WORKSHOP · WED, OCT 14 · 1:15-2:15 PM

Zero Waste Event Resource Guide for the Community

Victoria Schlaepfer, Climate Fund Manager, Park City Community Foundation; Morgan Mingle, Senior Director of Sustainable Tourism, Park City Chamber & Visitors Bureau

Events are where residents, part-time residents and visitors all see a town's waste. Park City and Summit County, Utah, turned a $30,000 tourism grant into a simple, ranked zero waste guide for event organizers, then tested it themselves at a rodeo with no waste infrastructure.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. **Keep the guide short and ranked.** Busy organizers won't read a dense consultant report. The final guide is a checklist from most to least impactful, starting with "get to know your waste."
2. **Build it with partners, not around them.** The city, county, Recycle Utah and local nonprofits helped shape the guide, so it supports their work instead of competing with it.
3. **Staffed stations make the difference.** At the Oakley Rodeo BBQ, two staffed stations hit a 68.4% diversion rate, about double the 32% national average. Weighing the waste gave staff a number to beat.
4. **Work upstream with vendors.** Most sorting headaches came from vendor materials. Agreeing on cups, utensils and serviceware ahead of time beats digging through bags the next day.
5. **Organics are the big target.** Organics were about 39% of Summit County's landfill waste in 2019 and about 65% of Main Street restaurant waste in 2021.

WHAT LOCAL OFFICIALS CAN DO

- ☐ **Fund it with tourism grants.** Park City's grant paid about half for a consultant and half for collapsible bins, including 10 anyone can borrow.
- ☐ **Give permit applicants a waste plan template.** Permits required a waste plan, but no one explained what one is.
- ☐ **Remove or cover unstaffed trash cans.** Otherwise attendees skip the staffed stations.
- ☐ **Plan for liquids.** A five-gallon bucket at each station keeps drinks out of bags, grass and storm drains.
- ☐ **Use event sponsorships as leverage.** The chamber is exploring tying sponsorship dollars to staffed waste stations.
- ☐ **Hold firm on permit thresholds.** If an event claims 1,999 attendees to dodge a 2,000 cutoff, call the organizer and hold the permit.
- ☐ **Certify green events.** Park City's Green Business Program now certifies events on waste, energy, water, transportation and equity.

BY THE NUMBERS

$30,000
First sustainable tourism grant for the guide

68.4%
Rodeo pilot diversion rate (32% national average)

10
Community event bins lent free via Recycle Utah

$12,000
New grant for food waste diversion at 30 to 40 events

~65%
Organics share of Main Street restaurant waste

2053
Year the local landfill is projected to fill

WATCH OUT FOR

- ! Reusable dishware needs commercial washing, drying, sanitizing and storage space. Park City decided it isn't ready yet for large events.
- ! Summit County's compost facility accepts food waste only, so napkins and compostable serviceware go to trash.

RESOURCES

Recycle Utah
recycleutah.org

Park City Green Business Program
Local green business and green event certification

Walking Mountains Science Center
walkingmountains.org

Waste Less Solutions
wastelesssolutions.org

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Summarized from the session recording and presenter slides. Figures are as presented; confirm with presenters before citing.

CONTACTS

Victoria Schlaepfer
Climate Fund Manager, Park City Community Foundation

Morgan Mingle
Senior Director of Sustainable Tourism, Park City Chamber & Visitors Bureau