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PROJECT



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# Green Game Plan

Transforming apparel recycling and reuse  
to achieve zero waste goals

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Green Game Plan is a proposed apparel recycling program based at athletic stadiums that will align the community convening power of athletics with citywide zero waste goals. Athletic stadiums and sports bring people together, and Green Game Plan leverages this quality to divert textile waste from landfills and increase the city's recycling rates. To execute Green Game Plan, a local recycling partner would install collection bins in stadiums for all apparel of any condition. The apparel would then be collected by the recycler to sort for reuse, recycling, or municipal solid waste. This program would be made interactive with the use of engaging participation incentives and app-based gaming, and would gather essential recycling data regarding the types of apparel collected to track impact. Cities and stadiums could collaborate to create further opportunities for reuse and recycling while raising community awareness about responsible production and consumption.

## PROBLEM

Apparel has a far-reaching environmental impact, contributing [about 10%](#) of total global CO2 emissions. Because different stages in the life cycle of apparel, such as procurement, design, production, and retail, happen in different parts of the world, consumer waste generation is difficult to track. Although [about 95 percent of clothing](#) could be recycled, few consumers know this, and [about 85 percent of clothing goes to landfills](#). Apparel waste



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is an environmental hazard, contributing to ocean and land pollution.

Athletic stadiums provide an ideal way to engage the broader public and encourage sports fans to participate in clothing recycling. As a place for convening, stadiums have a unique transportation impact on apparel because stadiums encourage fans to wear apparel to or to buy apparel from the stadium retail store. Green Game Plan places recycling bins in stadiums, engages fans with creative public messaging and incentives to participate, and works with athletes to spread the word. Creating apparel drop-offs at stadiums would allow the community to integrate recycling into their routine while reducing the environmental footprint of sporting engagements.

*Green Game Plan is an innovative public–private partnership between cities and athletic stadiums to increase apparel reuse and recycling and achieve zero waste goals.*

## **SOLUTION**

Green Game Plan draws on the ability of sports to coordinate community action by aligning city–team–stadium waste reduction goals to apparel recycling. Stadiums are a space for convening, providing an ideal way to engage the broader public and encourage fans to participate in recycling. Green Game Plan would place recycling bins in stadiums, engaging fans with creative public messaging and incentives to participate, and working with athletes to spread the word. This would benefit all stakeholders by increasing the city’s recycling rate and diverting waste from the landfill; providing a consistent input source of material for the recycler; and creating a new opportunity for sustained community engagement for the stadium. Moreover, apparel recycling, sorting, and secondhand clothing markets from the stadium collection would create jobs and keep valuable materials in the supply chain. Green Game Plan thus creates an easy way for teams, apparel providers, and stadiums to connect with the local community.

For more information about this proposal, see: **(1) a policy brief** describing the program for athletic facilities, recyclers, cities, and the organizing partner; **(2) an operational plan** to implement a pilot of the program; and **(3) a sample commitment letter** for stakeholders to sign on.

## **ABOUT THE HUB**

The Aspen Tech Policy Hub is a Bay Area policy incubator, training a new generation of science and tech policy entrepreneurs.

We take science and tech experts, teach them the policy process, and support them in creating outside-the-box solutions to society’s problems.

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