

Materials *Vision*

Our Vision for Minnesota's Materials Future

Our vision for Minnesota's materials system is that Minnesota will:

- Eliminate the concept of waste
- Define and develop the workforce and infrastructure required for a circular economy
- Utilize materials in a manner that is regenerative and has net positive impacts
- Improve human health and well-being by advancing social, racial and economic equity
- Enable long-term prosperity for all and the availability of necessary materials for future generations

Problem Statement

“While more food, energy and materials than ever before are now being supplied to people in most places, this is increasingly at the expense of nature’s ability to provide such contributions in the future.”¹ Materials are undervalued and are part of a linear take-make-waste model, resulting in inefficient use and unsustainable consumption, which threatens natural resources, human health, well-being, business continuity and growth.





1. Quote from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services research.

Business Case for Action

The Minnesota Sustainable Growth Coalition has the opportunity to substantially impact Minnesota’s resources to ensure a thriving economy and healthy, equitable communities across the state. Benefits of maintaining and improving materials flows and resources include, but are not limited to:

- Reducing operational and supply chain costs and risks
- Being ahead of customer, consumer, and investor demand
- Creating new business models, products and services
- Building a regional brand that elevates Minnesota as a great place to do business and live
- Growing job opportunities for all and attracting and retaining talent in Minnesota
- Improving quality of life in Minnesota

Focus Areas

Focus Area	Rationale	Desired State
 Design for Circularity	<p>Reducing material utilization to maintain quality through product redesign will lower extraction, processing and resource usage. Through redesign, organizations can decrease long-term costs and risks while increasing resiliency.</p>	<p><i>Minnesota is the leader in advancing circular design, meaning eliminating waste through innovative materials design, decreased materials consumption, and increased conservation.</i></p>
 Reuse or Repurpose	<p>Reusing and repurposing materials decreases the need for (1) virgin, raw materials extraction and (2) resources for recycling (e.g. energy and water). The benefits to organizations are numerous, including new local markets for re-use, reduction in the need for material transport and reduction in the amount of new materials needed to grow.</p>	<p><i>No waste is created, meaning local markets exist for reusing and repurposing consumed, used, or disposed of materials in Minnesota. Minnesota is the leader in material reuse and circular innovation.</i></p>
 Recycle	<p>Having a recycling process that supports a circular economy can leverage regional resources and markets, save on costs, optimize materials use throughout their lifecycle, and positively impact local economies.</p>	<p><i>Recycling efforts will process materials at their highest value and utility, as locally as possible, reducing the need for additional sources of virgin materials.</i></p>
 Regenerate	<p>Currently the majority of materials are not part of a circular model and are not returned to their original state. We should return materials to their original, or a better state of being, to increase their long-term value, utility and availability.</p>	<p><i>In a truly circular economy, no materials recovery or waste-to-energy efforts would be needed. Our goal is to transition out of our recovery needs and eventually focus on regeneration—leaving our environment better than we found it and improving quality of life.</i></p>

About the Minnesota Sustainable Growth Coalition

Nearly 30 businesses and organizations formed the Minnesota Sustainable Growth Coalition, a business led partnership harnessing their expertise to advance the next frontier of corporate sustainability – the circular economy. Our members are: 3M, Ackerberg, Andersen Corporation, Aveda, Barr Engineering, Best Buy, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, Center for Energy and Environment, DuPont, Ecolab, Ever-Green Energy, General Mills, Greater MSP, Great Plains Institute, Great River Energy, HealthPartners, HGA, Institute on the Environment at the University of Minnesota, LJP Waste Solutions, Medtronic, Metropolitan Airports Commission, Metropolitan Council, Minnesota Department of Administration, Mortenson, Target, Tennant Company, Uponor, Wenck and Xcel Energy.