



Meeting minutes

Meeting: Regional Waste Advisory Committee (RWAC) Meeting
Date: Thursday, October 15, 2020
Time: 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.
Place: Zoom meeting
Purpose: *The purpose of the Regional Waste Advisory Committee is to provide input on certain policies, programs, and projects that implement actions in the 2030 Regional Waste Plan, as well as to provide input on certain legislative and administrative actions that the Metro Council or Chief Operating Officer will consider related to implementation of the 2030 Regional Waste Plan.*

Members in Attendance:

Roy Brower, Metro
Joe Buck, Small business owner
Sharetta Butcher, North by Northeast Community Health Center (NxNE)
Marilou Carrera, Portland Resident
Thomas Egleston, Washington County
Alondra Flores Aviña, Student
Jill Kolek, City of Portland
Shannon Martin, City of Gresham
Christa McDermott, Community Environmental Services, PSU (PSU)
Audrey O'Brien, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
Eben Polk, Clackamas County
Jenny Slepian, City of Lake Oswego
Beth Vargas Duncan, Oregon Refuse and Recycling Association (ORRA)

1. CALL TO ORDER & MEETING OVERVIEW

Roy Brower (Metro) brought the virtual meeting to order at 8:03 am.

2. CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS

Committee meeting minutes for September 17, 2020 were approved by the committee.

3. COMMITTEE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

Mr. Brower reviewed the committee schedule of topics for the remainder of the 2020 meetings (see attached at the end of the meeting minutes).

4. REGIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS

Jennifer Erickson (Metro) shared that the Regional Service Standards public comment period concluded today, October 15. As of October 15, Metro had received 12 comments. Most of the comments have been generally supportive of the changes, none were opposed, but there were a few specific concerns which Ms. Erickson shared with the committee. The general themes in the comments noted this work was long overdue, and highlighted the importance of clear labeling of bins. Bulky waste came up as an issue that needs to be addressed for the future. Comments noted the desire for more how-to guides, easily accessible bins, and that all garbage enclosures have recycling. One comment noted that property managers are not always responsive to tenant requests/questions. One hauler expressed concern over the cost of color-coding all containers. There were also a few comments about access to food scraps composting.

Based on the comments, Metro made a few changes to the proposal. One hauler suggested language changes to increase clarity for the exemption of every-other-week yard debris and recycling. One property manager commented on confusing language in the single-family section. None of the changes were substantive or changed intent. They were just points of clarity. The draft report will be completed and posted on the Metro website which will include all the comments:

<https://www.oregonmetro.gov/public-projects/garbage-and-recycling-service-standard-updates>

Christa McDermott (PSU) asked if there will be another public comment period later in the process.

Ms. Erickson explained that the current public comment period which is closing was meant to cover the code and administrative rules. She noted that staff will be going to Metro Council twice in December for approval to adopt the code changes. Once the code is adopted, there will be an additional public comment period which is just for the rules. This will happen in January/February 2021. If Council adopts the ordinance on December 10, code changes will be effective 90-days later (March 10, 2021). Rules are effective 30 days after approval, meaning that there is a 3-month window early next year in which an additional comment period on the rules can be held. The goal is to have the code and rules effective on the same date.

Marilou Carrera (Portland resident) asked about the report about the public comment period.

Ms. Erickson explained that there will be a report that includes every comment that was received and Metro's responses. It can be found here: <https://www.oregonmetro.gov/public-projects/garbage-and-recycling-service-standard-updates>

Beth Vargas Duncan shared that the Portland Haulers Association and the Clackamas County Refuse and Recycling Association both approved comments to go through. It is hard to get membership together with such tight turnaround. Washington County Haulers Association will be meeting today. The first two groups will both be submitting comments and will probably be similar to comments staff have already seen from haulers. Beth Vargas Duncan asked a clarifying question about the every-other-week collection content.

Ms. Erickson shared that the intent is to hold things at the status quo. All the every-other-week yard debris and recycling programs currently in place are acceptable. This was one of the points in the code/rules that were clarified. Metro is not requiring any existing programs to change. Metro is not recommending significant changes largely due to the statewide modernization work. There could be changes at the state level. The single-family collection will stay the same, with the focus here of improving multifamily standards.

Eben Polk (Clackamas County) shared that Clackamas County will probably also be submitting comments today.

Thomas Egleston (Washington County) asked for clarification on the every-other-week collection of yard debris and food scraps. They have one jurisdiction that has every-other-week yard debris program which is technically documented as out of compliance with the new rules. He asked if they'd still be in compliance.

Ms. Erickson shared that this jurisdiction would still be in compliance. This could change in the future. And some of this is reliant on what happens at the state level.

5. 2030 REGIONAL WASTE PLAN: REGIONAL WORK PLAN part 1

Holly Stirnkorb (Metro) presented the approach to develop the first 3-year work plan to support implementation of the 2030 Regional Waste Plan. She noted the goals of the discussion:

1. Inform committee about the process to collaboratively develop the 3-year work plan.
2. Create a shared understanding of the role and responsibility of the committee in this process, including the timeline for key points of engagement.
3. Prepare committee members for engagement in the first step of this process.

In March 2019, Metro adopted the 2030 Regional Waste Plan which sets the policy direction for the region's garbage and recycling system. The 19 goals and 140 actions in the plan provide a blueprint for the work to reduce the impacts of products throughout their life cycle, from production through disposal. In order to implement the goals and actions over the life of the plan, Metro and local governments will work together to create work plans every three years. The role of the Regional Waste Advisory Committee in this process is to review and provide input on the actions and activities that are prioritized for implementation in each three-year work plan cycle.

Ms. Stirnkorb shared that the 2030 Regional Waste Plan (RWP) presents a blueprint for our work over the next 10 years to achieve the vision set for the region by the plan. In order to effectively implement the plan, Metro and local governments will work together to create work plans every three years. This project is about developing the first 3-year work plan for fiscal years 2020 through 2023. Responsibility for implementing the RWP is shared by Metro and city and county governments in the region. Metro is responsible for coordinating implementation of the plan and assessing plan performance. Actual implementation of the actions in the RWP are shared between local governments and Metro. Some actions will be led by local government, some will be led by Metro and others will be co-led by both local governments and Metro. What the 3-year work plans will do is identify actions to be implemented in each 3-year period, indicate which agency will lead the action and it will provide the estimated resource allocations for the implementation period. The work plans break down implementation of the Regional Waste Plan into manageable pieces.

Both Metro and local government will be bringing their own priorities into the process as inputs to develop the work plan. The deliverables will not only consist of the work plan itself but also the agreements necessary to support implementation of the plan. These include agreements between Metro, local government and community partners to identify decision making processes, information sharing practices and scopes of work for funding allocations. Metro's work with local governments over the next six months is to determine what we have the collective ability to accomplish within the next three years. Together, we will answer three questions:

- What are the priority actions we will implement?
- How will we resource these activities?
- How will we work together to accomplish this?

A large number of the actions in the Regional Waste Plan represent guidance rather than requirements so timing for implementation will be determined by Metro and local governments. In order to prioritize the actions for the three-year work plan, both Metro and local government will be bringing their own short-term priorities into the process as inputs these include:

- Required responsibilities: These are actions that are required by state law, Metro Code or Metro administrative rules and are primarily directed at ensuring that comprehensive and consistent recycling and garbage services are provided across the region. These services are combined with the education, information and technical assistance programs needed to support residents and businesses in preventing waste, reusing materials and recycling.
- There will be certain priorities for Metro that will be set by Metro Council and those for local governments that are set by city councils and county commissions.
- There are also priorities identified by community members in the process to develop the RWP.

The Regional Waste Advisory Committee will provide input into the process as well. The priorities of both Metro and local government will shape the work plan by guiding the selection of actions for initial implementation in the first three years. Once actions have been selected, activities to implement each action will be crafted and included in the work plan along with the roles of each agency in implementing the action as well as an estimate of resources needed to implement the action. This work is being done at a time when resources are tight and there are many demands and constraints on staff time. This opens up the opportunity to find new and innovative ways of working together. This can lead to additional efficiencies, increase our collaboration and strengthen our working relationships.

Once the work plan has been developed Metro and local governments will craft working agreements necessary to support implementation of the plan. These include agreements between Metro, local government and community partners to identify decision making processes, information sharing practices and scopes of work for funding allocations.

The Regional Waste Plan includes a variety of elements to eliminate barriers and advance racial equity. Equity is called out in a set of values and a set of principles provide a framework for key equity considerations to guide plan implementation. This commitment to equity will guide the development of the work plan. Metro will seek input from the Regional Waste Advisory Committee and will also involve the community-based organizations that helped shape equity focused actions in the development of the activities to implement actions.

The goal in crafting this process is to create shared ownership of the work plan and to create:

- Shared agreement on the actions prioritized for implementation in these first 3 years
- Shared understanding of agency roles and responsibilities including how the work associated with implementing the prioritized actions aligns with the current work including identification of resource needs and gaps
- Plan to co-develop new, or refine existing agreements with local government and community partners necessary to support implementation of the plan including decision making processes, information sharing practices and scopes of work for funding allocations

This project has three phases and is anticipated to take 8 months from start to finish. The first phase began in late July with the design of the approach to the planning process and moved into working with local governments to identify actions for implementation for the first three years. The second phase will begin in December and will focus on drafting the work plan. The draft plan will include the actions identified for implementation, high-level activities to implement each action, agency and community partner roles in implementation and an estimate of resource needs. To inform work plan development, work groups will be convened that include staff from Metro and local governments in addition to community based organizations partnered on action implementation. The Regional Waste Advisory Committee will be asked for feedback on the identified actions in phase 1 as well as the work plan in phase 2. The third phase will focus on finalizing agreement to support implementation of the work plan. The third and final phase will begin in February 2021 with the goal to complete the 3-year work plan and all the supporting agreements by early 2021.

The first phase of the project is to identify actions for implementation for the three-year work plan, including agency roles and responsibilities for action implementation. The role of the Regional Waste Advisory Committee during this phase of the project is to provide input on actions prioritized for the first three years. Thinking about the next three years of the work plan, Metro would like the committee's input on what was not included in the list and actions that you would

like to see implemented in the short term or what was included that you think should be postponed, and why. Questions for consideration include:

- Which actions were not included that should be? Why?
- Which actions were included that should not be? Why?
- Which actions should the Regional Waste Advisory Committee have continued engagement?

Ms. McDermott asked about how drafting the work plan links with the RWAC schedule of topics from the start of the meeting.

Mr. Brower shared that these two documents are running parallel currently and will eventually be linked and brought together. The items that have been coming to RWAC are from the RWP and this process is to organize and merge the work and schedule of topics for committee.

Joe Buck (Small business owner) had no questions or comments on this presentation.

Alondra Flores Aviña asked for clarification on what actions committee would like to stay informed about vs which actions should be included on in the 3 year work plan. And would these be based on individual preferences of committee members or would committee reach a consensus on priorities?

Ms. Stirnkorb noted that the idea would be for the committee to find consensus and that Metro would be able to come to the committee on an ongoing basis to update on topics of interest.

Ms. Carrera had a question about the phases of the plan. Ms. Carrera wanted more elaboration on when community-based partners would be engaged and why they aren't being engaged in phase one. They also asked how the RWP will be able to be flexible during this time of unrest and deep social uncertainty.

Ms. Stirnkorb responded to Ms. Carrera's first question by noting that there was significant engagement from community based partners for the creation of the plan. So the phase one was focused more on the prioritization. Phase two will focus more on the implementation of the plan based on goals and actions they helped to identify during the creation of the plan. Ms. Stirnkorb noted that with the 3-year plan, work will be parsed out over those three years as well as the development of the working agreements between Metro and local governments and how these actions will be implemented.

Mr. Brower shared that Metro as a whole is adjusting to the economic strains and social justice issues currently facing the region's communities. These challenges will inform how some of the work is done and moves forward.

Ms. Carrera noted that Metro has done work to acknowledge the impact of racism on their overall structure and be more engaged around anti-racist work, without going so far as to say 'we are an anti-racist institution' because that is a lot of work and a long way down the road. There needs to be more pointed conversation around white supremacy and its impact and how those power dynamics are integrated in Metro and Metro's decision making. There is a real risk that this will continue to escalate. More conversations around white-supremacy and anti-racist work that needs to be done.

Ms. Sharetta Butcher asked about community member involvement – but got the answers she needed from previous responses.

Jenny Slepian (City of Lake Oswego) asked if there was any tie-in to local government climate action planning processes. She noted that there could be a better connection between these bodies of work.

Ms. Stirnkorb shared that she has seen this come up and is seeing local governments make this connection.

Shannon Martin (City of Gresham) noted connections between works being done around greenhouse gas reductions related to the solid waste system as an example.

5. INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

Dan Blue (Metro) introduced the presentation which focused on the West recycling and transfer center project. He introduced Matt Tracy, the project manager for a potential new facility in the West side of the region, and Gloria Pinzon, engagement coordinator for the West project as well as a separate project to site a potential new facility in the South part of the region. Enrique Vargas was also present as the engagement specialist working to connect with stakeholders out in Cornelius and neighboring communities.

Mr. Blue provided a brief update on the South siting project. The Metro South Transfer Station is aging and at extreme capacity, serving over 230,000 residential and commercial customers each year. Due to space constraints, it is unable to add additional desired services such as commercial food waste transfer, additional recycling and reuse services. Metro has been working to identify a suitable new or additional site for a more modern facility for many years. The South project team has been busy conducting a comprehensive property search to identify any potential new sites. There are currently still no suitable industrial sites on the market in proximity to the existing Metro South Station. The team has identified a potential site that was not on the market, and we are currently exploring the possibility of securing the site for further investigation. Simultaneous to the site search process, the South team has formed a community advisory group made up of a diverse group of community members to help advise the team during the property search phase of the project. Staff will return to RWAC in early 2021 to provide a more thorough update on the status of the South project, and can take your questions about the South project at that time.

Mr. Blue communicated that Metro staff are here to share an update on work that has been done related to a potential property acquisition in the City of Cornelius before Metro Council makes a decision on whether to buy the property or not. The decision that will be before Council in the coming months is not whether to proceed with the design and construction phase of a new transfer station, *it is only to acquire the property*. Staff will briefly revisit what was heard from RWAC in January 2020, provide an overview of recent site investigation work and the work engaging the community, and then pose a set of questions for your consideration that we'll discuss in more detail when we return in November to this committee. So this is part one of a two part discussion with you before we take this question to Council.

Metro staff are currently in Phase 1 and getting close to asking Metro Council to make a decision on whether or not to acquire the Cornelius property. Metro has signed a contract with the property seller, and has a limited window to finalize the decision within the term of the contract. Should Metro Council elect to acquire the property, Phase 2 will include another more robust phase of community engagement and planning work to make sure that the location will work for a transfer station, and to refine the proposed attributes and services, and to gain additional knowledge about whether the community supports hosting such a station at the site. Once that work is complete, staff will go back to Metro Council and share our findings, and Council will have the opportunity to decide whether to proceed with a new station or not. After that point, staff would transition to the design and build phase for a new facility at this site.

Mr. Blue shared about how COVID has impacted the project work and timeline. Metro also had the added complication of being obligated by contract to both investigate the property, and conduct engagement on a fixed timeline. Despite the negative impacts of COVID-19, Metro has made progress on both fronts and are on track to get in front of Metro Council within the next few months. Mr. Blue noted that the timeline slipped 2-3 months across the board, and that has forced Metro to do as much as possible with many constraints on the project team including furloughs, and staff reductions. Mr. Blue recapped some of the points staff heard from RWAC in January 2020.

Matt Tracy (Metro) shared information about the site for a potential new transfer station on the West side that would bring much needed and long overdue basic and enhanced services to the western part of the region. Metro is only seeking to acquire a suitable site that could accommodate such a station. Through Metro's research and talking with staff of other recently built facilities, Metro staff learned that a best practice is to develop and use a set of 'siting criteria' to identify and assess possible properties. These were developed by the South project team, and we are adapting them for use on the West project. We have three buckets of criteria which includes:

1. **Base criteria:** the basic needs for a project site; the minimum requirements needed in a site to make the project work – this includes zoning, sufficient size, and in the general site search area – for the West project, which was defined as “western Washington County.”
2. **Functional criteria:** the important considerations and needs in a site related to the operation of the facility, feasibility of the project and health of the community. These include good access in and out of the site, the site location will help minimize any negative environmental and community impacts, the land is for sale and at fair market price, and that the site location will allow Metro to meet a minimum set of operational requirements.
3. **Community criteria/considerations:** might include whether the community would value and education/visitor center, public art and meeting spaces, if the community wants to see the facility and have a welcome plaza, for example, or if the community would prefer a visual buffer in place to hide it from the neighborhood etc. Community criteria for the West will be developed with stakeholders once potential sites have been identified, secured (as in the Cornelius site) and acquired.

If the parcel is purchased, Metro is committed to doing extensive community engagement prior to doing any design and construction on a proposed transfer station to make sure it is a good fit for the host community.

Mr. Tracy began explaining why Metro is looking at the Cornelius property. He noted that in 2018, Metro staff, with the help of a commercial and industrial properties consultant, were tasked with finding suitable property for which to potentially develop a transfer station on the Western portion of the Metro region. The initial criteria set included properties that were industrially zoned, at least 7 acres in size, with good access to freight transit, and in a jurisdiction that was supportive of the concept. Staff and the consultant continued to review available properties as well as investigate additional properties that were not on the market at that time. After further review and elimination of unsuitable properties, staff identified six available properties that appeared suitable for the intended use. Of these six properties, three properties were located in the Cornelius Industrial District. Staff then contacted the City of Cornelius and worked closely with city staff to identify a property not determined for another potential development opportunity. By siting in Cornelius, staff have recognized the proximity to the Hillsboro Landfill and the opportunity to lessen the transfer distance for dry waste collected at the new transfer station. Staff also recognized that as of January 2020, the Riverbend Landfill located near McMinnville, was no longer able to accept waste from the Metro region. Therefore, compaction would be key to maximizing efficiencies of transporting waste from the Western region.

The Metro project team focused on the property located along the west side of 4th Avenue and Holladay Street, just to the north of a Walmart super center, to the NW of the center of Cornelius. While investigating the potential use of this site, Metro staff recognized potential synergies with the existing and future surrounding businesses such as:

- Myers Container (Metro has a contract with Myers Container for packaging materials)
- New Season Foods
- Truss Components
- S&H Compost

Recently, other cities in the United States have capitalized on eco-district developments where a materials management or transfer station is located near companies that may be generators of significant or special wastes. Metro recognizes the Cornelius site as a potential site for an eco-district concept should Metro proceed with buying the property.

In order to evaluate the physical attributes of the property itself, Metro utilized several contractors to assess a number of conditions on the property. Metro:

- Had the property appraised to insure the offer price was fair/reasonable and consistent with other like properties in the area
- Conducted a property line survey to fully understand the actual property boundaries
- Assessed the environmental health of the property itself to make sure there wasn't significant contamination from current or prior uses
- Assessed the amount and depth of groundwater and the soil structure to see if it would support the types of construction used in building transfer stations
- Evaluated whether a wetland existed on the site
- Assessed other geotechnical attributes to make sure the site would be a good fit for a potential transfer building.

If Metro were to buy this parcel, they would be obligated to build a connector road on the north boundary of the property, which would help connect the Cornelius and Forest Grove industrial areas. Staff are still reviewing and assembling all the findings into a single staff report which will be shared with you when available. Based on all available data and findings from the property investigation, at this time we do not see any red flags regarding the site itself and are feeling confident that it would be a suitable parcel for a potential future transfer station and related operations and services.

Gloria Pinzón shared a presentation on the community engagement for the West project. She noted that Metro wants any new facility to become a community asset for Cornelius and Washington County as well, and not a burden. Metro wants to make sure these facilities bring to life the values and principals of the RWP, and deliver operational efficiency in the near and longer term as the region grows. Some of the expected community benefits are environmental health, jobs and investment, community amenities and partnerships, cultural and social equity and service equity. Community engagement is integral.

Metro has worked to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic. Metro is being intentional about making investment decisions with community input and guidance. Metro is also considering the COVID-19 impacts on the community, CBO partners and Metro staff. Metro is also committed to reducing barriers to participation within the solid waste system. Ms. Pinzon noted that as a public agency, Metro is committed to mitigate or eliminate as many of the community impacts as possible. Involving the community in this process is vital to fulfill that commitment.

Metro is committed to work closely with and for the members of the community to first decide whether or not this is a facility desired by the community and if so, how such a facility should be designed to look, feel and perform as an asset to the community.

Ms. Pinzón shared one important element of the engagement work is hosting a community advisory group, which is a small group of twelve local community members representing diverse perspectives from Cornelius, Forest Grove and a few youth members from Hillsboro. Recruitment for the group focused intentionally in Cornelius, Forest Grove and nearby areas. At this early phase Metro was most interested in learning about potential impacts to the community based on their proximity to the site. In future phases, we'll broaden our reach to ensure all who may be impacted or can benefit from the facility can weigh in.

The community advisory group (CAG) participation will help inform Metro about:

- Level of support there is for the proposed project in Cornelius
- Challenges and opportunities of the location
- The community-centered features and services that they want Metro to explore further to inform a future phase.

In a normal environment, Metro could take advantage of existing community events or hosting open houses. But Metro currently relies on virtual engagements. The broad community will have a chance to weigh in this fall through public webinars and Q&A sessions and CAG meetings, which are open to the public. Metro has also presented to City of Cornelius Council, City of Forest Grove, City of Hillsboro, Washington County Board and the Washington County Haulers Association. Metro is committed to work closely with and for the members of the community to first decide whether or not this is a facility desired by the community and if so, how such a facility should be designed to look, feel and perform as an asset to the community. At this time, Metro will be focusing on getting feedback from the community advisory group and other stakeholders on whether to proceed with the property purchase.

Metro staff will be coming back to RWAC in November to seek feedback related to the West project, and particularly the decision before Council on whether to acquire the Cornelius parcel.

Ms. Sharetta Butcher wanted to know some of the concerns and challenges that have been expressed by community members on the prospect of a new transfer station in Cornelius.

Ms. Pinzón noted that so far there have not been many concerns expressed about Cornelius specifically. There have been concerns about nuisances. There are manufactured homes fairly near the property which is a senior community. Metro is working to engage that community. Traffic is another concern that was expressed. There has been excitement about the possible amenities for the community.

Ms. Flores Aviña was impressed by the amount of engagement happening for the project.

Ms. Carrera was curious how some of the property assessment results were communicated back to the CAG. Ms. Carrera also asked about the industry webinar and input from industry. They asked for more information about the engagement with local tribes and asked that this be included at the next committee meeting.

Mr. Blue shared that the industry webinar will be an opportunity to share what is being heard from community as well as an overview of the project for haulers, facility operators, and local government. Metro will bring back more information to the committee on the historical information as well as engagement with local tribes.

Mr. Buck and Ms. McDermott had no questions or comments on this presentation.

Mr. Egleston noted that Washington County has received a similar presentation to the one given today to RWAC. He asked for a summary of the engagements for the region which could be useful for local governments. The feedback will be helpful for planning future work.

Mr. Blue noted that there will be a staff report that can be shared out.

Beth Vargas Duncan (ORRA) asked about the need for a broad-based facility. She also wanted more information on the cost-benefit analysis which should be communicated to community members.

Mr. Martin noted that east county communities will be helping to pay for this transfer station. He asked how this work will support the full region/bring equity to the entire region considering East County is also a recycling desert.

6. TONNAGE ALLOCATIONS part 2

Molly Vogt (Metro) provided an update to the committee on the wet waste tonnage allocation approach. Staff spoke with Metro Council at the end of September. The Council feedback from that session was to take a few more months to develop the goals-based allocations for 2021 and implement by July 2021. Metro staff are currently working on this temporary approach for 2021. There are engagements with industry in October. For the 2022 and beyond, this will be the long-term approach and staff will be working throughout 2021 on this work and having continued engagement with RWAC as well as public comment period.

MEETING AJOURNED at 10:00 a.m.

Next meeting

October 15, 2020 8:00 am – 10:00 am (virtual meeting)