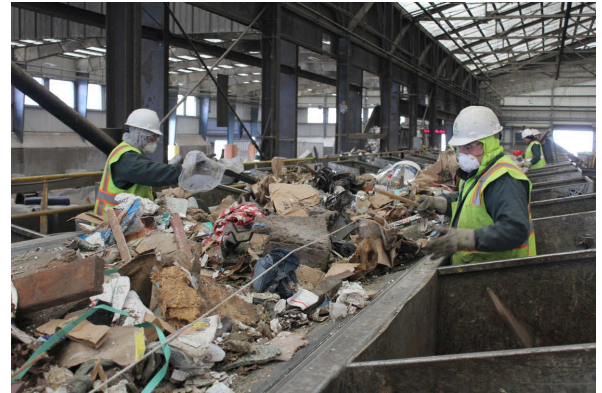




Private Industry Roundtable Summary

Garbage and Recycling System Facilities Plan

Metro hosted a roundtable on November 3, 2022 to seek input from local garbage and recycling businesses. The focus of this meeting was to identify infrastructure or facilities needed to support garbage, recycling, reuse, repair, recycling, and composting services in the greater Portland region. The following is a high-level summary of what we heard.



Existing facility gaps

At the roundtable, we heard about existing gaps including:

- There is only one facility in the region that accepts asbestos, and its location in Hillsboro can be a barrier.
- Space and separation from commercial traffic are barriers for some operators in allowing public self-haul.
- A request for a metal drop-off center that could pay for recyclable metal.
- Specialty haulers need more storage space for hard-to-recycle items, as well as coordination on collection of these items to achieve a cost-effective volume and to weather changes in prices for materials.
- Specialty haulers have difficulty finding someone who will accept recyclables like plastic film and pill bottles.
- More centralization of collection sites would benefit specialty haulers so different types of items/materials can be received at a single location.
- It's difficult to find donation centers that will consistently accept large reuse items like couches and mattresses.
- Gaps related to amenities at Metro transfer stations:
 - Request to retain the truck wash at Metro South.
 - Suggestion for expanding reuse options, like adding a reuse room at transfer stations.
 - Specialty haulers would benefit from asbestos testing opportunities at transfer stations.

Other system gaps

Education needed

- Specialty haulers would benefit from knowing where various items are accepted.
- Metro has an important role in providing public education that helps facility operators reduce contamination and hazards - such as from batteries.
- More public education is needed about where customers can take items for reuse.

Policy and regulatory barriers, concerns

- The DEQ classification of a specialty hauler as a transfer station imposes unreasonable requirements.
- Collaboration between Metro and DEQ on sharing required reporting would help lessen the burden on facility operators.
- Private transfer station operators would like to capture more of the waste stream currently processed at Metro-owned facilities and feel they could operate more efficiently than the public sector.
- Transfer station operators need to know the future regulatory environment and markets to make significant investments in their facilities.
- Materials Recovery Facility operators face economic pressures from low or uncertain commodity prices, caps on wet waste, as well as disposal costs for garbage.
- Depots for collecting hard-to-recycle items are not likely to cover the cost to operate.



- Transfer station operators and Materials Recovery Facilities would benefit from increased volume from haulers for different types of materials.
- For wet waste, smaller transfer station operators lack the volume to effectively match Metro's rates.
- If allowed, waste streams from many types of commercial customers with a very small amount of food waste could be processed as dry waste to increase recovery rates.
- There's a role for Metro in helping to provide and/or fund new infrastructure that will be required through the Recycling Modernization Act.

Markets

- Research and development are needed in the industry to create recycling markets and scalability.
- While a new west-side transfer station is needed, operators are concerned about how it will be funded and if a new facility would pull wet waste tonnage from other facilities.
- Unpredictable markets for plastics creates barriers.

Transfer stations

- Some operators do not want public customers to access their facilities because of space, access, and issues with mis-sorting (also applies to Materials Recovery Facilities).
- Some transfer station operators have space to expand while others do not.
- Acquiring insurance is a barrier for facility operators and something that Metro could help with.
- Haulers face a burden in documenting negative asbestos tests and the risk of a load being rejected; would benefit from acceptance of electronic asbestos test results.

Reuse/repair/recycling

- It is not always clear what reuse items will be accepted by donation centers, as this can change daily.
- Acceptance of hard-to-recycle items.
- Given sufficient volume and markets, private haulers can take additional materials that are not currently collected.
- There are not currently good disposal options for used RVs.

- Polypropylene items are expensive to process, which is a barrier to recycling.
- Haulers face a burden when loads are rejected because of contamination (like lumber in yard debris).

Residential self-haul

- Public self-haul access is costly for private facility operators because people dump garbage or materials that are not accepted; would need more staff to operate effectively.
- Partnership from the public sector and/or volunteers (like master recyclers) in staffing depots could help offset rising costs to private industry in making depots available to the public.

