



City of Helena

ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING

October 1, 2025 - 4:00 PM

City - County Building Room 326 / Zoom Online Meeting; <https://zoom.helenamt.gov/c/36053471/publicmeetings>

AGENDA

1. **Call to Work Session, introductions**
2. **Communications from the Helena Citizens Council**
3. **City Manager's Report**
4. **Commission comments, questions**
5. **Department Reports**
 - a. Curbside Recycling Service Contract to Helena Recycling, LLC
 - b. Curbside Green Waste Collection and Sustainability Program Update
 - c. City of Helena Sustainability General Update
6. **Public Comment**
7. **Commission discussion and direction to the City Manager**
8. **Adjourn**

The City of Helena is committed to providing access to persons with disabilities for its meetings, in compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Montana Human Rights Act. The City will not exclude persons with disabilities from participation at its meetings or otherwise deny them the City's services, programs, or activities.

Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations to participate in the City's meetings, services, programs, or activities should contact the City's ADA Coordinator, Ellie Ray, as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to arrange for the requested accommodation, at any of the following:

Phone: (406) 447- 8490

TTY Relay Service 1-800-253-4091 or 711

Email: citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov

Mailing Address & Physical Location: 316 North Park Avenue, Room 445, Helena, MT 59623.

City of Helena, Montana

09/24/2025

To: Tim Burton, City Manager

From: Ryan Leland, Public Works Director
Emily Jacobson, Sustainability and Recycling Coordinator

Subject: Consider staff recommendation to award curbside recycling service contract to Helena Recycling, LLC.

Present Situation: The current curbside recycling contract with Helena Recycling, LLC provides citizens with subscription based, source-separated, curbside recycling of glass, cardboard, plastics (types 1 and 2), paper, aluminum and tin cans. As part of the current contract, the City is responsible for reimbursing the actual costs of recycling containers, and providing billing services. Current subscription cost is \$16.20 per subscriber per month.

The contract with Helena Recycling, LLC expires on January 2, 2026.

On August 11, 2025, the City released a request for proposal (RFP) for curbside recycling service as a stand-alone operation. This operation would include the contractor assuming all responsibility and cost associated with the curbside recycling program to include billing and containers. The RFP closed on September 5, 2025.

One proposal was submitted, from Helena Recycling, LLC. The proposed subscriber costs are as follows:
Source Separated (glass included): \$22/month per subscriber or
Single Stream: \$24.95/month per subscriber, with an option to add glass for an addition \$12.95/month per subscriber.

Current curbside recycling costs in other Montana cities are as follows:

- Billings: \$28/month per subscriber (source-separated)
- Butte: \$31/month per subscriber (single stream)
- Bozeman: \$20.76/month per subscriber (single stream)
- Missoula: \$24.64/month per subscriber (single stream)

Background Information: In 2015, Helena Recycling, LLC contracted with the City of Helena for residential curbside recycling service. That contract has twice been extended and amended to include rate increases, glass collection, and clarifying language. The current contract is no longer eligible for extension and expires on January 2, 2026.

Proposal/Objective: To review the only proposal received for the curbside recycling contract and get commission direction on staff's recommendation to negotiate a contract with Helena Recycling, LLC for source separated curbside recycling service.

Advantage: n/a

Notable Energy Impact: n/a

Disadvantage: n/a

Quasi-Judicial Item: False

Notice of Public Hearing: False

Staff Recommendation/Recommended Motion: Staff recommends proceeding with negotiating a contract with Helena Recycling, LLC for source separated curbside recycling at \$22 per month, per subscriber.

Proposal for Curbside Recycling Services

Submitted to:
City of Helena

Submitted by:
Helena Recycling, LLC
3 Industry Loop
East Helena, MT 59635
406-457-2437
Principal: John Hilton



Date: September 5, 2025

Firm's Prior and Current Experience

Helena Recycling, LLC was formed in August 2009, by me, John Hilton. I grew up in Helena, MT and graduated from Helena High School in 1993. I earned a B.A. in Political Science from The University of Montana in 1998. My first job out of college was Project Manager for Puebla Trading (a textile company) located in Puebla, Mexico. After three years working abroad, I returned to the United States and began my career in the financial sector. I worked in the financial sector for more than a decade, including four years as the Branch Manager for US Bank in Helena, MT. I started Helena Recycling, LLC while employed at US Bank. As Helena Recycling, LLC's business increased, I left US Bank to pursue the business full-time.

Since January 1, 2016, Helena Recycling, LLC has held the City of Helena's curbside recycling contract. We currently serve:

- 1,548 residential customers on a source-separated program
- Over 350 commercial curbside customers
- 295 Lewis and Clark County customers
- 115 City of Helena renters

In 2016, Helena Recycling, LLC opened its own 10,000 sq. ft. recycling center on 2.6 acres. This facility accepts recyclables from curbside and commercial routes and processes materials for shipment to regional and national mills. Key partners include City of Helena Solid Waste, Tri County Disposal/Republic Services, Iron Mountain Shredding, and Jefferson County Solid Waste.

Our most recent expansion is EcoSafe Shredding & Recycling, LLC, a mobile paper shredding business serving both commercial and residential customers across Montana.

Current Residential and Commercial Curbside Recycling Service

City of Helena Residential Source-Separated Program:

- Four 18-gallon bins provided per household: plastics (1–2), aluminum/tin, paper, and glass.
- Cardboard collected under bins or in a cardboard box to be recycled.
- Bi-weekly pickup with one-ton trucks and trailers with recycling containers.

Lewis and Clark County Single-Stream Program:

- 96-gallon containers provided for plastics (1–2), aluminum/tin, paper, and cardboard.
- Bi-weekly collection using sideload garbage trucks.

Our current experience in implementing recycling programs in Helena, MT has been very positive. We have helped residential customers and numerous large and small businesses develop successful, comprehensive recycling programs. Below is a list of larger businesses and/or organizations that we currently serve, their start date, and contact person:

1. City of Helena: 1548 customers: 01/01/2016
Contact Emily Jacobson: 406-447-8094
2. State of Montana General Services (50+ buildings): 12/2014
Contact Cory Schlauch: 406-531-3834
3. Fort Harrison (20 buildings): 8/2014
Contact Rebekah Meyers: 406-324-3087
4. The VA Hospital: 10/2010
Contact Josia Walker: 406-447-7121
5. Valley Bank (5 buildings): 3/2010
Contact Rich Norstrom: 406-495-2566

Helena Recycling, LLC also provides a recycling program at the following schools: Helena Middle School, Helena High School, Central Elementary, Jefferson Elementary, Four Georgians Elementary, Kessler Elementary, Warren Elementary, Jim Darcy Elementary, Smith Elementary, Rossiter Elementary, East Valley Middle School, Radley Elementary, East Helena High School, Prickly Pear Elementary, and Eastgate Elementary. The intent of the program, started in 2009, was to encourage schools to start recycling and to educate the staff and children on the importance of recycling. Local businesses typically sponsor a school and Helena Recycling, LLC provides the recycling education and services.

1. Collection

The commodities that will be collected curbside by Helena Recycling, LLC:

Cans: aluminum and steel/tin cans.

Paper: newsprint, magazines, white office paper, catalogs, mail, paper bags, etc.

Cardboard: corrugated and paperboard.

Plastics: type 1-2 plastics.

Glass: All household container glass

2. Equipment

All equipment is inspected daily by drivers using pre-trip inspection forms. Regular maintenance ensures safe, efficient, and year-round operation in all conditions.

3. Personnel

Experience and Qualifications of Assigned Team Members

Our team offers a proven record of operational expertise, customer service, and commitment to safety, with decades of combined industry experience.

John Hilton – Owner/Operator (17 years), Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) holder.

Chance Hinds – General Manager (9 years), CDL Holder

Monty Viall – Maintenance Technician/Shred Driver (6 years), CDL Holder

Lucas Anderson – Route Manager (9 years), CDL Holder

Charlotte Hilton – Bookkeeper/Marketing (12 years)

Henry Lauerma – Route Driver/Recycling Center Worker, Marketing (4 years), CDL Holder

Brett Larson – Route Driver/Recycling Center Worker (2 years)

Dusty Acord – Route Driver/Recycling Center Worker (1 year)

We provide trained, professional, and courteous personnel for all collection activities. Drivers are licensed and regularly trained in safety, compliance, and efficiency. Customer service representatives receive training in communication and problem resolution to ensure respectful and responsive service. Ongoing evaluations and refresher training maintain high standards of professionalism and accountability.

4. Customer Service

Helena Recycling, LLC uses the waste hauler software Hauler Hero for customer service, routing, billing, and operational information. All trucks are equipped with an onboard tablet to track curbside recycling. Office hours are Monday through Friday from 6:30am to 4pm. We pride ourselves on customer service and will always have a dedicated local customer service representative to answer phone calls and emails. City of Helena Residents will be able to use our website, www.helenarecycling.com, for signing up, accessing pick-up calendars and recycling and guideline inquiries.

5. Billing/Reporting

Helena Recycling will independently bill customers and process payments on a monthly or quarterly basis. Billing will be done by mail and/or email, and payments will be accepted by check, ACH, or credit card. Helena Recycling will submit a monthly customer report with the number of customers, estimated tonnage and any other information the city of Helena requests.

6. Public Education & Outreach

There are many ways to encourage and boost recycling habits for individuals in the City of Helena. The most effective way is through education. Helena Recycling LLC has been in contact with a non-profit entity called The Recycling Partnership. They help by engaging “in community partnerships to design and execute tailored social marketing campaigns that increase desirable recycling behaviors.” Helena Recycling, LLC will cover the costs, if any, but they are a non-profit entity committed to working with cities to implement effective recycling programs.

We propose a partnership between Helena Recycling, LLC, the City of Helena, and The Recycling Partnership. They have a “proven track record that utilizes public-private partnerships to improve recycling at the local level.” Our marketing employees, Charlotte Hilton and Henry Lauerman, will work with a City of Helena staff person and The Recycling Partnership to develop an educational brochure unique to Helena to distribute to new residential recycling sign-ups. In addition, social media, email, radio, and newspaper campaigns will be launched prior to the curbside recycling service rollout as well as after to promote additional sign-ups and effective recycling habits. We will also use local resources such as the City of Helena Chamber of Commerce to help promote the curbside program. For more information on The Recycling Partnership, please visit their website at <http://recyclingpartnership.org/>.

7. Disposal/Processing

All recyclables collected by Helena Recycling, LLC will be taken to our recycling center for processing. Our brand-new Maren auto-tie baler handles up to 30 tons per day per shift. All materials are baled and sent to recycling mills throughout the United States. We work closely with five different recycling brokers who market our material to reputable mills. A list of mills and brokers will be provided if the city of Helena asks. Absolutely no recyclables will be directed to landfills.

8. Contamination Management

We address contamination through:

- Customer education at sign-up and ongoing communication
- Driver inspections prior to collection
- Leaving contaminants behind with clear explanatory notes

Each customer is educated about our recycling program during and after they sign up. Our drivers are trained to look inside of bins for contamination before dumping them into the trailer. Items that are not recyclable are left in the bins, and a note is left explaining the proper way to recycle. We have trained our recycling customers throughout the years to become the best recyclers in the state of Montana, and we pride ourselves in that.

9. Safety/Environmental

Helena Recycling, LLC adheres to all federal, state, and local safety regulations, including OSHA standards and the Montana DEQ regulations. Helena Recycling, LLC holds mandatory safety meetings with all employees on a quarterly basis. New employees will have to complete safety training during the first week of hire. Most of these trainings will be conducted by Victory Insurance Company, Inc. to ensure a professional program is in place.

10. Commodity Collection Service

Source-Separated Collection (bi-weekly): Helena Recycling, LLC will use multi stream to collect paper, cardboard, plastics, glass, and aluminum and tin cans. Four–18-gallon bins with lids (same bin as currently used for city curbside recycling) will be used for source separated recycling. See attached ***What is Recyclable with Helena Recycling*** document for sorting instructions. Bins will be purchased and owned by Helena Recycling, LLC. Helena Recycling, LLC will use one-ton trucks and custom-made recycling trailers to pick up the recyclables. Residents will put their recycling bins out no earlier than 6 a.m. the day before picking up and remove them the same day. Helena Recycling, LLC will promote pick-up from curbside and not alleys. We will only use alleys in the event there is no other viable option available for pick-up.

Single-Stream Collection (bi-weekly): Helena Recycling, LLC will use single stream to collect paper, cardboard, plastics, and aluminum and tin cans. All recyclables will be put into automated rollout 96-gallon containers with attached lids. See ***What is Recyclable with Single Stream*** document for instruction. A logo and unique serial number will be hot stamped on each container. In addition, an Ultra High Frequency (UHF) Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID) and a weather-proof sticker showing items that are allowable in the recycling program will be placed on the lid of each container. If needed in the future, updated stickers will be provided for residential participants by Helena Recycling LLC, to place over any outdated stickers. Containers will be purchased and owned by Helena Recycling LLC. Containers will be purchased and owned by Helena Recycling, LLC. Helena Recycling, LLC will use side-load garbage trucks to pick up recyclables.

Glass Only (monthly): If single stream is chosen by the city of Helena, then a separate pick up will be required to collect glass with single stream recycling. There will be a cost associated with the pickup of glass. Each customer will have the option to sign up for both single stream recycling and glass pick up or just the single stream recycling without doing the glass pick up. Glass pick up will be monthly and Helena Recycling will use two 18-gallon bins for pick up.

11. Term of Contract and Cost of Service

Helena Recycling, LLC will be submitting costs for both source-separated and single-stream recycling to give the City of Helena two options to consider. Since glass cannot be included in single-stream recycling, we will provide a separate glass collection service with its own associated cost.

Subscriber Costs (3.5% annual increase):

- Source-Separated: \$22.00/month per subscriber
- Single-Stream: \$24.95/month per subscriber
- Glass (optional with single-stream): \$12.95/month per subscriber



What is Recyclable with Helena Recycling?

Please sort into four bins: **MIXED RECYCLABLES WILL NOT BE PICKED UP!**

Yes!

Paper Bin

No

Newspapers/inserts, magazines, home office paper (white/pastel), BAGGED shredded paper, copy/fax paper, post-it-notes, white envelopes, and paper ream wrappers.



Tissues/tissue paper, food wrappings, paper towel, soiled/food stained paper, hard back book bindings, construction paper, wrapping paper and dark colored office paper, phone books, manila envelopes and file folders.



We do accept thin cardboard, paper bags and packaging, but **PLEASE PLACE WITH CARDBOARD.**



Do NOT include with paper.

Yes!

Metal Bin

No

Aluminum cans and steel/tin cans.



Bottle caps, aerosol cans, paint/solvent containers, tin foil/pans and scrap metal.



Yes!

Plastics Bin

No

All Type 1 and Type 2 plastic:
Containers accepted: plastic bottles, milk jugs, pop/water/juice bottles, laundry detergent bottles. **Make sure it has a recycling symbol with a 1 or 2. Remove lids!**



Type 3-7 plastics like butter and yogurt containers. Plastic caps or lids. No styrofoam. Plastic bags, wrappers, zip lock bags, bread bags, etc. **No bags of any kind.**



Cardboard

Flatten and place cardboard in another box/container (see picture below).

Yes!

Moving/mailling boxes, non-corrugated (like cereal boxes), brown paper bags and packaging, and any thin cardboard.

Must be flattened!



No

Soiled cardboard (i.e. oily pizza boxes), egg cartons, milk cartons, and paper cups.



Glass

Yes!

Glass containers (all colors), bottles, and jars.

Remove lids!

Only ONE bin of glass per pick-up.



No

Remove lids!

NO caps, neck rings, corks and flow control plastic from any glass bottles or jars.

Labels are OK

Any plastic on glass contaminates the glass and makes it unrecyclable.



Policy Reminders — PLEASE READ!

- Rinse out ALL recycled containers.
- Flatten ALL cardboard boxes — cardboard not broken down will not be taken.
- Keep bins stored indoors until pick-up day to preserve their condition.
- No small bags filled with recyclables.
- No plastic bags of any kind.
- Absolutely NO trash.

Please put your bins out the night before your scheduled pick-up day.

Contact us if you have any questions:

Helena Recycling, LLC
3 Industry Loop
East Helena, MT 59635
406-457-2437

gogreen@helenarecycling.com
www.helenarecycling.com





What is Recyclable with Single Stream?

YES—put these items in tote

PLASTICS

Bottles (milk, pop, detergent or shampoo, etc.).
Type 1 and 2 plastics only.



CANS

Aluminum and tin. Rinse, flattening optional.



CARDBOARD

Flattened boxes, cereal and other paper-board boxes.



PAPER

Newspaper, magazines, catalogs, mail, writing paper, phone books, paper bags. Shredded paper in paper bag.



NO — DO NOT put these items in tote

- Non-bottle shaped #1 and #2 plastics (clam shells, cups, etc.)
- Plastics #3-#7 or unlabeled plastics
- GLASS
- Aerosol cans
- Pill bottles
- Ceramics
- Foil
- Metal hangers
- Food contaminated pizza boxes, paper plates, and napkins.
- Batteries
- Light bulbs
- Paper milk or other liquid cartons
- Plastic cups
- Juice boxes/pouches
- Chip bags
- Plastic bags
- Styrofoam/packing peanuts
- Frozen food bags
- Toxic product containers (oil, antifreeze, herbicide, pesticide, etc.)

Please put your bins out the night before your scheduled pick-up day.

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gogreen@helenarecycling.com
www.helenarecycling.com

Trans Hudson Trading, LLC.

September 3, 2025

City of Helena
316 N. Park Avenue
Helena, MT 59623

To Whom It May Concern,

Trans Hudson Trading is excited to support Helena Recycling in their effort to secure the curbside recycling for the City of Helena. Our traders have been fortunate to have worked with Helena Recycling over the past 5 years brokering their recycled material. Over this time our two companies have developed a strong partnership. Helena Recycling has proven to be a reliable partner who is easy to work with and cares about their business.

Even when shipping large volumes of material, Helena Recycling pays attention to detail, consistently shipping clean loads of recyclables free of contaminants to various end markets in several different states. Trans Hudson Trading, LLC is a brokerage company specializing in baled recyclable fiber, post-consumer plastics and post-consumer metals. Trans Hudson services suppliers all around the country with focused marketing efforts in Colorado, Montana, Wyoming, New Mexico, Nebraska, Kansas, Arizona, Texas and Nevada.

Trans Hudson supports Helena Recycling in its Curbside Recycling Proposal. They are a worthy local Montana company who is a huge asset to Helena and the surrounding communities. They divert 100s of tons of recyclable material from the landfill each month and have been doing so for years. They have a great opportunity for growth by processing more material and increasing the recycling opportunities for the surrounding area.

Sincerely,

Jamie Gormley - Sales Manger

Trans Hudson Trading, LLC.

To Whom this may concern:

John and I have been doing business for over 7 years. ACP Solutions is a full service brokerage company that purchases plastics, paper and cardboard in 13 US States. I have been purchasing cardboard, plastic mixed bottles, Tin, Aluminum cans , mixed paper and SOP from Helena Recycling . John has always shipped me superior quality products with no claims. I have no problems finding the best price for Helena Recycling products.

We normally provide the trucks for Helena Recycling, and I do not believe we have ever had an issue with loading the trucks in a delayed manner. Helena Recycling is always quick to get us the information needed when the trucks leave their facility.

I look forward to many more years of business with John and Helena Recycling.

I can be reached anytime at 435-764-1834 cell

Sincerely,

Tony Guillen
Owner ACP Solutions

City of Helena, Montana

09/24/2025

To: Tim Burton, City Manager

From: Ryan Leland, Public Works Director
Emily Jacobson, Sustainability and Recycling Coordinator

Subject: Curbside Green Waste Collection and Sustainability Program Update

Present Situation:

Curbside green waste collection was identified in the Strategic Plan as a solution to meeting Helena's diversion goals set forth in Resolution 20643. The Strategic Plan online engagement survey, "Be Heard Helena", asked if residents' wanted "Universal curbside compost collection for all residents". The results demonstrated strong resident support, with 67% expressing a desire for this service. Due to most of the collection and composting infrastructure being in place, the City, in cooperation with Lewis and Clark County, could start implementing a green waste curbside collection and composting program within 1-year.

Implementation of a City curbside green waste collection program and other recommendations of the Integrated Solid Master Plan are being analyzed in the ongoing Cost-of-Service Rate Study. The rate study is scheduled to be finalized this fall.

City staff will be presenting some of the major sustainability accomplishments and programs of the last year, such as the Sustainability Newsletter, solar projects, EV pilot program.

Background Information:

Helena City Commissions have demonstrated a long-standing commitment to waste reduction programs and diversion initiatives as outlined below:

City of Helena Waste Reduction/Diversion Timeline:

2021: City Commission adopted Resolution 20643 establishing solid waste reduction goals and calling for the development of a Strategic Plan for Waste Reduction.

2022: City Strategic Plan for Waste Reduction finalized.

2025: Integrated Solid Waste Master Plan, incorporating key information from the Strategic Plan for Waste Reduction, is accepted by both City and County Commissions.

Proposal/Objective:

Staff is updating the City Commission on the status of the curbside green waste collection program and the sustainability program.

Advantage:

n/a

Notable Energy Impact:

n/a

Disadvantage:

n/a

Quasi-Judicial Item:

False

Notice of Public Hearing:

False

**Staff Recommendation/
Recommended Motion:**

n/a