

 Metro | Agenda

**Meeting:** Metro Solid Waste Advisory Committee

**Date:** Thursday, July 21, 2011

**Time:** 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

**Place:** Room 401, Metro Regional Center

TIME	AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTER
9:00 a.m.	1. Welcome and review of today's agenda	Paul Ehinger, Metro
9:05 a.m.	2. Food Donation Infrastructure Research Presentations & Discussion <i>Objectives:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide an overview and key findings from research</li><li>• Answer SWAC member questions about research</li><li>• Identify primary areas of focus for developing and discussing policy options at the next meeting</li></ul>	Jennifer Erickson, Metro  Beth Cohen, Oregon Food Bank  Renee Curtis, PSU
10:40 a.m.	3. Public comment on Food Donation Infrastructure Research	
10:50 a.m.	4. Next steps	Paul Ehinger, Metro
11:00 a.m.	Adjourn	

**MEETING SUMMARY**  
**METRO SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SWAC)**

Metro Regional Center, Room 401  
Thursday, February 17, 2011

**Members / Alternates Present:**

Matt Korot, Chair	Dave White	Michelle Poyourow
Rick Winterhalter	Bruce Walker	Amy Pepper
Scott Keller	Theresa Koppang	JoAnn Herrigel
Leslie Kochan (substituting for DEQ rep. Audrey O'Brien)		

**Members / Alternates Absent:**

John Lucini  
Adam Winston  
Susan Millhauser  
JoAnn Herrigel  
Paul Ehinger, Alternate

**Guests and Metro staff:**

Easton Cross, Allied Waste Segeni Mungai	Ray Phelps, Allied Waste John Schwer, City of Sherwood	Andy Sloop, Metro Chris Carey
Dan Blue, City of Gresham Joel Fischer, CFM	Dean Kampfer, WMO Dick Springer, WMSWCD	Gina Cubbon, Metro

**I. Welcome and Review of Agenda .....*Matt Korot***

Matt Korot handed out a summary of the food waste recovery policy options, as redrafted following the SWAC meeting of February 2. Members took a few minutes to read them over before discussion began, which led to suggestions for clarified language in Option 1 (reflected below) and the addition of the words “such as” in Option 3 underlined below:

1. Metro should use regional funds to help pay personnel costs associated with new organics collection programs. These funds will leverage local government and ratepayer investments in personnel, equipment, and collection service. Preference should be given to funding options that would not raise the Regional System Fee, as long as those options do not jeopardize the integrity of other waste reduction programs.
3. Consistent with RSWMP priorities for organics, Metro should pursue options to provide organics transfer service at Metro South, such as by diverting dry waste loads or self-haul customers to other facilities.

**II. Food Rescue Policy .....*Matt Korot, All***

Mr. Korot reviewed the discussion from the February 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, recalling that there had been a suggestion to wait until the barriers and benefits study is completed in June. If the Committee chooses to make that decision, he explained that there will be a couple of options: 1) make no recommendation about policy options for food rescue at this time and wait until they review the study; or 2) simply recommend that Metro support the region’s food rescue system (as stated in the original policy paper).

Bruce Walker voiced support for the second option, and suggested adding verbiage that further recommendations would be made regarding food rescue after review of the study. Rick Winterhalter asked if that action might help as a placeholder in the following year’s budget. Mr. Korot responded that yes, it could; Leslie Kochan agreed. Ms. Poyourow said that just mentioning the study could be of benefit, as well. The majority of the group agreed.

Mr. White asked whether it is a good approach to fund this solely through the Regional System Fee (RSF). He remembered that Jennifer Erickson had mentioned a partnership concept at the previous meeting, which could go ahead while waiting for the barriers / benefit study.

Mr. Korot drafted language to use, and will refine it further.

**III. Public Comment**

Waste Management’s Dean Kampfer referred to number 1 on the draft recommendation sheet, stating that he disagreed with the idea of funds going solely to help pay local governments’ personnel costs associated with the program. Mr. Korot said he understood Mr. Kampfer’s position, but that was the decision of the Committee.

**IV. Carbon Pricing Policy .....*Matt Korot, All***

Mr. Korot previewed the agenda item and handed out copies of a partial summary of recommendations from the materials management section of the Oregon’s Global Warming Commission’s (OGWC) *Roadmap to 2020*. (View the entire document at [www.keeporegoncool.org/](http://www.keeporegoncool.org/))

Mr. White cautioned the group to make sure it knows what it’s talking about. There are consequences of these types of policies, such as increased food prices, he said. Ms. Poyourow said she’d be satisfied with taking a basic position reflecting the OGWC recommendation as a way to just let the Metro Council know that SWAC feels that carbon pricing management would be beneficial in the context of organics, as it is in other areas such as transportation. Ms. Kochan agreed that materials are often left out of the carbon discussion, so chiming in with the message would be helpful. It’s good to put a message out there that Metro is supportive of carbon pricing.

The Commission’s paper didn’t weigh in on whether they support cap-and-trade or a carbon tax, Mr. Korot clarified. The latest context that Metro Council had, he continued, was based on emissions inventory work by the DEQ and Metro, which showed that roughly half the region’s emissions are associated with the production of goods and food.

Mr. White asked whether the policy would address only food grown in the Metro region, food grown in Oregon, the United States, or even internationally? One of the consequences of carbon pricing is that it would push food prices even higher, he said. Supporting both food rescue for the poor and carbon pricing that helps food prices skyrocket seems contradictory, he commented, and suggested that perhaps the DEQ's David Alloway could come and explain the concept to the group.

Mr. Walker commented that he'd be comfortable recommending that Metro further investigate what would work best for the region. Under "purpose relative to the food system," he suggested wording such as: "Metro shall support the work being done by the Oregon Global Warming Commission." He'd like to know a lot more about the concept before recommending that Metro "advocate." Ms. Kochan responded that the policy as shown doesn't commit Metro to a specific road. Ms. Poyourow was comfortable with the word "advocate" because it implies that further investigation will take place. She's fine with the statement as written.

The Committee talked about the current wording. Ms. Poyourow was unsure whether it's necessary to specify the Oregon Global Warming Commission, and prefers the policy as written. Mr. White felt that the word "advocate" is too strong and that he prefers recommending that Metro be aware of the work being done.

Ms. Kochan suggested "through pricing or other means." Mr. Winterhalter said that many studies point to pricing being the way to go, and he agrees. The issue is complicated, he admitted, but if we don't start advocating for some kind of change, it won't happen. Ms. Poyourow found the policy in alignment with Metro's work in transportation. Mr. Walker wondered if it really should include the clause focusing on food, or change it to "materials management." It could be a misstep to single out food. Ms. Kochan and Scott Keller suggested at least adding food as a component.

The group discussed further.

Mr. White said he'd be most comfortable if the focus of the recommendation wasn't on food. "We've all agreed we're going to advocate for something, and we all agreed we don't know exactly what that is." Mr. Korot reminded the group that the policy discussion paper is not intended to be given to Council, it's merely a discussion paper for the Committee itself.

Ms. Koppang suggested language along the lines of "Advocate for regulatory options to reduce the life cycle carbon intensity of products." This led to further discussion and a suggestion to append the following language: "Options considered by the OGWC were pricing signals such as emissions caps or carbon tax."

## **V Public Comment**

Audience member Segeni Mungai said that for the consumer to understand carbon pricing, they'd need a breakdown of water costs, transportation costs, everything. Therefore, signs right in the stores with information about carbon taxing would be very helpful. It's a very complicated issue, and for carbon taxing to work, people will need the tools to help them understand it so they can make the right choices.

## VI Next Steps

Mr. Korot will draft a summary of the set of options that came from this meeting and email it to the Committee. He'll then put together a report summarizing the conversations that led to SWAC's recommendations, to show the Metro Council how the decisions were made. He'll ask the members to point out glaring omissions or things that are represented incorrectly.

Once these recommendations are presented to Council, Mr. Korot continued, there are several pieces of the Solid Waste Roadmap that will lead to policy decisions and could benefit from SWAC discussion and recommendations. He asked the group if they'd like to take a hiatus and reconvene to discuss food rescue, or move on to another topic such as the Solid Waste Roadmap.

Mr. Keller suggested having David Alloway come and talk to the group could be a good meeting to further inform the Committee of the carbon / food issues. Mr. Walker responded that discussion of transfer capacity would be a natural link, as well.

Mr. Korot thanked the Committee for eleven months of great discussion on an important topic.

Prepared by:

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## Oregon Food Bank's food recovery efforts

- Fresh Alliance program recovers surplus food from grocery stores across Oregon since 2002
  - 190 stores across the state participate
  - All major grocery chains involved (Fred Meyer, Albertsons, Walmart, Whole Foods, Safeway, Target)
  - Last year, recovered 7.1 million pounds of food across the state (2.1 million in the metro region)
  - Successful program that could provide a model for food recovery at a smaller scale
- OFB has an agreement with St. Vincent de Paul that they will recover prepared food and OFB will not

## How policy can strengthen surplus food donation

- Collect information to answer the following questions:
  - What are the impacts of existing federal, state and local policies surrounding food donation?
  - What is the policy and programmatic framework around food waste reduction in the Portland metro area?
  - What are other jurisdictions around the country doing in relation food donation and food waste reduction?
- Findings are informed by interviews with local government staff, staff from jurisdictions and food rescue efforts around the country, local food rescue experts and feedback from stakeholders at the Multnomah Food Summit.

## Findings

- 1. The federal and state policies around food donation are intended to enable local governments, school districts and businesses to donate food, but could be more widely distributed to potential donors.**
  - Federal and state Good Samaritan laws
  - Federal legislation allowing food purchased through federal programs and federal contracts to be donated
  - Federal tax deduction and state crop donation tax credit
- 2. Local governments across the country and in the metro region are elevating food into policy and planning**
  - Comprehensive food policies and frameworks
  - Sustainable purchasing policies that prefer/specify local food
  - Policies/programs to reduce food waste
- 3. Food donation is not at the forefront of resource conservation efforts in local governments**
  - Most local governments aren't partnering with the food rescue agencies on food donation.
  - Metro's Fork it Over! program is a model program and has an opportunity to continue being a leader.
  - Examples of public sector efforts in other cities
    - Los Angeles Surplus Food Policy
    - Seattle's Food Recovery Infrastructure grant program
    - San Francisco's considerations of food donation policy
    - Attempts in California Legislature to mandate or encourage food donation
  - Important lessons and takeaways
    - Limitations of policy solutions to address logistical challenges of food donation
    - Need for collaboration with the food industry, food banks and food rescue agencies
    - Importance of raising awareness about food waste and hunger issues with general public

**4. Multiple barriers to increased food donation exist including**

- Limited capacity of the food rescue agencies to accept, transport and store recovered food
- Cost to businesses for sorting and packing surplus food
- Lack of a dynamic information sharing mechanism to respond to surplus food donation opportunities

**5. More information and education about a variety of topics related to food donation is needed**

- Research on the economic decisions that businesses make around food donation
- Information about how much food smaller generators are wasting
- Expanded materials to suit broader audiences on topics like options for food donation and liability protection

**Policy and program options**

Strengthening food donation will require collaboration between the public and private sectors. The public sector typically plays the following roles:

- Policy and program development
- Convening stakeholders
- Providing resources, technical assistance, education and outreach

The following policy and program options are opportunities where Metro could take the lead or support partners.

**1. Expand understanding of opportunities for increased food donation**

- The scale and nature of waste for smaller scale generators such as restaurants
- Costs and benefit calculation for generators to donate food
- Economic impacts of increased food donation as part of regional economic analysis of food systems

**2. Identify where the public sector can better leverage its purchasing, contracting and permitting authorities**

- Conduct more complete inventory of the public sector's food purchasing throughout the region.
- Develop model language to mandate or encourage surplus food donation in public sector contracts.

**3. Utilize existing solid waste policy framework and infrastructure to drive increased food donation**

- Leverage existing solid waste system to strengthen capacity of food donation infrastructure.
- Structure solid waste collection fees to incentivize surplus food donation.
- Develop a regulatory solution to enforce food donation and composting.

**4. Address the logistical gaps in the existing system**

- Partner with the private sector to increase capacity of infrastructure for surplus food donation through technical assistance, grants and other resources.

**5. Increase public knowledge and awareness around food donation**

- Expand Fork it Over! materials and other outreach efforts to target additional audiences.
- Expand branding around surplus food donation.
- Frame food donation as a strategy for community building, increasing equity and promoting sustainability.

## *Supporting the Food Donation Infrastructure*

Presentation on July 21, 2011 to SWAC by Renée Bogin Curtis & Kyle Curtis, Community Environmental Services (CES)  
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**Overview:** CES conducted research to assess gaps in the Portland Metro region's food donation infrastructure in April-July, 2011 in order to evaluate potential roles for Metro Regional Government in supporting this infrastructure.

### Methods

- **Multnomah Food Summit Workshop** to identify perceived gaps in the infrastructure. Participants included representatives from the Oregon Food Bank (OFB), under-the-radar food rescue agencies and businesses.
- **Business survey** with 50 Portland-based businesses including restaurants, farmers markets; ethnic, small and large grocery stores; food producers and generators, culinary schools, college dining facilities, and school lunch programs.
- **Organization survey** with 25 food rescue agencies around the region with efforts to include under-the-radar agencies.
- **Informal interviews** with Metro staff, local food waste and donation experts, and non-local donation program leaders.
- **Literature review** from Internet research of food donation programs and from information gathered at conferences.

### Summary of Findings

- Food donations have reduced. Surplus is down as businesses plan better and there is less federal support for donations, but food insecurity has increased. The implementation of compost programs has had no *obvious* impact yet but potential is significant. Food *waste* has reduced, but an increase in food donations supports both environmental and sustainability goals; donations have a smaller carbon footprint than production of additional food and composting.
- The current business climate is receptive to donations. Community and employee goodwill recognition helps retain donors. Information about tax incentives, savings and what/how to donate can help recruit new donors.
- Given the newness and enthusiasm around composting, it's a good time to also promote the social and environmental benefits of donations and to consider PSAs to expose the changed profile of hunger.
- Transportation, storage, timing, coordination, access to information and volunteer/ staff labor are still major barriers.
- Most rescue agencies participate in both formal and informal networks, often with the OFB and with other groups.

### Significant Changes from the 2003 Food Waste Prevention and Donations: Barriers and Benefits Study

**Climate:** Business surplus, food donations and food rescue agencies resources are down as a result of economic conditions. Compost is more widespread. Rescue organization *patrons* have changed (there are more professionals).

**Incentives:** Employee and community goodwill provide the greatest incentives for businesses to donate.

**Barriers:** Coordination (time, storage, transportation, labor) remains significant. Liability concerns are *less* significant.

**Information Sources:** The Internet and to a lesser extent social media are now major sources for information.

## *Food Donation Infrastructure Current Components*

### Networks and Relationships

**Advantages:** Many agencies participate in both formal and informal networks between donors and agencies and between agencies. Many are connected to both OFB networks and non-OFB networks which accept perishable food.

**Gaps:** Turnover among staff and volunteers at businesses and agencies impacts relationships. Non-OFB affiliates surveyed have limited transportation and volunteer capacities. OFB- affiliates deal with time and donation inflexibilities.

**Support:** Support formal and informal networks. Tools are need for "word of mouth" networks. Toolkits could provide volunteer and staff training and emphasize relationship building, maintenance and ways to adapt to high turnover.

### Coordination

**Advantages:** Networks to help reduce coordination, transport and storage challenges include OFB for non-perishable foods; St. Vincent de Paul, Birch Community Services, Urban Gleaners and B-line for perishables. Metro's Fork it Over! (FIO!) program helps match donors to agencies.

**Gaps:** Logistics of time, labor, volunteer management, food handling, and quality assurance are major challenges.

**Support:** Coordination and training of volunteers could help. Assist agencies far from HUBs, without transportation.

### Information

**Advantages:** Businesses use Internet as a primary source for food donation info. FIO! could become more pertinent.

**Gaps:** More knowledge is needed about what and how to donate, about Good Sam laws, tax incentives and FIO!.

**Support:** Outreach campaign to disperse information and to promote FIO! is advisable.



## Content of Food Donations

**Advantages:** More quantities of fresh, healthy and perishable food are being donated than in previous times.

**Gaps:** Still, sufficient info about what can be donated is lacking: fresh produce, meat, dairy and perishables. Supply changes result in varying storage and handling responses, which agencies aren't always adapted for.

**Support:** Broadcast information about what can/can't be donated. Creating or purchasing sufficient storage capacity to handle supply could help.

## Incentives

**Advantages:** Staff and community goodwill are strong motivators for current donors. The business climate is receptive.

**Gaps:** Knowledge is lacking about tax incentives, protection against liability, and awareness of processes. Business concerns about increased labor and their perceptions of having nothing to donate are also barriers.

**Support:** Promote benefits (emphasize tax incentives) and explain simplified processes. Pursue and provide data about potential cost savings.

## *Metro: Programs, Capacity and Roles*

### Fork it Over!

**Advantages:** FIO! provides coordination and matches donors with agencies.

**Gaps:** It's underutilized. One-third of food rescue agencies surveyed had never heard of it and those who had, received no donations. The majority of businesses surveyed had never heard of it as well.

**Support:** Promote it more heavily. Consider housing it in another Internet location to simplify and expand the program.

### Metro's Capacity

**Strengths:** Acting as convener, systems design, toolkits, expansions of existing programs, information provision.

**Limitations:** Restrictions on technology, website, funding, personnel resources and capacity to implement new programs.

### Metro's Role: Options for Consideration

#### *1. Serve as an information provider. Provide user-friendly information and motivational messages.*

- **Clearinghouse:** Continue to provide a one-stop shop for information on how and what to donate.
- **Messaging:** Combine donation information *and* messaging with compost campaigns. Promote food donations as taking care of "our community." Promote tier approach for food waste with donation first and compost second. Emphasize tax incentives and Good Sam laws.
- **Traditional media:** Produce Public Service Announcements on the changing profile of hunger and greater environmental benefits of donations. Promote FIO! program with print, radio and television media.

#### *2. Update and consider expansion of FIO! program. Network with community partners.*

- **FIO!:** Update info to emphasize environmental value of donations. Encourage local government with website links to FIO!, to also briefly mention its environmental and community value. Provide info on tax incentives and details about garbage savings. Promote FIO!, with rescue agencies to renew their support of the program. Track site usage.
- **Regional partners:** Collaborate with local governments to combine FIO! information *and* food donation promotion along with compost information. Support relationships between agencies and businesses. Incorporate haulers in outreach efforts.
- **Online content:** Expand FIO! to provide information or links to volunteer resources and opportunities.

#### *3. Consider partnership with or support of third-party organization.*

- **Website:** Host FIO! externally to incorporate volunteer coordination, training and potentially social media tools.
- **Staff:** Provide staff to oversee coordination of volunteers, donation distribution, and donor/ agency connections.

#### *4. Provide infrastructure support to increase capacity of organizations to capture available donations.*

- **Equipment:** Provide grant funding for transportation, storage equipment or for capacity to support informal networks.
- **Space:** Explore options for shared storage spaces in existing facilities with capacity or develop capacity, if feasible.
- **Expand operations:** Support efforts to pick up food at off-hours. Provide grants to organizations with this capacity.
- **Education:** Incorporate surplus food donation and diversion as part of curriculum at culinary institutes.

#### *5. Assess future opportunities to expand Metro's role in the food donation infrastructure.*

- **Evaluation:** Conduct case studies including waste audits and cost/benefit analyses to demonstrate the environmental and financial benefits of food donations for businesses.
- **Creative opportunities:** Encourage innovation and/or collaboration among rescue organizations. Develop creative ways to streamline the donation infrastructure for perishables and prepared foods. Explore relationships with community kitchen programs. Promote "planned surplus" among food producers and generators; pursue tax benefits.