

2025 Community Waste Reduction & Recycling Grant Program

Project Title: Purchase of Trailers for Foam, Plastic Bag, and Cardboard Drop-Off Recycling in Rural Area of Guilford County

Applicant Contact Information:

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General Requirements:

- 1.) Usage of N.C. Solid Waste Disposal Tax Proceeds: Solid waste disposal tax funds are spent on solid waste program salaries, facility expenses, tools, equipment, special collection events, and promotional and educational materials.
- 2.) Public Building Recycling Services: All Guilford County buildings provide recycling for office paper, cardboard, plastic bottles, and cans. Glass recycling is available in our High Point buildings as well. Buildings include Greensboro and High Point Court House buildings and the Independence Center at 400 W. Market Street, Greensboro, Truist Building at 201 W. Market Street, Greensboro; Human Resources and the Family Justice Center at 201 S. Green Street, Greensboro; County Public Safety at 401 W. Sycamore Street, Greensboro; Guilford County Health Department buildings and other smaller County offices such as the Scrap Tire and Recycling Site at 2138 Bishop Road, Greensboro.
- 3.) Mercury Product Recycling: Guilford County has a Universal Waste program for mercury-containing products, which our Risk Management Division has confirmed.

Project Description:

- 1.) The Guilford County Planning & Development Department's Environmental Services Division submits this proposal to purchase four (4) utility-type trailers for drop-off locations in the County's more rural areas to recycle foam, plastic bags, and cardboard. These items are typically challenging to recycle or dispose of. The areas identified as needing and being able to support the recycling trailers are Summerfield, Browns Summit, Sedalia, and Pleasant Garden. The trailers will be wrapped, clearly identifying what items can be placed in the trailers and what cannot. The Tiny Homes Community

Development LLC and the Guilford County logos will be present, with contact information clearly visible.

We will partner with Tiny House Community Development, LLC (a 501c-3) in Greensboro to have the trailers picked up and unloaded. Similar trailers exist in Greensboro and High Point, but the same service is needed and has been requested in unincorporated areas and smaller towns. The trailers will be unloaded, and the materials will be processed at the Tiny House Community Development, LLC's Greensboro facility. We expect trailers to be picked up once a month initially and more frequently as word spreads about the recycling opportunity and locations. Other locations are picked up weekly or bi-weekly,

Guilford County Communications and Public Relations Department will assist in promoting the new recycling opportunities on social media, short videos, and TV news stations with whom we have a standing contract. In addition, Environmental Services will use other social media platforms, including Facebook, Nextdoor, and Instagram, as well as our Environmental Services web page. Information about the program and locations will be shared on local municipalities/organization web pages and social media. We will have information available at all outreach and education tabling events.

- 2.) The trailers' service life is over twenty (20) years. The foam and cardboard collection is extremely popular in the community, and we anticipate continued support for this endeavor. Once the trailers are purchased, there is no additional cost in the future. Tiny Homes Community Development has agreed to cover the insurance for the trailers to and from drop-off locations.
- 3.) Guilford County's participation in foam, plastic, and cardboard recycling using the trailers is new. Still, it also supports and enhances existing recycling in the unincorporated areas of Guilford County, but participation is not restricted to unincorporated households. We anticipate the robust involvement of smaller towns within the County. Recycling is provided by private haulers on a subscription basis.

Foam takes up significant space in trash cans and landfills. Since it is difficult to dispose of, it often results in illegal dumping. Cardboard is another difficult item to fit in a recycling container. With the increase in shipping boxes like Amazon, cardboard frequently forms the composition of illegal burning reports. Recycling plastic bags requires a trip to the grocery store and are typically thrown away instead. These drop-off recycling units outside the city centers will reduce illegal dumping and burning and provide a recycling option for these difficult-to-recycle items.

Over the past year, a foam, cardboard, and plastic bag trailer was provided at each of our four community recycling events. The trailers were stuffed full, and we had to turn some people away. Participants at the recycling events expressed how happy they were that these new materials were included in what they could bring to the event. Since beginning that collection, we've received numerous requests to provide this service more permanently.

This proposed project could impact households and businesses in both incorporated and unincorporated areas of Guilford County. Guilford County has a total area of 646 square miles of land and is the 22nd largest county in North Carolina by area. Of that area, approximately 360 square miles are unincorporated. According to the most recent census data, the County's estimated population is 553,275, with a growth rate of 0.62% from 2022 to 2023. This makes it the third-most populous county in the state. According to the North Carolina State Demographer, the population was estimated to reach 577,037 in late 2024. The community supports foam and cardboard recycling, and we anticipate no issues with collection.

- 4.) It's difficult to judge the expected tonnage of the recycled items due to the unknown ratio of cardboard to foam. However, using the information provided by the Tiny House Development Corporation, they have collected about 102.14 tons (21,297 cubic yards), or the equivalent of 852 garbage trucks of the foam alone. This is from their beginning in 2020 to November 2024. They started collecting cardboard and plastic bags more recently. For this project, each trailer will be weighed before it is unpacked. Each trailer can hold just over 300 cubic feet of material. To determine the weight, we would need to know the density of the foam. One cubic yard weighs between 6 to 9.62 lbs. depending on the density. Of course, some of the items will be cardboard and plastic bags.
- 5.) We will partner with Tiny Homes Community Development LLC – a charitable nonprofit working to reduce homelessness by engaging in public and private partnerships to create tiny home communities and employment opportunities. They are part of the Triad Foam Recycling Coalition. The other members of that partnership are Greensboro Beautiful, Emerging Ecology – a charitable nonprofit dedicated to understanding and enhancing the relationship between people and the planet through the way individuals and communities view the world, and Environmental Stewardship Greensboro – an interfaith coalition of congregations, encouraging sustainable lifestyle practices within faith communities and among residents of Guilford County.

Tiny House Development Corporation LLC has agreed to pick up and unload the trailers as needed. We will have a memorandum of agreement stating this. The trailers purchased through this grant will rotate between four locations within Guilford County identified as needy areas.

Special Requirements for Away-From-Home Recycling Projects

- 1.) The items to be collected by single stream are foam, plastic bags, and cardboard.
- 2.) No additional outreach and education materials development are included in this grant.
- 3.) Funds will be used to purchase trailers specifically for recycling, not waste collection. Funds will also be used for informational wraps on the trailers.

Project Timeline:

- **July 1 - 15, 2025** – Purchase trailers and have them “wrapped.” Begin a media campaign to inform residents of the new recycling opportunity.
- **By August 15, 2025** – Have trailers at identified locations; contact media partners for news stories, pictures, videos, and press releases.
- **Ongoing:** Track the recycling weight and volume of the trailer loads to verify or adjust the final estimate of waste reduced by the project. Continue with education and promotion of the project.
- **May 15, 2026** – Draft final report to be submitted to DEACS.
- **By June 30, 2026**, Provide a final report to the State on the details and success of the project.

Project Budget:

Project Elements	Estimated Cost		
Trailers (4) at \$4,140 each	\$ 16,560		
Wrap for Trailers (4) at \$2,800 each	\$ 11,200		
Projected Budget	Total Project Cost	Grant Award	Applicant 20% Cash Match
Total	\$27,760	\$22,200	\$5,552

We will purchase Kaufman Deluxe, enclosed 6x12-foot trailers with side openings and rear swing doors (or similar trailers from a county-approved vendor in North Carolina).

The wrap will be similar to the picture of the existing trailer below. Thank you.



