



## Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

### 2026 Request for Proposal

#### General Information

**Proposal ID:** 2026-181

**Proposal Title:** Bulky Waste Diversion Project (Oversized Bulky Waste)

#### Project Manager Information

**Name:** Shawn Dolan

**Organization:** EMERGE Community Development

**Office Telephone:** (612) 230-5741

**Email:** dolans@emerge-mn.org

#### Project Basic Information

**Project Summary:** Divert bulky waste from landfills by partnering with governments and haulers to expand recycling and reuse, protecting the environment, reducing landfill demand, and creating jobs through sustainable waste management.

**ENRTF Funds Requested:** \$1,833,000

**Proposed Project Completion:** June 30, 2029

**LCCMR Funding Category:** Land (F)

#### Project Location

**What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?**

Region(s): Metro

**What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?**

Statewide

**When will the work impact occur?**

During the Project

## Narrative

**Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.**

Many communities struggle with the disposal of oversized and hard-to-manage discarded goods, such as furniture, appliances, and electronics. The current disposal system is inconsistent, often resulting in these items being crushed in waste collection trucks, eliminating their potential for recycling or reuse. Additionally, there is minimal coordinated effort to manage the growing volume of these materials entering the waste stream, leading to inefficiencies and missed opportunities for sustainability. Illegal dumping, particularly of furniture, remains a persistent issue, exacerbated by insufficient disposal infrastructure in metropolitan areas. High fees and limited capacity at designated disposal sites further discourage responsible recycling, making it easier for individuals to abandon these items in unauthorized locations.

Emerge has already demonstrated a successful model for addressing large-scale waste challenges through its LCCMR-funded mattress recycling program. This initiative has dramatically increased mattress recycling across the state, proving that targeted efforts can create effective, scalable solutions. Building on this success, we seek to replicate and expand key components of that program to tackle the even larger problem of bulky waste disposal. By implementing a structured, sustainable approach, we can reduce landfill waste, combat illegal dumping, and maximize resource recovery, creating economic and environmental benefits for the broader community.

**What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? Introduce us to the work you are seeking funding to do. You will be asked to expand on this proposed solution in Activities & Milestones.**

This project will protect, conserve, and enhance the state's natural resources by improving the collection and recycling of oversized and hard-to-dispose discarded goods. We will expand infrastructure and capacity to divert these materials from landfills and incinerators, increasing opportunities for reuse and material recovery. By developing and refining recycling processes, we aim to significantly boost the amount of recoverable materials before they are lost to waste.

To test and refine these methods, we will conduct pilot programs in multiple municipalities, working with local partners to implement innovative collection and recycling solutions. These pilots will generate valuable data and insights, helping us evaluate the effectiveness of different strategies. By comparing pilot results with baseline data from landfills and waste facilities, we can measure impact and identify best practices for long-term sustainability.

A key component of this project is creating a scalable, adaptable framework for future statewide recycling initiatives. By leveraging local knowledge and existing infrastructure, we will design solutions that can be replicated and expanded across Minnesota. Our goal is to provide a comprehensive, long-term strategy that reduces landfill waste, prevents illegal dumping, and promotes responsible disposal practices throughout the state.

**What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?**

This project will create a sustainable, community-driven system for managing oversized and hard-to-dispose-of discarded goods. It will reduce landfill waste, curb illegal dumping, and increase material recovery, protecting the state's natural resources. By expanding recycling infrastructure and refining recovery processes, we will divert waste from incineration and landfills, lessening environmental impact. The initiative will also create economic opportunities in underserved communities, promoting local engagement in environmental stewardship. A key goal is to develop a scalable system that can be replicated across the state, ensuring long-term sustainability and broader environmental benefits.

## Activities and Milestones

### Activity 1: Curbside Collection for Oversized Waste Diversion and Material Recovery in Saint Paul

**Activity Budget:** \$1,303,000

**Activity Description:**

This pilot program will establish a targeted curbside collection system in St. Paul to recover oversized and hard-to-dispose-of discarded goods before they are crushed or landfilled. The program will focus on reuse, recycling, and repurposing, ensuring that collected items such as furniture, appliances, and electronics are evaluated for their highest-value recovery option.

Key components include transport and sortation, where collected items will be efficiently transported to processing centers for assessment and material separation. Usable goods will then move to distribution and delivery, providing recovered materials to resale markets, donation centers, or recycling facilities. Additionally, detailed data on material composition and recovery rates will be collected, helping to evaluate curbside collection as a scalable solution for waste reduction statewide.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Finalize partnerships with the city, haulers, and processing center on operational plan for targeted collection.	October 31, 2026
Establish necessary infrastructure (logistics, transport, sortation, secure storage) of acquired bulky waste materials.	January 31, 2027
Implement curbside collection system in Saint Paul beginning with scheduled pickups and organizing material recovery.	April 30, 2027
Transport collected materials to processing center for evaluation, sorting, identifying reuse, recycling, repurposing	April 30, 2027
Collect detailed data on material composition, recovery rates, diversion success and effectiveness of collection system.	October 31, 2027
Report on the potential of a statewide implementation strategy, and what modifications may be needed	August 31, 2028
Evaluate results of the program, assess scalability, generate report outlining potential for expansion outstate.	June 30, 2029

### Activity 2: Bulky Waste Diversion Pilot – Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy - Newport, MN

**Activity Budget:** \$455,000

**Activity Description:**

This initiative will develop an efficient collection and transportation system to divert bulky discarded goods to recycling or reuse facilities. In collaboration with waste haulers and municipalities, we will establish drop-off locations and scheduled collection events to increase accessibility and reduce landfill waste. Partnering with the Natural Resources Research Institute (NRRI), we will explore innovative reuse methods for non-conforming materials and identify value-added commodities and potential markets for repurposed materials.

Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy (R&E) is a partnership between Ramsey and Washington counties, operates the Recycling & Energy Center (R&E Center) in Newport, processing all waste collected in the counties. The facility recovers metals for recycling and produces fuel for Xcel Energy, reducing landfill use and greenhouse gas emissions. R&E is committed to waste reduction and resource recovery, aligning with this project's goal of expanding recycling infrastructure and promoting innovative reuse solutions. By leveraging R&E's expertise and facilities, this pilot will

enhance waste diversion strategies and contribute to sustainable materials management, supporting the long-term vision of “vibrant, healthy communities without waste.”

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Finalize partnerships with stakeholders, develop collection and transport plan and secure locations and drop sites.	October 31, 2026
Set-up drop off locations, launch scheduled collection events, and begin public outreach to encourage participation	January 31, 2027
Evaluate collected materials, develop innovative reuse methods with NRRI and identify potential markets for repurpose.	July 31, 2027
Expand program to additional municipalities, implement a sustainability plan, and evaluate program effectiveness	January 31, 2028
Evaluate results of the program, assess scalability, generate report outlining potential for expansion outstate.	June 30, 2029

### Activity 3: Expanding Recycling Infrastructure through Strategic Partnerships for Waste Diversion and Sustainable Resource Recovery

**Activity Budget:** \$75,000

**Activity Description:**

This activity will focus on establishing partnerships with businesses, recycling facilities, and municipalities to expand infrastructure for recycling and reusing oversized and hard-to-dispose-of discarded goods.

By collaborating with key stakeholders, we will develop scalable models for collection, transportation, processing, and distribution, ensuring that materials are diverted from landfills and repurposed effectively.

Through these strategic partnerships, we will identify best practices for waste diversion, optimize logistics, and create a framework that can be replicated across the state. This initiative will strengthen Minnesota’s recycling network, enhance resource recovery efforts, and support long-term environmental sustainability

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Establish partnerships with businesses, recycling facilities and cities. Finalize agreements for collaborative efforts.	October 31, 2026
Design and refine scalable models for collection, transport, processing and distribution of bulky waste.	January 31, 2027
Implement best practices for waste diversion, optimize logistics for collection, processing and distribution with partners.	April 30, 2027
Create a replicable statewide framework for waste diversion, evaluate success of implemented strategies for sustainability	January 31, 2028
Report on the successes of the statewide implementation strategy and what modifications might be needed.	June 30, 2028
Evaluate results of the program, assess scalability, generate report outlining potential for expansion outstate.	June 30, 2029

## Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Sarah Haas	City of Saint Paul	Project Partner assisting with the coordination of bulky waste collection, transportation, sortation and re-distribution within the city of Saint Paul	No
Amy Caron	Ramsey County Public and Environmental Health	Project Partner assisting with the coordination of bulky waste collection, transportation, sortation and re-distribution with city partners and residents of Ramsey County.	No
David Brummel	Washington County Public and Environmental Health	Project Partner assisting with the coordination of bulky waste collection, transportation, sortation and re-distribution with city partners and residents of Washington County.	No
Leslie D. McCollam	Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy	Collaborator and existing partner in support of bulky waste diversion from cities and counties who utilize Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy infrastructure.	No
Victor Krause	Natural Resources Research Institute (NRRI)	Collaborator and partner in support of bulky waste diversion and repurposing/recycling/reuse of materials collected from cities and counties.	No

## Long-Term Implementation and Funding

**Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this work be funded?**

Project results will be implemented through sustained partnerships, expanded infrastructure, and a replicable framework for waste diversion and material recovery. By leveraging data, best practices, and scalable models, municipalities and recycling organizations can integrate targeted collection, waste diversion, and reuse programs into long-term waste management strategies.

To ensure ongoing funding, we will work with local governments, waste management agencies, and private-sector partners to secure continued investment through municipal budgets, recycling fees, grants, and public-private partnerships. Ramsey/Washington R&E will play a key role in maintaining and expanding processing infrastructure, while partnerships with businesses and nonprofits will support material reuse

## Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Statewide Diversion of Furniture and Mattress Waste Pilots	M.L. 2023, , Chp. 60, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 08q	\$2,833,000

## Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

**Project Manager Name:** Shawn Dolan

**Job Title:** General Manager Second Chance Recycling

**Provide description of the project manager's qualifications to manage the proposed project.**

As the General Manager at Second Chance Recycling, I have direct responsibility and oversight of operational performance, contract fulfillment, financial performance and reporting, customer relationship management and enterprise growth. I am a decisive and intuitive leader with experience and passion for bringing diverse people together

to exceed both customer expectations and company objectives. 30+ years experience in leadership within the printing and distribution industry. I have a proven ability to implement strategy, aligned with expense and profitability measurements that drive results in all aspects of business. I am experienced with both production and customer support operations managing multiple channel, market and product strategies on a local, regional and national level. My background is in logistics, operations, staff development and technical support services. I form solid partnerships and trust between the marketing, sales, support, operations and fulfillment priorities to exceed both customer and organizational expectations.

**Organization:** EMERGE Community Development

**Organization Description:**

Second Chance Recycling is a social enterprise of EMERGE Community Development and provides high quality recycling services coupled with a vitally needed social mission. Beyond the environmental impact of mattress recycling, Second Chance makes a profound impact in the community with our re-entry program. The majority of employees at Second Chance are formerly incarcerated individuals with significant barriers to employment opportunities who benefit from a variety of support services in addition to a much needed job. On average, 150 individuals each year are employed for 6 to 9 months. During this time, they develop solid work habits and skills necessary to obtain and keep their next job and, in many cases, the opportunity for vocational training that leads to a career.

EMERGE Community Development is a workforce and community development nonprofit. Every year EMERGE helps thousands of people access jobs, financial coaching, and career training along pathways to brighter futures. Our programs have special expertise in supporting participants overcoming a criminal background, new Americans, single parents seeking to end reliance on public assistance, and individuals in need of career training to obtain living-wage jobs.

## Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
<b>Personnel</b>								
Site Coordinator		(A1) Daily management and operation project for all activities			24%	3		\$205,000
Onsite Recycling Staff		Be onsite at pilot location for receiving, sortation, and preparation for distribution.			15%	9		\$360,000
Driver		Curbside collection of bulky items throughout the city			15%	3		\$270,000
Assistant Driver		Curbside collection of bulky items throughout the city			15%	3		\$258,000
Field Project Manager		(A2,3) Coordination with R&E, Recyclers, Haulers for routing and re-distribution			24%	3		\$205,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$1,298,000</b>
<b>Contracts and Services</b>								
Natural Resources Research Institute (NRRI)	Service Contract	Will partner NRRI and Second Chance Recycling to conduct research and develop processes, procedures and evaluation of commodity uses.				0		\$150,000
Activity 2 Transportation	Service Contract	Transportation and re-routing costs of re-distributed bulky waste				0		\$100,000
Activity 3 Transportation	Service Contract	Transportation and re-routing costs of re-distributed bulky waste				-		\$75,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$325,000</b>
<b>Equipment, Tools, and Supplies</b>								
	Tools and Supplies	(A1) Conveyor Systems	Product flow within the facility					\$20,000
	Equipment	(A1) Cutting Tables and Supplies	Processing equipment and supplies					\$20,000
	Equipment	(A1) Sorting Equipment and Supplies	Sorting equipment and various items for sorting efficiency					\$20,000
	Equipment	A1) 2 Trucks (Leased for 3 years)	Pick up, transport and re-distribute Bulky Items					\$150,000

							Sub Total	\$210,000
Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
							Sub Total	-
Other Expenses								
							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$1,833,000



Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
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## Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	Amount
<b>State</b>				
			<b>State Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Non-State</b>				
In-Kind	Natural Resources Research Institute (NRRI)	Unrecoverable Indirect Expenses	Secured	\$81,000
In-Kind	City of Saint Paul, MN	Processing Space	Secured	\$300,000
In-Kind	Emerge Community Development	Unrecoverable Indirect Expenses	Secured	\$40,000
In-Kind	Washington County, MN	Unrecoverable Indirect Expenses	Secured	\$20,000
In-Kind	Ramsey County, MN	Unrecoverable Indirect Expenses	Secured	\$20,000
			<b>Non State Sub Total</b>	<b>\$461,000</b>
			<b>Funds Total</b>	<b>\$461,000</b>

**Total Project Cost: \$2,294,000**

**This amount accurately reflects total project cost?**

Yes

## Attachments

### Required Attachments

#### *Visual Component*

File: [7b4e4ff7-df9.pdf](#)

#### *Alternate Text for Visual Component*

Google Map arial view of Second Chance Recycling's large processing facility in Minneapolis...

#### *Financial Capacity*

Title	File
ECD 990	<a href="#">e9d2a26f-b7f.pdf</a>
Emerge Audit	<a href="#">90e67e0c-698.pdf</a>

#### *Board Resolution or Letter*

Title	File
EMERGE Board Resolution March 2025	<a href="#">4c53cbf5-ac5.pdf</a>

### Supplemental Attachments

#### *Capital Project Questionnaire, Budget Supplements, Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other*

Title	File
Letter of Support. Natural Resources Research Institute (NRRI)	<a href="#">3f72eae7-41d.pdf</a>
Letter of Support City of Saint Paul, MN	<a href="#">57529718-69b.pdf</a>
Letter of Support Ramsey County, MN	<a href="#">a91055a8-5b3.pdf</a>
Letter of Support Washington County, MN	<a href="#">685afb0b-8d7.pdf</a>

## Administrative Use

**Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?**

No

**Do you understand that travel expenses are only approved if they follow the "Commissioner's Plan" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget or, for University of Minnesota projects, the University of Minnesota plan?**

N/A

**Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, sale of products and assets, or revenue generation?**

Yes

**Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?**

Yes

**Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF? If so, describe here (1) the source and estimated amounts of any revenue and (2) how you propose to use those revenues:**

Yes, Reinvest to support the ongoing and expansive projects of recycling, reuse, and re-purpose of bulky waste within the targeted area through continued diversion from the waste stream.

**Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?**

No

**Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?**

No

**Does your project include the pre-design, design, construction, or renovation of a building, trail, campground, or other fixed capital asset costing \$10,000 or more or large-scale stream or wetland restoration?**

No

**Do you propose using an appropriation from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to conduct a project that provides children's services (as defined in Minnesota Statutes section 299C.61 Subd.7 as "the provision of care, treatment, education, training, instruction, or recreation to children")?**

No

**Provide the name(s) and organization(s) of additional individuals assisting in the completion of this proposal:**

Sarah Haas, City of Saint Paul, MN

Amy Caron, Director of Ramsey County Public Health

Victor Krause, Project Manager Natural Resources Research Institute

David Brummel, Director of Washington County Public and Environmental Health

Brenda Ekland, City of Scandia, MN

Jennifer McLoughlin, City of Woodbury, MN

Sara Taylor, City of Bayport, MN

Beth Wolf, City of Stillwater, MN

Leslie D. McCollam, Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy

**Do you understand that a named service contract does not constitute a funder-designated subrecipient or approval of a sole-source contract? In other words, a service contract entity is only approved if it has been selected according to the contracting rules identified in state law and policy for organizations that receive ENRTF funds through direct appropriations, or in the DNR's reimbursement manual for non-state organizations. These rules may include competitive bidding and prevailing wage requirements**

Yes, I understand