

**Brown County Port & Resource Recovery Department
Strategic Solid Waste Management Plan**



BROWN COUNTY
**Resource
Recovery**

April 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. COMPONENTS OF STRATEGIC PLANNING	2
3. BROWN COUNTY RESOURCE RECOVERY.....	3
a. Overview	3
b. Divisions	3
i. Solid Waste Operations	3
1. South Landfill.....	3
2. Transfer Station.....	4
3. Closed Landfills	4
ii. Recycling.....	4
iii. Hazardous Material Recovery	4
4. ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE	5
5. MISSION STATEMENT	5
6. VISION	6
7. STRATEGIC ISSUES.....	6
a. Solid Waste	7
i. Issue: Diversion of waste from the BOW landfill	7
ii. Issue: Drawdown of the Closure Fund for Long Term Care expenses.....	7
iii. Issue: Management of organics	7
iv. Issue: Beneficial use of landfill gas.....	8
b. Recycling	8
i. Issue: Maximizing BOW MRF recycling operation	8
ii. Issue: Adding additional material sorting capabilities to the BOW MRF	8
iii. Issue: Identifying end markets for all commodities	8
iv. Issue: On-going education in recycling	9
c. Hazardous Material Recovery.....	9
i. Issue: Self sustainability	9
ii. Issue: Hazardous material handling and recovery capabilities	9
d. General	10
i. Issue: Keeping up with changes in waste disposal technology	10
ii. Issue: Customer Service	10
8. SWOT ANALYSIS	11

9. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.....12

10. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN14

1. INTRODUCTION

The Brown County Port & Resource Recovery Department is an Enterprise Fund of Brown County. The Resource Recovery area of the Department offers services to local communities, residents, businesses and industry. The Department has been in business for more than 45 years providing cost-effective, efficient and environmentally responsible disposal options for Brown County residential and commercial waste and recycling. The Department's resource recovery operations include the South Landfill, the Solid Waste Transfer Station, a Single Stream Recycling Transfer Station, a regional Hazardous Material Recovery Facility, the maintenance of two closed landfills, and coordination of household sharps and pharmaceutical collection and disposal programs. The Resource Recovery Department also provides programs for disposal of tires, wood waste, construction & demolition waste, shingles, concrete and asphalt, appliances (both Freon and non-Freon), scrap steel, and electronics. These programs have been successful due to commitments to the solid waste management system through solid waste and recycling agreements with local communities and businesses.

The Department is part of a three-county regional waste agreement with Brown, Outagamie and Winnebago Counties known as the "BOW". The three counties coordinate their waste disposal using each county-run landfill thereby sharing administrative and operational costs. Currently, two of the BOW landfills are receiving waste as the BOW transitions to closing one landfill. In Brown County, the Department operates the South Landfill and a Solid Waste Transfer Station that collects, compacts and transports waste produced by county residential, commercial and industrial users. The transfer station waste is compacted and trucked to landfills operated by one of the Tri-County Solid Waste partners with the landfills currently located in both Brown and Outagamie Counties.

The BOW operates a regional single stream Material Recovery Facility (MRF) in Outagamie County that is one of the largest publicly owned and operated MRFs in the country. The MRF processes and markets commingled residential and commercial recyclable containers and paper from the partner counties and other northeastern Wisconsin counties. Since opening in 2009, the MRF saw a steady increase in the volume of material processed from year to year that has since stabilized at over 100,000 tons per year received. In 2022 more than 107,000 tons of recyclables were processed. Existing equipment is upgraded regularly and new equipment is added to the facility to allow for more material to be separated and baled more effectively. Curbside recycling began in Brown County in 1994 and converted to single stream recycling countywide in 2009. The Department operates a Recycling Transfer Station in Brown County which collects more than 33,000 tons per year of single stream recyclables (plastic bottles, tubs & containers, aluminum & tin cans, glass, and paper), and has returned more than \$3.3 million to customers since 2009.



Since opening in 2009, the MRF saw a steady increase in the volume of material processed from year to year that has since stabilized at over 100,000 tons per year received. In 2022 more than 107,000 tons of recyclables were processed. Existing equipment is upgraded regularly and new equipment is added to the facility to allow for more material to be separated and baled more effectively. Curbside recycling began in Brown County in 1994 and converted to single stream recycling countywide in 2009. The Department operates a Recycling Transfer Station in Brown County which collects more than 33,000 tons per year of single stream recyclables (plastic bottles, tubs & containers, aluminum & tin cans, glass, and paper), and has returned more than \$3.3 million to customers since 2009.

The Resource Recovery Department also operates the Brown County Hazardous Material Recovery Facility. The facility has collected more than 18.2 million pounds of hazardous materials from more than 195,000 households and businesses since 1996 and has averaged more than 800,000 pounds per year since 2010.



The Brown County Solid Waste Management Board sets policy for the Brown County Port & Resource Recovery Department's resource recovery services. It is authorized by Wisconsin State Statute and Chapter 12 of the *Brown County Code of Ordinances*. The nine (9) members of the Board are appointed by the County Executive and serve as an oversight committee of the County Board. Three members of the Board are from the city of Green Bay, three from incorporated non-Green Bay municipalities and three from unincorporated areas of the County. Two Board members are County Board Supervisors. Board members serve three-year terms. Minutes of the Solid Waste Board meetings are reviewed and approved by the County Board.

In 1998, the County Executive and County Board of Supervisors combined the Port Department with the Solid Waste Department to create a new department called the Port and Solid Waste Department. The merger resulted in the combination of Director of Solid Waste and Port Director into the Director of Port and Solid Waste that would serve as Department Head over these combined departments. A Port Manager was then hired to manage the Port's daily operations.

In 2012, the Solid Waste area of the Department developed a strategic plan to create a 5-10 year vision for its continued success. One outcome of the plan was to rebrand the Department as the Brown County Port & Resource Recovery Department to better reflect the focus and program areas of the Department. As an enterprise fund, the Department must maintain its self-sufficiency and retain revenue-generating opportunities in order to provide the necessary resources to operate successful solid waste operations. The Department can accomplish this by meeting the established goals and the specific objectives of this updated Strategic Solid Waste Management Plan. This Strategic Plan update will allow the Department to maintain self-sufficiency, increase visibility, spur economic development and growth pursuant to the established goals. For the sake of clarity, this Strategic Plan will be termed the *2023 Resource Recovery Department Strategic Solid Waste Management Plan*.

The 2023 strategic plan update refines the Port & Resource Recovery Department's mission statement, goals and objectives, identifies strategic issues that will affect the Department's ability to achieve its mission, identifies and evaluates options for addressing issues and recommends an implementation plan for the selected options.

2. COMPONENTS OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

The strategic plan is a comprehensive document created to guide the Port & Resource Recovery Department's resource recovery activities into the future. The strategic plan identifies where the Port & Resource Recovery Department wants to be in five, ten, and twenty years. The strategic plan must have the consensus of the key decision-makers to buy into the Department's plans and realize its identified goals.

The strategic plan identifies ways in which the Department is prepared to deal quickly and effectively with potential futures. Strategic planning takes into account the many internal and external factors that may have an impact upon the Department's future. Strategic planning and management keeps the Department's leadership constantly aware of and ready to react to both crisis and opportunity.

The first phase of strategic planning is to review the Department's mission and vision statements. These elements provided the direction for the initial strategic plan and help to guide the update. The 2012 Strategic Plan analyzed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT Analysis) of the Department's resource recovery activities. The opportunities and threats were then used to identify issues that could have a significant impact upon the performance of the Department. Goals

and objectives were then developed to deal with the strategic issues and a targeted time frame for completing each objective was identified. Finally, a method of measurement was developed for each objective. A new SWOT Analysis was not conducted as part of this plan update.

After the Strategic Plan was formally adopted and implemented, a monitoring program was developed. The plan was regularly monitored and an annual update of the progress of the plan has been conducted by the Department and reported to the Solid Waste Board, County Executive and County Board. In addition, it was noted that every five (5) years the Strategic Plan would need to be comprehensively reviewed and modified by the Solid Waste Board and staff and approved by the County Executive, County Board and Solid Waste Board to incorporate any necessary changes which have been accomplished with this *2023 Resource Recovery Department Strategic Solid Waste Management Plan* update.

3. BROWN COUNTY RESOURCE RECOVERY

a. Overview

The Department’s resource recovery operations include the South Landfill, Solid Waste Transfer Station, a Recycling Transfer Station, a regional Hazardous Material Recovery Facility, the maintenance of two closed landfills, and coordination of household sharps and pharmaceutical collection and disposal programs.

Other programs such as waste-to-energy that help to minimize waste-needing landfilling are continually evaluated. The Department relies heavily upon private enterprise through contracted services.

b. Divisions

The Resource Recovery area of the Brown County Port & Resource Recovery Department is composed of three broad operational waste divisions: solid waste operations, recycling, and hazardous material recovery. Each of these divisions represents separate cost centers within the Department with an integrated but separate budget.

i. Solid Waste Operations

The Solid Waste operations of the Department represent the largest division from both an operational and cost perspective. The Solid Waste operations include the South Landfill, the Solid Waste Transfer Station, and maintenance of two closed landfills.

1. South Landfill

The South Landfill is located in the town of Holland in southern Brown County. The landfill was constructed in 2021 and opened in January 2022. The South Landfill is operated by Brown County as a BOW landfill. The landfill is designed to last an estimated 15 years, the maximum period for which a landfill operator can project usage of a landfill under the current WDNR regulations. The



South Landfill site includes three scales, a scalehouse, a maintenance building and three-sided storage building and a resource recovery drop-off area.

2. Transfer Station

The Solid Waste Transfer Station is located at 3734 West Mason Street in the village of Hobart on land adjacent to the closed West Landfill. The Transfer Station was built to provide solid waste disposal services to the county’s municipalities and private customers



as part of the agreement with the town of Holland in acquiring the site of the South Landfill. This facility is used to consolidate solid waste from the urban areas before it is transported to the landfill which, in turn, reduces the truck traffic on the rural roads leading to the South Landfill.

3. Closed Landfills

Brown County’s East and West landfills have been filled to capacity and are no longer active. Both landfills have been environmentally capped and the County is required by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to conduct periodic groundwater testing along with regular maintenance. The County manages gas and leachate at both landfills and reports on groundwater quality at both landfills twice yearly. Monthly testing of wells in the area is also conducted.

ii. Recycling

Brown County operates a Recycling Transfer Station at 2561 S. Broadway which serves as a transfer point for recyclables that are shipped to the BOW Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) in Outagamie County. The BOW MRF is one of the largest publicly owned and operated MRFs in the country. The MRF processes and markets commingled residential and commercial recyclable containers and paper from the partner counties and other northeastern Wisconsin communities. Single Stream Recycling includes the recycling of plastic bottles, tubs and containers, aluminum and tin cans, glass, and paper.



iii. Hazardous Material Recovery



The Brown County Hazardous Material Recovery Facility (HMR) provides an environmentally responsible outlet for hazardous, universal and special wastes for Brown County residents. Prior to 2022, the Brown County HMR assisted a number of counties with the collection, removal and disposal of their respective hazardous waste. The program

supports area businesses by providing economical disposal options of hazardous and special waste to businesses that qualify as Very Small Quantity Generators (VSQGs). Brown County also coordinates the Household Sharps Collection Program and assists law enforcement in the proper disposal of discarded pharmaceuticals.



4. ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

The Department services are among the least expensive and most complete services offered by any operation in the State of Wisconsin. The Department operates as an Enterprise Fund, solely using revenues gathered through operations to fund its activities. The low cost of solid waste disposal is an economic engine to the economy of northeastern Wisconsin. The Resource Recovery area of the Department's annual budget has grown from just over \$10 million in 2017 to more than \$30 million in 2022 in both expenses and revenues. A majority of the Department's revenue is derived from a tipping fee charged for each ton of solid waste delivered to the Waste Transfer Station and South Landfill. The Department has historically kept its landfill tipping fee low in order to provide a competitive rate for waste disposal helping to keep local budgets stable. The tipping fee is adjusted annually based on the costs of landfill operations and expected tonnage of waste received.

The sale of recyclables by the BOW provides the second largest revenue stream for the Department. The Department receives revenues each quarter based on the sale of sorted and baled recyclables delivered to the BOW Single Stream Material Recycling Facility (MRF). The resale market for processed recyclables can fluctuate significantly from year to year. The Department has returned more than \$3.3 million to municipal customers since 2009 while averaging more than 33,000 tons per year in collections. The tipping fee is recalculated monthly based on market prices and is indexed to the tipping fee set at the BOW MRF.

The BOW MRF is currently operating at near design capacity for two full-time shifts processing more than 107,000 tons in 2022. The BOW has expanded its operations by adding additional types of material to the collection, bringing on additional customers and upgrading sorting equipment to add new sorting technology. This has increased efficiency for all tons processed at the facility.

The Hazardous Material Recovery Facility has historically been funded through partnership contributions from NEW Water, local municipalities and a subsidy from the Resource Recovery area of the Department. Approximately 50 percent of the facility's revenue comes from several small grants and charges to customers for disposal of material. The facility is always examining its operations to ensure that they are as cost effective as possible. The HMR Program currently accepts any material for free that is considered residential hazardous waste (material that is corrosive, flammable, reactive, or toxic). Material considered Universal Waste is accepted on a fee basis including latex paint, bulbs and batteries.

The Department also maintains several long-term funds to provide money for maintenance and closure of the East and West Landfills, the South Landfill and a reserve for potential environmental repair activities.

5. MISSION STATEMENT

A mission statement is a broadly defined enduring statement of the organization's purpose that distinguishes it from other organizations of its type, identifies the scope of operations, and reflects the values and priorities of its decision-makers. The mission statement should provide direction and motivation to employees and constituents. The mission statement should answer who the Department is, what we do, who we serve, why is it important to serve them, and how do we serve them?

The following mission statement was approved by the Solid Waste Board at its April 17, 2023 meeting:

"The Brown County Port & Resource Recovery Department will meet the solid waste disposal needs of local communities, residents, businesses and industry through methods that are



environmentally sound, technically feasible and economical. These methods may incorporate waste reduction, material reuse, recycling, composting, hazardous material treatment and disposal, solid waste disposal and waste-to-energy.”

6. VISION

A vision is a view of where decision-makers want the Resource Recovery Area of the Department to be in the next five (5) years. It is created to generate enthusiasm and serve as a goal to strive for. An effective vision needs to be clear, concise and reflective of the Department. The Brown County Solid Waste Board approved the following Vision at its April 17, 2023 meeting:

“To provide competitive, cost-effective and environmentally sound management systems for solid waste, recyclable and hazardous materials for Brown County communities, residents, businesses and industry.”

7. STRATEGIC ISSUES

A strategic issue is an opportunity or threat that will directly affect the ability of the Department to achieve its mission and requires the attention of senior management and significant resources to resolve or implement. Strategic issues are not current problems or crises nor are they easily resolved. Strategic issues can be expected to have a significant impact on the Resource Recovery area of the Department.

Strategic issues are fundamental policy questions involving:

1. Mission, mandates, philosophy, and values;
2. Products or service:
 - level and mix
 - client/user (i.e. target groups)
 - cost and/or financing
 - management and/or organization

Strategic issues arise when:

- Events have the potential to make it difficult or impossible to accomplish cost-effective basic objectives;
- Technology, financial, employment, management or political choices are unstable for achievement of basic objectives;
- Mission, mandates, or internal/external events offer opportunities to:
 - make significant improvements in the quantity or quality of services
 - gain significant cost reductions
 - introduce new services
 - combine, reduce, or eliminate certain services



a. Solid Waste

i. Issue: Diversion of waste from the BOW landfill

Providing landfill disposal for BOW wastes has been a part of the solid waste management system for 40 years. It is likely that landfill disposal will continue to play a role into the future. As landfill disposal costs increase (due to rising state fees and surcharges) and subsidies or other revenues increase for alternatives to disposal (such as energy production credits or green energy initiatives) the potential for diverting waste away from the BOW landfill system increases.

The BOW solid waste partnership was not created to commit the BOW Counties to landfill disposal nor was it created to reject beneficial uses of waste. But the partnership recognized the need for landfill disposal for much of the current waste production. Since landfill operation is capital intensive with a majority of its operation costs fixed, high volumes of waste disposed in any one year keeps the unit disposal costs down for BOW users.

Comment: Brown County should continue to work cooperatively with the other BOW partners to look at the long-term effects of waste disposal or beneficial reuse on its population. Brown County should encourage BOW to look at expanding its role in all solid waste management so that costs can be better managed over time. The BOW needs to maintain a certain volume of waste to cost-effectively operate a landfill. This may entail an expansion of the BOW partnership. Beneficial use of waste (such as generating electrical power) should be encouraged if it is environmentally safe and economical, and their operations are stable enough to consistently handle the waste stream. New technology should be regularly evaluated to reduce labor costs as well as to address the changes in packaging materials. Another option is to create an independent Solid Waste Authority/Utility/District as part of the BOW partnership. This would create an independent body that would be more responsive to changing business conditions and allow for more independent business decision-making. An independent analysis of the type and powers of this entity would need to be completed with action based on careful consideration and approval of the Brown, Outagamie and Winnebago County Boards.

ii. Issue: Drawdown of the Closure Fund for Long Term Care expenses

The Long-Term Care (LTC) Fund pays for expenses for the State-required 40-year Long-Term Care period at each closed landfill. Reimbursement for annual LTC expenses must be approved by the Wisconsin DNR before being released by the institution holding those escrowed funds. The Closure Fund pays for expenses to close each landfill sequence and the landfill itself. When LTC expenses exceed what the State allows, the Department takes the remainder from the Closure Fund. It will be important to manage the landfill maintenance costs to ensure the viability of the fund.

iii. Issue: Management of organics

Management of organic material is likely to be a larger aspect of waste management in the future and Brown County should understand how organics removal will impact gas and leachate systems.

Comment: The most recent Wisconsin DNR Waste Characterization Study completed in 2021 indicated that more than 20% of material in Wisconsin's landfills was food waste and other organic material. In order to manage and maintain efficient and effective operational and capital costs of its landfill systems, an analysis of the potential reduction in organics from local collection programs on leachate and gas systems should be undertaken as well as any cost-effective alternatives.

iv. Issue: Beneficial use of landfill gas

Brown County should continue to examine beneficial use of landfill gas. Landfill gas can be utilized to generate electricity, heat, or steam; as an alternative vehicle fuel; or cleaned up for pipeline gas which is a high BTU application. Landfill methane can be processed to meet interstate pipeline standards prior to injection into the delivery system.

Comment: The volume of natural gas from the landfill changes over time as the landfill ages and organic material breaks down. Landfill gas has a value on the energy market as a renewable "green" power or gas though the markets are currently weak as the price of natural gas is low.

b. Recycling

i. Issue: Maximizing BOW MRF recycling operation

In 2009 the BOW Recycling Partnership invested in a \$9.9M Material Recycling Facility. Since then, the facility has added additional sorting capabilities and customers to process more than 100,000 tons per year of BOW single stream recyclable paper, plastic and metal containers ensuring that there is enough tonnage for two full-time shifts. Since the facility started operations, the recycling resale markets have fluctuated significantly with both record high commodity prices and near record low commodity prices occurring in in the same year (2022). Recycling Tipping fees are set monthly based on market prices to ensure that the MRF covers the costs of operation.

Comment: Brown County should encourage BOW to examine existing and new contracts for additional tonnage and examine quality of material to ensure the 2nd shift remains economical. Operating an additional shift with inadequate tonnage makes it unprofitable while accepting loads with high contamination levels can affect pricing. Advanced sorting technologies should continue to be examined as a solution for chronic staffing shortages.

ii. Issue: Adding additional material sorting capabilities to the BOW MRF

The BOW MRF currently sorts paper, aluminum cans, steel, glass and all plastic containers. Additional materials in the waste stream such as lower grade aluminum, pots and pans, etc. may be added to the sort in the future. Additional mechanical sorting equipment should be evaluated to help ensure the MRF is not affected by labor shortages. The process of sorting material can be labor intensive, but the markets for them may be intermittent. A benefit/cost analysis must be done when considering adding new materials.

Comment: Adding materials to the MRF sorting ability may make the MRF more competitive with private sector MRFs and may make it more profitable. New technology such as upgraded optical sorting equipment, AI sorting and robotics, and glass clean-up technology should be regularly evaluated to reduce labor costs as well as to address the changes in packaging materials and lightweighting of existing containers.

iii. Issue: Identifying end markets for all commodities

Finding end markets for all commodities may help the BOW MRF add sorting capabilities while providing some assurance that the materials will be able to be sold. Advanced sorting equipment can improve bale quality and help to sell commodities by reducing bale contamination levels.

Comment: Ensuring that there are stable end markets for all MRF commodities will make the MRF more competitive and may make it more profitable. It may also reduce the amount of non-recyclable (residual) material that is landfilled.



iv. Issue: On-going education in recycling

Brown County should continue to provide on-going recycling and hazardous waste education to all age groups and populations. On-going education is needed to ensure that people are recycling the proper items and to inform them of any changes in the recycling system as well as to help understand what can be brought to the HMR facility. On-going education will help inform the public about program fees and why they are charged.

Comment: The role of recycling education has changed as curbside recycling has become the norm. Education is now focused on what to recycle rather than on why to recycle. The Department should evaluate the need for a full-time recycling educator. School education on recycling is cyclic; as students move through school from kindergarten to high school, they carry the message with them; however, each successive generation of students needs to be educated about recycling.

c. Hazardous Material Recovery

i. Issue: Self sustainability

The Hazardous Material Recovery program started in 1996 to fill a need, not to earn revenue for the Department or even to pay for itself. It has served well in that capacity. The present-day situation may force a reconsideration of that idea.

NEW Water and the Department each contribute a subsidy to the HMR program. Each subsidy was initially set at 40% of the net Program cost. As the program has grown, costs have outpaced revenues, and the resulting deficits have been made up by Brown County Resource Recovery. NEW Water has been a good and committed partner throughout the life of the HMR Program. NEW Water may question financial support of external projects such as this if they face budget cutbacks or leadership changes. Department financial support may be questioned if its solid waste area runs deficits and/or is unable to raise its solid waste tipping fee.

The HMR Program may have to consider cutting costs or earning more outside revenue to balance its budget.

Comment: The Hazardous Material Recovery Program has done a very good job of marketing itself as a regional program to surrounding Counties. Each pound of extra waste run through the program better utilizes the facility and spreads the fixed costs over more pounds. It also earns a revenue premium beyond the cost for the regional operations. The HMR Facility needs to continue to look at ways to expand its customer base and further establish itself as a regional facility. The Department should work to establish cooperative agreements with additional counties in Northeast Wisconsin.

ii. Issue: Hazardous material handling and recovery capabilities

Brown County HMR has regularly added new materials to its hazardous material collection program based on requests from the public. The program and facility have been rebranded to encourage use by both residents and businesses as well as to emphasize the program's role in recovering material. The facility's layout and hours of operation limit its ability to expand.

Comment: The program will need to continue to evaluate processing of materials internally in order to keep participant costs down. The HMR program will need to continue to evaluate how to better serve the needs of businesses.



d. General

i. Issue: Keeping up with changes in waste disposal technology

As noted above, providing landfill disposal for wastes has been a part of the solid waste management system for 40 years. It is likely that landfill disposal will continue to play a role in the future. However, changes in technology, the public’s desire to divert more material to recycling and new markets for recycled materials are issues that have to be addressed proactively.

Comment: Beneficial use of waste and additional recycling opportunities should be encouraged if they are environmentally safe, economical and their operations are stable enough to consistently handle the constantly arriving waste stream. New sustainability messages need to be incorporated into the mission and strategies. The Department should examine new technologies and new trends to identify opportunities to either reduce costs or generate revenue. The County must analyze the Brown County waste stream composition to identify potential areas for beneficial reuse and the costs associated with these opportunities.

ii. Issue: Customer Service

Customer service issues include staff training, hours of operation, and the type and cost of services. The Department website, secondary information provided by others outside of the Port & Resource Recovery Department, and a lack of public knowledge all contribute to customer service issues.

Comment: The Department may provide more employee flexibility, an updated web page, new technology, and training for staff to help reach customers more effectively. Consider table of organization changes to provide staff cross training, better utilization of staff skills, professional development opportunities, and create succession planning opportunities.



8. SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT analysis is an examination of the Department's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Strengths are internal characteristics the Department could emphasize and build upon to improve its performance. Strengths can be the availability of unique competencies, competitive advantages such as price, location, quality, service and others. Weaknesses are internal characteristics which the Department needs to mitigate to improve performance. Weaknesses can be barriers to service, lack of sufficient quality or quantity, poor management, infrastructure or organization, duplication or service overlaps, and others. Opportunities are external factors that provide the Department with the chance to improve performance. Opportunities can be new revenue sources, emerging technologies, inter-agency arrangements, and others. Threats are external factors that can potentially impede the Department's performance. Threats could be the loss of funding, adverse market conditions, supply shortages, constraining regulations, and others.

Results of SWOT analyses conducted in 2011 are summarized below and have been reviewed as part of the updated Strategic Plan. Communication efforts and relationships between the Department and municipalities have improved over the last ten years addressing some of the weaknesses that were originally identified during the SWOT analysis.

Strengths Summary

The Department's strengths can be summarized as saying the Department has a large diversity of staff skills, they are centrally located, and have the ability to be a revenue generator for the county all while serving the county residents. There is a good working relationship between the Solid Waste Board and the staff, and the Board felt it could have conversations without political influence. Municipalities and customers felt that the Department provides a value and quality of service with comparable costs.

Weaknesses Summary

The power of the County Board to override decisions of the Solid Waste Board was also a concern. Customer service issues have multiple facets that could be combined including items such as the Department website, secondary information provided by others outside of the Port & Resource Recovery Department, and a lack of public knowledge.

Opportunities Summary

The opportunities that were identified include the change in union rules providing more employee flexibility, the Single Stream Facility, an updated web page, training for staff, and the information at the recycling outlets.

Opportunities include the use of new technology, business development, public and private partnerships, and the ability to implement long range planning and opportunities to increase recycling.

Threats Summary

Major threats include not keeping up with new and innovative technology, cuts in programs providing financial support and a static business plan.

Political support for the Department, political decisions changing the role of the Solid Waste Board, reductions in landfill tonnage, fluctuations in markets, and the private sector all were seen as posing threats.



9. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals are broad-reaching targets to strive for using specific incremental steps (objectives) to reach the goal. Goals need to be realistic, yet not as broad as the vision. The following Goals and Objectives have been ranked by the Solid Waste Board and staff of the Department to establish priorities for completing each objective. High Priority objectives are expected to be completed within the next one to two years, Medium Priority within the next five years and Low Priority after five years. Goals and Objectives that affect BOW activities will be evaluated on a consensus basis with the other BOW counties.

Solid Waste Area

1. General (including Transfer Station)

- a. Encourage and play a role in the beneficial use of waste (such as recycling or energy production) if it is environmentally safe, economical and the operations are stable enough to consistently handle the constantly arriving waste stream*
- b. Develop a plan for Waste Transfer Station improvements that are scalable to accommodate increased transactions*
- c. Evaluate the hours/days of operation of the Waste Transfer Station to reduce congestion and improve safety and customer service*
- d. Continue to research organics management*
- e. Implement a text/email communication system to reach all customers regarding changes to regular service hours*
- f. Evaluate waste reduction methods to extend the life of existing and future landfills*
- g. Determine timeline for landfill expansion*

2. East and West Landfill

- a. Explore beneficial utilization of methane gas at both closed landfills*

3. South Landfill

- a. Examine role of South Landfill Resource Recovery Park in integrating resource recovery activities*
- b. Produce a 5-year South Landfill construction plan*
- c. Develop Gas Management Plan and Timeline*
- d. Develop an implementation plan for Phase II*
- e. Design a horizontal gas system*
- f. Explore options for future gas clean-up, transmission and beneficial reuse*
- g. Consider issuing a request for proposals from potential users of future landfill gas*

4. BOW Tri-County

- a. Work with the BOW Counties to update BOW strategic plan*
- b. Examine the viability of a Solid Waste Authority or Utility to create an independent body as part of the BOW partnership*
- c. Develop a plan to use retained earnings for future capital projects*

Recycling Area



- 1. Work with BOW to maximize BOW MRF recycling operations**
 - a. Explore additional waste reduction and recycling opportunities*
 - b. Utilize glass stockpile for beneficial reuse within the Outagamie County Landfill footprint*
 - c. Identify end markets for all commodities including glass*
 - d. Provide educational material to all BOW MRF customers to ensure consistency in recycling*
- 2. Advocate for additional material sorting capabilities at the BOW MRF**
 - a. Encourage the BOW MRF to add mechanical and advanced technology sorting capabilities to alleviate staffing shortages*
- 3. Maintain high quality recycling stream**
 - a. Analyze changes in sorting technologies to handle changes in packaging materials and lightweighting of existing containers*
 - b. Provide on-going education to Brown County residents on recycling*
 - c. Work with BOW partners to provide educational materials to partner municipalities and haulers outside BOW Counties*

Hazardous Material Recovery Area

- 1. Make the HMR program more self-sustainable**
 - a. Market the HMR Facility to businesses*
 - b. Develop cooperative agreements with other counties*
 - c. Evaluate the hours/days of operation of the HMR facility to reduce congestion and improve safety and customer service*
 - d. Evaluate processes for handling and storing materials to increase efficiencies*
 - e. Evaluate incoming waste streams (e.g. latex paint) to determine if HMR is the best option for recycling/disposal versus landfilling*

General Area

- 1. Solid Waste Fund Reserves**
 - a. Ensure Closure Fund is adequately funded for Long Term Care expenses*
 - b. Maintain the safeguards that protect customers' user fees collected for designated solid waste purposes*
- 2. Emerging waste management technology**
 - a. Incorporate green sustainability messages into the Department's mission and strategies. High Priority***
 - b. Examine new technologies and new trends to identify changes in waste disposal technology and examine opportunities to either reduce costs or generate revenue*
 - c. Analyze the current Brown County waste stream composition to identify potential areas for beneficial reuse and the costs associated with these opportunities*
- 3. Maintain high quality staffing**
 - a. Create a succession plan for continued staffing and operations of the Department*
 - b. Implement retention and compensation study*



- c. Provide cross training to better utilize staff skills, increase flexibility and professional development*

4. Enhance Customer Service

- a. Market Waste Transfer and Recycling Transfer Stations to surrounding counties*
- b. Provide additional professional development and training opportunities*
- c. Maintain good relationship between County and municipalities*

10. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The final Strategic Plan adopted by Brown County for the Port & Resource Recovery Department will be implemented annually through the creation of an annual operating plan created by the Solid Waste Board. The operating plan will consist of goals and objectives for the Solid Waste Board and staff to accomplish during the calendar year. The operating plan will be created by July 1 of each year for incorporation into the next annual budget.

