### Minneapolis, Minnesota

**Population**
- 387,753

**Recycling Rate**
- 18% (residential only)

**Recycling Programs**
- Mandatory residential & commercial recycling
- Food Scrap Pilot Program

**Management Systems**
- Residential: Municipal/Consortium
- Commercial: Open-Market

**High-Road Economic Policies**
- Residential Haulers: Collective Bargaining Agreements
- Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy
- Recycling Workers: Living Wage

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**Three factors are driving momentum to build a sustainable recycling program in Minneapolis:** a recent transition to a more streamlined recycling program, a goal to increase recycling by 17 percent, and existing policies that raise standards for workers throughout the waste stream.

Although mandatory recycling was recently expanded to include commercial establishments and some institutions, Minneapolis’ recycling programs primarily focus on residential trash. The city is currently running a small scale food scrap pilot program for households and recently shifted to a single stream recycling program. Minneapolis has a unique consortium structure for managing residential trash. In addition to setting standards for the services the haulers offer, the contracts require that workers earn a living wage or be represented by a collective bargaining agreement. The private companies that operate recycling facilities are also required to pay a living wage.

While the city has strong systems in place for residential waste and recycling facilities, it has taken a much more hands-off approach toward commercial trash. The open-market commercial system makes enforcing the mandatory recycling ordinance challenging and most commercial trash is incinerated. Minneapolis presents an opportunity to develop a more comprehensive program, strengthen management systems, and ensure that the existing job quality standards stay in place as the sector expands.

**Sources:**
- Interview with Minneapolis Department of Public Works, Division of Solid Waste & Recycling
- Hennepin County Solid Waste Management Master Plan
- City of Minneapolis Sustainability Indicators