



Oregon Recycling System Advisory Council 2026 Legislative Report

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Visit the [Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act website](#) for more information.

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Executive Summary

The Oregon Recycling System Advisory Council is pleased to submit this report to the Oregon Legislature summarizing its recommendations for continued implementation of the Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act, as required by ORS 459A.902(3).

Background

Since its September 2024 report to the Oregon Legislature on this topic, the Council has worked diligently to represent local governments, the recycling industry, producers, small business, and environmental and community organizations in its advisory role guiding RMA implementation.

On-the-ground implementation launched in July 2025, resulting in producer funding flowing to communities across Oregon for new and expanded recycling programs, consistent education and outreach, investments in recycling processing facilities, and end market reporting and transparency.

In August 2026, following a five-day trial in July, the RMA was upheld in federal district court against constitutional challenges brought by the National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors.

Initial implementation successes

The first year of implementation has already produced meaningful accomplishments, including expanding recycling opportunities in communities such as Baker City, The Dalles, Roseburg, and other communities throughout Oregon, while improving performance across the statewide recycling system.

It has also introduced responsible end market reporting, increasing transparency and assurance that recycling collected in Oregon is managed responsibly.

Recycling Council Activities 2024-2026

Over the past two years, the Recycling Council has reviewed, provided feedback and made recommendations to both the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and the producer responsibility organization, Circular Action Alliance, on foundational elements of Oregon's new recycling system. Especially critical to program implementation were three drafts of the first producer responsibility organization program plan and two amendments to that program plan. Recycling Council members devoted several months to reviewing and making recommendations on the program plan amendment for responsible end market verification, advocating for strong yield requirements and working to develop a risk-based sampling approach for on-site audits that helped to meet both DEQ and CAA interests.

The Recycling Council also consulted on a variety of important topics, including new outreach materials and statewide promotional campaigns to educate people in Oregon about how to recycle well, exemptions to covered products, and the division of responsibility between producers and local governments for collecting glass packaging.

Through its engagement and ongoing collaboration among system partners, the Recycling Council has helped strengthen the system's effectiveness, transparency, and long-term stability.

Early Implementation Lessons

Through this process, one conclusion has become clear: modernizing Oregon's recycling system remains in its early stages. The first year has demonstrated that Oregon's geography, administrative complexity, service delivery models, infrastructure needs, and coordination among system partners continue to require attention.

The RMA provides a strong foundation, and moving forward with implementation—while refining and adjusting the system as new information, challenges, and opportunities emerge through ongoing collaboration and rulemaking—will be essential to achieving the outcomes envisioned by the Oregon Legislature.

Recommendations

The Recycling Council's primary recommendation is that the Oregon Legislature continue supporting implementation of the RMA while recognizing that targeted statutory or regulatory refinements may be appropriate as implementation progresses.

Early implementation has revealed opportunities for clarification or targeted adjustments to improve program effectiveness, operational efficiency, and long-term outcomes. Such refinements are a natural part of implementing an innovative statewide program of this scale and in most cases are addressed through administrative or regulatory updates.

The Recycling Council encourages the Oregon Legislature to remain committed to continued implementation of the RMA while supporting thoughtful improvements informed by data, experience by interested parties, and ongoing collaboration. Maintaining the stability of the program while making targeted refinements will best position Oregon to realize the long-term environmental, economic, and public service benefits envisioned when the Legislature adopted this landmark policy.

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Oregon's Recycling System Advisory Council

The Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act (SB 582, 2021), or RMA, created the Oregon Recycling System Advisory Council in ORS 459A.902. The Recycling Council is an advisory body whose duties began in 2022 during the initial development and implementation phase of the RMA and will continue in perpetuity.

Background

The Recycling Council reviews key elements of the recycling system and advises both DEQ and Producer Responsibility Organizations (PRO) on issues related to the implementation of the RMA as outlined in ORS 459A.902. The scope of the Recycling Council's oversight is broad and generally extends to any topic related to implementation of the RMA that the Recycling Council members consider to be in the public interest.

The statute enumerates the following duties: reviewing PRO program plans; making recommendations related to the establishment and maintenance of the recycling acceptance lists, covered products, PRO membership fee structures, recycling depot or mobile collection events, PRO plans to improve access to recycling, PRO fee distribution, system funding, and education campaigns and resources. These activities primarily take place through consultations at Council meetings, with some requirements for formal written recommendations on specific RMA elements as described in law.

The RMA directs DEQ to provide administrative and staff support and facilities necessary for the Council to carry out its responsibilities.

Membership and Organization

The Recycling Council is comprised of 17 members appointed by the Governor, plus two non-voting members of the Oregon Legislature appointed by the Senate President and Speaker of the House. Membership requirements for the voting members are defined in law (ORS 459A.899(2)(b)) to provide a diversity of experiences and interest among Council members.

The voting members of the Council represent local governments, community-based organizations representing the interests of historically underserved groups, small businesses, environmental nonprofit organizations, the recycling industry, service providers, processors or material end-users and producers of covered products or producer trade associations or suppliers.

Council members serve staggered three-year terms. The Council elects a Chair and Vice-Chair in July of each year. The tables below show the members as of September 1, 2026. There are currently several vacancies, and the Council has discussed ideas for recruiting new members. Current terms for each member are noted on the [Council's website](#).

Governor Appointed Recycling Council Members

Name	Organization	Represents
Scott Byrne	Sonoco	Producers
Sonya Carlson	BRING Recycling	Environmental Nonprofit
Taylor Cass Talbott (Vice-chair, 2026)	Ground Score Association	Community-Based Organizations
Dylan de Thomas	The Recycling Partnership	Producers
Jill Hrycyk	Oregon Metro	Local Government
Nicole Janssen	Denton Plastics	Recycling Industry
Scott Keller (Chair, 2026)	City of Beaverton	Local Government
Laura Leebrick	Rogue Waste Systems	Recycling Industry
Angie Marzano	Lane County	Local Government
Celeste Meiffren-Swango	Environment Oregon	Environmental Nonprofit
Eben Polk	City of Portland	Local Government
Eadaoin Quinn	Mars	Producers
Alando Simpson	City of Roses Disposal & Recycling	Recycling Industry
Vinod Singh	Far West Recycling	Recycling Industry
Elizabeth Start	Start Consulting Group	Small Business
<i>Vacancy</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Community-based organization</i>
<i>Vacancy</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Producers</i>

Legislators Serving on the Recycling Council

Name	Organization	Represents
<i>Vacancy</i>	Oregon Legislature	Oregon Senate
Rep. Susan McLain	Oregon Legislature	Oregon House

2024-2026 Activities

Meetings

The Council must meet at least quarterly by statute. The current Council prefers to meet more frequently. Since the last report submitted to the Oregon Legislature in September 2024, the Council held 12 regular meetings and one special meeting during review of the program plan. In addition, Council committees met over two dozen times.

Council members provide public, verbal disclosures of real, perceived or potential conflicts of interest, in compliance with [State of Oregon ethics guidance](#) for public officials.

Committees

The Recycling Council has five standing committees. Committees meet as needed to review documents, discuss issues, and prepare recommendations to DEQ and the PRO. The table below indicates the topics addressed by each. Committee work products are shared with all Council members and a vote is taken if written recommendations are required by law or otherwise desired.

Recycling Council Committees

Committee	Topics
Equity and Outreach	Recycling System Equity Report, Multifamily Recycling Needs Assessment, education and outreach, racial equity, urban/rural balance
Infrastructure	Recycling system expansion, PRO Recycling Centers, transportation reimbursement, Commingled Recycling Processing Facility investment
Materials	Uniform Statewide Collection List & PRO recycling acceptance list, on-ramp of new materials, delisting of materials, Specifically-Identified Materials
PRO Budget and Fees	Annual budget report, producer fee structure, eco-modulation bonuses, covered product exemptions
Responsible End Markets	Standards, certification, verification

RMA Implementation

During 2024-2026, the Council oversaw an important period in Oregon's recycling system.

On-the-ground implementation launched in July 2025, resulting in producer funding flowing to communities across Oregon for new and expanded recycling programs, consistent education and outreach, investments in recycling processing facilities, and end market reporting and transparency.

First year implementation highlights

The first year of implementation has already produced meaningful accomplishments, including expanding recycling opportunities in communities such as Baker City, The Dalles, Roseburg, and other communities throughout Oregon, while improving performance and consistency across the statewide recycling system.

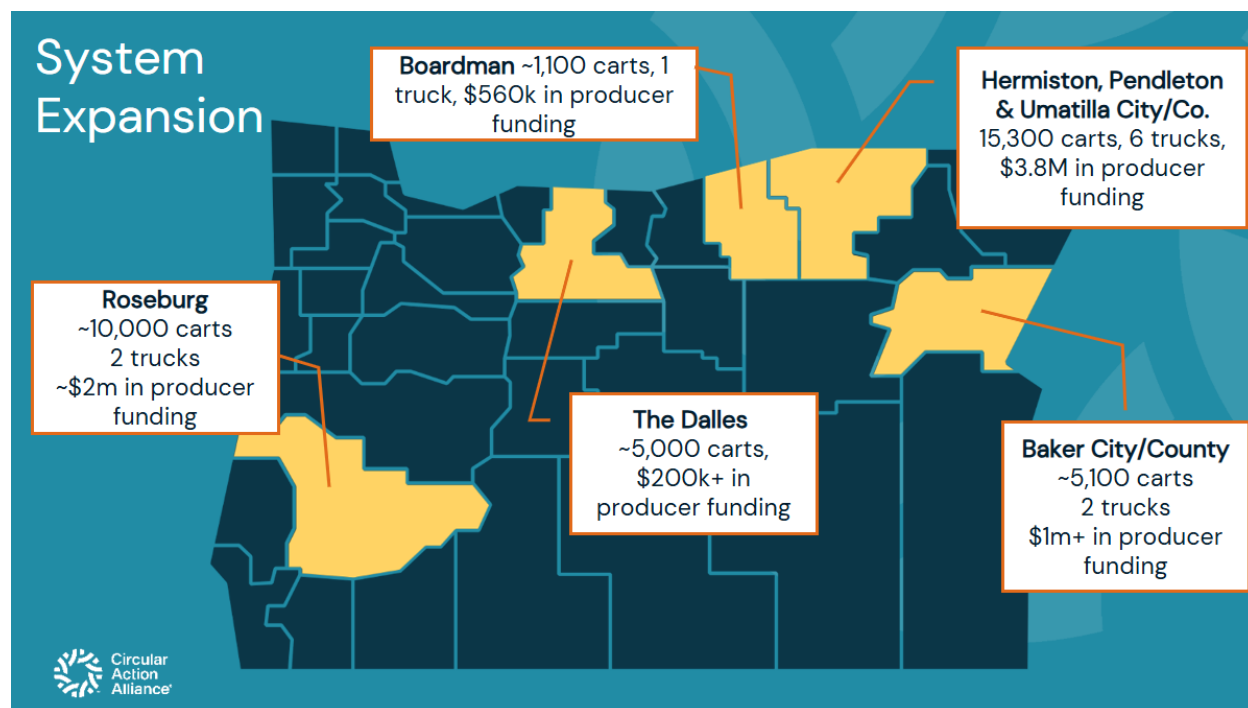
It has also introduced responsible end market reporting, increasing transparency and assurance that recycling collected in Oregon is managed responsibly.

The two infographics below, developed by Circular Action Alliance, highlight some of the implementation progress during the first year of the RMA.

Oregon EPR By the Numbers: Program Highlights as of July 2026



Recycling Service Expansion Progress as of July 1, 2026



In August 2026, following a five-day trial in July, the RMA was upheld in federal district court against constitutional challenges brought by the National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors.

2024-2026 Recommendations to DEQ and the PRO

[ORS 459A.902\(3\)](#) directs the Recycling Council to submit a report every two years to the Oregon Legislature describing the recommendations of the Council.

Program plan

In February 2025, following an eleven-month process that spanned three drafts and included public comment and in-depth review and [written recommendations](#) by the Recycling Council, DEQ approved, with directed changes, the third draft of the first PRO program plan. The Council also made written recommendations on the [first](#) and [second](#) drafts of the program plan.

Program plan amendments

- In September 2025, following a public comment period and consultation with the Recycling Council, DEQ approved, with directed changes, a proposed amendment to the PRO program plan to add a producer fee bonus for achieving environmental impact reductions by switching to reusable or refillable packaging.
- In May 2026, following public comment and [written recommendations](#) from the Council, DEQ approved the second draft, with directed changes, of a proposed program plan

amendment that refined the verification process for responsible end markets. The Council also made [written recommendations](#) on the first draft of the REM program plan amendment.

Rulemaking topics

In September 2025, DEQ began a third rulemaking process to refine the administrative rules for RMA implementation. The Recycling Council consulted on several topics that arose during the rulemaking process. From the Fall of 2025 through the Spring of 2026 the Council:

- Made [written recommendations](#) on exemptions to the list of covered products;
- Provided feedback on proposed changes to material definitions and recycling acceptance lists;
- Discussed recycling reload topics; and
- Provided feedback on the division of responsibility between producers and local governments for collection of glass packaging.

Education and outreach materials

In the Spring and Summer of 2025, following multiple consultations with local governments, service providers, and the Council, DEQ approved several batches of education and outreach materials and the initial statewide promotional campaign for the Uniform Statewide Collection List. The Council also consulted on the PRO's 2026 statewide promotional campaign strategy in July 2026.

Other Recycling Council Input

The Recycling Council also reviewed and provided feedback on the following topics:

- September 2025: Circular Action Alliance 2023-2024 Financial Report
- December 2025: Reports from Circular Action Alliance that meeting the convenience standard for PRO collection of aerosol containers and pressurized cylinders is not practicable
- February 2026: Circular Action Alliance proposal for evaluating materials to add to the Uniform Statewide Collection List
- March 2026: Changes to the list of Specifically-Identified Materials
- March 2026: DEQ Marine Debris and Litter Needs Assessment to determine the impact of covered products that leak into the environment, required by statute.
- July 2026: DEQ Compostability Study to assess the impacts of covered products on Oregon's composting industry, required by statute.

Fall 2026 Recommendations to the Oregon Legislature

As one of the first states in the nation to implement a comprehensive producer responsibility system for packaging and paper products, Oregon continues to generate valuable lessons that will strengthen both its own program and inform implementation efforts across the country. During the first year of on-the-ground RMA implementation, it has become clear that modernizing Oregon's recycling system remains in its early stages.

The RMA provides a strong foundation, and successful implementation will require continued collaboration, ongoing evaluation, and a willingness to make thoughtful, evidence-based refinements as new information, operational experience, challenges, and opportunities emerge. This adaptive approach is a normal and expected part of implementing a complex statewide policy designed to evolve over time while remaining faithful to the Legislature's original vision and intent.

Recommendations

The Recycling Council's primary recommendation is that the Oregon Legislature continue supporting implementation of the RMA while recognizing that targeted statutory or regulatory refinements may be appropriate as implementation progresses.

While the RMA achieved many successes in its first year, early implementation has also revealed opportunities for clarification or targeted adjustments to improve program effectiveness, operational efficiency, and long-term outcomes. Such refinements are a natural part of implementing an innovative statewide program of this scale and in most cases are addressed through administrative or regulatory updates.

The Council encourages the Oregon Legislature to remain committed to continued implementation of the RMA while supporting thoughtful improvements informed by data, stakeholder experience, and ongoing collaboration. Maintaining the stability of the program while making targeted refinements will best position Oregon to realize the long-term environmental, economic, and public service benefits envisioned when the Oregon Legislature adopted this landmark policy.

Upcoming Work

Over the next two years, the Council will continue to provide feedback and recommendations to DEQ and the PRO on implementation of the RMA. In 2027, the Council will review a new PRO Program Plan, which will cover the next five years of RMA implementation.

The Council looks forward to continued engagement with DEQ, the PRO, producers, local governments and their recycling service providers to implement a system that works well for all people in Oregon and the obligated producers of packaging, printed paper, and food service ware.

For more information about the Recycling Council and upcoming meetings, visit the Recycling Council webpage at oregon.gov/deq/recycling/Pages/ORSAC.aspx.

Recycling Council Staff

DEQ

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Arianne Sperry – Recycling Program Implementation Lead

Mia Weitz – Solid Waste Information Assistant

Facilitator

In early 2026, DEQ procured the short-term services of NTH Consulting to evaluate the effectiveness of using a professional facilitator for the Recycling Council. Recycling Council members have responded positively and DEQ is embarking on a competitive procurement process for a longer-term facilitation contract.