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Memorandum

DT: Tuesday, July 16, 2013
TO: Mayor Weitkunat and City Councilmembers
TH: Darin Atteberry, City Manager
FM: Bruce Hendee, Chief Sustainability Officer
RE: **Glass Recycling**

BH
5/28/13

Glass recycling has been discussed with Larimer County since last October when the Environmental Services Department learned that glass was no longer being recycled. Fort Collins has set up locations including the Rivendell site where motivated recyclers can take their glass for complete recycling.

It was discovered that the Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) managed by Waste Management Associates in Adams County discontinued recycling the glass being sent to them in October. Instead, the crushed glass was put to another use either as pipe bedding or as a cover liner for the landfill. Both of these uses put glass to productive use although, not the highest and best use. Ideally glass would be reusable, much as it traditionally has been with milk bottles which are delivered to homes, collected, washed, and then reused. Alternatively glass can be crushed, melted and reformulated into other usable glass products. There is nothing illegal or wrong with the current practice but it is just not optimal.

The reuse of glass is a significant part of the ongoing Road to Zero Waste Study which is being conducted by the Environmental Services Department together with Zero Waste Associates (ZWA). Zero Waste Associates is in town today and together with Susie Gordon, our Senior Environmental Planner, are meeting today with the Public Works Director and the Landfill Manager, of Larimer County. One of the topics is the recycling of glass. One of the recommendations of the Zero Waste Study will be regarding glass bottles.

The various options of recycling glass are being evaluated as part of the study including benchmarking other communities. Our understanding is that the City of Boulder has elected to install a ~ \$1M optical sorter which would be a potential option. Other options include creation of multiple locations around the community which allow for easy recycling. Implementation of a system called Extended User Responsibility which puts the burden on the product producer (bottle deposit and return) is another option being considered.

This study and the recent discussion between City Council and County Commissioners represent another opportunity to seek alignment between the County and City. In a meeting this morning with ZWA there was discussion regarding options to see waste as a commodity through productive reuse of waste. These discussions will be furthered in the next couple of months with hopefully a solution which meets the goals of both City and County.