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This plan was informed by interest holder engagement conducted with members of New Mexico’s Recycling and Illegal Dumping (RAID) Alliance and reflects input gathered through structured listening sessions and related discussions.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

New Mexico is a state defined by its landscapes, communities, and strong sense of place. With over 121,000 square miles, a population of approximately 2 million people, and a large share of rural, tribal, and federally managed lands, the state faces unique challenges in delivering consistent, convenient, safe, and cost-effective materials management services.

This Circular Economy Plan (CEP) is being developed alongside the State's ongoing Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP), and where referenced, the Solid Waste Management Plan will be referred to as the SWMP. Together, these efforts provide a coordinated framework to strengthen New Mexico's materials management system over time.

What is a Circular Economy?

We use the definition established by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation:

"The circular economy is a system where materials never become waste and nature is regenerated."

In a circular economy, products and materials are kept in circulation through processes like maintenance, reuse, refurbishment, remanufacture, recycling, and composting. The circular economy tackles climate change and other global challenges, like biodiversity loss, waste, and pollution, by decoupling economic activity from the consumption of finite resources.

The circular economy is based on three principles, driven by design:

- [Eliminate waste and pollution](#)
- [Circulate products and materials \(at their highest value\)](#)
- [Regenerate nature](#)

Early engagement with the New Mexico Environment Department and members of the Recycling and Illegal Dumping (RAID) Alliance made clear that illegal dumping is one of the most visible, persistent, and costly challenges facing communities across the state. Interest holders consistently emphasized the need to both prevent illegal dumping and address existing material streams through a combination of public education and consistent, effective enforcement that is coordinated statewide across local, county, tribal, federal, and state partners. In response, this plan prioritizes illegally dumped materials as a first-order focus of the CEP, recognizing that prevention through education, access, and enforcements are the most immediate and cost-effective opportunity to reduce environmental harm, protect public health, and restore community trust.

A System Under Pressure

This CEP provides a flexible, phased roadmap to build a more responsible and resilient materials management system. It is grounded in the principles of the circular economy, where materials are kept in use, waste is reduced at the source, and natural systems are regenerated. Achieving this vision will take time, but with practical, coordinated action, it is within reach.

New Mexico's current system performance underscores the urgency of action. The state's diversion rate is approximately 15%, compared to a national average of over 30%, with the majority of materials still being disposed. At the same time, New Mexico generates an estimated 3.9 million tons of waste annually, with relatively high per-capita generation.

At the same time, worker safety risks are increasing. Lithium-ion battery fires are becoming more frequent in solid waste and recycling facilities, posing serious hazards to essential workers and increasing operational costs. Household hazardous waste (HHW), paint, and bulky materials present additional risks and management challenges. End-of-life (EOL) costs are often externalized onto local governments and ratepayers. Shifting responsibility upstream and embedding these costs into product systems is essential to building a safer, more equitable system.

Collection, processing, and manufacturing infrastructure and market gaps further strain system performance. While New Mexico has existing reuse, recycling, and composting capacity, collection systems and market incentives are not consistently aligned to fully utilize those assets. Valuable materials are often transported out of state for processing, resulting in lost economic opportunity, increased emissions, and system vulnerability. Rural and tribal communities face additional barriers related to distance, scale, and jurisdictional complexity.

This plan focuses on practical, scalable steps beginning in the near term. There is no single policy or technology that will solve these challenges. Instead, the CEP advances a coordinated set of actions to reduce waste at the source, expand access to convenient collection, maximize the use of existing infrastructure, and strengthen in-state markets and responsible end uses.

A central principle of this plan is that recycling only works when materials are turned into new products and packaging. Strengthening material quality, improving product design, and aligning procurement and market demand are critical to ensuring that materials collected in New Mexico are used productively rather than exported, landfilled, or mismanaged.

Evaluating Emerging Materials & Technologies

As the world works to achieve a circular economy, new materials and technologies are being brought to market and proposed for integration into New Mexico's solid waste,

recycling, composting, and materials management system. Some of these materials are labeled as “compostable” or “recyclable,” while new facilities are being introduced as part of the “recycling” system.

Innovations in materials include biobased alternatives, such as foam-like products made from shrimp shells, as well as petroleum-based materials that may contain residuals not conducive to circularity. Other states have begun grappling with how these materials are labeled and managed, and these discussions will continue at both the state and national level. New Mexico should be prepared to engage and align policies to meet the State’s needs.

At the same time, a range of processing technologies, often described as chemical, molecular or advanced recycling, what we call “chemical processing” because they are not assumed to be defined as recycling, are being brought to market by investors and developers. While these technologies vary in feedstock and process and may play a role over time, they remain in relatively early stages of development and are not yet fully understood but are almost always extremely expensive. Some technologies labeled as “recycling” do not result in new products or packaging, instead producing fuels or other outputs that do not meet circular economy goals. National discussions are ongoing to define what chemical processing is and its different types such as pyrolysis and dissolution, and New Mexico would want to be a part of these discussions and determine the most appropriate technologies for the State based on the latest costs, science and needs. Consideration should be given to developing an infrastructure plan and permitting strategy to properly vet potential new projects to ensure the needs of the State are protected and elevated in new facility proposal discussions.

Transparency around feedstocks, processes, energy use, emissions and end products will be essential to determine whether these technologies meet the State’s definition of recycling.

The State is encouraged to proactively convene stakeholders and permitting authorities to develop clear evaluation criteria, establish consistent definitions, and ensure readiness to assess how and whether emerging materials and technologies should be integrated into New Mexico’s system.

The Plan’s Five Strategic Goals

The CEP advances a portfolio of strategies, including extended producer responsibility (EPR) systems, deposit return systems, market development incentives, state procurement alignment, regional coordination, and harmonized education and enforcement. These approaches are designed to work together to create a more stable, equitable, and effective system.

The plan establishes five strategic goals:

1. Reduce Illegal Dumping & Environmental Harm

2. Internalize End-of-Life Costs through Shared Responsibility
3. Strengthen In-State Markets & Infrastructure
4. Improve Access and Equity Across Rural and Tribal Communities
5. Improve Data, Coordination, and Consistency

These goals are supported by near-term priority actions focused on high-impact materials, including scrap tires, batteries, organics, and household hazardous waste, as well as system-wide improvements that remove barriers, increase efficiency, and improve outcomes.

A circular economy in New Mexico does not mean eliminating disposal overnight. It means designing systems that reduce waste first, internalize costs, protect workers and communities, and keep materials and economic value circulating within the state for as long as possible.

Achieving this vision will require shared responsibility and coordination across producers, consumers, local governments, tribal communities, state agencies, and private sector partners. With clear policy signals, strategic investment, and sustained collaboration, New Mexico can build a materials management system that is safer, more resilient, and economically stronger.

1. CURRENT CONDITIONS IN NEW MEXICO

Based on available data and findings from the ongoing development of the State's Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP), New Mexico's materials management system is characterized by low diversion rates and a heavy reliance on disposal.

The state's diversion rate is estimated at approximately 15%, less than half the national average of 32%.

New Mexico generates an estimated 3.9 million tons of waste annually, with relatively high per-capita generation compared to national benchmarks (10.2 pounds per person per day compared with the national average of 4.9).

To ensure that achieving a circular economy is affordable, the most cost-effective place to start is in source reducing the waste generated, which will be a theme throughout the CEP.

New Mexico's materials management landscape reflects both strengths and constraints. The state's vast rural and tribal lands, and jurisdictional complexity, including tribal sovereignty and independent permitting authority, create unique challenges and opportunities in delivering consistent services statewide. At the same time, foundational programs and emerging infrastructure provide a base upon which a stronger circular economy can be built.

Illegal dumping remains one of the most visible and persistent challenges. Scrap tires, mattresses, televisions and electronics, paint, appliances, and other bulky materials frequently appear in rural areas, on federal lands, tribal lands, and private property. These products cause environmental damage, provide homes for vectors including mice and mosquitos, are expensive to clean up, and cause public frustration.

Several factors contribute to ongoing dumping. Long travel distances to landfills or transfer stations (disposal locations), disposal costs, limited or inconsistent collection options, and lack of enforcement and awareness of alternatives all influence behavior. In some areas, generational habits and cultural norms reinforce improper disposal practices. Enforcement is often not prioritized due to limited staffing and competing priorities. While free collection days and the RAID program have produced good results, the funding is never enough to meet the demand.

Public health and worker safety concerns are intensifying. Lithium-ion batteries are increasingly causing fires in solid waste and recycling facilities. These fires pose serious hazards to essential workers, disrupt operations, and increase fire suppression and insurance costs. Many batteries are embedded in products and not easily removed, heightening risk during collection and processing. Paint and other HHW products present disposal challenges due to a ban on the disposal of free liquids. Heavy and bulky materials create lifting and handling hazards. Tires and mattresses can accumulate water

and create vector concerns. In many cases, downstream facilities and local governments are absorbing risks and costs that originate upstream in product design and distribution systems. When it comes to product waste, the producers have the greatest ability to reduce EOL costs because they make the design and marketing decisions - that is why EPR policies are so important to drive the reduction of waste first and then reduce the cost of recycling.

Infrastructure and market capacity are uneven across material types. Some in-state processing capacity exists, particularly for organics and certain fiber materials. Composting operations have indicated available capacity that could accept additional organic materials, including landscaping waste and other suitable feedstocks. However, collection systems are not aligned to utilize that capacity. In some regions, materials that could be diverted are still landfilled due to lack of convenient collection or failing to ban it from disposal or insufficient market incentives such as deposits.

For other materials, including scrap tires and certain electronics, processing and recycling occurs primarily out of state. Transporting materials outside New Mexico increases hauling costs, reduces system resilience, and limits opportunities for local economic development. Without reliable feedstock and the right policy signals, private investment in in-state infrastructure will be limited. The state can address this via procurement strategies, permit streamlining, and streamline permitting process to incentivize infrastructure development.

Rural and remote communities face disproportionate burdens. Long distances to facilities, limited staff capacity, and smaller material volumes increase per-capita service costs and reduce market attractiveness. Tribal communities operate within additional jurisdictional complexity and may face distinct infrastructure and funding constraints, but those differences in permitting and having sovereignty may influence behavior; when proper disposal is inconvenient or costly, compliance declines.

Reliable and actionable data is not consistently available across all material streams. While there is clear evidence of illegal dumping, fire risks, and infrastructure gaps, standardized reporting mechanisms are not developed statewide. Policy implementation is often constrained by funding limitations, staffing capacity, and differences in local government capacity and priorities across regions. Communities have demonstrated willingness to innovate, but sustained implementation requires coordination and stable resources to increase efficiency.

These conditions form the foundation for the system-level challenges addressed in the next section.

2. CORE SYSTEM CHALLENGES

New Mexico's materials management challenges are not isolated operational problems. They reflect structural gaps in responsibility, funding, market development, infrastructure alignment, and coordination. Achieving a Circular Economy requires confronting these structural system-level barriers directly.

2.1. Externalized End-of-Life Costs

For many priority products, including scrap tires, mattresses, electronics, paint, large appliances, and lithium-ion batteries, the costs of collection, processing, and risk management fall primarily on local governments and waste ratepayers. Producers are not responsible for downstream impacts. Without mechanisms that internalize end-of-life costs into product systems, costs are socialized onto other people who didn't choose to buy or benefit from the product, making their lives more unaffordable and local programs remain underfunded and reactive rather than preventive.

2.2. Unstable & Insufficient Funding

The RAID Alliance funding provides critical support, but demand consistently exceeds available resources. Many local efforts rely on grants or periodic collection events rather than predictable, dedicated funding streams. Without stable revenue tied to material generation, communities cannot plan long-term investments in infrastructure, education, or enforcement.

2.3. Market Fragility & Out-of-State Dependence

Several materials are transported out of state for processing, increasing costs, and limiting local economic benefits. In-state processors require reliable feedstock and policy stability to scale operations. Without procurement alignment, recycled content incentives, disposal bans or clear market signals; private investment in processing infrastructure remains limited.

2.4. Domestic End Market Gaps & Supply Chain Misalignment

While materials are collected and, in some cases, processed for recycling, New Mexico lacks sufficient in-state end markets and manufacturing demand to consistently manage recovered materials. As a result, valuable feedstock leaves the state, increasing transportation costs, emissions, road damage, and system vulnerability while limiting opportunities for local jobs and economic development.

Weak or inconsistent demand for recovered materials creates uncertainty for processors and discourages private investment in collection and management infrastructure. Without reliable end markets, even well-designed collection systems cannot achieve long-term sustainability – we need consistent “market pull”. Interest holders identified unstable end markets as a key barrier to advancing a circular economy.

In addition, supply chains are not consistently aligned to aggregate, transport, and deliver materials at the scale and quality required by end users. Opportunities exist to improve regional coordination, and feedstock aggregation to support market development and attract in-state processing and manufacturing.

2.5. Infrastructure Misalignment & Gaps

Some capacity exists within the state, particularly for composting, yet collection systems and market incentives are not consistently aligned to fully utilize it. Other material streams, including bulky waste and certain electronics, lack adequate in-state solutions. Building new facilities alone will not resolve system breakdowns if feedstock, funding, and policy alignment remain inconsistent.

2.6. Geographic Scale & Jurisdictional Complexity

As previously noted, New Mexico's large rural footprint increases hauling distances and service costs. Smaller communities may not generate sufficient volumes to make transportation to markets cost-effective or to attract private investment. Tribal lands and lands managed by the Federal government require more collaboration to ensure coordination on enforcement. These realities require regional and tailored approaches rather than uniform mandates.

2.7. Limited Enforcement Capacity

While penalties exist for illegal dumping, enforcement resources are limited. Enforcement alone cannot overcome barriers such as distance, cost, and lack of convenient alternatives. Prevention depends on making the materials management process easy, clear, affordable, and accessible.

2.8. Worker Safety Risks from Product Design

Facilities are increasingly managing products designed without end-of-life considerations. Lithium-ion battery fires are a clear example of upstream design decisions creating downstream hazards. Without stewardship mechanisms and design incentives, essential workers will continue to absorb disproportionate risk.

2.9. Data and Measurement Gaps

Consistent statewide data on material flows, illegal dumping patterns, and fire incidents are limited. Without standardized reporting and performance tracking, it is difficult to prioritize investments and measure progress.

Together, these structural challenges demonstrate that incremental operational adjustments will not be sufficient. A circular economy approach requires coordinated policy signals, dedicated funding mechanisms, shared responsibility across the value chain, and infrastructure strategies that reflect New Mexico's geographic and economic realities.

3. STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Achieving a circular economy in New Mexico requires coordinated progress across materials, markets, funding systems, and jurisdictions. The following five strategic goals address the structural challenges identified in this plan and provide a framework for action over the near, mid, and long term.

1. Reduce Illegal Dumping & Environmental Harm
2. Internalize End-of-Life Costs through Shared Responsibility
3. Strengthen In-State Markets & Infrastructure
4. Improve Access and Equity Across Rural and Tribal Communities
5. Improve Data, Coordination, and Consistency

3.1. Reduce Illegal Dumping & Environmental Harm

Illegal dumping must be addressed through a multi-pronged strategy of Education, Eradication, and Enforcement. Scrap tires are a visible and recurring product of concern and serve as an initial priority for system-wide improvement.

Key objectives to achieve this goal are:

- Reducing dumping of scrap tires, mattresses, electronics, paint, and bulky waste
- Targeting known hotspots, including areas near rural highways and lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management
- Expanding convenient and affordable disposal options
- Strengthening coordination across local, state, tribal, and federal jurisdictions
- Address frequently littered items including plastics
- State procurement alignment buying Rubberized Asphalt Concrete and other products made from in-state and domestic recycled materials.

3.2. Internalize End-of-Life Costs through Shared Responsibility

A circular economy requires that product systems account for downstream impacts and by doing that, sends an economic signal to manufacturers to reduce end-of-life costs by changing product design. Local governments should not bear sole responsibility for managing products where producers not only make the design and marketing decisions that lead to end-of-life costs, but they profit from the sale of the product and externalize the EOL costs onto others.

Key objectives to achieve this goal are:

- Develop EPR/ stewardship systems for priority materials such as batteries, tires, mattresses, electronics, and beverage containers
- Embed collection and recycling costs into product systems

- Provide stable funding for education, infrastructure, and enforcement
- Avoid unfunded mandates on local jurisdictions

3.3. Strengthen In-State Markets & Infrastructure

Building a resilient circular economy in the state requires not only collecting and processing but ensuring there is consistent preferably in-state demand for these materials. Strengthening New Mexico's end markets retains economic value, reduces reliance on out-of-state processing, and creates a more stable and predictable system.

Key objectives to achieve this goal are:

- Increasing feedstock to existing composting operations with available capacity
- Strengthening in-state manufacturing demand for recovered materials
- Supporting development of in-state processing for scrap tires, mattresses, and electronics
- Aligning state and institutional procurement policies to support local markets
- Encouraging procurement policies that prioritize recycled content
- Providing market development incentives to attract private investment and spur economic development, including attracting new processors and manufacturers for priority products
- Improving coordination across collection, processing, and end users to ensure materials meet quality and volume requirements

Retaining valuable materials within the state supports local economic development, strengthens supply chain resilience, and ensures materials collected within the state are remade into new products and packaging rather than exported, landfilled, incinerated, or illegally dumped as waste.

3.4. Improve Access and Equity Across Rural and Tribal Communities

Solutions must reflect New Mexico's geographic scale and jurisdictional complexity. Rural and tribal communities face higher service costs and longer travel distances.

These objectives are:

- Expanding convenient collection access in remote regions
- Supporting regional coordination and back-hauling strategies
- Providing targeted funding for under-resourced jurisdictions
- Ensuring coordination across tribal lands and federal lands

3.5. Improve Data, Coordination, and Consistency

Clear data identified for collection and how it will be collected, harmonized messaging, and coordinated governance are essential to sustained progress.

These objectives are:

- Standardizing data collection and reporting across material streams
- Harmonizing education and public-facing messaging statewide
- Improving interagency coordination
- Aligning permitting and implementation processes where feasible

4. PRIORITY MATERIALS AND ACTIONS (0–3 YEARS) 2026-2029

The near-term actions prioritize materials that present the most immediate risks to public health and safety, contribute significantly to illegal dumping, or have existing infrastructure that can be better utilized in the short term.

Priority materials for the 0–3-year timeframe include:

1. Scrap tires, due to their prevalence in illegal dumping and environmental impact
2. Loose and medium-format batteries, due to increasing fire risks and safety concerns and system costs as well as other household hazardous waste products specifically mentioned for short-term solutions include paint and electronics
3. Organics including yard waste and food waste, due to volume and opportunity, are prioritized for source reduction, and food recovery for human consumption, followed by diversion to existing composting facilities.
4. “Clean Technologies” such as wind turbines and blades, photovoltaic panels, and battery walls.

Summary of Priority Actions in the Next Three Years:

- Identify and remove regulatory barriers through state-led policy and permitting updates
- Reduce organics at the source through statewide and local public education campaigns, prioritizing food waste prevention and food recovery for human consumption
- Increasing organics diversion for materials not source-reduced, including on-site practices and collection systems
- Assess and maximize use of existing infrastructure through state-led analysis and local implementation before developing new capacity

- Identify regulatory, market, and operational barriers to fully utilize current and emerging processing capacity through coordinated state and industry engagement
- Evaluate sales or disposal bans through legislative and regulatory processes for products and materials that undermine circular economy outcomes
- Address high-cost material streams, including household hazardous waste, through state policy, producer responsibility systems and coordinated funding
- Increase proper management of scrap tires through expanded collection programs, market development and coordinated illegal dumping prevention efforts

Convene the Recycling and Illegal Dumping (RAID) Alliance and additional partners to coordinate statewide response to illegal dumping

4.1. Convene with energy providers and recyclers to discuss potential solutions for both residential and industrial generated “clean technologies” that currently have no end-of-life plan. Identify potential solutions and develop plans to address windmill blades, solar panels, and battery walls. Implement a Scrap Tire & Illegal Dumping Reduction Strategy

Scrap tires are one of the most visible and persistent illegally dumped materials in New Mexico. Addressing tire dumping provides an opportunity for measurable early progress while strengthening coordination across jurisdictions.

- Prioritize implementing EPR for tires
- Identify and prioritize illegal dumping hotspots statewide
- Expand permanent and event-based scrap tire collection opportunities through local governments, tribal partners, and state- supported programs
- Coordinate cleanup and prevention efforts across local, tribal, federal and state partners, including the Bureau of Land Management
- Improve public education on legal disposal options
- Evaluate sustainable funding mechanisms to support ongoing tire collection and processing
- Convene the RAID Alliance and invite additional partners to coordinate a statewide response to illegal dumping

4.2. Adopt a Battery Stewardship Program

Lithium-ion battery fires present an escalating safety risk to facilities, continued insurability, and essential workers. A stewardship program shifts responsibility upstream and ensures stable funding for safe collection and recycling.

- Develop and adopt legislation or a regulatory framework for a statewide battery stewardship program

- Require producers to fund and manage collection, transportation, recycling and education
- Expand convenient collection through retail, municipal, and community-based sites
- Launch a statewide awareness campaign addressing fire risk and proper disposal
- Improve tracking and reporting of battery-related facility fires
- Reduce battery-related fires protects essential workers and shifts responsibility upstream
- Evaluate and develop EPR or stewardship frameworks for priority materials, including HHW, paint, and mattresses through feasibility analysis and interest holder engagement

4.3. Expand Household Hazardous Waste & Paint Systems

Household hazardous waste, including paint, electronics, and other products, represents one of the costliest material streams to manage and presents ongoing management, cost, and safety challenges across New Mexico. Long transport distances limited permanent infrastructure, and reliance on periodic collection events create barriers to proper disposal and increase the likelihood of illegal dumping.

Paint has been identified as a high-cost and high-volume material to manage due to transportation, handling, and processing requirements. Current contractor-based models can be expensive and may not provide sufficient access or system efficiency statewide.

Expanding and optimizing HHW systems will require coordinated approach access state agencies, including the New Mexico Environment Department Hazardous Waste Bureau, local governments and partners reduces costs, and integrates collection across material types.

- Develop regional HHW hub-and-spoke systems to complement event-based collection events
- Evaluate the cost and effectiveness of existing contractor-based models and identify opportunities for cost reduction
- Explore paint stewardship programs to provide dedicated funding and reduce overall system costs
- Assess alternative management approaches, including drying, reuse, and retail take-back options
- Improve public education and awareness through statewide campaigns and locally delivered outreach of proper disposal requirements
- Evaluate policy options, including sales bans or product design requirements for materials that create disproportionate end-of-life management challenges

4.4. Improve Management of Mattresses, Electronics, & Bulky Waste

Mattresses, large electronics, and bulky waste frequently appear in illegal dumping hotspots due to limited collection options and high processing costs. Targeted improvements to the collection system and stewardship program exploration can reduce environmental impacts and improve material recovery.

- Expand mattress and bulky waste collection programs through local governments supported by state funding and policy
- Improve electronics collection infrastructure through expanded local programs and private sector partnerships, including acceptance of large screens
- Increase recovery of materials with in-state market potential
- Assess stewardship feasibility for additional priority materials

4.5. Advance Organics & Biocircular Economy Systems

Organic materials represent a significant opportunity for near-term progress in New Mexico. Reducing organics generation is the priority, beginning with food waste prevention and food recovery for human consumption. For materials that are not source reduced, existing composting facilities in parts of the state remain underutilized due to misalignment between collection systems and processing infrastructure.

On-site management practices, such as on-site management practices appropriate to New Mexico's climate and conditions, can further reduce the need for collection and processing. Advancing organics management also supports a broader biocircular economy, linking material recovery with soil health, agricultural productivity, and climate outcomes. Partnerships with the agricultural sector can help return nutrients to the soil, improve water retention, and support rural economic development.

- Align collection local and regional collection systems with existing composting capacity
- Expand diversion for materials not source reduced, including food and green waste
- Support public education and behavior change to reduce and divert organics
- Identify regulatory, market, and operational barriers to fully utilize existing capacity
- Develop partnerships with the agricultural and fire disaster sectors to support soil health, carbon sequestration, and land application of compost and management of fire debris
- Improve coordination between collection programs and facilities
- Identify and address logistical barriers preventing full utilization of available capacity

- Support public education and outreach on organics diversion to increase participation
- Explore policy mechanisms, including phased disposal restrictions, to increase organics diversion where opportunities exist including funding and incentives to support the addition of new organics processing facilities.

4.6. Stabilize and Expand Funding

Stable funding is essential to sustain cleanup, prevention, and infrastructure investments. Reliance on periodic grants limits long-term planning and system consistency.

- Strengthen and evaluate expansion of available RAID funding
- Identify dedicated funding streams tied to material generation
- Explore stewardship funding mechanisms for priority materials
- Provide market development incentives to support in-state processing

4.7. Improve Data, Education, and Coordination

Consistent data and harmonized messaging improve program effectiveness and public participation. Coordination across agencies reduces fragmentation and duplication.

- Standardize reporting on illegal dumping and material recovery
- Improve statewide tracking of battery-related fires
- Harmonize public education messaging across jurisdictions through statewide coordination and shared resources
- Strengthen coordination among state agencies, local governments, tribal entities, and federal land managers

5. MID-TERM ACTIONS (3–5 YEARS) 2030-2035

Mid-term actions focus on scaling stewardship systems, expanding strategies to additional material categories that require more complex policy development, infrastructure investment, or market maturation.

5.1. Priority materials for the 3–5-year timeframe include:

1. Mattresses, requiring expanded collection and processing systems
2. Electronics, including large and those with embedded batteries
3. Beverage containers, through potential implementation of a deposit return system
4. Packaging, through the development of extended producer responsibility frameworks
5. Textiles, supported by emerging collection and recycling system

Organics, supported by emerging technologies including biochar. These materials build on early system improvements and require coordinated policy, market development, and infrastructure alignment to achieve long-term success.

5.2. Implement & Expand Stewardship Programs

Following initial program development, stewardship systems should move from framework design to full implementation and expansion across priority materials.

- Launch and operationalize the battery stewardship program
- Implement stewardship programs for additional materials such as tires, mattresses, electronics, and beverage containers where feasible
- Ensure programs provide dedicated funding for collection, processing, education, and enforcement
- Integrate data reporting and transparency requirements

5.3. Adopt a Beverage Container Deposit Return System

If feasibility analysis and interest holder engagement support adoption, New Mexico should implement a beverage container deposit return system to improve recovery rates, reduce litter, and stabilize recycling markets. Deposit systems in other states have demonstrated high return rates, improved material quality, and reduced contamination in curbside programs. A carefully designed system can complement existing infrastructure while strengthening shared responsibility.

- Establish a statewide working group to advise the legislature and Environment Department on how to draft the legislation and what will work for New Mexico
- Pass legislation to implement a refundable deposit on covered beverage containers that defines producer and distributor responsibility for system financing and administration and government oversight and program metrics
- Design a statewide redemption network accessible to urban, rural, and tribal communities
- Align deposit system operations with existing recycling and processing infrastructure
- Develop reporting, transparency, and performance standards

5.4. Strengthen In-State Processing & Market Development

Building local processing capacity improves economic resilience and reduces reliance on out-of-state markets.

- Support development of in-state tire and mattress recovery infrastructure
- Expand electronics processing and material recovery capacity

- Encourage private investment through grants, tax incentives, or procurement commitments
- Align state procurement policies to support recycled content markets

5.5. Expand Regional & Rural Infrastructure Solutions

Regional coordination is essential to address geographic scale and service gaps.

- Develop regional processing hubs where volume supports investment
- Expand back-hauling strategies to reduce transportation costs
- Provide targeted funding for rural and tribal communities
- Improve coordination across state, tribal, and federal land managers

5.6. Improve Enforcement Tools and Prevention Systems

As convenient disposal systems become more accessible, enforcement tools can be strengthened in a balanced and fair manner.

- Evaluate and improve enforcement mechanisms where prevention infrastructure exists
- Increase coordination between agencies responsible for enforcement
- Align penalties with education and access improvements

5.7. Institutionalize Data & Performance Tracking

Reliable performance measurements support continuous improvement and accountability across the system.

- Establish standardized statewide reporting across material streams
- Track illegal dumping reduction progress and hotspot changes
- Monitor fire incident reductions linked to battery stewardship
- Publish periodic public performance updates

6. LONG-TERM VISION (10+ YEARS) 2036+

Over the long term, New Mexico can evolve from a mostly reactive cleanup and fragmented system to coordinated, resilient, and self-sustaining material management, creating a more responsible circular economy. The goal is not the immediate elimination of disposal, but the systematic reduction of waste, internalization of end-of-life costs, and retention of economic value within the state.

1. Significant reduction in illegal dumping statewide
2. Stabilized in-state processing markets

3. Reduced reliance on landfill disposal
4. Internalized end-of-life costs across major material categories
5. Safe material management systems protecting essential workers
6. Strong regional coordination across rural and tribal communities
7. Increased economic development tied to circular materials

6.1. Significantly Reduced Illegal Dumping

- Sustained reduction in illegal dumping hotspots statewide
- Reliable and convenient collection systems across urban, rural, and tribal regions
- Coordinated enforcement supported by accessible disposal alternatives
- Reduced public health and environmental risks associated with dumped materials

6.2. Fully Operational Stewardship Systems

- Mature battery, tire, mattress, electronics, and beverage container stewardship programs
- Embedded end-of-life costs within product pricing
- Stable funding streams independent of local general funds
- Transparent reporting and performance accountability

6.3. Strong and Stable In-State Markets

- Expanded in-state processing capacity for priority materials
- Reliable feedstock flows supporting private investment
- Procurement policies reinforcing recycled content demand
- Increased circular economy job creation

6.4. Aligned Infrastructure & Regional Coordination

- Regional processing hubs where appropriate
- Efficient back-hauling systems reducing transportation costs
- Improved coordination across state, tribal, and federal jurisdictions
- Consistent public education and messaging statewide

6.5. Improved Worker Safety and Public Health Outcomes

- Significant reduction in facility fire incidents
- Safer handling of hazardous and unknown materials
- Reduced vector risks associated with improperly managed tires and mattresses
- Lower environmental contamination from household hazardous waste

Over time, these outcomes position New Mexico as a state where materials are managed responsibly, economic value remains local, and environmental protection and public safety are integrated into product and policy design.

7. SUMMARY OF ACTIONS BY STRATEGIC GOALS

The following section summarizes how near-term, mid-term, and long-term actions and outcomes described in Sections 5 through 7 align with and advance each of the plan's strategic goals and objectives. This crosswalk is intended to provide a clear line of sight between the plan's goals, priority materials, and phased actions, and to illustrate how activities collectively contribute to long-term circular economy outcomes. Some actions contribute to multiple goals and are therefore reflected in more than one section.

7.1. Goal 1: Reduce Illegal Dumping & Environmental Harm

7.1.1. Objectives:

- Reduce dumping of scrap tires, mattresses, electronics, paint, and bulky waste
- Target known hotspots, including areas near rural highways and lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management
- Expand convenient and affordable disposal options
- Strengthen coordination across local, state, tribal, and federal jurisdictions

7.1.2. Goal 1 Actions by Timeframe

Table 1: Summary Actions to Reduce Illegal Dumping and Long-Term Harm

Action Category	Near-Term (0–3 Years)	Mid-Term (3–5 Years)
System-Level Actions	• Improve public education on legal disposal options • Standardize reporting on illegal dumping and material recovery • Consider convening the RAID Alliance and inviting additional partners to coordinate a statewide response to illegal dumping • Identify and prioritize illegal dumping hotspots statewide	• Evaluate and improve enforcement mechanisms where prevention infrastructure exists • Increase coordination between agencies responsible for enforcement
Priority Material-Specific Actions	• Implement a Scrap Tire & Illegal Dumping Reduction Strategy • Implement EPR for tires • Expand permanent and event-based scrap tire collection opportunities through local governments, tribal partners, and state-supported programs • Expand mattress and bulky waste collection programs through local governments supported by state funding and policy	• Pass and Implement stewardship programs for priority materials such as mattresses, electronics, and beverage containers

Action Category	Near-Term (0–3 Years)	Mid-Term (3–5 Years)
	Improve electronics collection infrastructure through expanded local programs and private sector partnerships, including acceptance of large screens	

Long-Term Outcomes (10+ Years)

- Sustained reduction in illegal dumping hotspots statewide
- Reliable and convenient collection systems across urban, rural, and tribal regions
- Coordinated enforcement supported by accessible disposal alternatives
- Reduced public health and environmental risks associated with dumped materials

7.2. Goal 2: Internalize End-of-Life Costs through Shared Responsibility

7.2.1. Objectives

- Develop EPR/stewardship systems for priority materials such as batteries, tires, mattresses, electronics, and beverage containers
- Embed collection and recycling costs into product systems
- Provide stable funding for education, infrastructure, and enforcement
- Avoid unfunded mandates on local jurisdictions

7.2.2. Goal 2 Actions by Timeframe

Table 2: Summary of Actions to Internalize End-of-Life Costs

Action Category	Near-Term (0–3 Years)	Mid-Term (3–5 Years)
System-Level Actions	- Identify dedicated funding streams tied to material generation - Evaluate policy options, including sales bans or product design requirements for materials that create disproportionate end-of-life management challenges	Ensure programs provide dedicated funding for collection, processing, education, and enforcement
Priority Material-Specific Actions	- Develop and adopt legislation or a regulatory framework for a statewide battery stewardship program - Evaluate and develop EPR or stewardship frameworks for priority materials, including HHW, paint, and mattresses through feasibility analysis and interest holder engagement	- Implement stewardship programs for additional materials such as tires, mattresses, electronics, and beverage containers where feasible - Adopt a beverage container deposit return system if supported by feasibility analysis and interest holder engagement

Long-Term Outcomes (10+ Years)

- Mature battery, tire, mattress, electronics, and beverage container stewardship programs
- Embedded end-of-life costs within product pricing
- Stable funding streams independent of local general funds
- Transparent reporting and performance accountability

7.3. Goal 3: Strengthen In-State Markets & Infrastructure

7.3.1. Objectives

- Increase feedstock to existing composting operations with available capacity
- Strengthen in-state manufacturing demand for recovered materials
- Support development of in-state processing for scrap tires, mattresses, and electronics
- Align state and institutional procurement policies to support local markets
- Encourage procurement policies that prioritize recycled content

7.3.2. Goal 3 Actions by Timeframe

Table 3: Summary of Actions to Strengthen In-State Markets and Infrastructure

Action Category	Near-Term (0–3 Years)	Mid-Term (3–5 Years)
System-Level Actions	• Assess and maximize use of existing infrastructure before developing new capacity • Identify regulatory, market, and operational barriers to fully utilizing current and emerging processing capacity • Provide market development incentives to attract private investment and spur economic development, including attracting new processors and manufacturers for priority products	• Implement in-state tire and mattress recovery infrastructure • Encourage private investment through grants, tax incentives, or procurement commitments • Align state procurement policies to support recycled content markets
Priority Material-Specific Actions	• Increase proper management of scrap tires, including end markets and illegal dumping prevention • Align collection systems with existing composting capacity • Expand diversion for materials not source reduced, including food and green waste	• Expand electronics processing and material recovery capacity

Long-Term Outcomes (10+ Years)

- Expanded in-state processing capacity for priority materials
- Reliable feedstock flows supporting private investment
- Procurement policies reinforcing recycled content demand

- Increased circular economy job creation

7.4. Goal 4: Improve Access and Equity Across Rural and Tribal Communities

Objectives

- Expand convenient collection access in remote regions
- Support regional coordination and back-hauling strategies
- Provide targeted funding for under-resourced jurisdictions
- Ensure coordination across tribal lands and federal lands

7.4.3. Goal 4 Actions by Timeframe

Table 4: Summary of Actions to Improve Access and Equity Across Rural and Tribal Communities

Action Category	Near-Term (0–3 Years)	Mid-Term (3–5 Years)
System-Level Actions	• Improve coordination across state, tribal, and federal land managers • Support public education and outreach on organics diversion to increase participation	• Develop regional processing hubs where volume supports investment • Expand back-hauling strategies to reduce transportation costs • Provide targeted funding for rural and tribal communities
Priority Material-Specific Actions	• Expand convenient collection through retail, municipal, and community-based sites for batteries • Expand convenient HHW collection coverage across urban, rural, and tribal communities	• Ensure programs provide accessible collection systems across urban, rural, and tribal communities

Long-Term Outcomes (10+ Years)

- Reliable and convenient collection systems across urban, rural, and tribal regions
- Strong regional coordination across rural and tribal communities
- Efficient back-hauling systems reducing transportation costs
- Improved coordination across state, tribal, and federal jurisdictions

7.5. Goal 5: Improve Data, Coordination, and Consistency

7.5.1. Objectives

- Standardize data collection and reporting across material streams
- Harmonize education and public-facing messaging statewide
- Improve interagency coordination

- Align permitting and implementation processes where feasible

7.5.2. Goal 5 Actions by Timeframe

Table 5: Summary of Actions to Improve Data, Coordination and Consistency

Action Category	Near-Term (0–3 Years)	Mid-Term (3–5 Years)
System-Level Actions	• Standardize reporting on illegal dumping and material recovery • Improve statewide tracking of battery-related facility fires • Harmonize public education messaging across jurisdictions through statewide coordination and shared resources • Strengthen coordination among state agencies, local governments, tribal entities, and federal land managers	• Establish standardized statewide reporting across material streams • Publish periodic public performance updates • Improve coordination across state, tribal, and federal land managers
Priority Material-Specific Actions	• Improve tracking and reporting of battery-related facility fires	• Integrate data reporting and transparency requirements into stewardship programs

Long-Term Outcomes (10+ Years)

- Transparent reporting and performance accountability
- Published periodic public performance updates
- Improved coordination across state, tribal, and federal jurisdictions
- Ongoing monitoring and performance tracking across material streams

8. IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Successful implementation of this Circular Economy Plan will require stable funding, coordinated governance, phased execution, and ongoing performance evaluation. The following considerations outline key elements necessary to translate strategy into sustained action.

8.1. Funding & Financing Framework

Achieving a circular economy in New Mexico requires more than one-time investments or short-term grant funding. It requires a durable financing system that aligns responsibility with material generation, provides predictable revenue, and supports long-term system performance.

Feedback from the RAID Alliance consistently identified funding limitations and unstable revenue streams as the most significant barrier to progress. Without dedicated and sustained funding, communities are forced into reactive cleanup and periodic collection events rather than preventive, upstream system-level solutions.

This plan proposes a financing framework built on shared responsibility, diversified funding sources, and alignment with circular economy outcomes.

8.1.1. Producer Responsibility as a Primary Funding Mechanism

For many priority materials, the most effective long-term funding solution is Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) or similar stewardship systems. These programs embed end-of-life costs into product systems and shift shared financial responsibility upstream to producers, who have the greatest ability to influence product design, material choices, and recovery pathways.

Producer-funded systems can provide:

- Stable and predictable funding for collection, transportation, processing, education, and enforcement
- Expanded access to convenient and free or low-cost disposal options for the public
- Incentives for product redesign to reduce waste, toxicity, and end-of-life management costs
- Priority materials for producer-funded systems include batteries, paint, electronics and other HHW tires, mattresses, and beverage containers.

8.1.2. Strengthening and Expanding RAID Funding

The RAID Alliance plays a critical role in supporting local governments through targeted grant funding for illegal dumping prevention, cleanup, and recycling initiatives. However, demand for RAID funding consistently exceeds available resources.

To increase impact, RAID funding should be:

- Expanded and stabilized to support long-term program planning
- Tied to measurable outcomes such as reduction in illegal dumping, increased material recovery, and improved access to services
- Coordinated with other funding mechanisms to avoid duplication and maximize effectiveness

RAID funding can continue to serve as a flexible tool for pilot programs, regional coordination, and rapid response to emerging challenges.

8.1.3. Market Development Incentives

Strong responsible end markets are essential to a functioning circular economy. Without demand for recovered materials, collection and processing systems cannot be sustained.

The State can play a critical role in strengthening markets through:

- Tax incentives or credits to attract and expand in-state processing capacity
- State and institutional procurement commitments that prioritize recycled content and circular products
- Grant or financing support for infrastructure that aligns with identified material priorities
- Policy signals such as disposal bans or minimum recycled content standards where appropriate

These incentives reduce investment risk, attract private capital, and retain economic value within New Mexico.

8.1.4. Aligning Funding with System Outcomes

Funding mechanisms should be directly tied to the outcomes this plan seeks to achieve. Investments should support an integrated system that addresses:

- Infrastructure: Expanding and optimizing collection, processing, and regional coordination systems
- Enforcement: Supporting consistent and effective illegal dumping prevention and enforcement efforts
- Education: Providing clear, harmonized, and statewide public education to improve participation and reduce contamination
- End Markets: Strengthening in-state demand and processing capacity to ensure materials are used productively

Aligning funding with these system components ensures that investments reinforce each other and deliver measurable results.

8.1.5. Diversified and Resilient Funding Approach

No single funding mechanism will be sufficient to support all materials and system needs. A diversified approach increases resilience and allows the state to adapt to changing market conditions and policy environments.

This framework includes:

- Producer-funded stewardship systems for priority materials
- Expanded and outcome-driven RAID funding
- Market development incentives and procurement strategies
- Strategic use of grants and public funding to support early-stage and regional solutions

Together, these mechanisms create a more stable, equitable, and effective financing system that enables long-term progress toward a circular economy.

8.1.6. Public-Private Partnerships

Achieving a resilient and economically sustainable circular economy will require strategic collaboration between public entities and private sector partners. To accelerate infrastructure development, improve operational efficiency, and leverage private capital, the State will pursue structured Public-Private Partnerships (P3s) where appropriate.

These partnerships may include:

- Design-Build-Operate-Maintain (DBOM) and Design-Build-Finance-Operate (DBFO) delivery models
- Long-term service agreements for collection, processing, and material recovery
- Public-private co-investment in regional processing infrastructure
- Performance-based contracts tied to diversion, recovery, and safety outcomes

8.1.7. Funding Deployment & Cost Allocation

Long-term progress depends on predictable and dedicated funding streams that align responsibility with material generation.

1. Prioritize producer-funded stewardship systems for high-impact materials
2. Stabilize and evaluate expansion of the RAID Alliance with allocations tied to measurable outcomes
3. Identify revenue mechanisms that avoid reliance on local general funds
4. Leverage public funding, grants, and incentives to support infrastructure development
5. Ensure funding mechanism account for tribal, rural, and under-resourced communities, including accommodations for distance, scale and jurisdictional complexity
6. Tie funding to performance and outcomes, including measurable reduction in illegal dumping, increased material recovery, improved access to services, and reduced safety risks
7. Support coordinated system design across material streams to improve efficiency and reduce duplication

8.2. Emerging Technologies & Implementation Considerations

Emerging technologies and new material innovations are entering the market and being proposed for integration into state waste and recycling systems. These include materials labeled as “compostable” or “recyclable,” as well as processing technologies described as “chemical,” “molecular,” or advanced recycling.

While some of these innovations may play a role over time, they require careful evaluation to ensure alignment with circular economy goals, protection of public health, and cost-effective system design.

8.2.1. Material Innovation and Labeling Considerations

New materials entering the market, whether biobased or petroleum-based, may be labeled as “compostable” or “recyclable” without aligning with existing infrastructure or end markets.

Clear standards and consistent labeling will be necessary to avoid contamination of recycling and composting systems, ensure materials can be effectively processed within New Mexico, and align with evolving national and state policies.

8.2.2. Technology Readiness and Scale

Many emerging processing technologies remain in early stages of deployment. While some facilities have moved beyond pilot phases, they are not yet operating at full scale or demonstrating consistent performance. These technologies should not be relied upon as near-term solutions to current system challenges.

8.2.3. Feedstock Requirements and System Limitations

Facilities often require specific material streams with low contamination and are not capable of processing all mixed plastics. These technologies should not be considered a universal solution.

Most systems rely heavily on sorting, cleaning and preprocessing using conventional mechanical recycling infrastructure. This reinforces the need for improved product design, cleaner collection streams, and continued investment in secondary processing infrastructure.

8.2.4. Data Transparency and Performance Verification

Clear, facility-specific data will be necessary to evaluate feedstocks and material inputs, process flows and outputs, emissions and environmental impacts, and end products and markets. x

Transparency is essential to determining whether these technologies meet the State’s definition of recycling.

8.2.5. Permitting and Regulatory Clarity

States are still determining how to classify these facilities across recycling, manufacturing and solid waste regulatory frameworks.

New Mexico will need to establish clear permitting pathways, consistent definitions and standards, and coordination across regulatory agencies.

8.2.6. Community and Environmental Considerations

Siting, permitting and enforcement should ensure protection of public health, avoid disproportionate impacts on communities already facing environmental burdens, and include ongoing monitoring and compliance.

8.2.7. Strategic Decision-Making for Investment

Given the high cost and uncertainty associated with many of these technologies, the State should evaluate whether proposed investments support circular economy outcomes, complement rather than displace proven solutions, and represent the most cost-effective use of public and private resources.

8.3. Governance & Interagency Coordination

Clear roles and coordination mechanisms are essential to reduce fragmentation and improve efficiency.

- Clarify implementation authority across relevant state agencies
- Strengthen coordination between state, tribal, and federal land managers, including the Bureau of Land Management
- Establish advisory or interest holder coordination mechanisms where appropriate
- Align this plan with updates to the state's Solid Waste Management Plan

8.3.1. Statewide Circular Economy Advisory Committee

To support coordinated implementation, accountability, and continuous improvement of the CEP, the State will establish a Statewide Circular Economy Advisory Committee. This Committee will serve as a formal, multi-stakeholder body responsible for guiding implementation, advising on policy development, and ensuring alignment across jurisdictions and sectors. The Committee will provide a structured forum for coordination, transparency, and accountability, helping to ensure that implementation reflects real-world conditions and evolving system needs.

Proposed composition may include representatives from:

- State agencies and regulatory bodies
- Local governments and regional authorities
- Tribal governments
- Private sector entities, including producers, processors, and service providers
- Nonprofit organizations and community-based groups
- Technical experts in materials management, public health, and environmental protection

8.4. Phased & Scalable Approach

Implementation should proceed in stages, beginning with high-impact and high-risk materials.

- Sequence program development before large-scale mandates
- Pilot new systems, where appropriate, before statewide expansion
- Scale stewardship and infrastructure investments based on performance data
- Adjust strategies based on measured outcomes and fiscal realities

8.4.1. Pilot Strategies

Pilot programs and demonstration projects provide an opportunity to test new approaches, reduce risk, and build momentum for broader system implementation. Given New Mexico's geographic diversity and varying infrastructure capacity, piloting solutions at a regional level allows for adaptation to local conditions before scaling statewide.

Pilot efforts can help identify operational challenges, refine program design, and build stakeholder confidence while demonstrating measurable outcomes. These projects should be designed with clear objectives, performance metrics, and pathways for scaling successful models.

Priority Pilot opportunities include:

- Organics collection and diversion pilots, including food and green waste co-collection aligned with existing composting capacity
- Textile collection and recycling pilots, supporting reuse and emerging circular systems
- Rural aggregation hubs, to improve material consolidation and reduce transportation costs
- Hard-to-recycle materials centers to provide convenient access for bulky and difficult-to-manage items
- Repair and reuse programs, including community repair clinics and partnerships with local organizations

Partnerships with universities, local governments, nonprofits, and private sector interest holders can support pilot design, implementation, and evaluation. Pilot programs should include data collection and reporting components to inform future policy and investment decisions. Successful pilots can serve as the foundation for broader program expansion and help accelerate the transition to a more resilient and coordinated circular economy system in New Mexico.

8.4.2. University & Innovation Partnerships

Universities and research institutions can play a critical role in advancing New Mexico's circular economy through applied research, pilot program support, data analysis, and workforce development. Partnerships with universities can help bridge gaps between policy design and real-world implementation while building local capacity and expertise.

Academic institutions can support testing and evaluation of pilot programs, development of new material recovery and reuse approaches, and analysis of system performance. These partnerships can also provide opportunities to leverage student engagement through internships, research projects, and workforce training programs aligned with circular economy initiatives.

Potential areas for collaboration include:

- Applied research on material flows, recovery technologies, and market opportunities
- Support for pilot program design, implementation, and evaluation
- Data collection, analysis, and performance measurement
- Workforce development and training programs aligned with emerging circular economy sectors

Strengthening partnerships with universities can accelerate innovation, support evidence-based decision-making, and build a pipeline of skilled workers to support long-term system development.

8.5. Interest Holder Engagement & Public Communication

Sustained engagement improves program adoption and public participation.

- Engage producers, retailers, local governments, tribal entities, and processors early in program design
- Provide clear and harmonized public messaging statewide
- Ensure transparency in program funding and performance
- Maintain ongoing feedback mechanisms

8.6. Data, Reporting, & Accountability

Performance measurement must be embedded in program design from the outset.

- Establish standardized reporting across material streams
- Track illegal dumping reduction, fire incidents, and recovery volumes
- Publish periodic public progress reports

- Identify priority data to be collected across material streams, including illegal dumping incidents, material recovery volumes, access to collection services, and safety incidents
- Establish a public-facing dashboard to track progress, improve transparency, and communicate outcomes to stakeholders and residents
- Use collected data to evaluate program performance and adjust strategies over time, including policy practices
- Incorporate public feedback mechanism to inform continuous improvement and ensure programs reflect public need

9. METRICS AND MILESTONES

Clear metrics are essential to ensure accountability, guide investment decisions, and measure progress over time. Indicators should align with program implementation timelines and reflect both environmental and safety outcomes. Metrics and reporting should be made publicly available to support transparency and accountability.

9.1. Three-Year Metrics

Early indicators focus on visible improvements the public can see, safety risk reduction, and foundational system development.

- Measurable reduction in identified illegal dumping
- Increased scrap tire collection volumes
- Increased battery education, convenient collection access points statewide
- Reduction in battery-related facility fire incidents
- New and expanded household hazardous waste collection opportunities
- Increased diversion of organics to existing composting facilities
- Improved statewide reporting consistency

9.2. Seven-Year Metrics

Mid-term indicators reflect operational stewardship systems, infrastructure expansion, and measurable system improvement.

1. Operational battery stewardship program with stable funding
2. Implementation of additional stewardship programs, including beverage container deposit return system if adopted
3. Increased in-state processing capacity for other priority materials
4. Documented reductions in illegal dumping of tires, mattresses, and bulky waste
5. Improved rural access to collection services and/or drop-off locations
6. Public reporting dashboards tracking material recovery and fire reduction trends

9.3. 10+-Year Metrics

Long-term indicators reflect durable market development, shared responsibility, and sustained environmental outcomes.

1. Significant reduction in landfill disposal of priority materials
2. Mature stewardship systems covering major material streams
3. Stabilized in-state circular material markets
4. Sustained reduction in illegal dumping statewide
5. Continued decline in facility fire incidents
6. Demonstrated economic development linked to circular material processing

10. GLOSSARY

- **Circular Economy:** A system where materials are kept in use for as long as possible through reuse, repair, remanufacturing, recycling and composting.
- **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR):** A policy approach that requires producers to fund and manage the collection and processing of their products at end of life.
- **End-of-Life (EOL):** The stage when a product is no longer usable and must be managed through reuse, recycling or disposal.
- **Infrastructure:** The systems and facilities used for collection, transportation, processing and manufacturing of materials.
- **Processing / Processors:** Facilities or operations that sort, clean or prepare materials for reuse, recycling or manufacturing.
- **End Markets:** The manufacturers or industries that use recovered materials to make new products.
- **Feedstock:** Recovered materials used as inputs for manufacturing new products.
- **Market Pull:** Demand from manufacturers for recycled materials that drives collection and processing.
- **RAID Grant:** Recycling and Illegal Dumping Grant program administered by the State of New Mexico.
- **Household Hazardous Waste (HHW):** Products such as paint, batteries and chemicals that require special handling due to safety or environmental risks.
- **Bicircular Economy:** Systems that return organic materials to productive use, such as composting for soil health.
- **Economy of Scale:** Cost advantages achieved when larger volumes reduce per-unit costs.

11. SOURCES

Development of the New Mexico Circular Economy plan was informed by related interest holder engagement, technical analyses, and supplemental materials developed and provided in coordination with the State's broader solid waste planning efforts, including the following sources:

- RAID Alliance "What We Heard" Summary Report
- Resource Recycling Systems (RRS) Interviews and Engagement Materials
- Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) Waste Characterization Data

These materials provided additional interest holder perspectives, a broader current conditions analysis, system challenges, and support for priority actions throughout this plan.

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