilities through processing performance standards, supply agreements, regulatory oversight or other means.	
15.7	Identify and implement changes to recycling collection programs and material recovery facility operations to meet the specifications of a broad range of markets.	
15.8	Advocate for statewide policies or implement regional policies that create a preference, incentive or requirement for use of recycling end-markets in Oregon and the Northwest.	
15.9	Advocate to expand the statewide bottle bill program to include additional containers	
15.10	Evaluate whether a policy to increase garbage tip fees would further incentivize waste prevention and recovery without harming ratepayers or providing revenue windfalls to transfer station operators.	

## Goal 16

Maintain a system of facilities, from smaller recycling drop-off depots to larger full-service stations, to ensure equitable distribution of and access to services.

Action		2023 Status
16.1	Locate garbage transfer stations and allocate material tonnage to them in a way that benefits the public, emphasizing geographic equity, access to service and a reduction in environmental and human health impacts.	
16.2	Locate recycling and food scraps transfer and recovery facilities to best benefit the public relative to geographic equity and access to service, and to reduce environmental and human health impacts.	
16.3	Improve interagency and community collaboration on siting and authorizing proposed solid waste facilities to reduce potential impacts on neighboring communities.	
16.4	Maintain public ownership of facilities to ensure that a range of services are accessible to residents at equitable and affordable fees.	
16.5	Evaluate the feasibility of establishing a publicly owned facility in Washington County to accept and transfer garbage, recycling, food scraps, household hazardous waste and other materials.	
16.6	Expand and improve access to services provided at Metro South Transfer Station.	
16.7	Implement the Metro Transfer System Configuration policy.	

Not started
  Facing obstacles
  On track
  Completed



## International garbage and recycling symposium inspires local solutions

In September 2023, Metro held a reuse, recycling and garbage system symposium at the Oregon Convention Center. The event hosted an international panel of experts who shared how they address the big waste challenges in their communities, for the System Facilities Plan, which is looking at improving greater Portland's regional waste infrastructure.

A workshop followed the discussion where representatives from local governments, haulers, reuse nonprofits and businesses weighed in on potential facility investments to fulfill the goals of the 2030 Regional Waste Plan.

Stakeholders considered investment scenarios that could increase access, boost reuse and repair opportunities, and mitigate the negative impacts of climate change. When asked about the event, Metro Councilor Mary Nolan spoke of the opportunities to make upstream impacts through innovation and cooperation.

**“** *Waste management services are the cornerstone of a sustainable future for our community. The symposium highlighted the opportunities to shift our focus upstream and collaborate with manufacturers to reduce waste at its source and embrace reuse models* **”**

**Metro Councilor Mary Nolan**  
Metro Councilor representing Metro District 5

# Disaster Resilience

## Goal Area Progress

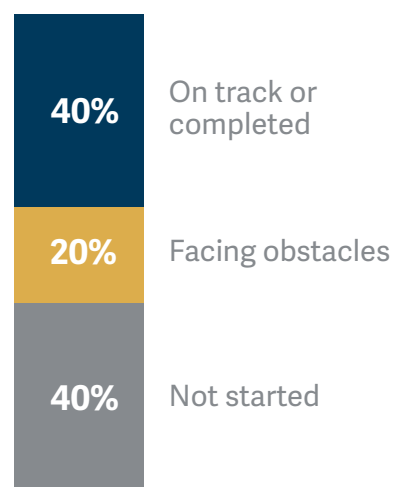
### Summary

The region’s garbage and recycling system must be resilient and prepared to recover quickly after a disaster, and the recovery process should minimize harmful impacts to local communities. The goals and actions ensure the region will be ready to implement the debris operations before a disaster happens.

### 2023 highlights include:

- The regional Solid Waste Disaster Preparedness Workgroup worked to develop a regional solid waste emergency management response and recovery framework, with completion expected in 2024.
- Metro transfer stations developed a crisis communications plan and contact process. A disaster debris tabletop exercise was conducted in June 2023 with Metro staff. Additional planning for regional disaster messaging and future exercise development is expected following the completion of the framework.

### 3 Goals | 15 Actions



### Goal 17

Effectively coordinate public and private partners in planning for the impact of disasters on the solid waste system.

Action	2023 Status
17.1 Develop a regional solid waste emergency management response and recovery framework in partnership with local governments and community organizations that prioritizes those most vulnerable in a disaster.	On track
17.2 Conduct periodic exercises to test and practice the implementation of disaster debris plans.	On track
17.3 Develop a coordinated preparedness and response messaging program that is accessible and culturally responsive.	On track
17.4 Develop a database of existing public and private solid waste infrastructure capabilities that can be integrated with other public databases.	Facing obstacles





## Goal 18

Ensure routine garbage and recycling collection, processing, transport and disposal operations can be restored quickly following a system disruption.

Action	2023 Status	
18.1	Implement strategies to maximize access to critical solid waste infrastructure during disruptions.	Not started
18.2	Implement requirements for solid waste system service providers to prepare and maintain emergency operations and continuity of operations plans.	On track
18.3	Prioritize the use of the current solid waste infrastructure for the processing of normal garbage and recycling, rather than for disaster debris, following a debris-generating incident.	Not started
18.4	Develop disaster resiliency standards for the design and construction of new facilities or when existing facilities are renovated.	Facing obstacles
18.5	Develop engineering and financing strategies to facilitate the seismic retrofit of existing public and private solid waste infrastructure.	Not started
18.6	Conduct periodic assessments of solid waste system facilities for vulnerabilities to different hazards.	Not started

■ Not started   ■ Facing obstacles   ■ On track   ■ Completed

### Grant program helps governments deal with disaster debris

In February 2021, a major ice storm hammered greater Portland – arctic air brought below freezing temperatures, blanketing the area in 10 inches of snow. Frozen tree limbs snapped off and littered the streets, leaving local governments to literally pick up the pieces.

After this storm, local governments asked if Metro could help fund disaster debris costs. Since then, Metro launched the Disaster Debris Management Grant program and began to set aside funding in the grant reserve, which had accumulated over \$719,000 by the end of 2023.

Staff worked quickly to create program guidelines and a website to host application information. By the end of 2023, Metro informed local jurisdictions that the program was operational. Soon after, the grant program distributed its first-ever funding for debris cleanup for an emergency winter storm event in January 2024.





## Goal 19

Plan disaster debris response operations to expedite the clearance and removal of debris, making the best use of locally-based services and materials and maximizing recovery.

Action	2023 Status
19.1 Identify and pre-authorize debris management sites throughout the region.	On track
19.2 Develop incentives for debris management contractors to prioritize purchasing services and materials from locally owned companies, with an emphasis on minority-owned and woman-owned businesses.	On track
19.3 Develop agreements and contracts with service providers and partner jurisdictions to ensure rapid mobilization of regional and out-of-region resources during emergency response operations.	Facing obstacles
19.4 Develop strategies for the safe reuse, recycling and disposal of materials following a debris-generating incident.	Not started
19.5 Create incentives or requirements for debris management contractors to collect and separate debris materials for reuse and recycling.	Not started

■ Not started   ■ Facing obstacles   ■ On track   ■ Completed

