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Proposed Business Recycling Requirements Stakeholder Feedback Summary May 2008

BACKGROUND

Businesses generate almost half of the region's garbage and each year dispose more than 100,000 tons paper and containers that could otherwise be recycled. Over the past eight years, Metro and its local government partners have invested \$3.5 million to encourage more business recycling by providing free technical assistance. Now, Metro is considering mandatory recycling of paper and containers for all businesses in the region.

Metro explored options for increasing business recycling by convening public/private work groups and conducting stakeholder outreach from 2003 to 2007. More than 1,000 people provided advice on approaches for increasing business recycling.

The proposed program, Business Recycling Requirements, would make it mandatory for local businesses to recycle all types of paper and certain containers such as plastic bottles, aluminum cans and glass. If the Metro Council approves this proposal as currently drafted, all local governments in the region would be responsible for formally adopting these business recycling requirements by January 1, 2009.

STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

In an effort to solicit input on the proposed program, Metro councilors and staff conducted meetings with local business associations and elected officials. Metro staff coordinated outreach efforts with the City of Portland, which was expanding its commercial recycling program at the same time.

Between February and May 2008, councilors and staff met with 13 business groups and five elected councils and boards (Table 1). The outreach efforts were supported by article submissions in local chamber newsletters, a survey and a web page. The program also received coverage in the Oregonian and other local publications.

The outreach efforts attracted a wide array of business representatives from across the region. More than 300 business representatives and elected officials participated in the meetings, and 103 surveys were completed at the meetings and online.

Table 1. Stakeholder Outreach Summary

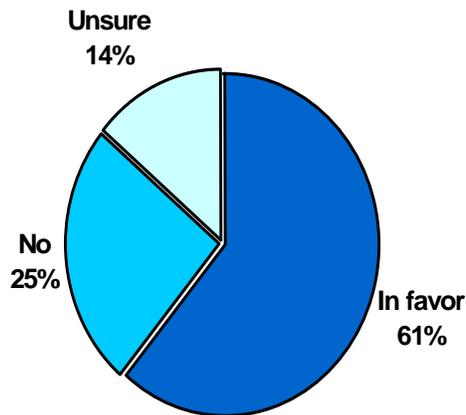
Organization	Outreach Format	Date
Building Owners and Managers Association	Breakfast forum	Feb. 6
Wilsonville Chamber of Commerce Governmental Affairs Committee	Membership meeting	Feb. 6
Oregon Lodging Association Board Members	Special meeting	Feb. 13
Westside Economic Alliance	Membership meeting	Feb. 20
Lake Oswego Chamber Governmental Affairs Committee	Membership meeting	Feb. 21
Recycling Advocates	Membership meeting	Feb. 29
Clackamas County Board of Commissioners	Work session	Feb. 26
Gresham Chamber of Commerce Governmental Affairs Committee	Membership meeting	Feb. 28
Wood Village City Council	Work session	March 11
Oregon City Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee	Membership meeting	March 13
North Clackamas Chamber of Commerce	Membership meeting	March 17
Milwaukie City Council	Work session	March 18
Lake Oswego City Council	Work session	April 1
Hillsboro Chamber Public Policy Committee	Membership meeting	April 2
Wilsonville Chamber of Commerce	Lunch forum	April 9
Hillsboro City Council	Work session	April 15
Sustainable Business Network	Lunch forum	April 16
Forest Grove Chamber of Commerce	Lunch forum	May 19

KEY FINDINGS

Overall, participants agree that business recycling efforts can be improved. Both elected officials and business representatives expressed support for the overall objective of the program.

Although participants support increasing business recycling through expanded education and economic incentives, support for a regulatory approach varied. Some viewed a regulatory approach as a contingency strategy if economic incentives and education fail to increase participation, while others felt a mandate was necessary to make recycling a priority for businesses. This was reflected both in the meetings and in the survey responses. As shown in Figure 1, survey results show that 61 percent of the respondents support required recycling, while 25 percent did not and 14 percent were unsure (see Attachment A for full survey).

Figure 1. Business Support for Proposed Requirements



Source: Proposed Business Recycling Requirements Survey, Metro, 2008.

Key items identified by the participants during the meeting discussions and in survey comments included:

- Recycling is a benefit to businesses. Practicing waste reduction attracts customers, and employees want to recycle.
- Education and economic incentives are the best way to encourage businesses to recycle. Some businesses, however, will not make it a priority unless it is mandatory.
- Education efforts should be tailored to the needs of businesses and should be directed at the owner, manager and employee level. Educational materials should also be available for multi-tenant businesses and janitorial companies. Recycling messages need to be simple and consistent across the region.
- Government regulation should be used only if education and economic incentives fail to increase participation.
- Regulations should be implemented gradually. Six months is a sufficient amount of time for businesses to improve their recycling programs to meet the requirements. Consider delaying fines until after the requirements have been in effect for one year.

NEXT STEPS

The proposed program and stakeholder feedback will be presented to the Metro Solid Waste Advisory Committee and Metro Policy Advisory Committee between May and July 2008. The results will be presented to Metro Council in July 2008.

HOW TO GET MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the proposed Business Recycling Requirements contact:

Marta McGuire, Senior Planner
Metro Solid Waste & Recycling Department
(503) 797-1806
marta.mcguire@oregonmetro.gov

Or, visit www.oregonmetro.gov/businessrequirements

**Attachment A:
Proposed Business Recycling Requirements
Survey Response Summary**

1. What type of business are you in?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Office-related such as financial, medical, or professional service	50.5%	48
Personal services such as hairdresser or plumber	2.1%	2
A retail store selling goods	3.2%	3
Restaurant, fast food, or grocery	5.3%	5
School, library, or educational institution	6.3%	6
Hotel or motel	0.0%	0
Hospital or medical clinic	9.5%	9
Manufacturer	3.2%	3
Wholesaling or warehousing business	3.2%	3
Government agency	6.3%	6
Non-profit organization	10.5%	10
	Other (please specify)	8
	<i>answered question</i>	95
	<i>skipped question</i>	8

2. What materials do you currently recycle?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Cardboard	91.1%	92
Office paper	92.1%	93
Newspaper	86.1%	87
Magazines, catalogs, phone books	82.2%	83
Plastic bottles	73.3%	74
Aluminum cans	79.2%	80
Steel cans	39.6%	40
Glass bottles	64.4%	65
	Other (please specify)	21
	<i>answered question</i>	101
	<i>skipped question</i>	2

3. Do you think businesses in the region should be required to recycle paper and containers?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	61.0%	61
No	25.0%	25
Unsure	14.0%	14
Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ YES! ▪ How could you enforce this? Unless you lock trash bins, anyone could throw recyclables in the trash. ▪ Use public award notifications that businesses can post. ▪ Make stronger voluntary program first. ▪ But encourage them with incentives. ▪ Education should do the trick. ▪ What a shame it needs to be a requirement! ▪ Reward system. ▪ Yes, if voluntary compliance is tried with renewed vigor and it still doesn't work. ▪ My company's recycling program is handled by someone other than me. ▪ The mandatory aspect is concerning. Just an example of poor communications & partnerships. ▪ I think they would recycling-I think they want to....I don't think a hard mandate is necessarily the best idea. ▪ This is a hostile idea to businesses, not very measurable, & will have unintended consequences. ▪ As long as the charge is nominal to get small business booked in. Education is also key. ▪ I don't like the idea of mandating it, but I don't understand why more businesses aren't recycling. It's so easy! ▪ Absolutely NO mandatory recycling. ▪ More could be done to teach recycling, should not be mandatory yet. How will code enforcement officers be paid? ▪ Not sure if this will do anything other than cost us for what we already do. If you use a cleaning service, will you be fined if THEY dump recyclable bins into general trash? How to monitor? ▪ I think there needs to be more specific info on the cost added with this service. 		13
<i>answered question</i>		100
<i>skipped question</i>		3

4. Does six months provide adequate time for your business to get its recycling program in compliance with the proposed requirements?			
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Yes	80.2%	77	
No	6.3%	6	
Unsure	13.5%	13	
Comments:		6	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Already done ▪ Already doing it. ▪ Already recycling ▪ We already do it. ▪ I don't think that requiring recycling would be effective. Incentives and awareness of recycling programs would be much more effective. 			
		<i>answered question</i>	96
		<i>skipped question</i>	7

5. Has your waste hauler offered to provide your business with recycling services?			
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Yes	52.6%	50	
No	10.5%	10	
Unsure	36.8%	35	
Comments:		6	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not a proactive ""ask"" from the waste haulers. ▪ Probably because we recycle a lot. ▪ Home-based. ▪ My apartment complex has recycling. ▪ We have a large mixed recycling bin but nothing for glass. ▪ Seasonal businesses, we don't currently have regular trash service. 			
		<i>answered question</i>	95
		<i>skipped question</i>	8

6. Are you aware of the free technical assistance and resources provided by the Recycle at Work program?			
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Yes	51.6%	49	
No	48.4%	46	
		<i>answered question</i>	95
		<i>skipped question</i>	8

7. Would you like a Recycling Specialist to follow up with your organization to provide free resources and assistance?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	23.0%	20
No	77.0%	67
	<i>answered question</i>	87
	<i>skipped question</i>	16

8. Do you have any questions you'd like us to answer for you regarding the proposed recycling requirements?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	10.6%	9
No	89.4%	76
Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ RE: E-waste 1) get co's to reduce their waste, help my clients w/recycling resources (I'm a professional organizer). ▪ Don't feel that Metro should be requiring property owner to enforce recycling if tenant does own trash disposal service. ▪ Would Metro consider a partnership w/businesses to get out into schools & work w/recycling in schools & looking into ways that we can support each others efforts & educate ourselves? (This was clearer in my head than when I actually wrote it out!) ▪ Shred-It takes our paper recycling from our locations. Are they recycling this paper? ▪ I have a business that has no need to recycle. My biggest waste is the gas I burn. ▪ We haul our cardboard to local facility-office cleaning crew handles the rest. Hopefully "mandatory" won't give recycling a bad name. ▪ Is there a way to get schools set up with a composting program. 		8
	<i>answered question</i>	85
	<i>skipped question</i>	18

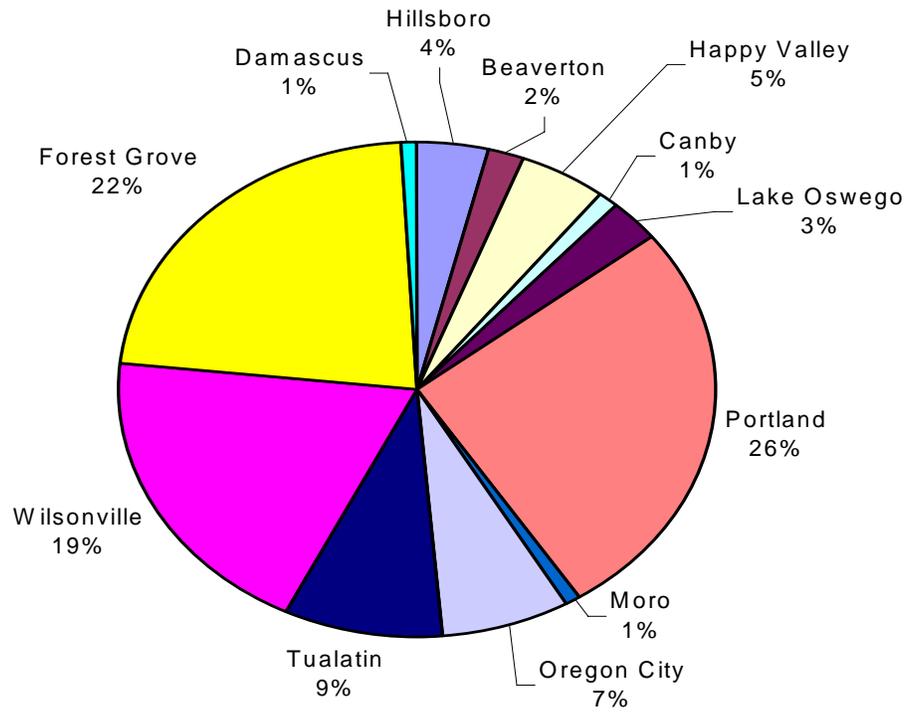
9. Please provide your contact information so we may follow up with your request for assistance and/or any questions you may have.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Name	95.1%	58
Title	82.0%	50
Organization	90.2%	55
Phone	83.6%	51
Email Address	80.3%	49
	<i>answered question</i>	61
	<i>skipped question</i>	42

10. Please share any additional comments you may have regarding the proposed Business Recycling Requirements.

	Response Count
<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This program should be national! ▪ Businesses and individuals need to get moving and recycle some more. ▪ I think mandated recycling is important. Our company has only very recently started doing any recycling, and it only happened because myself & co-worker made it a priority. Before I was employed here, I didn't realize businesses that don't recycle still existed! People need to push. ▪ We have a RecycleWorks Award. Great work - keep it up! ▪ We should dialog with manufacturers and get them to make products that lend themselves toward being recycled (eg: cradle to cradle manufacturing). Thank you much. ▪ I am very much in favor of recycling but I don't think you should require recycling. Business has economic incentive to do so-it lowers the garbage bill. Education is the key-educate business, show how it is economically better to recycle & they'll do it. There is enough government regulation without a recycling requirement. If you require recycling-make it apply only to large businesses with over a certain # of employees or waste. ▪ Recycling Rocks! ▪ Let's find a way to help get education out there instead of a hard mandate (with financial consequences) on businesses....tenants only have so much control over their waste programs. ▪ Your target is arbitrary. ▪ As a chamber, we would be happy to partner with Metro to educate our businesses. ▪ I wasn't aware that shredded paper wasn't recyclable. ▪ #8, unless you have ideas on what else we might recycle. ▪ The answers I gave are primarily for our home. The guild is made up of individual artists and currently we have no location for recycling. ▪ I'm just a tenant in the executive suites, so I don't have a lot to do with recycling. ▪ You have not provided the regulations which are enforced on a business for this program. Please do not propose a program without complete regulations which will be enforced on a business. We are not interested on a proposal which does not give full information to the subject of your plan(a business).We are in Wahington County and we have Waste Management in Forest Grove. ▪ Perhaps a gradual/stepped method of charging fees. ▪ Need boxes for recycling & info on segregating shredded paper from other recyclables. ▪ Office is open Jan-1 - April 15 ▪ Very glad to hear about the potential for Styrofoam. ▪ Is there an alternative recycle outside of Metro or can I have this in any color as long as I want black. ▪ Very interesting 1st-time info. I would think it's better to require education w/fines than recycling w/fines. ▪ Recycling is vital for our state and our world. However, I believe much more could be done to motivate before we have to regulate it. ▪ Why does glass have to be separate from paper & plastic? ▪ An interesting idea for businesses would be to provide shred-boxes at a competitive price that would be serviced by waste haulers... By the way, the new recycling containers provided by WM are great! ▪ Already working with someone on Recycle At Work. Thanks! 	
<i>answered question</i>	26
<i>skipped question</i>	77

11. Survey Respondent by City



answered question 103